This item was submitted to Loughborough's Research Repository by the author.
Items in Figshare are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved, unless otherwise indicated.

After the panic: an investigation of the relationship between the reporting and remembering of child related crime

PLEASE CITE THE PUBLISHED VERSION

PUBLISHER

© Georgina Payne

PUBLISHER STATEMENT

This work is made available according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) licence. Full details of this licence are available at: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

LICENCE

CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

REPOSITORY RECORD

Payne, Georgina. 2019. “After the Panic: An Investigation of the Relationship Between the Reporting and Remembering of Child Related Crime”. figshare. https://hdl.handle.net/2134/16783.

After the Panic: An Investigation of the Relationship Between the Reporting and Remembering of Child Related Crime

By Georgina Payne

A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
For the award of Doctor of Philosophy of
Loughborough University

October 2014

© Georgina Payne 2014

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of many individuals and organisations, all of whom I wish to sincerely thank for their help over the past four years.

First, I would like to thank Loughborough University and the Department of Social Sciences for supporting the project. The financial grant, training and guidance provided by the University, and especially the staff within the department, has been integral to the completion of this thesis. I am also grateful for the many research and teaching opportunities which have been afforded to me throughout my doctoral studies.

I am particularly lucky to have been in a department which encourages collegiality amongst the staff and research students. It has been so rewarding to share this experience with my fellow PhD students, David Smith, Sarah Lewis, Pawas Bisht, Alena Pfoser and Nour Shreim. In particular, I must thank Emily Harmer, Dana Nassif and Alex Lyness who have continued to support and encourage me after the completion of their own theses; for their advice but more so their friendship, I thank each of them.

My supervisors, Professor Mike Pickering and, Dr. Emily Keightley have been a source of invaluable guidance from the research proposal to the submission of this thesis. It is as a result of their patience and constructive feedback on several drafts of the thesis that its completion has been possible. For their investment in me, I am truly grateful.

This research would not have been possible without the generosity of the participants. I am indebted to each person for allowing me to record, reflect on and publish their thoughts. It is my hope that I have done justice to them by ensuring that their reflections are at the very heart of this study.

No list of acknowledgements would be complete without mentioning my family and friends. The writing of this thesis has been a challenge, which at times seemed far too great, but my concerns were always met with words of encouragement. I thank them all for their on-going support, and for the happiness they bring to my life. A special thanks must be given to my parents, for inspiring me to be interested in the big, wide world, for teaching me to work and play hard … and for always helping me with my “homework”. Finally to my husband, Tim for his constant enthusiasm and reassurance, in this and in all things. Thank you for sharing in my hopes and dreams and helping to make them come true.

Abstract

This thesis considers why some crimes persist beyond the moment of newsworthiness and how they are able to transcend this period of intense reporting to become a feature of popular memory. The central argument is that the popular memory of a crime is built up over time through a synthesis of public discourses, which are predominantly developed in news reporting, people's everyday experience and the normative social frameworks of everyday life. A temporally sensitive analysis of two case studies, the murder of James Bulger and the murder of Sarah Payne, tests this hypothesis by exploring the connections and disconnections between the ongoing reporting of these crimes and the remembering of them. The study finds that the personal past and public discourse intertwine in remembered accounts of these crimes and considers that this is evidence of the ways audiences utilise crime news as an imaginative resource for understanding crime and criminality more broadly. It can thus be said that audiences use the news to frame, but not define their understandings of the world around us.

Keywords: popular memory, media representations, children and crime, moral panic, longitudinal research.

Contents

Certificate of Originality II

Acknowledgements III

Abstract IV

Contents V

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

1.1 Outline of the study 1

1.2 Painting the landscape 3

1.3 Crime news in context 5

1.4 The framework and the findings 7

1.5 Structure of the thesis 9

Chapter 2: Literature Review 12

2.1 Introducing the field 12

2.2 Conceptualising the event in and over time 13

2.3 Mediation of 'the event' 20

2.4 Children 24

2.4.1 Media and Childhood 24

2.4.2 History of Childhood 27

2.4.3 Existing work on mediated representations of child crime 31

2.5 Remembering 'the event' 34

2.5.1 Media in memory studies 43

2.6 Conclusion 48

Chapter 3: Methodology 51

3.1 Introduction 51

3.2 A case study approach 52

3.3 Contextualising the case studies 56

3.3.1Case 1 – James Bulger 56

3.3.2 Case 2- Sarah Payne 58

3.4 Sampling the textual data 60

3.4.1 The qualitative sample 62
3.5 Textual Analysis 65
3.6 Interviews 66
3.7 Reflecting on the method 70
Chapter 4: Criminal Casting 72
4.1 Introduction 72
4.2 The perpetrator 76
4.3 The victim 88
4.4 The visibility of loved ones 97
4.5 Place 110
4.6 Conclusion 120
Chapter 5: Scripting the Coverage 124
5.1 Introduction 124
5.2 Patterns of reporting 126
5.3 Peak one 127
5.4 Scenes of mourning 129
5.5 Moral discourse and the trial 135
5.6 Judgement and blame 140
5.6.1 Sarah Payne 141
5.6.2 James Bulger 144
5.7 Refractions in the pattern of reporting 153
5.8 Conclusion 158
Chapter 6: Meaning-Making and Memory 161
6.1 Introduction 161
6.2 Reciprocal constructions of self 164
6.3 Recoiling from and reconstructing deviance 171
6.4 Class and discipline 176
6.5 Mnemonic values 180
6.6 Resistive readings 183
6.7 Conclusion 185

Chapter 7: The Cumulative Nature of Memory 187
7.1 Introduction 187
7.2 Linking the reporting and remembering through elicited reactions 189
7.3 Intertextuality and CCTV 193
7.4 The persistence and mnemonic value of the texts 196
7.5 Networks of crime 198
7.6 Complications and considerations of the moral categories of crime 208
7.7 Conclusion 214
Chapter 8: Conclusion 217
8.1 Evaluations 217
8.2 Reflections 222
Bibliography 224
I Primary sources for the textual sample 224
II Additional primary sources 226
III Secondary sources 227
Appendices 243
I Longitudinal analysis showing peaks of reporting 243
II Elicitation 244

Chapter 1: An Introduction

1.1Outline of the study

The premise upon which this study is based is that our understanding of crime and criminality is not tied to a single, discrete, newsworthy moment, but developed cumulatively over time. This is as a result of our engagement with mediated representations of crime and an interaction with other accounts of crime from which we derive first - or second-hand experiences in the social contexts of our everyday life. This approach is defined by its temporal sensitivity, which considers our understandings of crime and criminality to be accrued over time, rather than resulting from the singular impact of any one newspaper article.

The need for this type of approach is borne out of the presentist perspective of much scholarly work which connects media and crime. Few studies take account of the life cycle of a media event beyond the initial moment of reception. The tendency has been to investigate the topic of crime as temporally situated within the initial moment of newsworthiness, but it is usually *just* this high profile, highly mediated moment in time which is investigated; the social, historical and cultural context preceding and succeeding this moment is often considered to be tangential, and consequently is neglected.

Despite this assertion, it is not the aim of this thesis to overlook the obvious importance of newsworthy moments, but rather to consider them as part of an ongoing temporal trajectory. I argue that newspaper reports, in the longer term, contribute to our cumulative understandings of crime and criminality, acting as imaginative resources which the audience draws on to understand the crime and the broader discourses around it.

It is not only the newsworthiness of crime which makes it an appropriate topic for investigation. Some crimes transcend the discourse of the news and have an ongoing resonance with audiences within the longer-term course of their shared lives. The ways in which we think about these cases, understand them and refer to them long after their

initial newsworthiness has subsided, means that the topic of crime, in many ways, chooses itself as a way of studying memory.

The fact that some crimes have an ongoing cultural significance and enter into the realm of popular culture and popular memory appears almost implicit, and as such it is a process which remains un-interrogated in much academic work which connects media and crime. Jewkes is an exception to this paucity of attention relating to the temporal trajectory of high profile crimes beyond the initial newsworthy period, for she is one of very few authors to identify this connection: recognising that 'high profile criminal cases involving children are used much in the same way as other cultural events – coronations, royal weddings, state funerals and assassinations which become part of the collective memory through mass media' (Jewkes, 2004: 103). In other words, Jewkes emphasises the ongoing significance of particular crimes in society, comparing them to other events which are commonly seen as punctuating the cultural (and media) landscape.

The crimes she refers to are those involving children, suggesting that child crimes are a genre of crime which are noteworthy and particularly culturally significant. The nature of child crimes speaks to the experience of family life and draws on the emotional preoccupation with children, which epitomises our modern-day attitude toward them. It is for these reasons that a study of high profile crimes involving children is a particularly appropriate and interesting topic for assessing the connections and disconnections between media and memory.

The particular cases of child crime, which will be discussed in the thesis, are the murders of James Bulger and Sarah Payne. Both murders were subjects of significant public interest. In each case a major police and public search for the child was carried out, as was a high profile man-hunt for the perpetrators. In each instance petitions for changes to the law were also made, suggesting that public anxiety ran high and public opinion was being negotiated as a direct result of the events in question. There were, in the course of the investigation news conferences and appeals, and as a result the crimes were publicised, negotiated and commented on by the families as well as by the politicians of

the day. In what may seem to be a trend in the ways crime has become an omnipotent feature of the media landscape, these cases have thus been subject to heavy reporting, both at the time of the crime and since; they seem to have taken on a cultural status too. The ways this manifests itself within peoples understanding of crime and within narratives about high profile crime is the focus of this study and for these reasons the two crimes chosen constitute rich and interesting case studies.

1.2 Painting the landscape

The focus on a temporally extended understanding of crime, which is so central to this thesis, is at odds with the continued orthodox way of understanding media and crime. This proceeds by exploring only singular and highly mediated occurrences in periods of highly stunted duration defined by the news event itself. Conceptualisations of crime and media have, in this way, relied heavily on moral panic theory. First discussed in his pre-eminent book *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (Cohen, 1972), Stanley Cohen conceived the idea that the media had a significant role in the ways that the public outrage toward crime was manifested. In the first few paragraphs of his book, this is set out in terms which have been widely quoted in which he discusses the 'stylized and stereotypical' fashion of media representations. Although this is a useful stock explanation of moral panic, here it is more appropriate to focus on how he conceptualizes the media, rather than on how the cycle of the panic ensues. Cohen goes on to state that 'the media have long operated as agents of moral indignation in their own right: even if they are not self-consciously engaged in crusading or muck-raking, their very reporting of certain 'facts' can be sufficient to generate concern, anxiety, indignation or panic.' (Cohen, 1972). It is this explanation of the role of the media which is broadly useful in characterising the cultural landscape in which panics occur. However, as with much moral panic literature, it has been helpfully abridged by others in a perhaps more succinct manner. Here I once again turn to Jewkes, who states that 'social reaction is predominantly media fuelled' (2005: 64). The value of such definitions, as initially defined by Cohen, is that they argue that the stylized nature of press reports was a particular feature of the reporting of such

disturbances and see this as a critical component of a wider sense of hysteria in which the public become engulfed. Although this conceptualisation is helpful in considering the role of the media in generating social reactions, I suggest that a more nuanced consideration is required of the processes by which the public come to understand, negotiate and react to high profile crime, not just at the moment of reception, but also over time.

I will therefore argue throughout the thesis that a more complex, interdependent relationship exists between the structures and values of the media and the perceptions of the audience in relation to the crime; a more significant social issue than is often realised. As such, the framework adopted in this thesis, while being reliant on the production and reception of texts as per Cohen's conceptualisation, considers that as well as texts, the role of lived experience is as important in negotiating personal and collective experiences and in developing public discourse. The synthesis between these two areas of understanding is, I argue, actively negotiated by audiences through memory work.

Re-hinging the representation and reception processes through popular memory is a novel approach and its value is to link, with awareness of and sensitivity to issues of time and temporality, both the reporting of a crime and the remembering of it. The popular memory approach is particularly useful, because it offers the understanding that there are multiple contributors to memory formulation and takes account of the various different voices which all contribute to constructing versions of the past. Therefore, by listening to audience memories, this study takes account of the "voices" which contribute to their construction of the past.

In the context of this study, this translates into the hypothesis that the audience's popular memory of a crime accrues over time through a synthesis of the normative social frameworks of everyday life, people's localised experience and mundane schemata of remembering, and the public discourses which feature in the reporting. These are the multiple "voices" or contributors to popular meanings of crime which are examined by

this thesis in an attempt to highlight that the salience of particular crimes in public memory is not wholly determined by reporting.

1.3 Crime news in context

The core function of the news is to communicate information to an audience in an attempt to inform them about events and issues of social, political and cultural importance. It has been said that news is the first rough draft of history, a statement that highlights the importance and centrality of the news media as a source of information and an authoritative voice in society.

Crime is an issue that is of major social, political and cultural importance to citizens and thus constitutes a familiar feature of news output. As a subset of media output, crime news predominantly is a conventionally tabloid form of content, characterised by a more populist and less investigative style of journalism than, say, the reporting of educational or financial issues. The sensational headlines and narratives which often accompany tabloid crime news are a daily reminder of the lurid aspects of the news, legitimising the popular understanding that such news seeks only to shock and intrigue readers, rather than to serve any legitimate interest to the public.

The rise in representations of crime in entertainment formats, as opposed to traditional news formats, is also cited as evidence of the de-intellectualisation of the news, in particular crime news, and underpins a negative attitude to these kinds of highly stylised representations.

In an article in *The Guardian* in 2013, Fogg crudely asserts that that ‘newspaper editors and broadcasters have always known what sells their products and rule No 1 in the book is this: if it bleeds, it leads’ (Fogg, 2013). While this may be broadly true, I suggest it is somewhat simplistic and consider that, although crime news lends itself to the representation of the lurid details of deviant acts, the broad discourses used by newspapers to frame crimes are equally similar across tabloid and broadsheet content. It

is, therefore, not the case that the tabloid crime news engages only in sordid storytelling, but that the often difficult and unpleasant reality of crime, in particular crime involving children, is a topic of genuine interest and one which audiences of broadsheet and tabloid press alike invest meaning into and feel is informative and appropriate.

It is always the case that the audiences of crime news have ultimate power to decide whether they accept the version of events offered to them within press reports, which they do by negotiating the reports in order to consider if they are consonant with their pre-existing understandings of crime, and to choose whether to invest meaning into the story. Alternative to this, they may simply turn the page in the search for something which is more interesting to them. This is a personal process which is reliant on the audience as individuals to decode the reporting. This is not to say that the meaning of a text is completely open to interpretation; rather that while the discourse guides the reading of a text, it is the individual who makes connections between their personal past and their pre-existing knowledge, and intertwines the case being reported into their own web of understanding.

It is important to note here that the thesis attempts to open up possibilities around the extent to which audiences are active agents. It is often the case that studies which do this are considered contrary to research which holds that the media are, for want of a better term, relatively deterministic. It is the space between these two ways of thinking that this study hopes to reside in; being aware of both the ways in which consensus about public events is often derived from the media and the ways in which memory creatively processes the information it is fed.

The audience and the reception process is therefore conceptualised within this study as equally important to, and intertwined with, the representation process. Although, in practice, these two processes go hand in hand, in scholarly work they are often separated and investigated as discrete processes in and of themselves. It is important to identify this relationship within the conceptual framework of this study, because the reliance on both processes is echoed in the empirical evidence, the analysis of which attempts to

show how the discourse of the press and the audiences' personal and social experiences in some way coalesce or at least co-exist uneasily with each other.

1.4 The framework and the findings

The crimes the thesis goes on to discuss are, I argue, situated within broadly the same ideological, historically embedded frames which are underpinned by the normative ways we understand social deviance. The moral binaries of good and bad, right and wrong, innocent and evil are central to understanding deviance in its various forms, but are particularly potent in representations of crime which involve children, taken as a universal symbol of innocence.

The function of a binary is to create a dichotomy in which the boundary between 'us' and 'them' is sharply and unequivocally demarcated. The moral dimensions of this are clear and invite the reader to make a judgement about the crime being reported. The moral narrative of crime reporting is a consistent feature of the news reports analysed in this thesis. Its purpose is threefold: to invite judgement; to develop intimacy; and to create consensus; dynamics which encourage audiences to invest meaning in the actors and circumstances around the case.

The audience investment of meaning in the crimes is central to their ongoing resonance. It is central to my argument that this process occurs both at the moment of reception and also for a considerable period after the event, over a period of time in which the salient parts of these representations continue to be drawn on by audiences to make sense of other crime-related experiences, whether these are situated or mediated. Representations of crime therefore act as a mnemonic device for the remembering of a particular event, but also contribute to the ongoing negotiation of this event within broader discourses of crime and criminality. While this study accepts that the utilisation of the strong, ideologically embedded frameworks which bolster news discourse contribute to our existing understandings of crime, it considers that the investment of meaning by

audiences into particular events, such as high profile crimes involving children, is not limited to news discourses or to the period of salient newsworthiness.

The thesis provides empirical evidence of the intertwining of the personal and public in participants' accounts. This is conceived both inwardly, where participants use the discourse of the case to help make sense of self and outwardly, where participants use the case as a pathway to explore issues of crime and deviance as relevant to society. In both examples, participants invest personal meaning in the case study. The very fact that these crimes are so universal, and the discourse used to frame them are so morally imputed, means that it is often the case that audiences find meaning in the cases and that these meanings are consonant with their understandings of crime and children. It is, therefore, the case that audience fears about childhood and criminality both emerge from and are spoken back to them through these high profile crimes.

Where there is a meaningful connection between the personal and public, and a discursive fit between public and private discourse, a crime is able to become iconic. This discursive fit between the public and personal allows the case to become significant, to be remembered by audiences and become a useful imaginative resource for understanding society more generally. The crimes this thesis explores are significant because they speak to our experience of family, of childhood, of safety and of risk, which are important social issues. When a crime is reported which speaks to these concerns it becomes interwoven with our pre-existing understanding; It does not just stand alone in our memory as an interesting case. It speaks to our feelings about childhood, our concerns about security, or perhaps the increasing risks of everyday life. It is for this reason that some crimes are able to transcend the confines of immediate newsworthiness and become iconic.

Acknowledging and understanding the temporal trajectory of a crime, and how it both becomes and remains significant over time through memory work, overcomes the reliance on mediated aspects of the crime to explain its iconicity. By engaging with the

audience's thoughts and understandings about crime, this study elucidates how, and why, particular crimes resonate with audiences beyond an initial period of representation.

The temporal extension of moral panic beyond the newsworthy period and the tracing of popular memory back to inception is therefore a novel, but arguably more nuanced and realistic, approach to understanding how modes of communication converge, how key issues expressed in representations persist, and how they contribute to ongoing public discourses.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

Provided here is an overview of the key issues which are raised in the following eight chapters of this thesis.

Chapter Two outlines the relevant existing literature. This can be broadly broken down into three key areas: Memory studies, including an overview of the usefulness of memory as a way of making connections between, and understanding our past, present and future experiences as individuals within society; Theorising media and crime, or more specifically an overview of the media-centric and criminology-centric conceptualisations relevant to understanding the role of mediated crime; Research which relates to the representation of children and childhood. Although this could be seen as secondary to the main conceptual areas of interest of this study, it is important to understand the ways young people are discussed and represented in order to set out the historical and cultural context within which the case studies reside. In considering the relationship between the reporting and remembering of child crime there are several gaps in this literature which are also outlined in this chapter. I will then consider how my own research attempts to overcome such gaps.

Chapter Three discusses the methodological considerations of the study and outlines in detail the various methods used in the project, the data this yielded, and the pertinence of this data to the project. This chapter also makes a case for the case study approach which

underpins the project and situates the chosen case studies with a wider social, cultural and historical context. The chapter concludes with a reflexive account of the methods used and methodology undertaken.

Throughout the following chapters, which present the empirical research, I will discuss the reporting followed by the remembering of the case studies and where relevant attempt to consider the continuities and discontinuities between these two clusters of data.

Chapter Four and Chapter Five will focus on the qualitative findings from the textual sample. This includes an account of the discursive choices of the newspaper reports highlighting particular characteristics which appear to be significant in the framing of the case studies. This is followed by an account of how the cases are reported over time, which gives a sense of which characteristics may be important in the development of the meaning of the cases over time, and not just at the initial moment they were reported. The temporal connections and disconnections between different periods of reporting are considered here, showing that the newspaper discourse of both case studies is broadly similar in pattern and that the narrative is underpinned by ideological norms of gender, class and power which are culturally embedded. Although this is quite a predictable finding it is an important assertion upon which to highlight the discontinuities and connections between this and the remembering which follows in the next two chapters.

Chapters Six and Seven thus address the second data set – the interviews which focus on the reception and remembering of the cases. Whereas Chapter Six has an inward focus on notions of self, family and parenthood in relation to the discourse of the case, Chapter Seven has an outward focus, exploring the participants' experiences in relation to society more broadly. Although the specific focus of both chapters is different they are both supported using examples from the audience narratives.

In Chapter Six the audience accounts show that the generic, normative frameworks and moral discourses set out in the texts are useful for audiences in negotiating the cases. It then goes on to show that the textual discourse works in combination with the audience's

own thoughts, views and feelings about crime, criminality and the moral dynamics of crime to enable them to re-present an account of the case study, which is meaningful to them.

In Chapter Seven the ways audiences bring their own accumulated experience to bear on the case studies, in order to render the cases as meaningful events, is still central to the chapter, but the focus here goes beyond the personal context. In this chapter the criminal context of the case studies is considered with a view to understanding how such events help audiences to understand the world around them. The argument concludes by noting that the ways audiences attribute meaning to certain issues, including the case studies, as examples of child crime, is certainly linked to personal experience and circumstance and the assertion that these understandings are a personal, constantly developing process that can only be articulated within the current context.

The findings of each of the analytical chapters are drawn together in Chapter Eight. This chapter concludes the thesis by considering what connections and disconnections exist between the two sets of data – the reporting and the remembering. It gives a sense of the significance of the findings for the various fields it draws influence from, and considers how our understanding of popular memory and crime could and should be extended in the future.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introducing the field

This study focuses on the representation of children as victims and perpetrators of crime and attempts to consider how such representations contribute to popular conceptions of childhood and criminality. There is unfortunately little pre-existing literature which looks at the ongoing discursive constructions of particular types of crimes, victims and perpetrators and as a consequence the following review brings together three rather disparate areas of enquiry in order to make sense of the interrelationship of representation and remembering. These deal with the theorising of media and crime, children and childhood, and individual and collective memory.

The overall aim of this is to outline how the current, singular view of cultural events, which emphasises the power of representations of crime and the 'hysteric' response to them during the peak of the story's newsworthiness (as characterised by moral panic theory) overlooks any ongoing discursive constructions of crimes, victims or perpetrators. As I have briefly noted in the introduction, it is my argument that interpretations of criminal events go beyond the singular impact of any one newspaper article and are in fact defined as a result of a cumulatively built up understanding of crime and criminality; something which happens over time as a result of the mediation of multiple events in multiple forms. A further more detailed summary of this follows, in order to set the conceptual scene of the study.

The discourses surrounding childhood and children are so bound up in the framing and understanding of modern occurrences of child-related crime that an assessment of childhood as a key aspect of crime and ongoing social concern is also brought into this review. Following on from this I will argue that the role of lived experience, the interplay of various texts as well as the performance of traditional and non-traditional modes of knowledge exchange, all play their part in the cumulative development of social discourses. This conceptualisation relies heavily on the prior work of memory scholars who concentrate on the connections between past, present and future and identify complex connections between the social, personal and cultural world. The value of memory studies as a conceptual framework is therefore a key part of the

following review. The chapter then concludes by identifying the gaps within the literature and by considering how this study will address these limitations.

2.2 Conceptualising the event in and over time

Occasionally a particular, often high-profile crime goes beyond the definition of a news story, gaining a broader cultural status where it is able to act as a symbol of social concern. Such cases often have a 'personal impact and particular meaning for people as they navigate their everyday lives' (Innes, 2004: 18). Such a transformation, whereby a news story can signal a wider public reaction, is often conceptualised as a moral panic.

As briefly described in Chapter One, the conceptual framework of the 'moral panic' has often been adopted by scholars in order to account for popular reaction to events (such as child- related crime) which incite public concern. Characterised by public outcries for justice and changes to the law, academics generally see moral panics as hysteric reactions or gross exaggerations of the moral offensiveness of a particular folk devil as they are presented by stereotypical media representations. First discussed by Stanley Cohen in his landmark book *Folk Devils and Moral Panics,* Cohen observed how the disturbances in Brighton and Clacton as a result of tensions between the Mods and Rockers were reported. In doing so, he identified the stylized nature of the press reports as a particular feature of the reporting of the disturbances and saw this as a critical component of a wider sense of hysteria which the public were engulfed in. Thus, the term moral panic was coined.

Popularly, moral panics which are often, although not exclusively linked to youth in the broadest sense, are used to label and to describe the general public furore and demands for change surrounding a particular crime or event. In both applications, the academic and the popular, the focus is short term, looking at the immediate lifecycle of the media event, rather than the ongoing discursive construction of particular types of crime and the actors involved. It is however the longer-term persistence and proliferation of particular newsworthy crimes as a type of media event which is the

main thrust of my own research, and as such it requires a critique of moral panic as a starting point.

In assessing the workings of a moral panic[1] it is clear that this theory provides key insights into the role of the media in presenting deviant behaviour and the manner in which the folk devils of today are generated. However, addressing questions which go beyond the communicative structure of the event, such as - why these folk devils were targeted? why a particular framing of the panic? why did the panic occur at this particular historical moment? - are beyond the scope of the moral panic analytical framework. The theory is unable to go beyond the event itself. As such, moral panic theory lacks any acknowledgement of continuity in representational modes and public concerns, which are significant in terms of linking and contextualising events over time.

However, the presentist nature of this theory has rarely been problematic for other scholars. In fact, the popularity of the theory has soared since its conception in the early 1970's, becoming the 'go-to' theory for academic studies on media and crime. The idea that 'social reaction is predominantly media fuelled' (Jewkes, 2004: 64) has been of value to media scholars and criminologists alike in exploring and explaining public response to social situations. But as well as being widely used as an academic term, 'moral panic' has, as noted above, become part of the standard popular rhetoric to describe the response which surrounds a particular event (often high-profile crimes). As a result of this, the term has been borrowed and reconceived so many times that although it had considerable utility initially, it has become difficult to use.

Beyond this, there are three additional conceptual limitations, which impede the usefulness of this theory to an analysis of popular memories of child crime. These are; a failure to take account of the broader societal issues at play; inattention to the temporal structure of events which cause the 'panic'; and finally a limited account given to the role of the audience. I will deal with these in turn in the following assessment, but first it is important to note that the sum of these omissions means a

[1] The process of a moral panic is described as 'a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values…presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades as manned by… right-thinking people; socially accredited experts denounce their diagnoses…; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears' (Cohen, 1972: 1).

conceptual oversimplification in how processes of representation and reception of mediated events work in practice. Some of these have been explored by other academics. For example, Cohen himself has offered various reconceptualisations of moral panic, which attempt to deal with popular critique of the theory.[2] However it is still necessary that these issues be overcome in order to research how any cultural event may be understood, both in and over time.

It has been noted by several scholars that there is a 'tendency [in moral panic] to exclude broader structural processes or explanations' (Reiner, 2007: 310). In particular, Reiner (2007) provides an account of the theory which identifies this as a key limitation. Garland goes a step further in his critique of the theory, arguing that the 'weakness of much moral panic analysis is…the failure to provide evidence that these background anxieties truly exist' (Garland, 2008: 15). Garland implies through this statement that there is a lack of temporal or contextual framework within the theory. He then suggests that the current and historical context should be more central, claiming that historical context is an important factor in modern perceptions, particularly when discussing social issues and deviance. Garland thus identifies the lack of attention afforded to the longitudinal temporal structure of events which cause panic. It is unfortunate then that there is very little further literature that seeks to overcome this for such an argument is not a common critique of moral panic and generally lacks scholarly interrogation.

A more common perspective is to discuss the historicity of social concerns, identifying a temporal connectedness between periods of public concern but not connecting this to issues of deviance or to the role of the media as an extension of moral panic would likely do. Geoffrey Pearson's book *Hooligan* is thus noteworthy here, within it identifying a temporal connection between social issues and relating this to the issue of youth, in particular deviant youth. Although Pearson focuses much more on themes of myth and storytelling rather than more contemporary issues such as the role of the media, he does specify that 'the facts of crimes and disorder must be re-allocated within the idiom of continuity' (Pearson, 1983: 208). This suggests a continuing social reproduction of ideas around deviance. Pearson's work therefore

[2] The third edition of *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, published in 2002, provides a helpful anthology of the author's periodic re-evaluations of the theory.

supports the idea that there is a cumulative element to the way we make sense of the world around us, highlighting that a lack of consideration of temporality as a feature of social understanding is a serious miscalculation. However, Pearson's work does not attempt to overcome the limitations I have outlined within moral panic; instead he promotes historical realism as a framework for understanding 'a long and connected history' (Pearson, 1983: 207). I will attend to the value of this approach in the final section of this review.

The third limitation noted was the failure within moral panic to fully conceptualise the role of the audience. This is in spite of Cohen's own assertion that he will pay 'less attention to the actors than to the audience' (Cohen, 1972: 16). The folk devils in *Moral Panics and Folk Devils* are secondary in name and conceptualisation, but the audience too are overlooked. McRobbie and Thornton (1994) identify the importance of the audience in contemporary media research and consider that the lack of inclusion of audiences, which was common in early media research such as moral panic theory, is now out-dated. As such, they suggest that scholars 'need to embrace the complex realm of reception' (1994: 572). Their call for change is based on the awareness that audiences have much more choice than ever before and that by side-lining the role of the audience in making consumer decisions about media you would also fail to take account of the expansion and diversification of the mass media itself.

McRobbie and Thornton therefore identify that the modern world is much more complex than early work on the sociology of the media conceptualises, undermining the way moral panic theory conceptualises the audience. As part of this argument they state that 'while a consensual social morality might still be a political objective, the chances of it being delivered directly through the channels of the media are much less certain' (*ibid*: 573). This statement recognises that a collective understanding is unlikely to be formulated by a single source in a world where there are a multitude of outlets for the negotiation of common experience. This is something that moral panic theory fails to consider. This oversight may be because the conditions of the modern world, particularly in relation to mass media communication and media autonomy, were quite different when this text was first written, to the way they are now. However, although it is clear that media literacy has grown and that current audiences

are somewhat different to a 1960's audience, we can never consider the audience to be naive. In this sense a failure to conceptualise the audience is as patronising now as it was then. The media are not agents of social control in the same way as they were once considered to be, but neither were audiences of the sixties any less gullible or willing to accept media narratives than they are now. McRobbie and Thornton's research thus identifies two key issues. Firstly, that we live in a multi-mediated world whereby the consumption of media cannot be confined to picking up a newspaper or sitting down to watch the news. Secondly, that audiences are not passive. They understand, more than ever, what the media does and as such it is imprudent for researchers to conceptualise them as unknowing or to conduct research that does not take account of their experience and the reflexive manner with which they assimilate and think about it.

Martin Innes (2004b) also recognises the theoretical limitations of moral panic in effectively dealing with high-profile social anxieties and how they are understood in a late-modern context. He does this by building on McRobbie and Thornton's assertion that the changing social context renders the theory outdated. Innes points out that whereas moral panic 'seeks to explicate a process whereby personal troubles are translated into public problems', a more suitable approach in a context where fear and anxiety are more commonplace is to consider 'how the public problem of crime is imbued with personal meaning by people at a micro level' (Innes, 2004b: 351) Innes seeks to answer this question through the development and empirical practice of the signal crime perspective.

Innes describes the signal crime perspective as a way of 'looking at how crime and disorder is defined and rendered meaningful by people in their everyday lives' (*ibid*: 352). He asserts that mediated narratives of crime and co-present experiences of crime both contribute to embodied reactions, such as behavioural modification, which attempt to reduce risk as a result of crime and disorder. A signal crime is therefore something that indicates the presence of potential risk and can be identified through the convergence of two different experiences of crime; mediated narratives and co-present experiences. Mediated narratives consist of mass mediated reporting. This is a feature of signal crime which is of particular interest here, as it identifies the influence of mediated narratives in shaping public opinion. Innes' work suggests that

we often interpret key signals through the media and that signal crimes are those which 'people "tune" into, in order to manufacture for themselves some sense of the risks that are distributed throughout social space' (*ibid.*). Signals, he asserts, vary depending on how they are interpreted, indicating an active process in the negotiation of information by media audiences, something which moral panic and studies on fear of crime often overlook.

Despite the inclusion of media narratives as a key arena for the negotiation of criminal discourses, Innes places more emphasis on the value of co-present experiences of crime. He defines co-present experiences as 'the experience of encountering people, places, objects and events that can be construed as indicating the presence of danger' (*ibid*: 343) and suggests that mediated narratives act as a 'framing function for individuals in terms of how they interpret and define their co-present encounters' (*ibid*: 351). In other words, Innes considers that the media provide a toolbox for us to be able to situate and talk about our personal experiences of crime. This suggests that mediated narratives alone are not enough to construct meaningful public reactions toward criminality. In light of the hypothesis of this study, such an argument must be countered; mediated narratives alone *are* in some cases powerful enough to incite an embodied reaction. A co-present experience constitutes an event which *contributes* to understandings of particular crimes but is not essential in establishing a response to a particular event or an embodied reaction to it. I am persuaded by this argument not only because many of us have no co-present experiences of serious crime, but also because we all have conceptions of crime despite this.

However, the inclusion of co-present experiences as a factor in the understanding of crime is undoubted; clearly personal experiences are a source of information and a factor in the perception of criminogenic risk. For this reason they are equally as relevant when considering what may cause people to diagnose dangers and risks in their daily life. In relation to Innes' work, there is an underlying suggestion that the category of co-present experiences should be 'real'. This is defined by him as personally experienced, or events which have taken place in close proximity, both place and time, for example in a person's local area, or in recent times.

What is more pertinent to this study is the way co-present experiences may be re-constructed by people to construct what is meaningful for them. There are no formal rules on what sort of event or place does, or does not indicate danger and so the ways audiences discuss danger will suggest something about them; their fears, concerns and past experiences. This is important, especially given the attempt of this study to empirically investigate reaction to crime, because it places the communicative framing of the understanding of crime with the audience, and not with the researcher. This is important because some people may not identify minor local or street crime, which are more commonly experienced, in terms of fear and danger. In addition, the aftershock of personal experiences of crime often goes beyond the recent time and beyond a particular person, living in the memory and the memory of socially adjacent others for a long time. Accepting that experiences travel across time and space and that they can become powerful symbols for others, or are instilled as key lived experiences which contribute to the cumulative understanding of crime, is thus essential within this study. Neither of these aspects are taken into account by Innes, which mean that the theory of signal crimes is remarkably presentist.

By combining both personal and mediated experiences of crime, Innes seeks a more rounded understanding of what contributes to expressions of concern about deviant behaviours. The focus on personal experience is particularly useful, given that he seeks to understand expressions of concern and that people are arguably more likely to be "concerned" about crimes they have come into contact with, as well as those that pose a significant risk. However, it is important to note that what is considered risky is constructed in part by the media, interpreted by audiences and then used to frame their everyday experience. A more rounded view, which acknowledges the interplay of these factors, is thus missing from signal crimes. Although the theory is open to development in these areas and highlights the academic value in looking at how crime is made meaningful for people in their everyday life, the evidence he draws on to corroborate his ideas seem to overlook these issues. This constitutes a lack of consideration of the embeddedness of social concern, any reasoning for why people identify particular risks in particular ways, and how certain risks are meaningful to their everyday life. As a result, Innes' intention to counteract the tendency to assume a level of fear or a particular reaction to crime by suggesting that

his approach ‘enquires into the variety of ways that people interpret and define criminal and disorderly incidents’ (Innes, 2004: 336) is somewhat overshadowed.

Although I have identified some limitations in the conceptualisation of signal crimes it remains a useful concept, and one which is wholly relevant to this project. The limitations listed are surmountable through a deeper consideration of the role of the media in developing public discourse about social issues, something to which this research will contribute. For these reasons the significance of signal crimes is returned to towards the end of this review where its temporal selectivity is considered.

2.3 Mediation of ‘the event’

It is perhaps not surprising that deviance has long been a staple of media content whatever the story. Deviance is a divisive topic, demarcating a boundary between us and them. Deviance includes anything from high-profile murder to more everyday occurrences of criminality and social transgression. It is media worthy because it provides an opportunity to present the disruption of established social norms, drawing a distinction between the moral majority and the offending “other”, legitimising and delegitimising their respective attitudes, activities or lifestyle.

The popular preoccupation with crime is long standing and has, over the past two centuries, ranged from the production of penny dreadfuls to documentary films, from interest in lurid news reports to tales of famous police detectives (both fictional and factual). Although it is the factual representation of crime which this project is specifically interested in, the explosion of popular interest in crime has led to a criminal event becoming much more than a news story and thus mediated in a variety of ways. This can take the form of a direct reconstruction or documentary, which seeks to inform viewers about actual events; examples include *Crimewatch* or *Panorama*. Other representations include the dramatized recollection of events such as the 2006 ITV drama *See No Evil* which depicted the Moors Murders, or *Appropriate Adult* (2011) which portrayed the police investigation into Fred West from the point of view of his court-appointed appropriate adult. Such dramatizations

re-frame particular events for new audiences, often offering a new perspective on the case after time has passed. Other less direct re-presentations use the recognizable plot and/or characters but present the story as a fictional representation. For example, the novel *Boy A* by Jonathon Trigell and its 2007 adaptation for TV both use aspects which strongly correlate with the Bulger case. New uses or interpretations of real criminal cases are not only reserved for television. The computer game 'Law and Order: Double or Nothing' depicted the CCTV image from the James Bulger case in the titles.

What the above examples demonstrate is that the presence of real crime in the media is not always presented in a news format and thus a wide range of media contribute to representations of crime and our understandings of deviant actors and behaviours. Although the format of mediated information is important, clearly the content also plays an important role in our understandings of high profile crimes. For example, the manner in which mundane prejudice and abuse are represented also have a great impact on understandings of deviance. The banality which underpins such representations and the actor types involved often contributes to a more general understanding of deviant behaviour. For example, the rigidity and consistency of frames used to describe more banal deviance, such as teen pregnancy or ASBO communities, means these views can become embedded in society and are considered a legitimate way to frame similar actors which appear in more high-profile but less frequent occurrences of crime. It is the high-profile crimes that capture public imagination, but I argue that what we think about them and the terms of reference used to describe them are undoubtedly based on 'a repetitious and rigidly immovable vocabulary of complaints and fears' (Pearson, 1983: 211) which has been built up through more banal occurrences.

When it comes to news or other factual representations of crime any representation will clearly seek to be both accurate and truthful, but as the above examples show, all news content is subject to some selectivity. This means that the content of crime news is rarely comprehensive even though it seeks to be. For example, not all crime is considered newsworthy but that which is, is always presented in culturally coded frames which seek to legitimise certain norms and delegitimise alternative values or dispositions. It is important to note that the practice of selecting what is newsworthy

is not necessarily agenda based, rather it is 'an unconscious function' (Pearson, 1983: 22) based on cultural and ideological values which are present in all cultural institutions.

The concept of 'news values' is an academic attempt to understand more about this 'unconscious function'. By taking account both of a range of 'perceived interests of the audience' and 'public mood' as well as 'forces that structure and constrain the form and content' of the news, it is argued that key characteristics present in reporting across media institutions can be identified. Jewkes has developed a set of 'news values for the millennium' (Jewkes, 2005: 40) and, while faithful to previous conceptualisations,[3] she takes account of changes in the structure and values that shape the news in the 21st century, so making the concept more relevant to contemporary social life and culture.

Content based values range from sex to celebrity. Within this category Jewkes argues that the news value 'most common to all media is violence' because it fulfils the aim to 'present dramatic events in the most graphic possible fashion' (Jewkes, 2005: 53). She uses evidence from Stuart Hall's *Policing the Crisis* to support this, stating that violence represents a 'fundamental rupture in the social order' (*ibid*: 54) which makes it worthy of media attention.

Other values include simplification which relates to constraints of form rather than content. News as a product must be 'reducible to a minimum number of parts or themes…in order that it should not strain the attention span of the audience' (*ibid*: 43). In this way news is not intended to generate multiple understandings, nor is it open to interpretation, privileging 'brevity, clarity and unambiguity in its presentation'; thus it is fairly simplistic. Jewkes states that for crime news the consequence of this is the inclusion of 'moral indignation and censure' which again serves to legitimate norms on the most basic level.

However, as a consequence of the simplistic format of news, stereotypes are often used. Stereotypes are themselves a simplification of characteristics presented in a recognisable format. Pickering (2001) defines this as 'an indiscriminate lumping

[3] The standard first reference for news values is Galtung & Ruge (1965).

together of people under over-arching group signifiers, often of a derogatory character [which] reduce specific groups and categories to a limited set of conceptions' (Pickering, 2001: 10). This description makes clear that stereotypes are often disparaging, but in terms of news they are also useful in characterising victim, though more usually perpetrator-types, in a way which both fits in with norms and is straightforward to present. The purpose of stereotypes is to promote ideological boundaries which are embedded within social life. The media are a key arena for the dissemination of these stereotypes, a process that contribute to the consolidation of social order.

As an 'important constitutive component of contemporary social ordering practices' (Innes, 2003: 62) Innes suggests that the media, the stories they tell and how they tell them 'contribute to defining what problematic issues the public are thinking about' (*ibid*: 61). 'By focussing upon and disseminating the details of a small number of especially dramatic, but fairly rare crimes' (like those discussed within this research) Innes argues that 'journalists construct these events as forms of signal that the public interpret in make evaluative judgements concerning the state of society' (Innes, 2003: 61-62). Although based on fact, the news represented therefore presents only a particular version of reality, one which legitimises norms and seeks to perpetuate a particular sense of the world around us. Greer goes one step further suggesting that crime news 'can be [a] key mechanism in the construction of ideology' (Greer, 2003: 44).

Going beyond this into an account of the workings of the cultural industry is often required when considering how representations are made. Indeed, understanding the ways in which news is constructed is important in terms of acknowledging that there is a level of active construction. As has been pointed out, news intends to be factually correct but it is fair to identify a level of artistic creativity which goes into the framing of the story and the ongoing development of particular areas of interest. In this case I would argue that an acknowledgement of these forces is enough, and that a focus on the implicit practices that underlie the representation is more helpful than a full consideration of media culture in the round.

2.4 Children

Research on children, childhood and the media is often related to safeguarding children. An example is the research on media literacy and the ongoing argument about media effects, which often links the proliferation of 'negative' imagery present in various media with negative behaviours enacted by children. Both fields are interested in children as a particular group of people who use or are subject to mediated representations. Research which focuses on children as a particular (vulnerable) group can also be identified in policy-driven research which generally focuses on children and the law and may take evidence from media to understand the context of particular child-related crimes and the public response, but critically such examples do not focus on media as part of the research.

This research draws on such work only in that it forms the basis for understanding childhood as a particular category, and helps to show what attitudes toward this group are generally proliferated in popular culture. The interest in children within this research is not, however, focused on their actual vulnerability (or strength); rather, it is in how this is perceived by the public and how such characteristics are represented in the media over time. Understanding discourse around child crime involves considering the various ways children and childhood are constructed. This includes an assessment of children as media consumers, childhood as a social construct, the newsworthiness of children and childhood, and the reasons for this. These will be discussed in the following section of this review.

2.4.1 Media and childhood

As noted above, this study goes beyond accepting the inclusion of children in the media as a particular topic. It seeks to understand how childhood is featured in the media and the tensions between this and how they are popularly understood. The tensions in the relationship between children and the media are striking because children are physically employed by advertisers and promoters, for example on TV adverts or by journalists in news stories. We, the adults, are happy to consume such material, yet children themselves are considered to be incapable of making choices about what media are harmful or acceptable. The following subsection considers

these kinds of tensions in more detail before turning to an assessment of children as subjects in the media.

Buckingham (2001: 64) succinctly sums up the attitude towards children as media consumers, stating that children are seen not as 'confident adventurers in an age of new challenges and possibilities but as passive victims of media manipulation; and the media not as potential agents of enlightenment or of democratic citizenship but as causes of moral degradation and social decline'. Such polarised constructions are part of a wider cultural repertoire which characterise children. Their increasing empowerment to make consumer choices masks the reality whereby they are bound by the ideological frameworks which define them in terms of what they lack – 'inability to conform to adult norms' and 'lacking the knowledge, the experiences and the intellectual capacities that would entitle them to social power' (Buckingham, 2001: 64). Interestingly, history shows us that such constraints, which reflect dominant ideologies, were present in the exclusion of other marginalised groups such as women or the working classes.

Media literacy has sought to educate in order to temper the concern that children as media consumers are vulnerable - in particular to negative messages - because they are incapable of processing, interpreting and evaluating mediated content. Finding its way into the national curriculum following a Bill[4] in 2003, media literacy classes were seen as a way to educate children about advertising and marketing, increasing their ability to distinguish between reality and fiction, and equipping them with tools which would allow them to evaluate mediated content rather than succumbing like 'passive victims to the seductive wiles of the "hidden persuaders"' (Buckingham, 2001: 65). The results of this are a more media-aware generation but the concern about children as victims still remains. Historically, there has always been concern about the dangers of new technology and the consequence for children and young people who are seen to be most at risk, and so the retention of such concerns is perhaps unsurprising.[5]

[4] See Communications Act 2003. S 21. 11
[5] See Pearson (1983) for an account of the introduction of cinema or Springhall (1998).

Children, media and the repercussions of access and viewership are a particular issue here because it draws in, and on the media effects debate. The media effects debate has resulted in much public concern and is relevant because it deals with discourses of criminality as a causal effect of violent TV viewing. Behavioural, emotional and ideological changes are all considered to be possible effects of engaging with mediated content which David Buckingham (2001) has explored in his work on the emotional effects of TV on children. He rightly identifies the possibility that TV can have powerful effects, but states that these can be both positive and negative responses and that the consequence of these responses is unclear.

However, public calls to understand so-called media effects are much less open-minded. Concern about this issue was consolidated in the 1984 Video Recordings Bill, a comprehensive review of which can be found in Martin Barker's *The Video Nasties*. In practice this Bill sought to develop a censoring body which would check the contents of any mediated representation in order to make sure such representations were fit for public consumption. The case for this was formed out of moral concern for children and the view that "video nasties" can damage the minds of children, causing them to commit depraved acts linked to what they have viewed. Although the Bill was not passed, the legacy of the "video nasties" panic has been that violence in the media is seen as negative and that where mediated violence and children come into contact violent behavioural effects were/are likely.

Discourses about media effects are therefore highly charged, resting on an engrained concern about childhood welfare through the interweaving of this with violence and criminality. As such, the media effects debate is a novel and thus interesting representation of childhood and criminality. In practice, however, much research fails to elaborate on what effects we should be looking out for if we, or our children, view violent television.

Any connections between violent criminality being enacted as a result of media consumption are tenuous; although clearly the academic research and the public debate are often at odds with each other on this point. Unfortunately, this lack of consensus means that a negative attitude toward the media and its influence prevails. The control (or lack thereof) parents, children and families are deemed to have over

their consumption of unsuitable media remains a central part of the concern. Overlooking which side of the argument one agrees with, the literature on media effects identifies how complex the range of arguments about childhood and agency are. Such opinions almost certainly underpin how children are constructed in other parts of society, not just as media consumers but also as media subjects, within the family and within society more generally. This body of work usefully highlights how highly charged concern about children is, and how the media can perpetuate certain ideas about it, something which should therefore be apparent in the empirical work.

2.4.2 History of childhood

The development of young people as subjects of increasing attention means that the frames of reference drawn on and the terms used to characterise them have played out across a variety of landscapes: politics, criminal justice, and media. Danger to children and childhood including issues such as childhood delinquency and deviance is a dominant part of this discourse. These popular concerns are relatively recent issues, for it is only in the last 200 years that we have become concerned, if not obsessed with childhood, and seen it emerge as a distinguishable demographic and biographical category.

Before the start of the 18th Century children were depicted as 'miniature adults'; there was no separate category for biological immaturity. Philippe Aries (1978) is credited with tracing the origins of childhood. His seminal work claims that 'in mediaeval society childhood did not exist'. This is in contrast to our current understanding of childhood, which is characterised by a 'heightened separation from adulthood' (Prout, 2008: 23) with deep moral evaluative connotations, something which is evidently a social construct rather than a natural one.

According to Cunningham (2005) it is the Romantic period that had the greatest impact on this development, citing it as a key turning point in the history of childhood. At this point children were beginning to be seen as a separate and particular category within the family, just as family life changed and was seen a source of pleasure and enjoyment. Cunningham suggests that a more independent and

confident middle class was the reason for this. These views along with the abandonment of wet nurse services, for example are considered to be particular indicators of a desire for more intensified bonding between mother and child and a more child-oriented family type.

As part of this transformation of family life, innocence was elevated as an essential characteristic of childhood. This was reinforced through the de-sexualisation of small children who were clothed in dresses, often in neutral tones, to 'blur sexual distinctions' (Cunningham, 2005: 70). This more protective and emotional way of relating to children was also reflected in the wider intellectual discourse of the time, specifically the Arts. Notably, Reynolds' iconic painting *The Age of Innocence* represents the archetypal romantic image of a natural and unspoiled child, epitomising the marked surge in sentiment towards children, which has become yet more generalised over the following centuries.

The history of childhood is thus 'one of progress and improvement over time' (Holland, 2008: 43). Since the Romantic period, society has become consistently more child-oriented; the exploitation of children, rights of children, sexualisation, adultification, education and experiences of children are now central concerns. However, an examination of the conditions of modern childhood suggests that these historical changes have had consequences for the lifestyle of children and the conception of the family.

As a result of the Romantic period, children became less independent, both financially and socially; their actions, and thus wellbeing, became directed by adults who were, and continue to be, more protective toward children. Since then any changes in the way children are treated have been orchestrated by adults, and as a result they have little agency over their own lives. The best example of this is the establishment of compulsory education, which has physically separated adults from children. Cunningham states that, through education, children were effectively 'sent to a quarantine before they were allowed to join adult society' (Cunningham, 2005: 5). This creates an obvious distinction between environments for children and environments for adults. By virtue of this change, children have also become less of an economic asset to a family (a possible driver for having children in pre-modern

society) because they are no longer part of the work force[6]. The result is that children have become systematically more dependent on their family unit. Notably, the desirability of further and higher education has extended this period of dependence meaning that young people are financially dependent of their families for a prolonged time. This modern-day norm marks the acceptance of a sentimental rather than economic connection with children by their families and indicates that children are 'under greater scrutiny and adult control' (Honeyman, 2009: 29), for a time which extends beyond an age of biological immaturity.

The separation of adults and children, specifically as a result of education, has promoted the privatisation of the family. Because children are removed from the family home so often, parents have become more protective over them when at home. In a modern, privatised family children are more valuable than ever, they are a symbol of vulnerability and are to be cherished and protected from external (to the family) dangers. As a result, an emphasis has been placed on parental responsibility including, but not limited to, the responsibility to socialise and moralise their children.

What this means is that responsibility for the child rests solely with its parents, perpetuating the ideal of a tightly bonded unit. Today, we all identify with this bonded family type whereby children are cared for by parents, even if this was not our own family experience. Therefore, when children commit depraved or criminal acts, or are subject to adultified or sexualised experiences, our normal frames of understanding are affected. These types of issues contravene our ideologically embedded expectations about children and childhood. It is on this basis that the convergence of criminality and childhood is so powerful and particularly newsworthy and why, perhaps, we have come to recognise the emotional responses by the public in reaction to cases of child crime, as a norm.

The acceptance of such a paradox in attitudes towards children in contemporary society signals a hardening of the discourses surrounding childhood. This means that paradoxical representations focussing on either the tragic victim or evil monster

[6] Although generally speaking children became liberated from the workforce as a result of the Romantic period, this process wasn't complete until the Education Acts of the early 1870s'. In fact, many working-class children worked from a young age up until then.

scenario are more easily proliferated. Undoubtedly this discourse filters through into the public consensus, underpinning popular attitudes toward children and young people; to paraphrase David Altheide's words[7] – when it comes to children, sometimes we don't know when to 'protect' or when to 'punish'.

Beyond its literal meaning, childhood has a wider symbolic value; childhood means more than a young person It also stands for innocence, vulnerability, and naivety. As such it is particularly newsworthy.[8] This is especially because these discourses draw on morality and notions of protection and security, which have become the norm in an ever risk-concerned society.

As noted above, when children commit depraved or criminal acts or are subject to adultified or sexualised experiences, our normal frames of understanding are affected. The appropriateness of our protective nature toward innocent and vulnerable children becomes yet more legitimate when it is infringed upon for any reason. This applies to crimes against children or children as criminals. Indeed, any obstruction to what we consider a normal childhood – where children are innocent and need to be protected - is a direct contravention of norms, is deviant in the extreme and thus eminently newsworthy.

It is appropriate to keep linking the newsworthiness of these issues with the popular attitude because both contexts feed into one another. It has become acceptable to identify some groups of children and young people as threatening to social norms and thus subject to a different set of symbolic constructions, dependant on their behaviours. In line with this, Newburn (2007) states that society's 'number one folk devil' (Newburn, 2007: 626) is young people, a claim reflected by Geoffrey Pearson in *Hooligan* who identifies youth as a perennial problem for society. Stanley Cohen also identifies deviant youth as a folk devil in *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* and considers that the reaction to their behaviour is the cause of the early panics he writes about.

---

[7] Altheide's direct quote is used on page 174 of this thesis. It is originally taken from (2009: 1356).

[8] Jewkes also considers the news value of childhood in 'News Values for the Millennium'. See (Jewkes, 2005: 40)

Another example of the hardening of discourses of childhood is the notion of adultification. This is a relatively new concept and is used to describe the ways in which children are seen to engage in adult behaviours, or to have agency over their own actions in the same way as an adult. This includes 'rises in teenage pregnancies, children being tried in adult courts, children winning the right to "divorce" their parents and so on' (Jewkes, 2004: 104).

The concept of adultification is particularly valuable to this study because it exemplifies the elasticity within discourses of childhood and is relevant to the criminal context. In Jewkes' summary of the term, she references the Bulger case citing a 'subtle process of adultification' (2004: 105) within the media discourse in an attempt to prove the guilt of the child perpetrators. What this suggests is that the way we view children and childhood is context-dependent. Although we seek, in ideal terms, to construct children as vulnerable and innocent, in cases where norms are contravened a process of adultification makes other frames of reference more appropriate.

2.4.3 Existing work on mediated representations of child crime

So far, this chapter has considered theories which attempt to conceptualise attitudes towards children, childhood and the media. The following subsection identifies a number of studies which have undertaken works on children as media subjects, specifically children as victims and perpetrators of crime.

Works that investigate mediated crime and children tend to focus on particular case studies to elucidate the central discourse of the representation. This approach is also taken up in this study; so too is the method of textual analysis, which often used as a method of enquiry to look at specific news content.

Machado and Santos (2009a, 2009b) use textual analysis in two articles: the first compares two missing children cases and how the use of forensics was represented, while the second compares the news content related to the disappearance of

Madeleine McCann[9] in two Portuguese titles. Such articles seek to identify continuities and changes in the presentation of news content about the related topic. For example, the authors make claims about the similarity in the angle of both newspapers in the aftermath of Madeleine's disappearance, specifically 'compassion for the McCanns' loss, their deep Catholic faith, and their pro-activity in starting a worldwide campaign to find their daughter' (2009b: 155). They do this through qualitative analysis, which allows them to identify themes in the coverage as well as shifts in the dominance of particular themes, and the introduction of new information. As such, the authors have sought depth over breadth; their work takes account of just two titles but analyses them in a way which allows key frames, as well as subtle changes in the coverage, to be clearly revealed.

Indeed, most work which explores the relationship between childhood and crime seeks depth over breadth. This is both a practical and theoretical consideration. Firstly, there are limited examples of high-profile cases in which childhood and crime converge; as they each involve differences, whether this be context, character or case-related, it is difficult in research terms to compare them. Secondly, because childhood is such a value-laden concept it is not easy to research the topic in a meaningful way if one does not take account of the discrete elements involved in its representation and reception. Consequently, the topic lends itself to qualitative research such as that undertaken by media scholars.

David Altheide's research confirms this. His 2009 study of the shooting at Columbine[10] is an in-depth theoretical assessment of news, combining the topics of childhood and criminality. Within his article he talks about how fear has become connected to notions of childhood through the presentation of child-related crime in ongoing mass media representations. Altheide's work is a thorough examination of this process by which the media contribute to the perpetuation of symbolic meaning. To achieve this he uses a case study approach, focussing on the topic of the Columbine shooting as a way of illustrating how different discourses can become

[9] Madeleine McCann disappeared in May 2007, while on holiday with her family in Portugal. She was 3 years old at the time of her disappearance, an event which sparked international media interest. The case remains unsolved and as such the media interest in the case is also periodically reignited.

[10] Columbine High School in Colorado, USA was subject to a premeditated attack by two students in April 1999. 24 people were murdered and a further 27 people were injured. This is in addition to the deaths of the perpetrators, who committed suicide following the massacre.

connected, through the high profile nature of one particular event. This method is effective in allowing Altheide to track how the meaning and significance of 'Columbine' developed and became a symbolic reference for other school shootings. However, like the previous example, Altheide's focus is quite limited, but the findings are well summarised by the author and are relevant to media research and studies on the fear of crime more generally.

While Altheide's work identifies that children are symbolically valuable and that they have been associated with discourse of fear in news and entertainment genres, it fails to identify that connections between fear and childhood are historically situated and that discourse of childhood and fear was connected before the Columbine shooting. Although his initial assertion attempts to contextualise the embeddedness of discourses of fear and childhood, the lack of historical context suggests that he does not consider past narratives to be a key feature in the framing of the Columbine shooting, something which could be considered as inaccurate. Despite this, his work has led him to suggest that 'the mass media and popular culture provide significant symbolic meanings and perspectives that individuals may draw on in specific social situations' (Altheide, 2002: 230). This finding is valuable, suggesting that mediated representations are re-used by audiences in other social situations. Put another way, the public accumulate knowledge about events and experiences and draw on such understandings to negotiate the world around them, then they utilise this information in other situations to underpin new thinking. Altheide conceptualises how mediated frames of reference travel, and in doing so become disseminated beyond a single audience through other modes of knowledge transmission such as informal talk, music, or debate. Although he doesn't make an explicit connection to memory studies as part of this conceptualisation, Altheide like Innes is aware that knowledge transmission in the modern world can be, as a result of the proliferation of mass media, more complex than in earlier periods of history, relying on the interplay of various facets of social life and not just on first-hand experience.

2.5 Remembering 'the event'

Memory is often thought of as an internal archive from which we can simply recall past experiences. This is a common misconception because our memory is prone to lapses and fluctuations, and can become altered on the basis of new information, experiences and judgements. It is far from objective, reliable or consistent, qualities we rely on when using an archive. On this basis the study of memory is fraught with contradictions and conflicts, not least between the two main branches of memory work: psychological and sociological memory studies.

The field can be most easily summarised by identifying a divide between these branches of memory studies and the underlying lack of agreement across and within these fields about what constitutes memory. It is well documented that certain types of memory, specifically that studied by psychologists and psychoanalysts, which focuses on the mental and mnemonic operation of memory has received greater attention and empirical examination. It is therefore the case that 'memory as a specifically social phenomenon has suffered relative neglect' (Connerton, 1994: 21). This imbalance is beginning to be redressed as a result of the so-called memory boom of the last decade or so which has sought to study the social formation of memory and its significance in the modern world. It is this type of memory which is particularly pertinent to my own research.

Maurice Halbwachs, the father of social memory studies, was the first person to consider memory in this way, setting out the social context as a key arena for the construction of memory. Unlike psychologists who consider memory to be a biological, internal function, Halbwachs' work showed that 'collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent body of people' (Halbwachs, 1992: 22). In other words, he understood that social groups provide the tools to negotiate personal experience and the cultural frameworks in which our memories operate.

Halbwachs' theory defines a group as a community to which we as individuals belong. Groups can be different sizes but are bonded by some commonality. On a macro-scale for example, a national group which contributes to developing common culture and customs. On a micro-scale, a family unit can be seen to be borne out of

that culture, but it also has its own traditions, which are relevant to a much smaller community. In particular, Halbwachs identifies the family as a key group for the negotiation of our experiences and thus the formulation of memory. One can conclude from this that individuals are members of several different groups at the same time, each of us has different frameworks to draw on which help us make sense of the world around us.

Halbwachs then goes on to describe the process by which individuals pass from one group to another. He states that this can 'change memories along with our points of view, our principles, and our judgements' (*ibid*: 81) What this means is that while an individual's memory is always made sense of through 'places, dates, words [and] forms of language' (i*bid*: 81), these are features of the social world which are accessed through group-level interaction. It is also the case that at certain points, as a result of particular group affiliations, an individual will re-frame and re-consider some of their experiences. This assertion is particularly valuable here because it suggests that memory is constantly changing and is subject to cumulative development. This will thus have an impact on the way individuals articulate their memories at different moments in time.

Identifying the social aspects of memory is a key contribution of Halbwachs' work. However, in developing this argument he fails to acknowledge or at least properly account for the role of the individual in the remembering process. Despite the usefulness of this theory, the invisibility of the individual is now broadly seen as a considerable limitation. Many authors have sought to redress this. Connerton (1994) in particular discusses the way we as individuals make sense of experiences in the social context. He states that in all modes of experience we always base our particular experiences on a prior context; that prior to any single experience, our mind is already predisposed within a framework of outlines of typical shapes of experienced objects' (*ibid*: 6). What he describes here is how 'the world of the percipient [is] defined in terms of temporal experience' and that people rely on the past to make sense of the present. While the individual is not explicit in either work, it is possible to connect the notion of Halbwachs' and Connerton's work and suggest that group level interactions inform individual memory.

Bringing Connerton's work to bear on Halbwachs' theory of social remembering is important in providing a fuller picture of how memory works in practice. Both scholars argue that memory is a socially constructed mechanism which is key to understanding why memory changes and develops over time. While it is true that without the social element, individuals would only be able to draw on their own experiences and understandings to make sense of the world (which is inconceivable as no individuals live in a social vacuum) both authors fail to fully conceptualise the individual. In this sense it can be argued that the authors, both in their own ways, contribute to the assertion that something *beyond* the individual is a key feature of the way we evaluate and assign significance to experiences and ideas which we encounter in everyday life.

Kuhn (2002) goes some way to reintegrating the role of the individual in memory work. She states that 'telling stories about the past, our past, is a key moment in making sense of ourselves' (2002: 2-3). While the audiences will not be prompted to recall their past, the conceptualisation of a connection between 'the past' and 'our past' is a useful one. It suggests that individuals may recall the newsworthy event and their personal pasts in sync; the way individual participants see themselves will therefore impact their view of the case. In other words our sense of self which is a fluid as our perception of the social world affect our values and the ways we might perceive the case studies in the present. For example the role people undertake at home, within the family or at work, may prevail as a way of thinking about and making sense of social issues. In this instance, the relevant identity of particular group affiliations may therefore be apparent in the remembering, or perhaps be a feature of an individual's framing of a particular event, beyond information gleaned directly from news reporting.

After summing up his conceptualisation of social memory in *How Societies Remember* Connerton discusses key modes of social knowledge transmission. He goes on to describe how performative and ritual-embodied practices are as important as the textual and verbal representations that social memory often looks to, to uncover social meaning. 'Incorporating practices' as he calls them, are actions which become built-in practices; these are culturally shaped, such as shaking hands as a greeting in western culture. These are quite different to commemorative practices

which are actively performed, most often linked to longer-term social remembering which ascribes significance to particular historical events. I would agree with Connerton that both of these features are important when considering how society transmits knowledge; however, it is important to be clear about the remit of this study and as such assert that the macro-scale public responses to events, which are often thought of when discussing commemoration are not, in my opinion, relevant when considering how remembering practices feature in everyday life.

Incorporating practices can be a feature of daily life but again, this type of mnemonic practice is quite removed from active negotiation of everyday life *as per* the negotiation of high-profile news events. This is because the information is often unconsciously imparted rather than re-presented or discussed. Connerton suggests that implicit performances do tend to be overlooked as culturally important because they appear to be habitual. This, he suggests, takes for granted the extent to which some cultural behaviours have been remembered and embedded. Although this is broadly true, I would argue that because these practices are so embedded there is a limit to considering which and what bodily expressions should be explicitly identified as mnemonic practices when considering social discourse. Both language and text, are a more active expression of identity, understanding and behaviour. Because this study is interested in how remembering explicitly features in everyday discourse, Connerton's conceptualisation of ritual and commemorative practices and the wider sphere of cultural remembering is of limited relevance. Where this is relevant, it is in acknowledging that mnemonic practices are embedded within social life and that the continued embeddeness of this is a product of ongoing reiteration and reconstruction in various social contexts.

Although the act of remembering causes one to recall the past, memory scholars are not always interested in the past, and as will be discussed later, have been accused of being overtly presentist in their interests. Historians, journalists and politicians tend to be much more interested in past events, evoking the past and the lessons learned from it in an entirely different way. They tend to use our memories of the past as a way to build up an understanding of what happened and use this as a way to frame the future, Although this may suggest a more sensitive treatment of the past, such

instances are also prone to using the past purely for rhetorical purposes or ideological reasons.

Unlike many historians, Pearson's aim in writing *Hooligan* was to overcome this; in his terms - 'the all too common view that our contemporary dilemmas can be resolved by somehow bringing the past back to life' (Pearson, 1983: 243). In attempting to achieve this, he takes account of the issues mentioned above, both considering that the past can only be viewed from the vantage point of the present but also considering how the past informs the present.

His assertion that a temporal link between past and present exists is a useful one. Specifically, the idea that past cultural and social experiences are, when recalled, negotiated within the context of the present restates the cumulative nature of memory. It thus presents the view that memory is social and can only be negotiated in the present context as an undeniable fact.

This text is well respected, particularly within criminology where it continues to be held up as a key work. It highlights some important issues around youth deviance, through which he asserts that there is a temporal connectedness between past and present concerns, and that the "problem" with youth is, in this vein, not an unprecedented issue. However, there is a limit to the value of Pearson's work today. Since 1983, when the book was written, memory studies has developed as a field in its own right. This means that some of the conceptualisations he develops, particularly the conceptualisation of nostalgia, now appear quite limited. In the text nostalgia is confined to a sense of longing for the past as a reflection of the disaffection with the current time. Now, there is a wealth of scholarly work on nostalgia which seeks to overcome this monolithic account, exploring the various forms nostalgia can take, which are not necessarily negative.[11] The intention here is not to reconceptualise the use of nostalgia, rather this example indicates that the field of enquiry has developed greatly in recent years and shows how this text may now be outdated.

[11] For example, see Keightley, E. & Pickering, M. (2012) where chapters four and five in particular, focus on the concept of nostalgia.

A further example of such a concern is in the way the history of the fears and complaints in British life is conceptualised. Pearson rightly suggests that history of fears is 'long and connected' but critically I do not agree that it is a 'seamless tapestry' (*ibid*: 209). Although this may seem like ineffectual detail, there is a subtle, but important difference between these two descriptions.

Although Pearson is able, through textual examples, to map the re-emergence of particular social issues at various historical junctures, he fails to take account of any transformation of the issues at hand, particularly how we (re)negotiate social problems. He describes the problems and the ways we deal with them as seamless, but this is not realistic. In considering these so-called timeless disputes to be 'recycled', and in continuously returning to the idea of repetition throughout the text by stating that events 'periodically repeat themselves' is to suggest a reiterative stability within social change. Although embedded anxieties do have a widespread appeal, their periodic reappearance in social discourse cannot only be caused by the wheel of history which, as it turns, brings such issues back into public consciousness. Pearson is careful to deal with this, putting a caveat towards the end of the book on the idea that he is not promoting 'a "flat earth" version of history according to which nothing ever changes', yet all that comes before the caveat doesn't seem to support this (1983:207).

Identifying how entrenched the past is within the present is not a justification for the conceptualisation of social issues as repetitive. Although I accept there is an argument for the cyclical nature of social issues there is not, in my opinion, an argument for a repetitive one: contrary to the popular saying, history does not repeat itself. The conceptual framework which Pearson uses to underpin this notion is problematic. Pearson is not unaware of this and he does note that a historical approach is perhaps not sophisticated enough to identify and conceptualise the continuities and changing interpretations of the world in a meaningful way. Again, I would agree with this and argue that his conceptualisation of social issues as repetitive does not allow for differentiation between particular periods in time, resulting in a formulation that only looks at continuities, thus failing to recognise the co-presence of both change and continuity within the social world.

Jill Edy deals with this issue more fully, simply saying that 'while the future is contingent on the past it doesn't really repeat it' (Edy, 2006b: 160). Bearing in mind the twenty year gap between these two texts, it is clear that Edy is able to take account of the more nuanced understanding of temporality, memory and society that we now have. She goes on to suggest that while 'memories can … influence the ways future events are understood and managed', memory 'is always an imperfect representation of the past despite the fact that we often treat is as the equivalent of the past' (*ibid*: 2). This is a helpful clarification by Edy because it overcomes the tendency to simplify the role of the past in the present, as with Pearson's account, and does not assume that memory is necessarily accurate. Edy builds on this in *Troubled Pasts,* a book which aims to 'better understand the role of the past in public discourse' (*ibid*: vii).

The past, she suggests, should be considered as a 'pre-existing interpretive structure' (*ibid*: 148-149) which supplies meaning for interpreting current events. In developing this argument she argues that we should focus on defining the present rather than re-defining the past. This assertion is most interesting because it re-states the way the past can be useful to scholars -not to make claims about what has happened or to decide if this has any standing on the future - but to consider how the *present* is defined within a context which is historically predetermined. As such she is particularly critical of the presentist concerns of many memory scholars, this view underpinning her concern that the field of memory can offer very little to scholars who seek to understand our relationship with the past in this way. In other words, she suggests that the concern within memory studies is largely to do with how the past suits current needs, and that the role of past events and moments of particular concern in the development of current discourses are not topics of scholarly interest.

The interest in past events, how they feature in public discourse and how our collective memories of past events feature in public discourse and popular attitudes is something Edy's work shares with this study. Although the focus of her book – on controversial topics which result in contested pasts – is quite different to child crime, both her study and this seek to understand how the past is represented in public discourse. Both works also consider that the current frameworks which exist within memory studies fail to consider how the past is used in people's everyday lives as a

an approach to understanding social problems, whether this be child crime or social conflict.

In particular, Edy critiques the key concept of collective memory which she suggests is of limited use to her in addressing these questions. Collective memories according to Edy are the 'stories that everyone knows about even if they're not the stories that everyone believes'. She states that these are 'widely available in the public sphere' and take on a kind of 'common cultural currency' (Edy, 2006b: 3) in the present. This, she indicates, is more in line with what the Popular Memory Group call dominant memories than the Halbwachsian conceptualisation. As I described earlier, I think there is something to be said for highlighting the popular memory approach when trying to overcome presentism because it seeks to oppose the top-down approach which is often adopted by presentists. The popular memory group, by contrast, consider memory to be a 'construct of various traces, influences and layers' (Misztal, 2003: 64). This includes all the ways the past is reproduced, particularly in media representations. Unfortunately, a review of this branch of memory cannot be found in Edy's book. Instead, Barbara Misztal provides a short but helpful insight into the subject. She conceptualises it as being in opposition to dominant political order; as a feature of memory formation, and suggests that memory is conceived as a 'site of struggle between different voices seeking to construct versions of the past' (*ibid*: 64).

Clearly this conceptualisation speaks to the notion of contested pasts which is so central to Edy's book but perhaps is much less important when considering a topic like child crime, since this is quite singular in its reporting due to the strict moral conventions in place when reporting children. What the popular memory approach can offer however is the understanding that there are multiple contributors to memory formulation. The idea that there are various different voices suggests that they are all constructing different pasts, but even with the multitude and magnitude of mass communication, I suggest that different voices can also contribute to the same version of the past.

Edy's review of memory is in my opinion unencumbered by the tensions which are often overt within the field of memory studies. She provides a realistic if not

progressive account of how memory works in practice in the modern world. Opposed to presenting a review which is bound up in the intricacies of a particular term, she provides a conceptualisation of memory which is useful to her study, drawing on concepts of framing, the role of (multiple) narratives, the authority of the news, and the context of conflict. As such, the book is broadly helpful to the field of memory studies even though it is not fully situated within the pre-existing literature. Indeed, this limitation is somewhat surmounted by Edy's willingness to problematise her hypothesis and test it on a case study.

Here, it is helpful to return to reviewing Martin Innes' *Signal Crimes*. Unlike Edy, Innes suggests collective memory *is* a useful concept. He makes this reference in relation to thinking about the 'longer term consequences of mediated crime narratives and how they shape culture' (Innes, 2004: 21), indicating that collective memory provides a way of thinking about how particular narratives resonate over time.

Other than mentioning collective memory, the type of memory Innes draws influence from is not well defined. He indicates that a Halbwachs-inspired approach, which he suggests is focused on what collective memories do, and a second approach, which looks at how collective memories are manufactured, should be combined together. This, he suggests, will make way for an analysis which takes account of the 'situated and negotiated processes of the stories construction' (*ibid*: 20). These are seen as contributing to the understanding of particular events as part of the wider understanding of crime and criminality. Innes' general assertion that an approach which is able to consider the event within and beyond its original temporal context is critical if we are to gain a truly well-rounded view of social understanding, but his particular approach is quite limited.

Innes concedes within the text that he has somewhat simplified memory studies in considering what it can offer scholars who are interested in public understandings of crime. His engagement with the role of the media is also limited and thus his focus is almost solely on issues of production and representation rather than on reception and the audiences. Although he is clear about seeking to draw these two issues together, in practice this is rather one-sided. Furthermore, if we are to understand how

particular criminal events shape wider cultural understandings, the audience must be a key focus, something which is clearly lacking here.

More usefully, in attempting to connect these two areas of inquiry Innes does identify, to a degree, where they converge and in doing so indicates where further scholarly work should be situated. He is, it seems, the only scholar to do this, and thus has opened up a new discrete field which connects Criminology more directly to other areas of social sciences research. As a first step such assertions are clearly praiseworthy, Innes' only downfall in making more progress in this area is that he has a deep knowledge of one area – criminology- and by comparison provides only an inkling of the possibility that the other – memory- can answer these questions about society's understandings of crime.

Despite their respective limitations, Edy's and Innes's work both indicate that connecting memory with social issues, in an attempt to understand them more clearly, is theoretically interesting. Both scholars also seem to agree the past can tell us something about how people make sense of the world, but are equally engaged with issues of production rather than with considering the memories of real people and how they deal with it.

2.5.1 Media in memory studies

Flashbulb memory is potentially the only type of memory study which seeks to overcome these problems, specifically dealing with high profile, mediated problems and the public response to them. However, the theory is overtly psychological in its conceptualisation, which means there is a lack of understanding about the actual representations people engage with in order to negotiate these high-profile events. The justification provided for why these events persist is defined by various factors such as significance, proximity, emotionality etc. which are common within conceptualisations of traumatic memory and personal memory. While it is likely that the presence of such factors can help individuals assign significance to particular events, it is perhaps simplistic to assert that it is only events which connect these factors that constitute popular remembering, particularly as work has only been done

on this when these issues converge with a negative feeling rather than a positive one, for example focusing on death, terrorism, war and murder (not that this research seeks to overcome such a point).

Flashbulb memory is also pre-occupied with issues of accuracy and the instability of the details people remember. Accuracy is not central to this study or to much popular memory work; rather, the aim is to deal with what people remember and consider why this is so, not to focus on what is accurate or inaccurate. For these reasons, this study goes beyond the remit of flashbulb memory. Although being aware of the theory is useful because it shows how other memory scholars are looking into the persistence of high profile, highly mediated events, the psychological aspects of the theory which exclude the social elements, particularly a focus on communication and media, mean the theory is of little use to this project.

The mediation of memory is also emerging as a discrete aspect within the sociological area of memory studies. Barbie Zelizer is one of the key contributors to the development of this area of enquiry, connecting memory and journalism. In her 2008 article ‘Why memory's work on journalism does not reflect journalism's work on memory’ she attempts to explore the manner in which journalism is involved in the production and articulation of popular memory. With particular reference to the Kennedy assassination, she discusses the ‘shared environment’ of memory and journalism identifying that ‘accounts provided by journalists constitute an important source of information about practices, issues and events of a given time period’ (Zelizer, 2010: 358) and that these accounts influence memory making. She provides a three-fold explanation of how this process works, suggesting that media representations can necessitate, invite, or indulge memory through their form. She argues that each of these uses is deployed to evoke certain feelings. For example, ‘when form necessitates memory, journalists produce obits, rewrites and revisits to old events as typical of commemorative anniversary journalism’ (2008: 83). As mentioned earlier in the critique of Connerton’s work, conceptualisations of commemoration are not appropriate frameworks for considering how crime news persists because they draw on different notions of the past. Crime news is therefore more in line with Zelizer’s conceptualisation of how representations can indulge memory. This is where an understanding of the past is *not* essential in interpreting the

story but is used to frame it. In other words, indulging memory involves looking to the past in order to frame the wider narrative or highlight a particular aspect of the current story. For example, the story draws on discourse about missing children rather than just being about a specific child.

The framework that Zelizer sets out is useful in considering *why* the media deploy particular frameworks to deal with news stories and how news is framed in a way which presents embedded social concerns. Connecting the why and how is more often a concern for media scholars than memory scholars, thus Zelizer's ability to connect the field of memory and media in a meaningful way is valuable. Like Zelizer, the remit of this study is a discussion of the representation as a product; neither her work, nor this study, intends to answer questions about the political allegiances of a particular media outlet, or the ambitions of a particular editor. Embarking on such issues is quite separate from any concerns presented within this thesis, and as Zelizer shows, a well-rounded analysis of what the representation is saying, and why it is saying it, is achievable without considering how the industry impacts on the product.

As a key contributor to this field, Zelizer has written several other texts which are of value. Notably, her more recent work on the image (which she argues is a key feature of modern journalistic content) is notable here. The famous notion that a picture's worth a thousand words is particularly relevant to the journalistic use of images, considering the often limited space available to tell a story and the ability of images to restate the key message of the story in an impactful way. However, according to Zelizer, our understanding of news, in particular newspaper representations, have 'tended to position news images in a supportive role to words, where the verbal records underpinning journalists' authority as arbiters of the real world takes precedence over its visual counterpart' (Zelizer, 2010: 3). In this sense images are generally thought to supplement textual coverage and for this reason do not always receive the attention they perhaps deserve.

For the reader, the images which accompany textual reports are undoubtedly important. Zelizer notes that this is in part to do with imagination. Imagination, she considers, is often needed to make sense of an image, 'introducing change, relativity,

implication, and hypothesis into the act of viewing, forcing people to imagine and interpret a sequence of action beyond the pictures talking' (*ibid*: 6). It is these instances which she argues 'help people engage with the news and that is why images appeal to them' (*ibid*: 12).

Images therefore act as 'conduits of both news and memory, they draw public attention regardless of how fully they depict what viewers might know and understand' (*ibid*: 5-6) and as such contribute to the audience understanding of the topic in and over time.

It is therefore important to note how images are used in news content; to depict not only 'the core of a news story but its peripheral, symbolic and associative sides – scenes removed from those described in the text but valuable because they play to broader mind-sets about how the word works' (*ibid*: 5).

Zelizer's work on the role of the image within the mnemonic imagination is a particular example of empirical memory research, bucking a trend within the field to stick with theory. Ingrid Volkmer's edited collection *News in Public Memory* also seeks to overcome the lack of empirical work by presenting a range of studies which explore the role of the media and their connection to collective memory. The key contribution of this text is to provide empirical evidence which supports long-held suppositions about mass media representations. In particular it is suggested that 'mass media images and texts were influenced by the current prevalent social perceptions' (Meyers, 2009: 527-528). This finding gives weight to the hypothesis of this study that social understanding is a cumulative process, and that the present context has an influence on how the past is recollected. Volkmer explicitly deals with this in her assertion that the past is only perceptible through the lens of the present circumstance, identifying that the past is always subject to reconsideration over time as different layers of understanding are built up or deconstructed.

The usefulness of this book is limited because any contribution is perhaps covered more comprehensively by other authors, for example, within Van Dijk's work. Van Dijk states that 'remembrance is always embedded, meaning that the larger social context in which individuals live, stimulate memories of the past through frames

generated in the present' (Van Dijck, 2006: 358). The construction of the past in modernity is a particular concern for Van Dijck whose work is centred on the value of cultural tools as mnemonic devices as opposed to traditional vernacular performances of memory. These 'tools' or mnemonic devices, traditionally items such as albums and letters, but now more widely conceptualised to include music, media and cinema, aid the remembering process. According to Van Dijck, mnemonic devices act 'as "mediators" between individuals and collectivity' (Van Dijck, 2007: 2). Specifically she talks about this in terms of 'shoe box collections' indicating the way we invest meaning in objects - tickets, programmes, trinkets, photographs etc – in order to help secure our 'autobiographical and cultural identities' (*ibid*: 1) What this suggests is that the discursive spaces around the personal and social can come together as a result of mnemonic devices and that engaging with these tools helps us to negotiate our personal pasts within a social context. Mnemonic devices therefore allow us to situate the personal in an appropriate context. What she conceptualises here is just one area of remembering which is particularly interesting in the context of modern consumerist culture.

While interesting, Van Dijck's work is more useful to this study when considered in another regard. This is in broadly showing that memory can be ascribed even when it is not, in Zelizer's words, necessitated, indulged or invited in the form. The way these two authors talk about memory seems quite disparate, but both "types" are relevant when considering how memory functions as a way to articulate our responses to social concerns.

Zelizer considers that the news attempts to connect the past and present as a way to frame mediated experiences. By contrast Van Dijck suggests that people use objects to mediate between past and present *and* personal and collective. It is necessary here to try to build up a picture of memory as something which is both implicit and explicit, an assertion that has obvious methodological implications. In relation to this study which attempts to consider the reporting and remembering of child crime, the work of these authors seems to suggest memory is manufactured by both cultural organisations and ourselves, in both vernacular performances as well as in private recollections. They also show that it can be held in mnemonic devices. In addition to this we can see that what is remembered is built up by these representations with

these explicit connections, but what particular audiences ascribe value to is also important. In other words, how audiences ascribe value to different aspects of the past is not only in relation to the tangible object; neither is it only necessitated through texts. Rather it seems in theory, that a combination of self and social influences come together in any articulation of the past or indeed of the present, which relies, imperfectly, on re-negotiating of pieces of the past.

What this means is that memory is not just a way to negotiate the past. It is also an explicit feature of our understanding and thus references to the past are important indicators of how people make sense of social world and connect their mediated experiences within the present. Practices of memory and their connection to tangible mnemonic devices, like media, therefore must be connected to each other and reflected on by real audiences. It is the process by which this occurs, and the output of it that this study is focussed on and will help to gain a valuable insight into the way memory plays a role as an imaginative social resource in everyday life.

The value in making these connections is in building up a realistic interpretive framework that connects some of the important but disparate studies which contribute to the field of memory. The contribution of this thesis is first to connect these works and then to consider whether this works in practice when speaking with the audience. The second empirical strand is particularly important because it is only the audience who interacts with the real world, with the media and does the actual remembering outside of media contexts. From the assessment of the pre-existing literature presented here it seems that no one has sought to bring these features together – in doing so is the contribution of this thesis.

2.6 Conclusion

What this review has shown is that children are newsworthy, deviance is newsworthy, and together these issues often cause public responses which range from fear to hysteria. Despite this understanding, it is clear that much of the media studies work on crime is limited because production issues and the intricacies of textual representation tend to be considered more important or interesting than the topic of

the representation. Thus crime, when it is addressed, becomes generalised rather than a key area of enquiry. Criminologists in general have been less inclined to look at mediated crime or crime as feature of popular culture at all. Work by authors such as Altheide and Garland are the exceptions here and in this regard must be praised for paving the way for more research on the interaction between crime and the media.

Where literature exists that identifies the newsworthiness of child-related crime and the public response to it, few studies connect these two areas by taking account of the processes of representation *and* reception. Even less common are studies which pay attention to the temporal dimensions of crime news and the relevance of its ideological roots. I would also go so far as to suggest that no other study has taken these issues and considered how they relate to memory both in terms of the temporal connectivity between occurrences of child crime and also how this contributes to collective understandings of children and crime.

It is possible that the reason for this is that memory studies, as an emergent field, has yet to connect itself fully with criminology as an interdisciplinary partner. Given the common interest in troubled pasts, conflict and trauma this is perhaps surprising. It is also all the more essential that such connections begin to be made in an attempt to reconsider and develop our current understanding of the persistence of crime as a particular feature of popular culture.

The review of memory studies, in particular its connection to social issues, is thus a particularly important area of this review. To define what memory is and make connections across and beyond the field, taking it from an often enigmatic feature of everyday life and turning it into a tangible and useful concept which has real meaning for scholars should be useful beyond the remit of this study. Connecting memory to other areas of inquiry such as criminology and promoting an interdisciplinary approach should also help to increase the recognition of the field of memory studies as a valuable area of scholarship, to which I hope this thesis will also contribute. It is clear however, that an equal amount of focus within memory studies on drawing connections and clarifying definitions is needed. At present memory studies is particularly difficult to break into for those who have no grounding in it; the lack of consensus and the difficulty in conducting empirical research unfortunately means

that theories of memory become easily diluted and misused. While this study seeks to promote the topic of memory, much in the way Innes' has done, it also seeks to make it possible for others to appreciate the value of the concept. While one cannot simply simplify what is complex, it is appropriate that the problems, in memory studies, should be more readily addressed.

It has been the intention of this review to consider how the event, the mediation and the remembering come together. It can be concluded that the way we think about the world is not only based on the most recent information about an event but also based on the transmission of norms, values and symbols which transcend the media events of the day. The media is thus an ongoing source of information re-presenting discursive frames and historical narratives and therefore contributing to the construction of child crime over time. Popular understandings, specifically of childhood and criminality, are therefore modern articulations of historically embedded concerns identifying a temporal connectedness between events and how we ultimately come to understand them. To understand how criminal events are defined and utilised both in and over time, we must consider not only the role of the representation but also the activity of the audience and the reception process. It is therefore the aim of the following chapters of this thesis to undertake such an approach and to provide some empirical evidence that such an approach is a valuable one.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The methodological frameworks used and choices made in carrying out this research will be outlined and justified in this chapter. First and foremost, the case study approach is outlined and its value considered. Following on from this a detailed account of the mixed-methods used to gather and analyse the two data sets, which make up much of the analysis in Chapters Four to Seven, is given. This will begin with a discussion of the approach to sampling the newspaper representations of the cases which make up the textual data and is followed by a discussion of the analytical approach to the interview data.

First, it is important to note that crime, as an important feature of society, can be researched and conceptualised from a variety of theoretical viewpoints. Indeed the more specialised analytical strategies become, the more isolated our work can become from the rest of the research community. This research attempts to redress this by taking a more holistic multi-methodological approach to understanding the ways in which child crimes as high-profile news events are understood by audiences.

There has been a call, by Jock Young (2011) amongst others, to 'return to criminology's creative and critical potential', he suggests that re-hinging cultural criminology to its sociological roots is one way of achieving this. This call is as important to the epistemological aims of the research, as it is to the methodological ones. The methodological choices set out are thus inspired by a desire to understand crime within a framework of cultural development; to 'give ample room to contradictions and doubts' (van Swaaningen, 2014: 365); to interpret 'people's motives and the way they give meaning to what they are doing' (*ibid.*); and ultimately to bring criminological research back to the heart of sociology' (*ibid*: 358).

Such aims lend themselves to a toolbox approach, which allows the researcher to make decisions about the value of various methods and then bring them together in a way which is most useful.

Being open to the possibility of what each conceptual framework, and the methodologies common within different academic fields, can bring to bear on a study of iconic child crime is central, but academic rigour must still prevail. While some novel methodological approaches, such as the use of (photo) elicitation have been used, this has been balanced by tried and tested methods, such as textual analysis which bring a solid and reliable framework upon which further analysis is situated.

The chosen methods, of which there are several, have therefore been selected for several reasons. Firstly because they stay true to the central theoretical aims of the study; this is to connect the sociological fields of communication and media studies and cultural criminology in a meaningful way. Second is to do this in terms that assigns equal value to the aims and priorities of each area of research and finally to a range of balanced methods, which will garner credible data and provide useful insights in to the ways that some high profile crimes against children are seen to prevail in popular culture.

3.2 A case study approach.

In their book of the same name Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg (1991) seek to make *A Case for the Case Study*. They suggest that in the Social Sciences it has become unfashionable to use case studies as a methodological resource but insist that the approach has value. Primarily, they identify that as a 'way of making a serious investigation of some mystery about the social world' the case study is a useful and practical approach for researchers (*ibid*: 2). They cite several reasons; it is an economical way to research a social phenomenon because it 'relies on the use of several sources'; it makes use of 'both qualitative and quantitative methods: it is 'in depth' (*ibid*.). Clearly such principles suit the aims of much social sciences research which is often related to understanding complex social phenomenon's or groups of people which cannot be so easily divided into separate categories for the purposes of research. According to the authors, a case study approach also lends itself to research which seeks to gather 'information from a number of sources and over a period of time, thus permitting a more holistic study of complex social networks and of

complexes of social action and social meaning' (*ibid*: 6). I concluded from this that the topic and aims of this research lend themselves to a case study approach.

However, child crime is much too broad a category to think of as a single case study and as such a more considered approach to using a case study methodology was considered. The result was to systematically narrow the remit of the case study of an iconic child crime and then to select specific case studies, which are representative of iconic child related crimes and from which key concerns and issues about the larger topic of iconic child crime can be drawn.

A high degree of selectivity was ultimately required in order to identify case studies that were manageable within the time and resource restraints of this project. Although ultimately this level of selection was undertaken for pragmatic rather than purely academic reasons, the process of continually reasserting the central concerns of the research of the project in the process of selection lent itself to crystallising the aims and objectives of the study, ensuring they remained central to any research decisions.

In the first instance the process of narrowing was thus considered with the other aims of the study in mind: to look into the changes and continuities in the memory, reporting and broader understandings of iconic child crimes. The principles for inclusion that follow were thus developed to ensure that to the greatest possible extent the case studies would be a likely feature of a cultural life for any citizen. As such each case study must:

- Be UK based, being more likely to feature in British newspaper reporting.
- Have occurred in the last 6 decades, the approximate time of living memory.

These essential criteria are very broad and so by including these, a significant number of applicable and suitable case studies were still apparent. It therefore became important to identify more specifically what "iconic child-related crime" is, and what specifically it meant to this project. Representing the breadth of issues under the umbrella 'child related crime' is again too broad. Narrowing this was ultimately achieved by identifying another key factor beyond childhood and crime: a case's newsworthiness and memorability.

Jewkes (2004) identifies, several key 'news values for a new millennium' (*ibid*: 40) within which she states that crimes which converge childhood and violence are often considered to be newsworthy. From this it was hypothesised that serious crime which included a degree of violence, that also converged childhood, should be considered as criteria for the case studies. Again, serious violent crime was too broad a category and as such child murder was identified as a feature that would, in all cases, converge childhood, violence and crime, constituting a viable case study.

The identification of murder as an essential characteristic of the cases studies is important, not only because it limits the overall amount of possible case studies; it also gave each case study some consistency. For example, each case would have a timeline which included finding a body, thus enabling comparative work. Cases like Madeleine McCann, which are unsolved or the Baby P abuse, whose perpetrators were convicted under section 5 of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims act 2004, rather than for murder, would not be suitable case studies despite their recent newsworthiness. Serial murder was also excluded on the basis that this would add an additional complexity to the study; each additional victim would add more variables to the study and in most cases not all victims of serial killers are equally well known. In addition to this, serial murder often occurs over a period of time, which would complicate, rather than simplify and already complex topic. In light of these factors interviews would also be lengthier as there would be more content to discuss and thus practical considerations also influenced the exclusion of this set of crimes.

Overall the inclusion of violence, and the further delineation of murder, was useful because it limited the number of possible cases. More importantly Jewkes' news values can in many cases be co-present, as such the inclusion of this characteristic did not rule out other factors such as such sex or celebrity, which are also deemed to have high levels of media interest. Although the process of selection does intend to limit the possibilities, staying true to a case study approach also rejects the idea of dividing social phenomenon into arbitrary categories solely for the purpose of research.

It was clear that a high degree of selection had occurred in the initial stages of the research design. As such it was concluded that a transparent process of selection should be used to identify the final case studies. A short questionnaire was developed

with the objective of surveying the public. Respondents would be able to choose which crimes were known to them, from a list which met the aforementioned criteria, thus balancing the more selective approach which had been undertaken yet.

The names of the victims who met the criteria were collated in the form of a questionnaire, available online and in paper format. In the first instance, members of the public were asked to identify which names they had heard of from that list. The list consisted of 15 names all of which were persons under the age of 18 murdered in the UK since 1960.

The survey was successful, identifying by a clear majority three cases which the respondents indicated they had heard of. These were the murders of James Bulger, Milly Dowler and Sarah Payne. These crimes have arguably received greater amounts of media attention and thus fit with the hypothesis that there would be some link between levels of mediation and initial remembering. In the second part of the survey respondents were asked to rank just 3 names, from the same list they recognised, that they recognised most and to give reasons for this. It was clear from this more qualitative data that the results were skewed as a result of the media attention the Milly Dowler case had been receiving at the time in relation to the phone hacking scandal. 13 out of 29 people who listed Milly Dowler in the top 3 identified the recent re-emergence of the case, or more specifically the phone hacking scandal, as a reason they remembered it. Although this research acknowledges a link between high levels of reporting and the remembering of a case it considers that this is not the most important feature in creating iconicity. On this basis Milly Dowler was not considered to be a viable case study because both the reporting and memories of it are entangled with the ongoing revelations related to phone hacking. The possibility of isolating the accounts solely linked to the reporting of the murder of Milly Dowler, would as a result, be very difficult. As such two crimes were to be used as the case studies; the murder of James Bulger and the murder of Sarah Payne. Although Sarah was third most popular in the survey, it was still the case that 94% of people indicated they had heard of Sarah. This was significantly more than any other of the names listed thus constituting a reliable case study.

An upshot of this combination is that the study can examine the child as both victim (in both cases) and perpetrator (in the James Bulger case) which allows an investigation of broader discourses around children, criminality and childhood. It is happily the case that both sides of the child, so to speak, are represented in these case studies.

3.3 Contextualising the case studies.

As stated in the previous chapter, the unique contribution of this research is to consider how a highly mediated event becomes part of public memory and is able to act as an imaginative resource and become a popularised symbol of social concern. This is achieved by looking at the mediation of that event and the remembering of that event as key processes which contribute to public memory. The aforementioned murders, or the case studies, as they will now be referred to, provide the context for the analysis in the forthcoming chapters. They are outlined in turn in the following section.

3.3.1 Case 1 – James Bulger.

On 12 February 1993 two-year-old James Bulger went missing while out shopping with his mother in Bootle's Strand Shopping Centre. He was led away from the Liverpool shopping centre while his mother (Denise Bulger) was in a nearby butchers shop. His abductors went on to brutally attack him, leaving the toddler with severe bodily injuries. They left James on the train tracks where the assault took place where his body was hit by a train. His remains were discovered on the railway line 2 days later.

A picture of James Bulger being led away by his abductors was captured on the shopping centre CCTV. This image, which was to become one of the most infamous images of the case, identified that the perpetrators were not adults, but two young

children. It was through the use of this clip on Crimewatch,[12] on 18 February, 1993 that the true horror of the CCTV came to light. The perpetrators were identified as a direct result of this showing and on 20 February 1993 two local boys were arrested. The arrest of Child A and Child B, as they were known until the culmination of trial, caused outrage in and beyond Liverpool. Locally crowds collected, chanting and charging at the police vehicles holding the boys; nationally a debate about the state of British society was sparked, leading the Prime Minister John Major to say 'we must condemn a little more, and understand a little less' (*BBC*, 1998).

In November 1993 Child A and Child B were convicted of the murder of James Bulger. Once the trial had ceased, the boys were named by the trial judge Mr Justice Morland who said they had committed an 'act of unparalleled evil and barbarity' (Cole, 2006: 125). The boys, Robert Thompson and John Venables, were sentenced two months later, their term set at 8 years during which they would reside in secure youth accommodation. Some months later, the then Home Secretary, Michael Howard amended the sentence to 15 years as a result of public pressure in the form of a petition for a longer sentence which was presented to him by the parents of James Bulger. This was in part the result of a campaign run by *The Sun* which encouraged readers to send off a coupon printed in the newspaper to the Home Secretary to compel him to raise the tariff. Further controversy was generated several years later when the European Court of Human Rights said in December, 1999 that Thompson and Venables had not received a fair trial as they were tried as adults when they were 10 years old, a fact which contravened the rule of *Doli Incapax*.[13] The court also said that the Home Secretary had acted illegally in changing their tariff, which was reverted to the original 8 year term (Rozenburg, 1993).

In June 2001, Thompson and Venables were given new, secret identities and released on life licence.[14] Speculation about the identities and whereabouts of the

[12] *Crimewatch* is a national TV show which seeks to promote unsolved crimes and bring their perpetrators to justice.

[13] The rule of *Doli Incapax* is concerned with the age of criminal responsibility. It assumes that children under 14 are 'incapable of crime' (Bandalli, 1998: 114). This means that the prosecution must prove 'by clear and positive evidence that when that act, the child knew what he or she was doing was seriously wrong' (Bandalli, 1998:114). The case against Venables and Thompson was found to be in contravention of this act.

[14] Life license is a particularly strict condition of parole. It means that an offender can be recalled to prison at any time, for the rest of their life, if they contravene the terms of their release. In addition to

boys, now in their thirty's, cannot be published in the media for fear of public retribution. Indeed when Venables alerted the authorities to the fact his identity may have been discovered in March 2010, police were sent to his home to protect him due to concerns about vigilante revenge attacks. As a consequence of this cry for help officers became suspicious- he was acting erratically and trying to damage the hard drive of his computer. His re-arrest on suspicion of 'serious offences' was immediately taken up by news outlets sparking debate about the success of the rehabilitation of Bulger's killers. There was speculation that Venables re-arrest related to sex offences against children and subsequently it was reported that he had been arrested on the charge of downloading indecent images of children at his home in Cheshire and as a result had been sentenced to two years imprisonment. It is thought Venables has now been released from prison. The whereabouts of Robert Thompson is not known.

3.3.2 Case 2 - Sarah Payne.

At 7.45pm on 1 July 2000, eight-year-old Sarah Payne disappeared after leaving a field in Kingston Gorse, near Worthing in West Sussex. She had been playing with her two older brothers and younger sister after an outing to the beach, which the children had taken with their parents and paternal grandparents. The children had been playing a game when Sarah had become upset and decided to leave. Her brothers ran after her but had been slow to catch her up as the youngest sibling, Charlotte aged four at the time of Sarah's disappearance had hurt herself. Sarah was not seen alive again. One of the brothers did however see a white van on the road she had gone onto. Sixteen days followed where Sarah's whereabouts were unknown, her family gave press conferences and did interviews to reach out to Sarah and to her abductor in the hope of finding her alive. During this period it was widely publicised that two girls, who had recently gone missing in the area, had been discovered alive and well (Hall, 2000, 4). However, on 17 July 2000, a farmhand discovered her body some twelve miles away from Kingston Gorse. It was not immediately clear that the body was Sarah; it had to be identified by forensic tests most likely because it had

---

the usual conditions, in this case the terms included not going back to Liverpool or committing any further crimes.

been mauled by animals or had rapidly decomposed due to its placement in a deeply rural area north of Pulborough.

Several months passed but no-one was charged with Sarah's murder. A *Crimewatch* appeal in November, 2000 sought to change this. The appeal resulted in a terrific response from callers but no new, hard evidence emerged. At the time of her disappearance police had interviewed several men, one in particular whom they believed to be a prime suspect and arrested. Unfortunately, they had no evidence with which to hold him on and he was released. Although the *Crimewatch* appeal didn't garner any direct evidence, several callers named Roy Whiting, the police's prime suspect, a local man who had already served time for abducting a little girl. At the time of the appeal his name was not publicly known, nor as it would later be revealed, that he was a police suspect.

The police had and continued to be suspicious of Whiting because had not been forthcoming during the police questioning, had failed to empathise with the concern for a missing child and had contradicted his own alibi. Earlier in 2000 between Sarah's disappearance and the *Crimewatch* appeal Whiting committed a driving offence and was imprisoned. This meant that as soon as police had enough evidence he was arrested for Sarah's murder whilst already detained on another charge.

The trial of Sarah's killer was held over November and December, 2001. Much evidence for this trial was given by members of the public, for example a woman who had seen a child's shoe whilst walking her dog and taken it to the police – it was Sarah's shoe. Likewise, a TV viewer recognised the curtain found in Whiting's van and remembered she had left it in her ex-boyfriend's white van before the vehicle was sold - it proved that Sarah had almost certainly been in Whiting's van. This, together with other fibres, and one of Sarah's hairs on Whiting's sweatshirt, made the forensic case compelling. However, the coroner was not able to say if Sarah had been sexually assaulted; it was however suggested that the nature of the crime and the fact she was found naked was likely to have been sexual motivated.

On 21 December 2001 Roy Whiting was found guilty of the abduction and murder of Sarah Payne and sentenced to life imprisonment. The minimum tariff of 50 years has,

as of November 2010 been lowered to 40 years, meaning Whiting will be considered for parole when he is 80 years old.

3.4 Sampling textual data

A key feature of this study is the construction of an account of the media coverage of the case studies. Various methods were used to achieve this. First, a broad and basic content analysis was conducted on a cross section of national media coverage of the aforementioned case studies. The aim of this analysis was to broadly map the volume of coverage over the life cycle of the case study. The result of this was a map of the peaks and troughs in the reporting of the cases over time. There were several peaks for each case study. These are of particular interest because they highlight at what point in the lifecycle of the case, the reporting was at its highest. It is assumed that because the peaks represent high levels of media coverage they also represent key moments of public interest and important events in the narrative of the case. As such, it is these key moments that inform the sample for the qualitative textual analysis. An account of this follows, but first the process by which peaks were mapped is outlined.

This data was collected using *Lexis Nexis*. Using this database various newspaper titles can be concurrently searched. The titles searched in this instance were *The Daily Mail*, *The Mirror*, *The Guardian* and *The Times*. These were chosen in order to achieve as broad a possible purview of the media landscape, each title having varying political views and representing a different target audience. *The Daily Mail* has a wide appeal, representing broadly right wing, populist views, and has a broad and large daily readership. *The Mirror* is to the left of *The Daily Mail*, it arguably appeals to a less broad subsection of the populace as it is aimed at a traditional working class tabloid readership. *The Guardian* is also left wing, but is not bound by such views. It is thus a modern broadsheet, focused on news and quality journalism rather than on typical tabloid subjects or on disseminating its own entrenched political concerns. *The Times* is similar to *The Guardian* in its desire to publish quality news and as a highly political publication, does this within the right wing views of its editorial board and readership.

The search terms consisted of the name of the victim and the name of the perpetrator. These terms were searched for 'in the headline, lead paragraph or indexing'[15] of the aforementioned titles. In *Lexis Nexis* this set of search texts is called "Major Mentions".[16] The argument for using major mentions in this scenario is that while it is purposefully broad, it does not capture every single occurrence of the search term. It is presumed that this method, will only present articles which are actually about the case, discarding those that mention the search terms in the body of the text but are not necessarily about the case *per se*. The aim is to achieve a broad but accurate survey of the media landscape.

However, there are particular limitations of using so called 'push button' (Deacon, 2007:7) analysis, like *Lexis Nexis* because of the dependence on a key word search which can generate an in perfect picture of the subject you are investigating. Deacon's review of the 'methodological implications of using digital newspaper archives for analysis of media content' (Deacon, 2007: 5) considers this issue alongside other concerns such as access and information retrieval, to make an assessment of the value of digital content analysis. He concludes that the validity and reliability of data compiled via this method must be carefully considered. I have noted with caution this assessment and consider that for the purposes of this study using digital content via *Lexis Nexis* is appropriate. False positives, another common problem with this method, were manually identified when the data was input for analysis. This is a practical strategy and allowed data inconsistencies to be overcome.

One search on *Lexis Nexis* for each case garnered the data required to 'diagnose' the peaks which would come to constitute the period of interest for qualitative textual analysis.[17] Each graph shows the peaks and troughs in the reporting over time; the duration in each instance being the period between the date of the crime and December 2010, the start date of the data collection process. As expected each peak could easily be matched to an event in the lifecycle of the case. The two highest

[15] This definition is taken from the search tips within the *Lexis Nexis* database.This can be found online http://help.lexisnexis.com/tabula-rasa/rosetta/news_companies_searchtips-field?lbu=GB&locale=en_GB&audience=business [accessed 03/ 12/ 12].

[16] It should be noted that this is not wholly objective for the indexing is not set by the author of the piece, but presumably by those who transcribe the reports.

[17] The results are best displayed visually. These can be seen in appendix I on page 242.

peaks in each case in addition to the initial moment of reporting were chosen for further analysis.[18]

3.4.1 The qualitative sample

The process of identifying the peaks (and troughs) was clearly helpful in terms of objectively identifying key periods of interest, but in order to conduct a thorough qualitative textual analysis a smaller sample of key news texts was required.

As such, the sample was first limited in terms of the number of titles; two of the four titles included in the quantitative analysis were discarded. As such one broadsheet and one tabloid was considered adequate; *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* matched these needs most fully. Although these titles are not politically polarised they are not Political with a capital 'P' in the sense that their ideology is central to their coverage. These titles had the biggest volume of articles related to the case studies, which suggested a wide pool from which to select the articles for the forthcoming textual analysis. Clearly no *News Corp* title is included in this sample. Titles owned by this company have been very vocal about ensuring justice for the families of both James Bulger[19] and Sarah Payne[20] and although this may have helped to form the narrative conventions of these cases, which I come to describe in the following chapters, titles which were involved in any way in campaigning about the case study crimes were deemed to biased. This is both in terms of the number of articles and the content within them, which is entangled with other issues and occurrences. This entanglement is problematic because it cannot be considered to be representative of the overall coverage. This is for the very reason that rather than solely reporting the

[18] The reasoning for the peaks is analytical rather than practical and is thus dealt with in more detail in the following chapter.

[19] 'A petition, signed by some 278,300 members of the public (with some 4,400 letters in support) urging that the two boys should remain in detention for life; a petition, signed by nearly 6,000 members of the public, asking for a minimum period of detention of 25 years; and over 20,000 coupons, cut out of a popular newspaper, together with over 1,000 letters, demanding a life tariff'. This extract and an fuller account of the public reaction to the sentencing of Venables and Thompson can be read in R v. Secretary of State for the Home Department, [1997] Ex parte V. and Same v. Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte T per Lord Steyn.

[20] A 'Name and Shame' campaign, lead by then editor, Rebekah Wade was carried out in *News Of The World* campaign. For an assessment of the campaign see *The Independent* (2000) 'The Name and Shame Game' 25 July [online] http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/the-name-of-the-shame-game-707417.html [accessed 24/09/14].

events in question, the reporting clearly seeks to proliferate a particular opinion and through the consolidation of political pressure to make legal changes. In saying this it should be noted that it is not the intention of this study to consider the ideology or editorial concerns of a particular newspaper or group, however where this is important it will be drawn on in addition to results garnered through the analytical process.

Again, for the purposes of condensing the data in to a more appropriately sized sample for qualitative analysis the peak was defined as a month of reporting over the event that defined it.[21] This amount of reporting within a whole month was too big to be considered in a qualitative sample, but was appropriately broad for an account which attended to variety in the reporting of the crime and thus a strategy for reducing the sample, whilst retaining this breadth of reporting was developed. To identify a more discrete time period within the peak, such as a day or a week from which to take the representations, was not considered to be appropriate, as this would artificially limit the sample to and thus dilute the aim of comprehensive in-depth analysis.

In order to carry out this task most effectively the case studies were dealt with separately. An inductive process of reading and manually selecting reporting ensued. This was always based around key events in the peaks although other factors such as the inclusion of images were also considered, in order to develop a truthful and rich data set. Although there were no formal qualifying criteria, particularly short articles were generally disregarded for the simple and perfunctory nature of the narrative, which is not conducive to textual analysis.

Conversely, the inclusion of images, was recognised as a dynamic feature of the reporting and something which should, where relevant, be included in the final sample. Headlines and intertextuality were not given any particular weight although naturally where interesting language or affective formatting was used this was identified and considered. Ultimately however, the whole sample had to work together, providing a substantive cross section of reporting of the case study across

[21] A calendar month would also have provided a definite amount of data, but was considered to be an arbitrarily inflexible time period and thus a four week period was deemed more logical.

time and so the main inclusion for criteria was centrality to the emerging narrative and the articles' merit in producing a text rich enough to warrant further analysis.

The Sarah Payne case had key moments clearly identifiable within each peak. This suggested an apparent before and after model. For example, before and after the body of Sarah Payne is discovered, and before and after the verdict. The sample, thus captured for analysis, the event itself and the time around it which is a good model to ensure a fair and consistent analysis because it is bound to a tangible succession of moments. This very clear pattern of reporting was visible in both the tabloid and broadsheet reporting of this crime, which to a greater degree, allows for simple comparisons to be made and from which an in-depth analysis could be built. Ultimately the analysis presented in the forthcoming four chapters, is based on 8 different articles; four broadsheet, four tabloid[22] which represent the peaks of interest.

In the James Bulger case this method was not effective because the before and after scenarios were not so readily apparent. This is because much more seemed to happen in the sample month. For example, in the initial peak when the case broke, like in the Sarah Payne case the reporting focused on when the body was found, but the time leading up to and particularly after this event the reporting in the Bulger case was also punctuated but reports on the relatively young age of the killers and on how the city of Liverpool was coping with the tragedy. As such the before and after scenario was not able to capture the way this event was reporting. Clusters of reporting seemed to be a more true reflection of the reporting in this case. Each cluster of reporting presented is made up of tabloid and broadsheet coverage, but rather than focusing on a single event, what happened before and after, this model attempts to illustrate the various news topics being reported around the Bulger case at any one time. Due to the amount of different stories being told about the case in which the ongoing narrative about James Bulger appeared to be hinged, this sample was made up of more articles.

Clearly this "system" is not a neat one, and the mode of sampling does not overcome issues of selectivity, such as researcher bias. However, given the complexity of these cases it seems to be the most appropriate method of selection; a more deductive

[22] A list of the reports which make up the sample can be found on pages 223-225.

approach would have surely failed by not allowing for the discrepancies and idiosyncrasies present in the news and in each case study to be identified, somewhat missing the mark in terms of identifying the key frameworks but also by missing or disregarding the less obvious features of news reporting.

3.5 Textual analysis

Using the data contained in the peaks and clusters of reporting identified, an in-depth textual analysis was undertaken. Deacon, Pickering et al (2007) consider that the method of textual analysis is particularly useful for 'discerning patterns of meaning and linking a given text to the wider use of language and discourse' (*ibid*:189). Analysis of the media texts, in this study, was intended to uncover the discursive strategies used in the news reporting and thus textual analysis was deemed an appropriate method.

Textual analysis covers a range of specific approaches, which is in line with the mixed methods approach undertaken here. More specifically this includes semiotic analysis, a method which attempts to deconstruct the language used in the text.[23] In this case such an approach will highlight the signs and codes which denote or connote particular meanings in the various media texts in the sample. This methodology provides a way of identifying the range of meanings and values available in a text, often culturally embedded ones, such as how motherhood and gender affect the way we understand the representations we consume. Similarly, critical discourse analysis provides a framework for similar in-depth study but is more focused on the context of the report- how it represents social structure, beliefs and ideology for example - or perhaps more appropriately for the topics discussed here, how it de-legitimises particular beliefs and behaviours and how this connects to what we view, accept, and understand to be features of the social world.

Rather than focusing on *what* the event being reported is, these methods take account of *how* the event is being constructed. The language of a text, even a simple headline,

[23] For an overview of the value of semiotic analysis relevant to media studies see Deacon, Pickering et al (2007).

can thus be used to unpick the ways that the process of "othering" for example, is achieved. The idea is to use the context of the newspaper report to consider the ways in which the crime and actors are discursively constructed. By unpacking the news story in this way, key events in the trajectory of the case studies and subtle changes in the way it is reported within the peak time periods can be identified and analytically considered.

3.6 Interviews

In memory studies and in media studies a range of different methods are employed to gather the accounts of a research participant. For example, oral histories are common in memory studies and in some case focus groups are an appropriate methodological tool for audience research in media studies. Here these methods may also be useful, particularly focus groups, which have the potential to elucidate the connections and disconnections in the remembering of a group of people who are interacting and discussing the topic of child crime.

In the process of considering the appropriate methods for this study focus groups were piloted, but the success of this method was limited to the extent that it was deemed an ineffectual method. The focus groups piloted were mixed in terms of sex and age, which, as will become clear in the following chapters, are frames of memory. The dynamics of a focus group therefore forced the participants to negotiate the significance of these frames rather than to present an autonomous account as is possible in an interview. The dominant members of the group were often those who had direct memories of the case study crimes. As such they were able to present their autonomous account which distorted the accounts of the rest of the group.

This is a deeply problematic given the aims of this project as it prevents audience members from presenting their own account; a method which fosters open interactions but is not in a group setting would therefore be preferable. For these reasons interviews are a more useful tool. They can help in the investigation of the reception process, particularly in considering the value of representations of crime as

on-going imaginative resources for audiences around which they can structure their remembering. The narratives which form in the process of interviews also illuminate individuals' understandings of, or concerns related to a topic. In this study, the audience accounts are requires to act as a useful partner to the textual analysis and through this method, important features of the case that may, and also may not, be apparent in the textual analysis, can be seen.

In order to allow the interviewee to freely give their views and not, at least initially, to be restrained by the reporting keeping the interview as unstructured as possible was considered to be the most effective strategy. The interviews were thus semi-structured, to allow for tangential issues, personal stories and unanticipated tangents, but also to keep the discussion focussed on the topic of the two cases and child crime more broadly.[24] The interviews were intended to be one-to-one, but the nature of interviewing in a relaxed atmosphere meant the interview often took place in the family home. As such there were some inevitable interruptions; phone calls, misbehaving animals, doing chores, or instructing others to do so. In many cases such a busy, unrestricted environment would not be a suitable location for interviews within which people were elicited to share their personal views, thoughts and feelings. However, in this instance, I do not believe the family environment detrimentally affected the efficacy of interviews. Given that the approach here is meant to be informal, the intrusions of everyday life are inevitable and have the potential to add to a relaxed environment in which communication between interviewer and interviewee can flow. This is borne out by the fact the data collected was rich in depth and detail.

It seems that interviews conducted in the home, serve to change the power dynamic of the interview somewhat, putting the interviewer, usually the dominant person, into a more passive position by making them a guest and the interviewee, the host. The impetus is on the host to choose a space they feel is appropriate which puts them "in charge". In many cases, the interviews took place in common spaces, in a conservatory, lounge or at the breakfast table. These are not neutral spaces they are

[24] See Bryman for a practical account of interviewing in qualitative research. Of particular relevance is his case for a flexible approach to interviewing, and his account of feminist researchers using interview in a way which creates 'rapport between interviewer and interviewee' and a 'non-hierarchical relationship' (2008: 492)

bound up in the life of the family; the photograph on the sideboard, the calendar on the wall; these are all reminders of day to day and family life. In this sense, conducting an interview in a comfortable and personal setting, may lead participants to be more likely to make personal connections rather than less likely, as might be considered.

This also underpinned the decision to use elicitation through photos and newspaper articles, to trigger remembering and to focus the interviewee's narrative within the usual interview format. It was posited above, that this technique could be used to break down the interviewer/ interviewee boundary, in order that a conversation about the materials could develop more naturally rather than having to rely on pre-formed questions to manage the interview process. This was in line with Harper's (2002) assessment of the method; that photo elicitation 'evokes a different kind of information' (*ibid*: 13); one that is conducive to connecting 'core definitions of the self to society, culture and history' (*ibid.*). Furthermore, it is suggested that 'pictures elicited longer and more comprehensive interviews, but at the same time helped subjects to overcome the fatigue and repetition of conventional interviews' (*ibid*:14). Understanding that the case studies were complex and that interviews had the potential to be lengthy, photo elicitation was thus deemed a useful technique and fitted tightly with both the conceptual and methodological approach of the project. Given the media focus of the project two newspaper articles were also chosen to supplement the photos which were of the central actors in each case study; the respective victims and perpetrators. The images were taken from newspaper reporting, but were cropped in order that they were purely photographic. The reason for this is that elicitation for non-photographic materials is somewhat untested. The reliance on images is a key part of the technique, the information they elicit reliably described. However, the assertion by Harper, that 'the key element is not the form of the visual representation but its relationship to the culture under study' (Harper, 2002: 19) was intriguing and encouraged me to a consider newspaper elicitation.

Newspaper reports are not only formed of a written narrative but are textually dynamic, combining photographs, images, words, captions and headlines in a way which is often visually appeal. The method had mixed results. Two newspaper

articles[25] with images, along with the photographs were shown interchangeably to each participant.[26] It seems that the success of the method was based on the level of knowledge the interviewee had about the case. Those who had limited knowledge used the elicitation in a different way, prompting them to ask questions about the content whereas those who knew more were in most cases able to use the representations to reflect on how this compared to their understanding of the case. In some respects, this could be said to have skewed the data as participants varied in their ability to reflect on the newspaper representations, which were after all meant to elicit data about the case studies from participants. However, I argue that this actually provides clear distinctions between the interviewees, especially in how they talk about their own experiences. This in turn allows for analytical contrasts in their accounts to be drawn out. This method has clearly elicited unexpected kinds of data, but this perhaps underpins the value of interviews within a memory approach; it is not the accuracy of the narrative that is important, rather the interview is a context which provides participants with an open framework to consider and renegotiate their memories in the present, investing and constructing meaning in their dynamic inter-crossings between past and present.

Through remembering the cases, with or without the elicitation, the interview data provides an insight into the network of cultural references that are used by audiences to make sense of the world around them. The ways in which participants make connections between themselves and the cases show both how they bring their personal experiences to bear on the cases *and* how the cases are used as an imaginative resource for examining their own personal experience. These reflections occur in the present but draw on the past to make sense of the cases studies, crime more generally, and the experience of family and childhood in modern society. It is therefore the case that the interview is an appropriate and valuable technique, as no other method is as suited to providing such personal and yet focussed data.

[25] The newspaper reports used are indicated in bold within the list of primary sources on page 223 - 224.

[26] Although there was no order in which the materials were shown to the participant, it was the case that all participants saw all materials. This was thought to be balanced across all interviews as a sample, but also sympathetic to the direction and dynamic of the interview while in session.

3.7 Reflecting on the method

It is important to reflect on the challenges of these methods, the value of using them, particularly a memory approach, and then to evaluate whether it has been successfully applied. This is especially important within the remit of this study for the approach is a novel way of understanding crime and media. It has not been previously brought to bear on these topics to investigate and make links between the reporting, reception and long term resonance of highly mediated crimes. The value of the memory approach is thus in its ability to provide a framework within which such an investigation is possible, and to provide a temporally sensitive model for re-hinging the reporting and reception processes.

The temporal focus memory brings to the project is especially pertinent because of the a-temporality of the moral panic model which looks only at single moments of panic and fails to contextualise these within the wider socio-political world. It is the aim of this project to provide a nuanced, longitudinal account of the case studies and how they have transcended their initial moment of reception to become imaginative resources in the long term; such objectives are reliant on a temporally sensitive model.

However, this approach is not without its challenges. It certainly overcomes the presentist investigation of media representation, which is a key aim of the study, but the approach is inductive and relies heavily on the role of the researcher, not only in terms of the collecting the memories but also in making sense of them. However, the same is true of any qualitative method and is thus an acknowledged and accepted feature of this research and a known risk when collecting this kind of data.

Choosing which stands of data to present here has been a significant challenge. Qualitative analysis is intended to give enough flexibility to be able to respond to emerging ideas and data and so this issue is a common one. It is easily surmounted by a rich data set which provides many opportunities for interrogation. The methods used here harvested a plentiful and rich data set and so the challenge was to consider what the key message were; this meant choosing what to include and what to leave out. It has been difficult within the writing up process to balance this. While researcher bias can be problematic in selection, here it has always come down to the

centrality of the data and ensuing analysis in answering the research questions. In other words, it is the continual reapplication of the research question to the data in different ways that has resulted in successful data analysis.

For this reason there are several strands of possible analysis which do not feature here. The primary reason for this is that while they are interesting, they are not central to answering the question at hand. For example, the intertextual dynamics in some cases were interesting, but broadly they were not useful in considering why these case studies have come to persist in popular memory. Although inevitably frustrating, it is this assertion that leads me to suggest that the study, and the framework within which it was undertaken, is credible. Answering the question at hand has always been the central focus of any research decision whether this be a choice of method or the inclusion or exclusion of certain features of the forthcoming analysis. Staying true to the aims of any research project is simple to say, but often quite difficult to stay committed to. Throughout this study, such a tension has certainly been felt. Empirical memory studies are few and far between because they are difficult to undertake, requiring an approach which captures the temporal dynamics of memory, open narratives within which remembrance is articulated and socio-cultural contexts and variables which shape and mould those articulations.

Chapter 4: Criminal Casting

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the textual construction of the two case studies. It will consider the key discourses of the reporting, how they are developed and what the mnemonic and discursive value of them may be. Before delving into the analysis, it should be noted that the following discussion focuses on the consistent features of the reporting across the sample period. It seeks to present an account of the overall reporting, focussing on the features of the case that are key to developing an ongoing narrative. It is for this reason that references are made across newspapers in order to show consensus and divergence between titles as opposed to focusing on the more discrete temporal moments, which are perhaps anomalous to the overall pattern of reporting. The subsequent chapter, Chapter Five, then seeks to temporalise the broader account set out in this chapter and where possible to note distinct moments of interest. These are moments in the reporting which are not ongoing or central to the 'tell-ability' of the case, but still important in the accumulation of the meanings of the case as they are assembled and woven together over time. It is my argument that discussing the media text through these two different, but allied lenses is the most appropriate and sensitive way of outlining the overall function and meaning of the narrative of these cases whilst also staying true to the predominantly qualitative focus of this thesis by considering the nuances in the textual representation of these case studies as these are manifest across the time of the stories' unfolding.

The case studies discussed here are not intended to be representative of child crime. In other words, it is not presumed that these case studies are typical of the types of crime children encounter, or that the features of these cases are factually the same as other cases. However, as noted in the previous chapter, the case studies discussed here are not just examples of criminal events; they are high-profile newsworthy events, which through their representation have become symbolic representations of child crime. For both cases to become symbolic of child crime the cases must share some common features; not only exhibit factual similarities but also speak to the same issues, reference the same problems and perhaps be reported in similar ways. It

is well known, and frequently cited, that news reports are often subject to bias because, *inter alia*, they are constructed to intersect with the broader media agenda which upholds hegemonic notions and values (Kidd-Hewit and Osbourne, 1995: ix-x). The reporting of crime news, as many scholars have noted, is also subject to the same ideologically grounded process of narrative framing and construction.

The analysis presented here shows that the reporting of these case studies is broadly similar in pattern and that the narrative is underpinned by ideological norms of gender, class and power which are culturally embedded and therefore provide a predictable frame within which to negotiate the crime itself.

This is perhaps not surprising given that the representation of deviance tends to be confined to especially stringent frames, and because the appropriate actors associated with deviance – both victim and perpetrator – are themselves ideologically constructed. These actors are commonly thought of as two sides of an extreme opposite, an assertion which is derived from the normative ways we tend to understand crime, in which one 'side' is good, and the other is bad. The idea of victim and perpetrator as diametric opposites draws on morally entrenched binaries such as right versus wrong and innocence versus evil. As demonstrated in the newspaper reporting discussed here, the representation of the key actors within these conventional moral frames, is a reflection and reiteration of the established and ideologically oriented ways we understand deviance.

The assertion that crime news draws on established ideals in order to demarcate moral and immoral behaviours is not a new one. As discussed in Chapter Two, Stan Cohen's moral panic theory conceptualises the media's role in creating social reaction and is centered on the idea that the media are 'a main source of information about the normative contours of society' (Cohen, 1972: 8). In this sense**,** the media can be thought of as a 'rule setting' agency which contributes to the maintenance of social order. Although this is a generalizable feature of the media it is particularly pertinent to the representation of deviance, which Cohen suggests tells us 'about right and wrong, about the boundaries beyond which one should not venture and about the shapes the devil can assume' (Cohen, 1972: 8).

While Cohen's focus on the folk devil as an important feature of representations of crime, which contributes to the demarcation of normative moral boundaries, is valid, the original conceptualisation may be a little outdated. He notes in the introduction to the third, most recent edition of *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* that the way of representing deviant behaviours within the media has somewhat changed since the first edition of the book. He states that in more recent media coverage 'attention shifts away from the offence, offender and the criminal justice process and towards a victim-centred cosmology'. According to Cohen this means that 'the offenders' background motivation and context becomes less salient so they are easier to demonise' (Cohen, 1972/2002: xxiv).

As the sample presented here is taken from the reporting of relatively recent crime, a victim-led narrative should be seen to run through the sample. If Cohen's account proves to be accurate this will also be at the expense of much detailed reporting on the perpetrators, the discursive effect of which is that the audience becomes affiliated much more strongly with the victim and the offender is ever more "othered". The consensus which is built up surrounding the case should therefore be sympathetic to the victim and by proxy unsympathetic to the perpetrators, allowing them to become objects of moral judgement. Throughout the following analysis I will use examples from the reporting to demonstrate this and show how the different actors are positioned within powerful ideological frames. These frames constrain the actors to normative representations of good and evil, contributing to the ongoing embeddedness of these historical moral sentiments. Where evident I will also make a case for why representations of particular actors go against this trend.

The representation of these key actors will therefore constitute an important part of the analysis presented here. Following on from this, I will discuss how similar discursive frameworks are apparent in relation to the construction of other important and consistent features of the case. This has the result of presenting a discourse which is heavily morally imputed.

The importance of moral sentiments in making sense of deviance has a long history. The father of moral philosophy, Adam Smith, argued in the 18th century that people

are fundamentally good. This perceived commonality amongst all of mankind has remained central to classical conceptualisations of understanding deviance ever since.

Smith states that when we encounter deviance our moral senses encourage us to 'feel nothing but horror and detestation at the thought of so execrable a wretch. We should abominate him even more than the tyrant who might be goaded on by the strong passions of jealousy, fear and resentment, and upon that account can be more excusable…correct moral sentiments, on the contrary, naturally appear in some degree laudable and morally good'(1790). In sum, Smith notes that as a society we react with 'detestation' against the person we see committing an immoral act. He notes that 'jealousy, fear and resentment' are emotions that 'mankind' understands and, perhaps, a deviant act as the result of this can be forgiven more easily. When, as in child crime, we do not understand the motive, we 'abominate' the perpetrator.

As in all binaries there are two absolute sides. Smith notes how we, with equal and opposite force, admire the good as well as detest the bad. This case is clearly made in relation to the actions of people; those who act in a morally good and bad way, such as victim and perpetrator. However, the moral foundation of these qualities is so central to making sense of deviance that it is echoed within the construction of other features of the cases presented here. By attaching moral sentiment to apparently banal features of the case such as place, these features are illuminated and become value-laden, increasing the discursive value of the broader discourse of the case.

The following discussion will therefore highlight how the representation of these kinds of cases is invested with meaning by reifying the morality involved. By this I mean to take account of the moral imperatives which necessitate the creation of social norms that reverberate through the construction of deviant actors within newspaper representations. How this is manifest in the construction of other features of the case, such as place and family, which serve to develop a consistent moral narrative and support the aforementioned construction of the key actors will then be described.

The following discussion first deals with the representation of the perpetrator as a distinct feature of the reporting. The representation of this actor is often forecast in

the reporting, and as such their construction is rarely based on fact and closely relates to stereotypes. This means that the representation lacks detail and context which are key features of the other dynamics of the reporting, such as victim, family and place. These features are all inflected with much more detail in the media reports and are closely linked to one another. As such they are discussed consecutively, in the latter part of this chapter.

4.2 The perpetrator

Although I have noted that the perpetrator or offender is often cited as less significant than the victim in more recent investigations of the representation of deviance, the folk devil remains a central actor in media representations of crime, and the focus of much revulsion. Here, I will discuss the perpetrator of Payne's murder, Roy Whiting, followed by a discussion of the perpetrators of the Bulger murder, Jon Venables and Robert Thompson. The ways these actors are constructed will be elucidated with a specific focus on the narrative functions which contribute to their consistent "othering".

In the Sarah Payne case, the perpetrator was an adult male who closely fits the popular stereotype of a paedophile. In line with this description, Roy Whiting does not contravene any expectations of who the perpetrator is. As such the reporting does not need to attempt to construct binaries that will display deeper ideological dissonance, for they already exist. His representation is thus formulaic and static, with little sense of any developmental unfolding within the crime narrative as it is constructed over time.

This is closely aligned to Cohen's suggestion that the offenders' background motivation and context becomes less salient in more recent representations of crime. His suggestion that this allows offenders to become 'easier to demonise' is also echoed by Claire Wardle. Wardle (2007) similarly notes that 'when "evil is the accepted explanation there is little tolerance for attempts to contextualise the offenders' (*ibid*: 274). With this is mind, it is unsurprising that such little information about Roy Whiting features in the media coverage of the case. He is, after all, a child

sex offender - the perpetrator of one of the few crimes which generate true consensus and absolute revulsion. His actions characterise him as thoroughly and irrevocably evil, a label which leaves little room for contextualisation.

Where Roy Whiting is characterised more specifically, the construction still confines him to a stringent stereotype. For example, the most well-known image of Roy Whiting is the post-verdict paparazzi style photo of him published in the example, below, by *The Guardian.* The representation of this image is a clear attempt to characterise Whiting as a mad and dangerous "other".

Figure 4.1
Image of Roy Whiting taken from Morris, S. & Hall, S. (2001). 'You should never be freed- judge' *The Guardian.*, 13 December: 1.

In her work on the visual representation of child crime in newspapers, Wardle states that the representation of offenders, but particularly sex offenders, like Whiting tends to be 'one-dimensional' (*ibid*:274). Interestingly she cites the image of Whiting, above, as comparable to the representation of other similar offenders at the time, suggesting a strict visual discourse which governs the visual representation of offenders. She states:

> This extreme close-up, showing him straining his neck, almost makes him look as if he is ready to make his escape. The photograph, taken by AP reporter Chris Ison, would have been chosen specifically from potentially hundreds of similar photographs of Roy Whiting leaving the courtroom, and the fact that all newspapers chose to use the image demonstrates the common

> codes that currently shape the coverage of crime and criminals (Wardle, 2007:274).

The code which she discusses positions Whiting as a popular folk devil and as a symbol of the modern day paedophile. This is a man who preys on young girls, who lives in the same community as 'us' and cannot be stopped. In this sense, the picture provides the public with an image of the most dangerous kind of person in society, a view which is illuminated by the visual characteristics he displays. This photograph therefore has the potential to act as an on-going imaginative resource for audiences because of the way in which the person represented is seen to symbolise the problem.

However, even before Whiting was connected to the crime, the reporting contributed to his "othering": it must be noted that this is an ideological process for it is only a convenient coincidence that in the wake of the trial, when Whiting is pictured for the first time, that his characteristics seem to match the stereotype. The run-up to this moment has, in terms of the media discourse, already set up the dichotomy in the reporting and reiterated the characteristics which ultimately come to define "Whiting the Perpetrator".

The ways in which the news reporting contributes to pre-defining the "other"/ perpetrator is through the focus on the sexual aspect of the case and the type of offender who commits this crime. In the initial reporting Sarah is technically a missing person, but she is discussed in the reporting as a victim of a predatory child sex offender. The potential sexual aspect of the case and thus an inevitable link to paedophilia allows, indeed encourages, the reader to react with disgust toward the (anonymous) perpetrator, even at this very early stage. This is particularly notable in an article by *The Guardian* which invites the reader to make a judgement about this crime from the earliest moments in the reporting in an attempt to build up an intitial level of disgust, before he (the stereotyped male perpetrator) has been formally identified.

This article 'Brother may have seen kidnap' was published 8 days after Sarah's disappearance and attempts to summarise the events to date rather than to report a single news event. At the start of this article it is noted that the police immediately

started ‘sifting the paedophiles from the rapists and flashers’ (Hall, 2000:4). Such a phrase constructs sex offenders as a significant social problem but also singles out child sex offences by separating the concern about paedophiles from the generalised concern about sexual deviance. This gradual focusing in on a specific target continues as the report goes on. It results in a more definite description and suggests that the police are looking for a ‘specific type of paedophile: a “predator” who snatches swiftly rather than a “groomer” who acts after cultivating a relationship with a child’. Identifying nuances in the sex-offending population is unusual as these types of offender tend to been seen as a homogenised group. In this case, the step-by-step approach reiterates the specific ‘type’ of perpetrator the police are looking for, but also the types of people ‘we’, the readership, should be aware of in a way that suggests sex offenders are an endemic risk. A consensus about the abhorrence of this crime is therefore initiated and reiterated at various points in the text. Although short, even the description of the two men who have been arrested in relation to the crime - ‘one local man in his 40’s and a second man in his 30’s’ - help to characterise this lonely, middle-aged, male perpetrator and in doing so reinforce the long-held stereotype of predatory sex offenders, whilst also underpinning parental concerns about ‘stranger danger’.

The discourses around ‘stranger danger’ as a specific social concern are not explicit within the reporting but the notion of predatory paedophiles who hide in plain sight (such as the two men described above) are nevertheless examples of the ways this popular concern is reported and personified. The stereotype outlined above reiterates the concern that predatory paedophiles are wolves in sheep’s clothing and thus particularly threatening to children who cannot identify their deviant nature. As such, their particular sexual deviance is beyond conventional criminality and is morally reprehensible in the extreme. This is akin to the way Adam Smith (1790) describes the way the moral majority reacts to apparently inexplicable deviance. However, because the term ‘stranger danger’ is not used, one could suggest that this marks a shift in the concerns of the time and thus in the overall discourse of crime and

childhood. In some sense, the labelling of the crime as paedophilic provides a more definite stereotype of the perpetrator replacing the notion of 'stranger danger'.[27]

Despite the specific rhetoric of the narrative, the result is that the nameless, faceless perpetrator of this crime is personified to the extent that he is to be reviled. Thus, when Roy Whiting is arrested, eventually convicted and identified, he is not the subject of shock, but of expectation, because the rhetoric of the reporting has already told us who we are looking for. When Roy Whiting's image is ultimately revealed his visual characteristics reiterate everything we already believed to be true about 'this type of person' and thus he is readily able to represent the stereotype.

In the overall rhetoric of Whiting's representation a sense of inevitability can be detected. The perpetrator of this crime is so stringently and so consistently connected to the familiar stereotype that his representation is not the subject of detestation, as Adam Smith suggests, but of predictability: the realisation that paedophiles are an un-avoidable danger, the certainty of this being a sexually motivated crime, and Whiting's visual characteristics, all underpin the apparent popular concern about the threat of paedophiles at this time.

However, this attempt by the media to make him memorable through the rhetoric of stereotyping may fail in the long term for he so closely conforms to the anticipatory discourse and thus his representation has a discursive value but maybe not a mnemonic one. In this sense, the interview data should be expected to show a dissonance between the newspaper discourse and the popular memory of this case.

The construction of Whiting like other perpetrators in crime reporting is a reiteration of the legitimacy of the moral narrative. However, it is not dependant on the perpetrators being consonant or discordant with the crime because their personal identity is not interrogated. Much effort is therefore ploughed into these representations by the media in order to ensure a consistent but appropriately distant

[27] It should be noted that the issue of 'stranger danger' is referred to in the interview data and will be discuss further in Chapters Seven and Eight. In the context of the interview data the term stranger has the subtext of meaning perpetrators of sexual deviance and is used in place of specific reference to the term paedophile or other, more explicit terms. The embarrassment around discussions of this type of crime or the perpetrator of it, are considered to underpin public fear.

construction of this actor, for this is all the reader needs to know for the "othering" to take place.

The relative invisibility of the perpetrator within the reporting, the de-personalisation and de-contextualisation of their identity and behaviour, which is a feature of Whiting's construction, is also echoed in the Bulger case. In this case, however, the circumstances are significantly different.

The main difference is that the perpetrators of Bulger's murder are more prominent within the reporting, but this visibility does not translate into familiarity, intimacy or empathy. The Bulger killers are, like Whiting, subject to a similar process of "othering" in which vilification toward them is built up through a narrative which seeks consensus about the abhorrence of the crime. In the Payne case, this was so straightforwardly done. However, in the Bulger case, the boundary which is so often demarcated between good and bad, is complicated by the reality that children, who are more commonly thought of as a symbol of innocence and purity, commit crimes too.

The confusion we feel about crime committed by a stereotypically 'good' category of people such as children, is similar to the ways in which women, or more specifically mothers, are viewed when they commit crimes: as an aberration from the usual norms of femininity and maternity. In this sense, the murderers of James Bulger are seen as an aberration to the norms of childhood. It is for this reason that Venables and Thompson are so extremely "othered" in their construction, to the extent that they are both adultified and homogenised in an attempt to construct them as anything other than the normal children that they arguably were.

James Bulger, as I will return to in more detail in the following section, is presented as a particularly vulnerable and innocent victim. This is an important, indeed crucial feature of the discourse of the reporting of his murder. The effort to reiterate Bulger's young age and vulnerability within the narrative is part of the attempt to build consensus about the crime's abhorrent nature and more importantly construct a vivid contrast between him and the perpetrators of the case who were also children.

Frequent references to the victim in the captions, headlines and in the reporting, as a wee 'toddler', draws attention to his limited physical, emotional and mental ability and autonomy. In this sense, the victim is the subject of a process of "childification", if you will, an attempt to reify his childlike qualities. This is as opposed to the adultification of the perpetrators. Adultification is a more established phrase, the process by which the certain behaviours of young people are characterised as especially, morally right or wrong; this seemingly has a standing on whether or not they should be held responsible for their actions. In essence, it refers to a 'blurring of distinctions' (Jewkes, 2004: 102) between youth and adulthood which is often used by the media and other institutional agents to manipulate how the public sees the seriousness of events and the culpability of 'bad' behaviours of this group of people.

When this process is used to construct the perpetrators of Bulger's murder it is done so in direct contrast to the construction of Bulger, making it yet more powerful. The 'victim centred cosmology' (Cohen, 1972: 8) is thus working differently in this case than in the Payne case, but it still functions successfully to avoid contextualising the motive of the killers whilst also allowing them to become subjects of abhorrence.

The readiness of media audiences to accept adultified constructions of children arguably underpins the confusion surrounding youth and criminality in society. By adultifying the perpetrators in this case, the reporting first seeks to make them culpable of their actions This is then consolidated in subsequent reporting, for example as a result of the trial.

Jewkes, who discusses in some detail issues around adultification, notes that during the trial of Venables and Thompson, 'one of the defending barristers showed the jury 247 press cuttings he had assembled which compared the boys to Myra Hindley and Saddam Hussein' (Jewkes, 2004: 92). By comparing Jon Venables and Robert Thompson to Hindley and Hussein, their behaviour has not only been compared to the behaviour of adults, but their personality and character has also been compared to two individuals who are hate figures in the UK and beyond. The result of this is that the public image of Robert Thompson and Jon Venables has become associated not only with their own criminality but with the heinous actions of others, drawing

attention to their single assumed commonality – "evilness". This serves to depersonalise and demonise them, creating distance rather than intimacy.

Such representations contribute to the polarisation of the victim and perpetrator on a societal level allowing Jon Venables and Robert Thompson's deviance to become assimilated with other acts of "evil". The ongoing characterisation of Bulger's killers utilises this initial construction which focuses on them as 'tearaways' or more explicitly, as evil children, a fact which continues to allow them to be constructed in relation to youth and youth justice. However, the ongoing connection to youth is grounded in a practical as well as moral rationale.

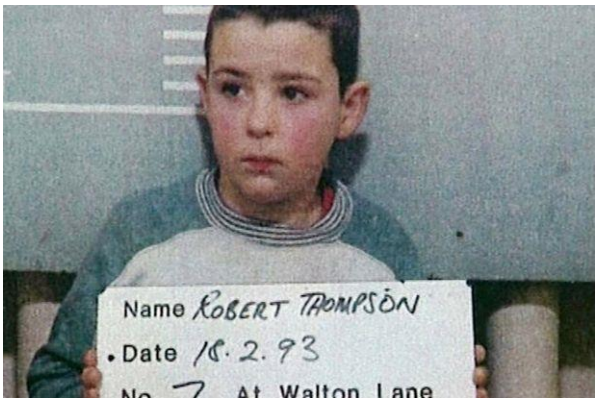
The killers have in practice, been anonymous to the public since 1993. Up until the culmination of the trial they were known only as Child A and Child B. The identification of perpetrators is always restricted by the Criminal Justice Act 1925, in which section 41 prohibits the taking of images in court for the purpose of publication. In this particular case, it is likely that Section 39 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933[28] was also applied, in order to prohibit publication of certain matters within newspapers. This is an extensive injunction which, in the case of the Bulger trial, would have been actively requested in order to protect the accused parties from identification. This order would have then been lifted at the culmination of the trial, thus allowing the publication of matters which had hitherto been prevented. Information about the killers' identities was initially the subject of intense speculation due to the lack of publicly available or publishable material about them; their specific identities, including names and images of them were only able to be published in the wake of the verdict once the order became obsolete. It was only then that several images of James Bulger's murderers became legally available. These images - their school photos, a family snap and their arresting mug shots - remain in the public domain. Like the image of Whiting, which confines him to a stringent

[28] Section 39 allows the court to prevent the identification of any parties involved in the trial. This is even to the extent that 'no newspaper report of the proceedings shall reveal the name, address or school, or include any particulars calculated to lead to the identification, of any child or young person concerned in the proceedings'. In addition, 'no picture shall be published in any newspaper as being or including a picture of any child or young person so concerned in the proceedings' of court. This information is abridged from the website of the *Crown Prosecution Service*. See: https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/p_to_r/reporting_restrictions/ [accessed 01/03/13].

stereotype, the more commonly and routinely used images of offenders - mugshots, do nothing to break this fixed visual discourse.

Figure 4.2

Mugshots of Venables and Thompson [29]



The images above clearly show the boys as they appeared upon their arrest. Semiotically, this is interesting because mugshots are solely taken for criminal justice purposes and as such have a different set of properties to other visual discourses present in the case studies. The mug shot by its very nature catalogues each perpetrator in the same way. Lashmar (2013) notes the significance of the card in the process of cataloguing; suggesting that it is an important 'identifying signifier' and part of the 'limited grammar' unique to making sense of a mugshot, say instead of a passport photo which are visually similar. He states that 'it can be the measuring stick, a board with a name and number identifying the subject; it might be two photos together: one face on, one a side profile shot. There may be a hint of institutional clothing -perhaps a white one-piece arrest suit' (*ibid*: 59); these are the features by which we understand the function and meaning of a mugshot.

In line with this, these images, each taken at a different police station, show the subjects holding a card with their name and date. They both appear to be looking at

[29] These particular images were often printed in low quality and in black and white. The qualities of the images were somewhat lost through photocopying original representations and as such the images presented here and throughout have been retrieved from *Google Images* rather than from the texts. [accessed 20/10/13]

someone out of shot, presumably an adult as their gaze is upward. The board on the wall they stand against records their height at being around four and half feet reiterating their physical immaturity. The particular codes inscribed in this form of visual image by way of these signifiers are what perhaps leads Wardle to assert that 'darkened mug shots of offenders are certainly unable to provide any contextualization to the person, their life and their crimes' (2007: 274).

Lashmar (2013) draws on work by Foucault (1977) to consider that the mug shot is a form of content which allows us to judge the subject. He states that its representation 'promotes ''the normalizing gaze", a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates and judges them"' (2013: 66). In this sense it is part of a 'permanent method of the spectacle, and the humiliation of those who have transgressed' (2013: 67).

The rhetoric of this genre, as described by these scholars, therefore functions, in addition to the similarity in size, age, expression and gaze of the subjects of these images, to contribute to their discursive anonymity. Their equal and collective culpability for the murder is referenced through this similarity which allows them to continue to be framed as a single unit, because there is little to separate their identities.

Through the mug shot, their identities also become temporally static, referencing a single moment in time. These particular images embalm a single moment in childhood, and so the audience are more overtly drawn into this period of time in their own characterisation of the perpetrators. In this regard the audience are likely to conceive of these perpetrators as children in their accounts of the crime despite the fact they are now adults.

The impact of this particular visual representation is due to the fact that a mug shot of an adult does not have such a striking temporal dimension because generally speaking adulthood is a much longer and less tangible time in a person's life. What this suggests is that even though these perpetrators are more visible in the sample than Whiting was, their visual representation still hinders any contextualisation or

potential for transformation, thus conforming to the notion that a consideration of the background and motivation of the perpetrator is often marginalised from reporting, at least at the time of these representations.

The result of these features of the case is that Jon Venables and Robert Thompson are often grouped together and discussed in the ongoing reporting as the 'Bulger Killers', a rhetorical device which allows them to be assimilated as a single culpable unit, contributing to their collective infamy as well as their personal anonymity. Although I have suggested that this is a practical decision as a result of their anonymity and the fact that their visual representation is so stringently connected to their childhood identities, there is also a discursive value: through their homogenisation the perpetrators remain un-interrogated. Through the use of a label, which renders them entirely culpable but personally invisible, there can be no unpicking of what being a 'Bulger Killer' may mean and thus this label is a foil for not considering who the individual is and why they committed the crime. As such, the rigidity and repetitiveness of this label allows them to be consistently "othered" in a way which has an ongoing mnemonic value in news reports and extricates society of any responsibility for the murder.

An interesting intervention into the rigidity of this frame is in the way blame has shifted between the perpetrators of this crime over time. This shift is an anomaly because the perpetrators of crime are usually confined to stringent stereotypes, their representation remaining fixed, such as described by Wardle in relation to Whiting. This is discussed further in Chapters Five and Seven when the shift is highlighted in relation to the re-arrest of Jon Venables as a notable moment, both within the reporting and with reference to the interview data where participants discuss the actions and identities of the perpetrators.

Despite this shift, which is undoubtedly significant, it is fair to suggest that the overall representation of the perpetrators is static, continuing to represent them both as evil children although not always as equally culpable. The ongoing dependency on the childhood frame is likely to be as a result of the discursive value of demonising them in opposition to the usual innocence of children and the innocence of Bulger. It

is also because of the ways in which the discourse of these crimes always speaks to the initial narrative frames, in this case in relation to their identities as children.

Following their conviction and the publication of the images (above), Venables and Thompson were incarcerated. Following their release, they were provided with new identities. As such, there has never been a time when these individuals had agency and identity in the public sphere. They have had various faces and names, which at some points come together, but for the most part, their public image and current identity are separate entities. For example, in the early reporting audiences could see the CCTV picture but we didn't know which one was Child A and which one was Child B. When their identities are released this comes together for a moment, but then they are immediately anonymised so the public no longer has knowledge of exactly what they look like or what their names are. What this means is that the clearest picture of them we, the audience, have is of them is at the time of this crime. Confounded by the mugshot, this characterisation is stringently delimiting and temporally bound. It not only hinders their contextualisation at the time of publication, but it also tightly binds them to this identity in the longer term, meaning they can never escape this frame of reference.

The mnemonic value of this is that these actors will undoubtedly remain personified as children in the mind's eye of the audience. This suggests that they will still be referred to as 'boys' and discussed in a way which implicitly considers their youth rather than in a manner which takes account of their current age and identity because this idea has never been developed in the narrative discourse of the case.

Generally, this analysis shows that the representation of the perpetrators is tightly connected to their initial framing, which is particularly ideologically oriented and is underpinned by notions of moral abhorrence in line with normative, historically embedded understandings of deviance, which serve to "other" the perpetrator even before they are formally identified.

However, I suggest that the familiarity of the offender stereotype adopted in the Payne case will be shown in the interview data to have a limited ongoing mnemonic value. As noted earlier, Whiting representation conforms very closely, perhaps too

closely to the familiar stereotype and thus in the longer term, his representation is unlikely to be memorable. This argument is particularly noticeable in comparison to the Bulger case which also uses the rhetoric of stereotyping to build up consensus and attribute blame, but in this example the perpetrators so violently break away from the familiar stereotype that their representation will likely have a mnemonic value both in and over time.

4.3 The victim

The term victim goes hand in hand with the term perpetrator and thus one is often used to define the "other". However, it is still a label which has its own set of conventions confining the victim to a similarly delimiting, albeit now desirable, set of personal criteria. These criteria are derived from the same ideologically grounded conventions, but relate to the sufferer as opposed to the wretch. The legitimacy of this actor is always central to their construction. The sufferer must be morally good, honest and respectable in order to be worthy of our attention and sympathy. The case studies presented here do not, however, deal with a legitimate victim, but an *ideal* victim.

An ideal victim is not only someone who constitutes a legitimate or respectable victim, but is also someone who is 'perceived as vulnerable, defenceless, innocent and worthy of sympathy and compassion' (Greer, 2007: 31). In this sense, dichotomies such as innocence versus evil, which we commonly utilise to make sense of such deviant events, are made yet more potent by the inclusion of the child victim as, not just a representation, but a supreme symbol of innocence, and thus the ultimate 'ideal victim'.

In both the case studies, the victim is constructed as 'legitimate and ideal' (Greer, 2007:31). First and foremost, they are both children but they are also from white British families. This adds to their status as an 'ideal victim' in British society, opening up the possibility of defining them in broadly positive terms. This is because it serves the ideological interests of white British families who make up the majority

readership of British newspapers, allowing them to feel empathy toward the victim as a representation of themselves.

An intervention into the broadly positive description of victims is the connotation of the label itself. Legal, criminological and sociological definitions vary but the term can often renders its subject inactive in their representations and thus it is often deemed to be a negative term. Valerie Meredith (2009) constructs a working definition of victimhood as an adjective to describe a person who has in some way been harmed, but she notes that it can be an identity or a status afforded to a person or group. When we choose this identity for someone, we also exclude other identities, deliberately or not, so the use of the term victim brings with it a set of attributes which constructs the children represented by these case studies as powerless and helpless. This identity is as unyielding and restrictive in its own ways as the label of perpetrator. This assertion leads Meredith to note:

> The use of the term 'victim' as an identity can have different implications, depending on who is using it, claiming it, rejecting it or attributing it to others. Its negative connotations may have an impact on the person or persons concerned. This implies that the term should be used with some care and insight. (Meredith, 2009: 259).

Greer makes a case for the 'archetypal "ideal victims"' to be 'young, bright, photogenic girls from stable and loving, middle-class family backgrounds' (Greer, 2007: 31) referencing Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman[30] as well as Sarah Payne. It is interesting that amongst the ideal characteristics Greer mentions the fact that these children are photogenic.[31] This suggests that the objective beauty of a news subject can enhance their newsworthiness. In this sense, the particular image used to 'advertise' the missing or murdered person is important because it can contribute to

[30] Wells and Chapman are the victims of Ian Huntley, who, as a caretaker at their primary school lured them into his home and murdered them. It became apparent following his conviction, that police had long thought Huntley to be a serial sex offender as he had been investigated several times for offences against women and girls. However, unlike Roy Whiting, Huntley had never been convicted of these offences.

[31]The traits of the ideal victim have been discussed widely, although this is predominantly within criminology as opposed to media studies. Although there is some consensus as to who constitutes the ideal victim, as outlined by Greer, definitions do vary. See, Christie, Garland, Smolej, 2010:81-82, Wardle, 2007.

communicating their status as a victim in so far as it makes visible their conformity to the ideal victim type thus indicating their being worthy of our interest and sympathy in a much more emotive and immediate way than would be created by a narrative description. It is for this reason that photographs of the victim are used so widely. The use of photos when children are missing has a function in the search but their visual presence in the newspaper reports persist even after their death has been confirmed.

In the Payne case, a school photo[32] was consistently used throughout the case. The school photograph is a familiar representation of childhood dating back to the introduction of compulsory education. The annual occasion prompts parents to dress their children for school more smartly than usual in an attempt to get a best presented portrait of their child (sometimes with siblings). This often becomes part of the personal collection of photographs framed and put up in homes, on walls or furniture, or instead sent in reproduced form to relatives, so evidencing a child's continued growth and denoting some sort of academic achievement and success.

The generic setting and composition generates a familiar looking image that can be seen in many homes: the child, body turned slightly away from the camera but head face on, smiles for a shot which shows just their face and enough of the uniform to identify the school. Despite the conformity of these images, which means they are readily identifiable, they form a highly personal record of a child's biological and academic journey. They are both generic and individual. However, when appropriated for a missing person's investigation, for example, such photographs take on a new set of meanings. They are not only the personal photographs of someone else; the person in the picture is now a news story and has become re-mediated within the relevant news frame.[33]

This is not to say that images lose their original meaning and value or that these photographs no longer elicit emotional responses because they are not 'personal'. The very nature of child crime is such that it intervenes in family life. This is meant both

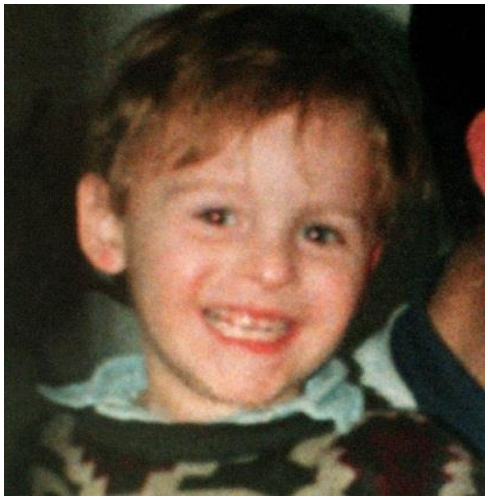
[32] As shown in Figure 4.4 on page 97.
[33] An exception to this general trend is discussed in the following chapter, which outlines why school images of perpetrators are appropriated for different reasons, seeking evidence from their past to identiy their evil nature, rather than to look upon their natural development.

in the sense of 'the family' as a social category, and 'a family'- the family of the victim. For this reason such cases are particularly emotionally charged because concerns about family are universal. The use of familiar pictorial representations such as school photographs are typically used in news reporting simply because they embed the victim in the familiar discourse of childhood and of family life.

Although the images of James Bulger (below) are not taken at school, the function of the images is the same. They adhere to the recognisable genre of the 'family snap' which depicts candid but endearing moments and are equally as familiar as a school photo. These particular images place James as the central focus in a discernibly domestic setting. The tight crop gives the sense of an intimate portrait of the victim encouraging intimacy between the reader and the victim generating the same empathy and emotion in audiences as the image of Sarah Payne.

Figure 4.3

Images of James Bulger. [34]



Wardle (2007) states that 'these photographs are probably some of the most highly selected images in news' as 'they were first selected by the families as ones which best represent their child in the ways they wanted them to be remembered, and then

[34] The images of James Bulger presented here were apparent in various texts within the sample (For example in Corless (1993) and Mulchrone (1993a)). For purposes of quality these particular images were retrieved online from *Google Images* [accessed 20/10/2013].

selected and positioned alongside other photographs by photo editors' (2010: 276 - 277). The high level of selectivity described is perhaps at odds with the fact that two images have come to define James Bulger, rather than one as is usually the case. These images fit within a broader repertoire of images (as above, but also including the CCTV and perpetrator images) which again, is opposed to the Payne case, where a single predominant image – the school photo - was used throughout. Although this could be construed as demonstrating a lack of consensus about how to represent James, the similarity in content, style and genre of these two images mean that they perform the same function, both serving to confine him to stereotypical representation of a child victim.

However, a more complicated visual discourse, as seen here, could dilute the impact of the visual discourse, suggesting that the mnemonic value of the images in the Bulger case is lessened. Despite this, the images, in terms of what they represent, are successful in constructing the victim as youthful, as vulnerable and therefore innocent; key traits of the ideal victim. Their equal success in fulfilling this function is the likely reason for their use and may, in this case, allow the audience to feel more intimately attached to the victim. Through the use of multiple images the audience are able to look over James in various settings which may encourage their feelings of sympathy and appeal to their voyeuristic imagination.

Images therefore provide a site for identification in a broader narrative context which will be radically outside of most readers' experience. In Chris Greer's words 'photographs humanize crime victims, adding a sense of the "real" to that which may otherwise remain abstract and difficult to latch on to or invest in emotionally' (Greer: 2007: 31). In this sense images of victims seem to perform a double function. In the first instance, they make familiar or domesticate the victim. However, the incongruence of this familiarity with the nature of the crime has the potential to disturb the viewer and elicit particularly affective responses; a secondary function. Greer also notes the value of photographs in performing this function, stating that they 'present an idealized personification of innocence and loss' but also 'serve indirectly to highlight the monstrosity and evil of the offender' (Greer, 2007: 31). Once again this demonstrates how the representation of the victim speaks to the ways

the perpetrator is “othered”, the pairing of these actors being an important feature of the reporting of both cases.

Whilst Greer (2007) suggests it is the image which powerfully connects audience and victim, the narrative construction also helps to develop a characterisation of the victim consonant with the notion of the ideal child. For example, the use of the phrase ‘little princess’ to describe Sarah Payne is a specific feature of the early reporting which uses the family’s supposed nickname for Sarah, characterising her in a particularly feminine and childlike manner.

The term ‘little princess’ draws on notions of the fairy-tale, which is frequently used to frame the interests and behaviour of girls. In this context, it is also used to reiterate her innocence as well as her girlhood and associated characteristics such as her caring and loving nature. By drawing on gendered stereotypes the innocence of the victim is reiterated as well as the normalcy of the child and her life. This overt construction of Sarah’s girlhood was particularly apparent in the early days of the reporting and should be seen as part of a strategy to strengthen public sympathy for the victim, and create consensus about the case, dynamics which remain central although less explicitly linked to gender, as the reporting develops.

Similarly James Bulger is also constructed in a gendered manner. This is done in a way which speaks to his boyhood, noting the importance of gender stereotypes for even the youngest victims. An interesting example of this is in the *Daily Mirror*. In which James Bulger is described as ‘playful’, and as ‘being in high spirits’ on the day of his disappearance, when ‘in his Noddy t-shirt, [he] skipped happily by his mother’s side’ (Corless & Mulchrone, 1993: 5).

These snippets of description all contribute to a stereotypical portrayal of a child in which their happiness and naiveté is highlighted. The content of the article then goes on to give more information about the lead-up to James’s abduction. Notably, this is taken from a statement made by Denise Bulger which was read out in court. This means the original purpose of this dialogue was legal and its presentation in a newspaper means it has been taken out of its original context.

> ‘James went to run up the escalator. As he did so an old woman stepped in front of him to stop him. I took hold of him then. The four of us (a reference to her niece and sister in law) went into Ethel Austen’s. An assistant was standing on a chair and throwing down baby suits. James got hit on the head by one of these and started throwing these suits around the shop. I got hold of him. James laughed and I took him outside… He was into everything kicking an empty box around … because of James having pinched the smarties (at another shop) I stayed outside the shop with him’ (*ibid.*).

The content of Mrs Bulger’s quote suggests James was quite a handful, having earlier in the day stolen sweets and been seen to throw clothes about a shop, perhaps not what the ‘ideal’ child represents. However, the journalists uses the “boyishness” of this behaviour to characterise James in a way that make a virtue of these traits; being playful, a bit cheeky, and full of childish zest, is a way which boys are often characterised. This draws on the acceptable mischief characterised in the field of arts by children like William Brown of the *Just William* stories who is the archetypal rascal. Even though James was a little younger at the time of his murder, his behaviour in the shopping centre is certainly framed in the same way as the behaviours of his fictional counterpart, drawing on notions of the lovable rogue or the mischief maker as opposed to any suggestion of naughtiness.

What this shows is that the legal truth of the matter, as described by James’ mother, does not necessarily underpin the construction of the child. Rather, the account is used to align the victim within ideological frameworks which are consonant with the ideal (male) victim. It is easy to see from this example how the reality of the events as described under oath can be re-framed in a way which is more suitable to the overall motive of the article. In this case engendering sympathy for the Bulger family and reconsolidating the idealised personification of James as the innocent, is the primary focus.

The intention to reiterate the childlike qualities James possessed, in an attempt to confine him very tightly to the stereotype of the idea victim, is also apparent in the nickname given to him. James Bulger was renamed ‘Jamie’ in the media in a clear attempt to construct the victim as a little loveable boy, embedding him into

conventional and personal ways of talking fondly about children. His family never referred to him by this nickname and yet it became widely used in the reporting. The purpose of this is to construct intimacy between the victim and the audience by stripping away any formality, effectively allowing the reader to speak in vernacular terms about the case.

These features of the reporting constitute an active journalistic decision to construct the victims in a way which is aligned with the aforementioned stereotype of the ideal victim. Due to the gender difference this is done in a different way but the result in both cases is to construct the child in a normative way. The images which accompany the textual reporting are also very important in reiterating these norms. By confining the victim to the stringent stereotype as depicted in the images shown here, there can be no disruption to the expected discourses, and as such their representation is predictable and thus memorable.

However, the fact that the ideal victim continues to be characterised in the same way may be problematic in the long term. This is especially so in relation to Sarah Payne and other female child victims who embody, more overtly, the stereotype of the ideal victim. Greer suggests that the Sarah Payne case is a particular example of how images are powerfully used in representations of crime, stating that her 'victim photographs which were used relentlessly throughout each case and its aftermath… became deeply embedded in the popular imagination' (Greer, 2007: 32).

An example of the persistent ongoing use of this image is present in *The Mirror's* coverage of the trial verdict. Rather than accompanying a textual report, the image that follows, was used to literally frame the current coverage. The purpose of a frame[35] is to construct a strong inter-textuality between reports which in practice, encourage the audience to read on. In this example, the text and image are integrated into a strapline working together to define the parameters of the article. Although this has a practical function, the discursive value of this device it to re-situate Sarah as the

[35] See Figure 4.4. Also, the *Daily Mirror* used the same narrative device to frame the reporting of the verdict in the Bulger case. Interestingly, they use the different images of James (shown on page 90) on consecutive pages in the same edition.

key actor, reiterating once again the victim-centred cosmology Cohen describes. It's *her* verdict and *her* image which are the anchors for the reporting. This assertion ensures that she is the central focus, even though she cannot be active in the reporting.

Figure 4.4

Arnold, H., & Shaw, A. (2000) 'You'll Die in Jail' *Daily Mirror*. December 13: 4-5

While it is clear that the single image of Sarah was, as Greer states 'used relentlessly' there are many other cases with similarly ideal victims which are also reported in this way. The cumulative effect of the repetitive framing of these types of crimes could result in conflation, lessening the specific mnemonic value of the image of Sarah Payne in relation to the case. The image is so familiar and widely used that it has allowed her to stand for victims of kidnapping more generally. As such her image may not be as deeply embedded in the popular imagination as Greer suggests. It is thus possible that her image has come to represent a familiar victim stereotype rather than function as a representation of her case.

It is appropriate to consider what the value of the visual discourse is in the longer term, given the consensus that victim photographs 'familiarise media audiences, instantly and enduringly with victims of crime in a way that words cannot' (Greer, 2007: 31). This study is unique in that it seeks to make connections between the reporting of the crimes and the subsequent popular understandings of them, and as such the mnemonic value of images will be revisited in Chapter Six, in respect of the audience accounts of the victims.

Although the analysis shows that the representation of these victims is broadly positive, not unforeseen given that they are considered to be legitimate and ideal victim, the constructions of these actors are far from individualised. They are subject to equally tight, delimiting, albeit positive stereotypes which attempt to confine them

to strict ideological norms. For example, the victims are constructed within gendered norms and appropriate ideologies of childhood, pure and innocent, and as members of white British families, criteria which are all formed from dominant ideologies. The authenticity of these characteristics are firmly told to us through media representations as shown here, but also in everyday conversations where the rhetoric of the good, sweet, ideal child is directly attributed to the children of our families. The representation of these kinds of qualities is therefore part of the ways we understand children and childhood, but it is also echoed in everyday life. The ongoing discursive value of this is that we can easily make connections between 'us'- our family – and 'us' the moral majority as we constantly engage with both sets of discourse; belonging to both communities therefore encourages us to empathise with these victims and their families.

4.4 The visibility of loved ones

The interest in victims and the discursive of value of them as actors within the developing moral narrative of these representations is, as I have briefly mentioned, connected to the family. The extension of this interest to victims' families is part of constructing how beloved and worthy of our sympathy the victim is. The victims' families, as represented in this sample, become central and consistent actors contributing to the discourse of sympathy (and exceptionally, discourses of inspiration). According to Greer, it has now become 'expected that victims' loved ones will express their emotions and share their pain and suffering with media audiences' (Greer, 2007:30).

The emotional rhetoric of representations of devastated parents, of grieving friends and loved-ones serve to encourage sympathy and empathy from the reader. It is therefore unsurprising that the victims are discursively embedded in the dynamics of a traditional British family. Such embedding is an attempt to universalise the victims and the case by constructing them and their families, as an everyman, by way of their representativeness of a conventional family group. In both case studies this is discursively achieved through the representation of the victims' parents. In the following news reports, the victims parents' speak about and for their children. In this

sense they are like us, the parents who speak about and for our children in other events - in daily life, in issues of health and in law. The construction of the victims' families as "normal" in an ideological sense, therefore encourages the audience to see echoes of their own experience in the relationships and events described in the reporting.

The indiscriminate horror of such crimes is also reified through the conventionality of the families who are dealing with them. The indiscriminate threat of such crimes to each and every one of us and our families is yet more visible to the reader through the understanding that this crime happened to a normal family; a family like us; a family like the ones we are so readily familiar with in our own everyday lives. In order to achieve the aim of developing an intimate relationship between reader and victim (including victim's family) the families, at least initially, must be seen to conform to the same legitimate status as the victim. This is perhaps less stringent, but as per the construction of other actors, the family are confined to and constructed according to similar ideological norms.

In the Payne case this initial conformity ultimately results in the family being held up as the beacon of a traditional family. For example, it is suggested in *The Guardian's* article 'We Seem To Know You', that the 'courage and unity of the Payne family has become a key signifier of the whole ordeal' (Mulholland, 2000: 4). These value-laden attributes are heaped upon the family through the media's own construction of them in which the physical closeness and affection that is apparent amongst this family becomes an overt sign of the comfort they are taking from one another, a fact which is likely to underpin the assessment that they are unified. This report is typical of representation of the family in this case, and clearly shows is how this family are constructed in a unified manner. They are frequently depicted together and discussed as a single unit throughout the reporting and as such they are always constructed as a unified group even when they are not all speaking or all pictured, signifying consensus in their actions.

Starting in the earliest reporting, Sarah's parents, Michael and Sara Payne, are key actors in the configuration of this close-knit family which comprises four siblings, including Sarah herself. On July 5th 2000, days after her disappearance, The *Daily*

Mirror reported that ‘the anguished parents of missing Sarah beg for her return’ in an article headlined ‘Family of Tears’. In both quotes a reference to Sarah’s closest kin is mentioned, the headline in particular gives a sense of collective sadness that they (her family) are feeling as a result of her disappearance. This is common of the kinds of references to her family and their typical construction as a unified group.

Over half of this article is taken up with a selection of images (below) which support this headline; a larger rectangular picture of Sarah and her siblings, sits alongside two smaller images of Sarah’s parents. The former is of the kind taken for a family portrait. The children are grouped together; the elder boys stand behind their two sisters – a protective and caring gesture. All subjects look towards, and smile at the camera, a construction quite typical of most family portraits in the UK around this time. The second two images depict Sara and Michael Payne. These images appear to be contemporaneous photographs and are not family photos. In the top picture, Sarah’s parents are seen to embrace. The image has been cropped in an oval shape to emphasise this. The lower picture is of the pair walking away from the camera arm in arm, their backs to the camera. This image is less intimate as although they are seen to be comforting one another, the composition shows their whole body not just upper body and face and some of the surroundings such as bushes trees and a path can also be seen. Despite this it is probably included because they can be seen to comfort one another, an action that shows an emotion applicable to the narrative which was trying to be built up at this time.

Figure 4.5
Headline and Images taken from Arnold, H., & Pilditich, D. (2000). ‘Family of Tears’ *Daily Mirror*, 5 July: 7.

The way the images have been cropped into particular shapes, laid over each other and placed on an angle, creates a scrapbook-type arrangement. This constructs the idea that the reader has been allowed into the Payne's family album, and so privilege to the closeness of acquaintance which such an album betokens. The reader is therefore positioned in a unique way and is able to engage with something quite intimate and personal to the family. As such a degree of empathy toward the actors is positively fostered. The genre convention of the family album is to trace a family in its development over time, in this case the discursive value of the format of these images is to highlight the normalcy of the family group, the devastation Sarah's death has caused, and the disruption this represents for the family's hitherto smoothly chronicled development. In the case of this family Sarah's inclusion in the family album stops here and stops irrevocably; what is left is a mourning family, a family with a wailing absence within it. By using this genre convention but showing the disruption to it, the visual discourse creates dissonance and has a powerful affective dynamic.

Yet, despite the unity that is constructed in relation to the Payne family through the images and the headline, there is a specific disconnection between this and the detail in the narrative of the report. The text consistently constructs Sara, the mother as the key actor leaving Michael, the father to be constructed in relation to Sara instead of as a key actor in his own right. For example, when we are introduced to Sarah's family in this article, Michael Payne is introduced as Sara's husband. The choice to introduce Michael in this way rather than as Sarah's father diminishes him and makes it clear that he is considered a less important actor than her.

The tendency to reify maternal experience, emotion and opinion is exemplified in the Sarah Payne case where Sara's construction is a consistent and central feature of the reporting. For example the main body of the *Mirror* article begins 'the mum of '. This indicates an important familial connection which provides status to this actor. The report then states that she, 'the mum' 'pleaded for her [Sarah Payne's] safe return'. It is because the narrative leads directly into Sara's perspective, that the framing of the parents is more vividly associated with her. This is typical of the

reporting of the Sarah Payne case in which Sara Payne is consistently represented as more active, more significant and a generally more important actor than anyone else associated with the case.

This is shown both through the discourse and through the amount of space she is afforded in the reporting. In this example several of her quotes are reproduced in full giving her both prominence and a great deal of space: eleven lines out of thirty are afforded to Sara, in comparison to her husband who is afforded four lines out of thirty. Not only is it the case that Sara is prioritised through the space afforded to her but it is more common for Sarah to be described as 'her daughter' rather than 'their daughter', indicating a more specific and symbolic relationship between mother and daughter rather than between parents and a child or father and daughter.

Wardle (2007) states that 'grief has a moral authority' which she suggests is well portrayed by mothers (*ibid*: 276). This is certainly underpinned by traditional gender ideology whereby the emotional and expressive mother, as exemplified by Sara Payne, openly talks about, and in this case, then grieves for her murdered child. She is supported by the strong and silent father, both norms which are acceptable and in line with the construction of these families as typically British.

Such an assertion is supported by the dialogue in this article, which is predominantly from Sara, and is aimed directly at her daughter. Clearly a heartfelt and personal message, the reader becomes part of the one-sided exchange, undoubtedly increasing empathy for her and a more vivid construction. Within this dialogue Sara states that her plight is 'nothing to what Sarah's going through'. This not only adds to the idea that something untoward has happened to Sarah, creating intrigue for the reader; it also adds to the construction of Sara as the good mother, one who puts others before herself, showing her to be a compassionate and selfless person and stressing her maternal nature in line with the archetypal good mother.

As a result of these norms reflected in the narrative structures of the reporting, the views of the father appear to be less important, playing no central role, either symbolically or in the unfolding of the story. Following on with the same example a from The *Daily Mirror*, 'Family of Tears', we can see how limited Michael's

discursive construction is. Introduced in the terms 'Michael said' and then 'he added', there is a lack of description or any emotion in this construction. The full statement relates to how his other children are finding it hard to adapt to life without Sarah. This should denote his loving nature as a caring father but the lack of emotion actually signals indifference for the reader. In general, his statements often relay information about the family. The reason for this is likely to be down to journalistic choice. Sara, in terms of the reporting of a news story is the "better" source; she provides emotion, has status as a source and talks directly to and for her daughter in a way which is inimitable in a news story. As such, there is little space for Michael's views. The effect of such a construction is a marginalisation of the father. In this case Michael Payne is constructed as unimportant, rather than a committed father. In this sense, his construction is akin to a police liaison officer, whose role is to support the family undermining Michael's role as a key member of the family.

Going further than Wardle (2007), who highlights the role of the mother in the context of child crime, Lule (2001) suggests the mother figure is a 'powerful symbol' (2001: 105) and a predominant feature in 'human story telling', generalising the discursive value of the mother within any story, news or otherwise. By focussing on Sara Payne, it is clear that this news story becomes more of a human interest story, where good people make a difference in the world rather than a standard tragedy. This ties in to the role of the good mother who not only gives birth to the child but also oversees the welfare of her family, acts as a role model and 'tends to the deathbed and the coffin', emphasising ideals of comfort and protection. Key characteristics of the good mother according to Lule are 'kindness, gentleness, selflessness and compassion' (2001: 105). These speak to the sacrifice idealised mothers make for their children, and it is exactly these which are used to describe Sara Payne. Interestingly the ideological nature of this archetypal construction can both 'affirm matriarchal power' but also 'proscribe restrictive social roles for women' (*ibid.*).

In this case, it is clear that Sara is affirmed as a matriarch of her own family and as a matriarch of society more generally. Such a characterisation is alluded to in *The Guardian's* 'We Seem to Know You', which describes Sara as ' a woman who in her darkest hour has mothered the public by reassuring everyone that Sarah was out

there, alive, was powerful reassurance indeed. She was wrong but she was strong, the kind of ideal mother image many aspire to, others belatedly yearn for' (Mulholland, 2000:4). Such an explicit endorsement of Sara Payne only goes to strengthen her personal appeal, create empathy towards herself and family, situate her as a source of inspiration, and in doing so reinforce her status in the case and subsequently as a social commenter.

In line with this, Garland has suggested that 'whoever speaks on behalf of victims speaks on behalf of us all' (Garland, 2001:11). This notion is very literally reflected in the ongoing representation of Sara Payne whose role as the good mother expands throughout the reporting into the role of good citizen when she was appointed as Victims' Champion in 2009, nine years after her daughter's death. In terms of what is shown in the sample studied here, this transition seems to begin in the wake of the trial when her status as a good mother allows her to speak candidly, sincerely and in uninterrupted prose both about her daughter but also about the legal system.

This is exemplified by a statement given outside court by Sara Payne. Her speech is quoted at great length in the *Daily Mirror's* post-verdict report, 'You'll Die in Jail' (Arnold & Shaw, 2001). The sub- headline -'mum appeals for new law' once again singles out Sara Payne as an important actor with important views much in the same way as the early reporting prioritised her views above her husband's. In the main body of the article her speech is reproduced. By including the common vernacular phrases she uses, such as 'what can I say?' and 'you know what change I want now?', the rhetoric appears more open and honest. These phrases are found in everyday talk and therefore lack the formality of many statements which are given outside of court. Although she is direct in terms of what she is asking for, these narrative structures ensure the rhetoric is accessible rather than hostile. When read by the audience, this has the effect of sincerity. For example Sara states, 'But let's make sure this stops happening', indirectly referencing her daughter's murder by a convicted paedophile. She follows this by adding 'time and time again people are being let out of prison when everyone concerned knows that it will happen again'. Again, she indirectly references the perceived problem that convicted paedophiles will reoffend. She then states that 'this is down to the government' which signals the appropriate change for enacting a new law, adding 'we've got a lot of work to do'. In each instance 'we'

could reference her family but within this there is a connotation to the reader and thus a wider community.

The concerns about sex offenders which are cultivated in relation to this case are, as demonstrated here, constructed mainly in the words of Sara Payne. As I have mentioned, it is possible that this shows where the mother and the good citizen begin to intertwine. Garland (2001) states that 'the rhetoric of penal debate routinely invokes the figure of the victim – typically a child or a woman or a grieving family member - as a righteous figure whose suffering must be expressed' (2001: 11). Sara Payne perhaps symbolises this more strongly than any other victim guardian. Her words serve to consolidate a wider group as agents of change, making it appear that together 'we' can achieve this goal – to change the law. This is particularly pertinent to the construction of Sara Payne as a voice of the people. It is also representative of the way she becomes a key figure beyond the lifecycle of the case. This is most pronounced in moments where she references the future; a new temporal dimension where the words of Sara Payne project transformation which we can all partake in.

Clearly Sara, and to a lesser extent Michael Payne, engaged with the media. As noted previously, this has become almost expected and is a commonly agreed feature of news reporting of this kind, leading Greer (2007) to state that 'articulate and "respectable" parents were not only able, but willing, and in some cases driven to engage with the media and withstand the potentially constant glare of its spotlight. Their suitability and capability in this regard made the stories more newsworthy and, crucially, kept the cases in the public eye' (*ibid*: 31). The evidence presented here about the Payne family fits well within Greer's assessments of the growing role of the family in crime news. But what of those who are not willing or capable of engaging with the media? Greer suggests that those who are 'less suitable for media exposure for whatever reason, may find that, deprived of new and newsworthy material, media attention quickly dries up' (*ibid*.). The Bulger case did not, however, experience a down turn in interest as a result of the non-conformance or non-compliance of his parents with media discourse.

At the time of his death, the parents of James Bulger were in their early twenties and, at least initially, had very little active presence in the news reporting, as such they are

almost invisible from the textual sample in this period. The reasons for this must be significant, whether they be practical or ideological, because as has been noted the parents of a child victim are usually considered to be authoritative and impactful as representations of morality and grief.

It is notable, perhaps, that Denise Bulger was heavily pregnant during the trial of James Bulger's killers, which took place some nine months after his death. This meant that for the most part she did not attend. Pregnancy is an overt symbol of new life and of motherhood and as such is opposed to loss and grief. It is possible that as a result of this Denise Bulger's pictorial representation as a grieving mother would have become difficult to uphold.

Denise's husband, Ralph Bulger, did attend the trial but his presence is not active at this point in the reporting either. More recently he has been featured in the reporting in a departure from the previous pattern of representation whereby he was invisible and/or inactive. An insight from very recent coverage suggests a change in the personal motivations of Ralph Bulger who stated in an interview in February 2013, that he has rarely spoken to the media because he considers himself 'uneducated and inarticulate' (Robinson, 2013).

This suggests that Greer's assertion that a parent's ability to communicate and engage with journalists can have an impact on their overall representation. In this case, Denise Bulger's pregnancy potentially undermines her rhetorical value as a symbol of loss. Similarly, the status Ralph Bulger is afforded as an actor is diminished by his personal concerns about communicating effectively with the media. It is also possible that this is diminished by the gender bias which considers the mother-child relationship to be more symbolic than a father-child relationship, as exemplified in the Payne case, although this cannot be substantiated. What these examples are able to show is that there are valid reasons for the inactivity of James Bulger's parents within the sample but, in terms of the overall news discourse, they are still present, if inactive.

Indeed, the family *must* be present within the initial reporting in order to contextualise the event, and in the Sarah Payne case, to help legitimise the victim by

situating them within a traditional and conventional family unit. The facts of the Bulger case mean that the intimate dynamics were being constructed concurrently with the very fast pace of the investigation. It took just a few days to find James and only a few days more to identify the perpetrators of his death. The interest in the case was immediately so high that reporting the facts of the investigation seems to have drawn attention away from, or replaced the need for, a very detailed construction of the family. In the case of Sarah Payne it took many weeks to find her, all the while her mother making public appeals which consistently re-stated her presence and the family as an especially important feature of the case.

Wardle's historical assessment of the visual discourse of child crime suggests that 'in the past 20 years they [images of family grief] have become far more prevalent' (Wardle, 2007:276). Being that the Bulger case took place in the early 1990's, some twenty years ago, it is possible that the lack of representation of the family is not a gap *per se*, and not an anomalous feature of the reporting, but part of a pattern of reporting appropriate to the time.

For example, Denise Bulger's presence in the reporting is supplementary rather than primary; she is present only by virtue of the fact that she is James's mother and, as appropriate to that role, is seen to grieve her son, enacting typical behaviour for a parent in the wake of the murder of a child. She thus fulfils the requirements of the news audience by engendering sympathy from them, but nothing more. Wardle notes that there was a 'lower tolerance for explicit cases of newspaper intrusion than in more recent times' (*ibid:* 276), providing an argument for the lack of reporting purely focused on Bulger's parents.[36]

This argument can perhaps be validated by noting the increasing prevalence of the family, in particular James Bulgers' mother, over the course of the reporting. In the most recent reporting Denise Bulger's presence is prominent. She is pictured and quoted widely, situating herself at the centre of the debate about the efficacy of the rehabilitation of the Bulger killers after their release in 2000. She and her family had fought against the "early release" since 1993 when she and her then husband handed

[36] I return to this 'intolerance' in the following section where I suggest its foundations are based in class ideology. This issue is also dealt with more fully in the following chapter.

in ‘a 300,000-signature Sun newspaper petition – claiming the case highlighted moral decay in Britain’ (Walker and Travis, 2010).[37] This issue was also revisited when Venables and Thompson were released in 2001 and more recently in light of the Edlington Murders, where the Bulger case was referenced in order to draw comparisons between the facts of the murders and in relation to the identity and rehabilitation of the offenders.

The revisiting of the Bulger case at each of these moments does not constitute a part of the newspaper sample for this study, but it is worth noting the re-emergence of the case, and the closer association of James’ parents with it, since it serves to demonstrate their increasing visibility. The fact that this pattern is not elucidated by the sample is clearly a limitation, but as noted in the methodology, the case is clearly complex and struggles to be confined to any model of reporting.

What is important to note is that although their presence is really only captured within the last peak of the sample, the representation of James’ parents is much more likely to have been built up in line with the increasing centrality of families in news reporting. The case, as symbolic of child crime, means that it has been revisited over time in relation to similar issues, and as the case itself has developed so has its discourse in line with the trends in the reporting of these cases.

For example, a *Daily Mirror* article ‘It’s brought back all the horror’ (Kelly, 2010:5) draws particular attention to Denise’s ongoing role in the debate about the efficacy of rehabilitation. Such reports, which are relevant to the life cycle of the Bulger case also illustrate Denise Bulger’s growing and ongoing involvement in the discourse of the case and wider concerns to which the case can be seen to relate. The report states that ‘Denise said it was not safe to parole the pair at 18’. By noting what Denise said in the past, this phrase suggests an engagement over time and a justification of her status to weigh in on debate about rehabilitation; the re-arrest of Venable legitimises this concern, giving weight to the populist punitive attitudes toward youth justice, and in doing so creates a peak in which the parents of James Bulger can be actively constructed, as has become appropriate within this temporal context. This report is

[37] For a more formal account of the petition see also R v. Secretary of State for the Home Department, [1997] Ex parte V. and Same v. Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte T per Lord Steyn

therefore a common representation of parenthood in relation to the longer term lifecycle of these crimes for it highlights the ways in which the moral narrative is revisited by way of the key, enduring relationship between parent and child.

Notably, like the Sarah Payne case it is Denise Bulger, the mother, as opposed to Ralph Bulger, the father, who is more consistently constructed. Although Denise does not conform to the same 'good mother' archetype as Sara Payne her attitudes towards the offenders and outspoken examination of the actions of politicians and government agencies mean that her words have a textual value for the press. In this sense they speak to the ways in which Sara Payne has status, suggesting that victim's mothers' seem to have agency as reliable and legitimate spokeswomen over time by way of their unmoving symbolic bond to the child victim.

In contrast, representation of their respective husbands and the fathers' of the victims' generally becomes less across time. Both couples eventually divorce, citing the stress of the death of their child as the reason for this breakdown. This means that where the husband/wife connection allows the male counterpart of the relationship to remain nominally close, the separation of these individuals means that there are less likely to be joint statements or photographs which allow the father to appear close, if inactive. The presence of the fathers in the reporting is limited overall, but this practical reason may provide a further reason for the ongoing marginalisation of this category of actor over time.

Throughout this chapter, I have predominantly drawn examples from the peaks of the two case studies since these help to show how the moral narrative manifests itself over time. Here it is appropriate to draw on one further example, which shows the static narrative construction of the actors. In this example the construction of the victims' loved ones is stagnant, it is reiterated rather than transformed in this context.

This article, which appeared in The *Daily Mirror* in 2004, is not related to either case but is useful because it constructs the families of both victims. It is ostensibly about the parents of crime victims promoting a new telephone hotline which serves to show how these actors remain connected to discourse of criminality and victimhood beyond the newsworthy moment of their child's disappearance. However, the image

and text is overtly focussed on the mothers' Sara Payne and Denise Bulger. These actors appear in the middle of the image and although Sara is not in focus she is clearly recognisable. Perhaps to redress the imbalance in the image which situates Denise Bulger as the key actor, Sara appears first in the caption and she is the first actor to be introduced in the article. The strength of Sara's construction in relation to the other actors in this article is similar to the ways in which her representation surpasses her now ex-husband, Michael Payne, within the reporting of the case itself. In line with the case reporting he is constructed in this article in relation to Sara and is given no agency. Similarly the function of this, more recent article, is that it positions Sara as spokesperson not only for Sarah, but for all victims of crime and their families. Once again, her dual status as the good citizen and good mother is reiterated although notably, in this example, this is beyond the remit of her daughter's case.

Figure 4.6

Report taken from *Daily Mirror* (2004). '£1m plea for crime victims' 27 April:10

£1m plea for crime victims

APPEAL: Sara, Michael, Denise, Richard yesterday

EXCLUSIVE

PARENTS of murdered children helped launch a national telephone hotline yesterday to raise £1million for crime victims.

Sara Payne, the mother of murdered eight-year-old Sarah, backed the campaign by The Victims of Crime Trust charity. Sara, with her new five-month-old baby Ellie, said: "There's nothing really out there for victims of crime. You have to struggle on your own and that's not easy."

The trust is urging a million people to pay £1 to call a petition line to protest at the greater support criminals get compared to their victims.

It says victims get £18.66 a year compared to the £30,000 it costs to keep an inmate in jail.

The money will be used to provide counselling. Sara was with husband Michael, Denise Fergus, mum of Liverpool tot James Bulger, two, who was killed in 1993, and Richard Taylor, father of Damilola, 10, who bled to death on a stairway in Peckham, South East London in 2000.

The petition line is 0906 780 0999

Despite the relative presence of Denise Bulger, such as in the above image, she is not always active and tends to be constructed in terms of her actions on the day of James

Bulger's disappearance rather than in her own terms. This is very much in line with her initial construction in reporting of her son's disappearance which means that she is not always a key actor even when she is identified - a clear contrast to the construction of Sara Payne.

What the representation of loved ones, in particular the parents of the victims, tells us is that the ideological norms, which the victims themselves are confined to, are equally appropriate in the construction of these actors. There is a sense that these families conform to the stereotype of the white British family – mother, father, children, honest, respectable. This is based on early 19th century Romanticism in which ideas around family life changed. As discussed in Chapter Two Hugh Cunningham's (2005) historical overview of ideas around childhood notes that during the Romantic period an increasingly domesticated nuclear family becomes established. Indeed the patriarchal focus of family life which had, up until this period been an important feature of upstanding families, becomes somewhat surpassed by a more child-oriented lifestyle, something which can be seen here. The highly idealised views around children and childhood clearly remain today. The manifestation of these family traits is constructed vividly in the Payne case where the ongoing discourse is imputed with traditional family norms. In the Bulger case Denise Bulger's representation remains tangential but her status as a mother remains useful to the discourse which capitalises on her eagerness to contribute to media reports. For this reason she is attached to the issues around her sons case, but her value is limited only to these purposes.

4.5 Place

While the legitimacy of the victim, their family and the perpetrator is clearly central to the initial framing of the case, other dynamics are often drawn in to build up an appropriate narrative within which the ideological representation of these key actors can operate.

Place is one of the notable features of these case studies. It is used as a discursive container for reiterating the appropriate ideological dynamics of the case, much like the construction of family. It is constructed differently in both cases, both constructions do however serve similar ideological purposes. The representations of place developed through representations of physical environment, social context and community, thus anchoring the case to broader meanings about the place. This means that the reader is encouraged to connect their judgements about place and its associated dynamics to their judgement about the crime. The discursive value of this is to construct ideological dissonance or consonance (whichever is appropriate) between the crime and other features of the case in order to build up a framework within which the 'us' and 'them' narrative can reside.

For example, there are several textual references throughout the coverage to the countryside location which Sarah Payne disappeared in. According to *The Guardian*, the place is 'a quintessentially English setting' with clusters of 'expensive houses, trimmed hedges and neat gardens' (Mulholland, 2000: 4). This depiction evokes a sort of *Midsomer Murders* setting in which an awful crime happens in a beautiful country village, framing this event within the historical and cultural reputation of the English countryside. In this case, the people who are seen to live in this coastal village, as imagined through the expensive houses in which they live, suggests a well-heeled community and thus the people, as a representation of the place, also become an important reference for judging the congruence, or in this case incongruence of a crime, within the setting.

This textual description of the place and people in this case is symptomatic of an environment which is considered, ideologically, to be risk free, thus suggesting the crime is as a result of the interference of an "other" into the hitherto undamaged fabric of a safe community. This is also demonstrated in the pictorial representations of place. Even as a banal feature of the reporting, as demonstrated in the following example, images of place powerfully convey a particular impression of the location.

The image (as follows) also taken from *The Guardian* depicts the TV reconstruction filmed for the *BBC*'s Crimewatch appeal, in the very early days following Sarah's disappearance. Although it is not clear whether this is a still from the appeal, or a

picture taken of the filming in progress, the representation of this particular image is very interesting and unusual.

Figure 4.7

Image of CCTV reconstruction taken from Hall, S (2000) 'Brother may have seen kidnap van' *The Guardian*, 8 August: 4.

In this image, a local child, who is not named, physically represents Sarah, acting as her for the TV reconstruction. By using an actor, the image shows a child taking the route Sarah did. As a result of the composition of the image it appears as if 'Sarah' walks toward the audience where the reader is there to meet her from the fields, rather than to the as yet unknown perpetrator. Newsmakers want audiences to 'see what the victims are seeing, and feel what the victims are feeling' (Smolej, 2010: 71) because this places them in the unique and intimate position of a witness to the crime, building up an intense proximity between audience and victim.

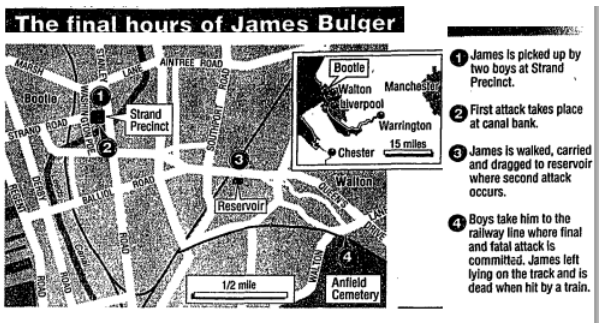
In the image, a house is pictured in the background which either is, or represents Sarah's grandparents' house which was reported as being very close, reiterating that this area was, or at least should have been safe. The visual discourses of this image therefore draw on folklore tales such as Hansel and Gretel or Little Red Riding Hood where someone takes advantage of a child who has become endangered in a forest or wood when they are away from home and alone.

The connotation with folk tales means this image has a familiar but sinister undertone which is elucidated by the imaginative processes of the reader. This is even more salient because Sarah is represented by an actor and the image is presented as a cinematic picture rather than a usual contextual photograph. As such this image is not typical of the kinds of visual images often associated with child crime. It is interesting that it operates on a moral and ideological level when attempting to develop a sense of dissonance between crime and place which perhaps requires more imagination by the reader.

Other, more common visual representations, such as bird's eye views, maps and routes operate at a different moral and ideological level. Such images are more routinely used in reporting, examples of which can be found in the reporting of both case studies (see below for an example from the reporting of the James Bulger crime). The images are often manipulated to include arrows or zoomed-in areas to illustrate to the audience key areas of interest or to pinpoint something integral to the case. The value of this is that they allow the audience to be able to take account of the surrounding area and to link this to the crime, providing a practical contextual framework within which to situate the crime. Arguably, the moral grounding of the previous image, provides a source of identification for the reader, helping them to empathise with the actors in the case. By setting up a relationship between reader and actor an 'us' is reiterated, the purpose of which is to underpin the search for perpetrator from outside of the community.

Figure 4.8

Image of the place of James Bulger's disappearance, which accompanied Sharratt, T. (1993). 'Boys 'changed their story over James Bulger murder'' *The Guardian.* 3 November: 3.



The discourse of the case therefore consistently focuses on the interference of an outsider. This is consonant, not only with notions of place, but also with notions of class as assumed through place. When Sarah Payne disappeared, her family was away from home. It was therefore not immediately appropriate, known or relevant to the crime, to frame Sarah in relation to where she was brought up. For this reason, she and her family are constructed in relation to the place she disappeared. This has an impact on the class dynamics of the case for it allows the Payne family to become abstracted from their lifestyle and for any inference that can be made about them as a result of their place of work, home, community etc, to be superseded by the location of Sarah's disappearance. This consideration of their construction does not seek to make any assumptions about the Payne family, but attempts to examine the reasons for this construction. It is notable that the agency afforded to the family, their involvement in the search for Sarah, as opposed to a more passive role in the case and the reification of the family dynamics, are all suggestive of a level of education and cultural capital associated with the middle classes and so is a construction which is thus consonant with the place.

The introduction of class clearly affects how particular features of the case are reified, how others are suppressed and how the actors are constructed. The fact that Sarah and her siblings had been playing alone at the beach and walked to this rural location unsupervised is not a feature of the reporting. The lack of focus on this is circumvented because the construction of the place and class of the family tells us that these people and this community are upstanding and thus part of the moral majority that the reader also belongs to. In line with this, any suggestion of blame on the parents is partly elided, allowing the focus to remain on finding the culprit who can be fully blamed for *taking* Sarah and intervening so disastrously in this family's life.

Parental scrutiny does not appear in the Bulger case either. This is interesting given that the congruence of location, class and crime, which is demonstrated by this case, and could lead to blame being placed on the parents. Indeed, this may also be part of the reason that the parents of James Bulger appear marginalised from the reporting in comparison to the Payne family: The stoicism so well embodied by Sara Payne speaks to a middle-class ideology. Denise Bulger, a much younger woman at the time

of her son's disappearance, therefore appears hysterical in relation to Sara's more ideologically appropriate and moral representation. As well the aforementioned pregnancy and the intolerance for this type of reporting at the time, this may be yet another reason why the Bulger's do not conform to the news discourse which is being built up in the reporting in their absence.

In a similar way to the constructions of place in the Payne case, as described above, place in the Bulger case also acts as a mnemonic gateway to interpreting the crime. In this case the parameters of the location (inner city, northern England, historically working class) provide a contrary, but equally obvious generalisable frame for the reporting and remembering of the case. The specific location of the Bulger crime, Bootle, an inner-city suburb of Liverpool, is, in the reporting, characterised as representative of the whole city.

Although obvious, a difficult line is trodden by all media in relation to this construction and as such the representation of place it is not as rigid as it might be. Although the relatively deprived area the crime was committed in does become grounds for a discussion of inner-city poverty, Britain's feral youth, childhood criminality and the decline of moral standards in the UK, because the parents of James also lived there, a blanket condemnation of the area is not appropriate; to impose this would put the blame for his death on the shoulders of society rather than with the perpetrators themselves. In this sense, the construction of place in relation to the Bulger case is much more complex than in the Payne case. Although the place is consonant with the crime, there is a still a need to build up identification and empathy with the victim by way of his family and wider community. But because the victims and perpetrators are a product of the same place, there is some tension about constructing Bulger's death as consonant with the place and thus complex notions of blame and vengeance are represented in the text.

The following report from the *Daily Mirror* shows this tension. Here I have included the full report in order to clarify this, noting that it bears an image of a doe-eyed James Bulger, alongside a rather grim image of the railway line he was found on. The juxtaposition of these two images reflects the ways in which identification and

empathy with the victim was built up while still documenting that the area where he was found, which evidently urban, is perhaps undesirable.

Figure 4.9

Reporting from James Bulger case. Corless, F (1993) How Can Anyone Be So Evil? *Daily Mirror*, 16 February: 2.

PAGE 2 DAILY MIRROR, Tuesday, February 16, 1993

HOW CAN ANYONE BE SO EVIL

Little Jamie battered to death – then placed in the path of train

By FRANK CORLESS

KIDNAPPED toddler Jamie Bulger was battered to death with bricks – before his tiny body was sliced in two by a freight train, it was revealed last night.

Sickened detectives were working on the theory that the murdered two-year-old was placed in the path of the train "for kicks".

The full horror of the bubbly blond boy's hideous death shocked officers "beyond words". Jamie's aunt branded his killers "evil beasts".

Treating Jamie – just 2ft 6ins tall – was lured from a shopping centre in Bootle, Liverpool, on Friday.

Two youths were pictured by store cameras leading him away as his mum queued at a butcher's.

Four schoolboy pals, who discovered his mutilated remains on a railway track 48 hours later, thought at first it was a baby doll.

There was a pile of blood-stained bricks around the body. A bloody iron bar lay beside them.

Jamie's blue-hooded anorak was found hanging in a tree nearby yesterday – possibly shoved there by his fleeing attackers.

Shock

The communities of Bootle and Kirkby, where the Bulgers live, recoiled with shock as a police officer warned:

"For goodness sake keep tight hold of your children.

"Until we know what's happened and who is responsible we cannot guarantee their safety."

The boy's devastated parents, Denise, 25, and Ralph, 26, were being comforted by relatives.

Jamie's aunt Patricia Matthews, 26, declared: "How could anyone do something like this to a little boy? They must be beasts."

A psychologist last night urged the parents: "You must try NOT to blame yourselves."

Note

Weeping cousins of the boy laid a bunch of carnations near the spot.

A handwritten note said:

"Rest in peace, little one. You didn't deserve to die the way you did.

"Please God, look after him and cuddle him always.

"You can play with the angels now, James. Sweet dreams."

Superintendent Albert Kirby appealed for information on the two youths.

He said: "There must be someone, somewhere, who will know their identity. They may be completely innocent. They may have stupidly led the boy away.

"We don't know whether as a result of that he came into contact with someone else."

The officer said there was no apparent motive. There was no evidence of theft or sexual abuse.

But after Jamie was abducted, events "may have got out of hand".

He and fellow officers were particularly upset by the murder. Supt Kirby added: "All I will say is that it is horrific and caused us a great deal of emotional upset."

Horrible

As he spoke, teams of detectives made a fingertip search of the railway track.

The line is yards from Walton police station. It is used by only two freight trains a day heading for the docks.

Jamie's body was found at 1.15pm on Sunday by four schoolboy pals out playing.

They were James Riley, 14, his brother Terence, 13, and their friends David Beckett and Stephen Gunnion, both 15, all of Walton, Liverpool.

James revealed yesterday: "One of us said 'No, it's a baby'. As we got nearer we saw it was a little boy.

"It was horrible – just terrible."

James's mum Julie said: "He's in a state of shock. He's really affected and keeps having flashbacks."

A local building boss offered a £10,000 reward yesterday.

Last night police were studying computer-enhanced pictures from the video camera. The two youths are aged 12 or 13 and are white.

The first one has dark hair cut very short and a chubby face. He had a "prominent forehead and full cheeks and is almost cherub-like". The second boy is older and taller.

SEARCH: Officers at spot where Jamie (above) died

POIGNANT: Flowers and note left by cousins

This report was published once James' body was found rather than during the period of disappearance which constitutes a slight difference between the temporal dynamics of the case in relation to this and the earlier Payne image. Despite this, I believe that the visual representation of place in this image, in relation to the Payne case is stark. Two notable headlines (below) also demonstrate the spectrum of emotion and tension which are attributed to the community, whose representation and personification becomes a key discursive container for exploring place.

'Prayers as the city of sorrow says farewell to Jamie' (Mulchrone,1993a 4-5).

'A community left numb by rage and grief' (Ward, 1993a: 3).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the stereotypical view of this community, the tabloid headline is the more sympathetic and the broadsheet headline more critical. The contrary constructions of this case, shown through the tabloid/broadsheet divide, again reiterates how class, cultural capital and perceived intellect have an impact on the representations of crime.

This is further elucidated in a report by *The Guardian* which was published in the wake of the arrest of Child A and Child B, as Thompson and Venables were then known. The paper reports that Mary Hardie, a mother of 10, stated that 'anyone with boys of that age expected the police…I kept looking at my kids to see if they fitted the descriptions' (Ward, 1993c: 2). So strong is this quote, which describes the relationship between a mother and son in this community, that it is used as the headline. An example of parent-child relations usually serves to universalise the case and discourse around childhood and criminality. In contrast, this particular example is incongruent with our understanding of this relationship because it does not depict the protective caring relationship that the imagined readership of *The Guardian* would see as culturally 'normal'. As such this quote is used to magnify the class and social standing of this community in order to contextualise, with some inferred bias, the events of the Bulger case.

Figure 4.10

Image taken from Ward, D. (1993c). 'Anyone with boys of that age expected the police. I kept looking at my kids to see if they fitted the descriptions' *The Guardian.* 23 February: 2.

In the image which accompanies the headline above, the people pictured are generally young, and likely to be in their early 20's which, paired with their angry expressions, has connotations of a disaffected youth. As such, there is a sense of foreboding in the use of this image. It attempts to depict the subjects who are representative of the community with a level of aggression and hostility. The working class community and the people within in it are therefore seen as disenfranchised from the social norms which feature in the everyday lives of the moral majority.

The 'majority' in this case is defined in opposition to the subjects; by confining the subjects of the image, and the report more generally, to a stringent stereotype, the reader is encouraged to distance and disassociate 'us' from ' them'. As such the article's visual discourse contributes to an interesting new binary which is set up between the local people and the readership.

The usual two-fold 'us' and 'them' does not adequately account for how the local people, depicted here, traverse between these two realms. The 'us' and 'them' in this case works on two levels. On one level the people depicted are part of the traditional moral majority; they are not the perpetrators of the crime and nor do they sympathise with them, in fact they are seen to outwardly vilify the two perpetrators who they see as "them". However, in this example the news discourse constructs them as an "other" too. This is based on their geographical location, economic standing and class, all of which connect them to the crime.

Depicting the local community in a negative way, by describing the intense anger generated by the local crowd and noting the unstable upbringing of children in this area, means the reader is left with the idea that underlying moral concerns about parenthood are founded within these communities. Demarcated through class boundaries, the readership is therefore distanced from the community but in a way which does not outwardly blame them for this crime. In other words, the article seeks to distance 'us' the readership and national community from 'them' the specific community from which this horror emanated. This is a somewhat convenient consensus and is being built up to service the interests and views of the readership, enabling them to suggest that "we", "here", are not to blame for what happened to "them", "there".

This is significant because although the place is defined as deprived, social structural inequalities are not drawn on to explain this crime. This is also demonstrated in a rather less provocative article than that discussed above, taken from the *Daily Mirror's* post-verdict coverage of the Bulger case.

Despite this being a tabloid newspaper, similar irregularities about social structural inequalities relating to the construction of place can be located in this article. For example, it states that 'the boy's [Jon Venables'] home is one of the few remaining council houses in Norris Green. It is one of the few without a satellite dish, without double glazed windows – a poor house in a road where others have made a break from the grinding poverty' (Antonowicz & Corless, 1993: 22). Similarly, it is described that Robert Thompson lived in a 'short term council "let" in a rundown area of Walton' (Mulchrone, 1993b: 24). The constructions suggest that these families were at the very bottom of society. They are not poor but 'poverty stricken'. They don't just live in council housing but rather in 'rundown' housing; the difference is not a subtle one. Such constructions have an implicit moral judgement within them, akin to constructions separating the deserving and the underserving poor. This is especially striking when judged against constructions of James's own family life, details of which are minimal throughout the reporting. For example, we are given an indication of where the Bulger family live through a description reported in *The Mirror*. It describes that 'Denise, 24 and Ralph, 26 live in a one-bedroom flat in oak tower a bleak tower block in Kirby' (Corless, & Taylor 1993: 6). The term bleak suggests the area is downtrodden rather than this applying to their particular home. A sympathetic description such as this broadens the possibilities for identification with the case, whereas a more negative account would undoubtedly close the possibilities.

The reality of their social class and lifestyle is likely to be the reason that much of the reporting focusing on James's life, centres on the personal and emotional, which creates points of identity and identification. Details about the family's material comfort, their work situation or economic capital, by way of the fact that they are working class are not drawn upon because such details would obfuscate the 'us and them' binary which must exist between victim and perpetrator in order to powerfully convey the distress caused by this crime and the moral boundary. By providing little

or no information about this, or by reifying the moral and intimate the ideological congruence between the Bulgers' social-economic status and the crime can be overlooked.

In other words, the obvious fact that the Bulger family are working class, and specifically the moral implications of this label, are absent from the news discourse. Such kinds of assertions are usually attributed to actors in a way that underpins the congruence of a crime to these characteristics. As such it is appropriate to draw out these facts of life in the representation of a perpetrator, but not for a victim, for it undermines the extent to which an audience may identify with them. In this sense part of what is "ideal" about James as an iconic victim of crime is not consistent with his background, and so this is conveniently overlooked in the reporting and is replaced with a discourse which focuses on his young age, vulnerability and caring parents.

Overt discussions of place, as shown here, are a sporadic feature of the reporting rather than a consistent one. When reported they help to ensure that the 'us' and 'them' (national/local) binary is reiterated, allowing readers to both be reminded of the class dynamics of this crime and to identify themselves within a class group that would not be connected to it. The broader implicit suggestion is that such crimes are located within working class estates rather than in 'our' communities. Representations of place therefore successfully work along with other dynamics of the case to construct a discursive framework within which the normative understandings and moral underpinnings of crime can operate.

4.6 Conclusion

The main finding of this chapter is that a prevalent moral sentiment is present throughout the reporting. This finding suggests that different titles which, while having a different readership with differing interests, nevertheless contribute to the development of broadly the same discourse.

In particular, evidence for the victim-centered cosmology (Cohen, 1972: 8) is clear to see across and throughout the reporting. The audience are encouraged to emotionally invest in the victim and to see common traits between the child victim and their children, or children they know. This is done not only in the narrative, which constructs the victims in relation to simple gendered norms, but also in the visual discourse which is so familiar and ordinary that audiences are able to imagine the despair, concern and shock felt by these broken families, which before the crime, were so similar to them.

However, it seems that the focus on the victim extends to interest in the family unit too. The overt visibility of this group in the reporting is clearly important to developing intimacy and emotion in the narrative of the reporting. This is so even when the actors are inactive.

Such foci come at the cost of a deeper interrogation of the perpetrators. The reporting of this actor relies equally as heavily on norms and stereotypes as the representation of the victim, but to achieve different ends. The reporting of the perpetrator seeks only to other them. This is possible through stereotyping and labelling which allows the subject to be pre-defined as evil, even before they are identified. Later reports which present evidence of undesirable behaviour such as truancy or a history of previous convictions therefore serve to reiterate and extend the audience's pre-conceptions about the perpetrator and to further extend the sense of distance between the morals and behaviours of these two categories of people.

The reporting is thus useful in helping the audience to reach a consensus about the character of the victim and the perpetrator and to make conclusions about the crime and the actors involved on the basis of these ideas. It is as a result of this consensus that the audience, as part of the moral majority, are able to pass judgement about the wrongness of the perpetrators acts, and to agree that they are deserving of our collective revulsion. For these reasons the audience come to see perpetrators of extreme crime as not only as immoral but as uncivilised or "un- normal". This not only "other's" the perpetrator further, but also eases the collective conscience of society, who cannot be blamed for what is unnatural and anomalous.

Representations which rely on constructions of class are perhaps the most obvious intervention in this consensus. Issues around class were briefly mentioned in relation to place, having a particular impact in this respect, but also contributing to the effectiveness of the representation of other dynamics of the cases (which are discussed in more detail in the following chapter). Despite this, it is appropriate to consider that the discourse around these cases is jointly and collectively built up through media representations which despite their specific political bias generally construct compatible representations.

This is of course all based on what is normal and natural in British society today. The very nature of reporting is that it informs and reflects the society it serves. Such claims are therefore not universal and may not apply to other societies where the norms are different. While the analysis of the news reports thus tells us that the reporting is underpinned by ideologies of gender, class and power this is only as they are relevant to the context of British society.

In line with this the work that has been done on the representation of crime outside an Anglo-American context (which has tended to dominate this field) shows that the same principles do not universally apply (see Smolej, 2010). What this means is that because of the ways these events are constructed and underpinned by ideological norms, representations of crime and the ensuing analysis will only be appropriate within a particular social context which sees these norms as legitimate. Therefore it would not be appropriate to consider that traditional gender stereotypes or family relationships which qualify as legitimate in the British context are appropriate or relevant in other contexts.

Having said this, the norms of western society are similar and thus research which pertains to this context is relevant in terms of assessing the validity of the findings set out here. Gavin (2005) notes the issue of context and assesses that 'the dominant narrative construction concerning child sex offenders in Western societies, identifies such individuals as purely male, inherently evil, inhuman, beyond redemption or cure, lower class, and unknown to the victim' (Gavin, 2005: 395). This account is broadly in line with the analysis of the textual representation presented here. What is interesting is that although Gavin's work applies to sex offenders, similar criteria can

be seen in the Bulger case which is not sexually motivated. Wardle makes a similar connection between visual discourses of sexual deviance and criminal activity, stating that 'similar patterns would be visible in the coverage of other types of violent crimes' (2007: 280). This research suggests she is correct to make a connection between the visual representation of sexual deviancy and other serious crimes. Indeed the similarity in the narrative construction of the two case studies also echoes this connection.

The reliance on historically embedded moral sentiments and ideologically grounded ideas in successfully achieving a coherent discourse is undoubted. Given the criminal context of these cases, an examination of institutional and legal issues within this coverage is surprisingly absent. However, legal discourse is not easy for audiences to invest with meaning and thus the moral as opposed to the legal is always brought to the fore. Even, for example, the reporting of the trial which has an obvious institutional setting, presents a narrative which is focused more on the actors present at the trial, and on their action and behaviour, rather than on the legal structures. What this shows is that presenting the broader discourse, the actors, context and environment of these crimes within a moral framework is essential to creating a narrative in which judgements and consensus about deviance can develop and function appropriately. How this final adverb, 'appropriately', is semantically realised and played out within that narrative is thus central to understanding how the discourse develops. Certain dynamics of the case require particular framing at particular moments in order to achieve such consensus. It is the consistency and connectedness of the discourse, and an understanding of why certain frameworks are appropriate at certain moments which is the focus on the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Scripting the Coverage

5.1 Introduction

Where Chapter Four discussed the representation of key discourse central to the ongoing narrative of the case studies, this chapter seeks to examine the temporal dynamics of the discourse in order to show how certain features of the case are temporally situated and extended. The aim of this is to give a sense of the temporal connectivity which runs throughout the lifecycle of the case studies.

This presupposes that the lifecycle of these case studies and associated discourse goes beyond one highly mediated moment. This is certainly the case with regards to both case studies which have sustained media interest over a period of time spanning 20 years for the Bulger case and 14 years for the Payne case. There are fluctuations in the exact level of reporting over this period – points where the reporting sharply rises or falls - but generally speaking these case studies have persisted as a feature of the news since their initial representation in 1993 and 2000 respectively.

There are few studies which contain a temporal focus such as this. In this regard scholarship in this area is limited. The absence of a temporally sensitive approach in the existing literature is thus restrictive, for as has been noted at various junctures in this thesis, a presentist approach sees each highly mediated moment as an individual phenomenon. Moral panic theory is a key example of this kind of model, and as I have argued, fails to capture change and continuity over time.

In the previous chapter the limitations of moral panic were not as restrictive, and the theory was helpfully used to outline why the reporting of deviance is often bound up in the representation of key actors, in particular the victim and the perpetrator. However, the limitation of the moral panic theory is now evident. Through its lack of temporal sensitivity it assumes that this occurs alongside a moment of panic. However, the representation of these actors and the wider event is dynamic. Over time these constructions are re-visited and renegotiated, reinvigorating public interest and at points, sparking public outrage.

Moral panic theory presumes that after the initial high level of interest and an outburst of public concern that the issue at hand dissipates and disappears from the media. This research contests the notion of a rapid decline in interest. The following chapter presents data which shows that the reporting of the case studies, as examples of high profile cases of deviant behaviour, persists over time rather than disappearing from the media. In this sense neither of these case studies can be seen to fit into the model set out by Cohen.

It has already been argued that each incidence of interest is better conceptualised within a model that sees the case study crime as a long running saga; there will be different episodes of interest, but overall the discourse is likely to be relatively consistent, providing a sense of connectivity over time. This means taking account of the discourse of the case studies as connected and yet constantly evolving. This is important not just from the point of view of developing a nuanced understanding of the text, but also in terms of thinking of the news reports as a set of discourses which may or may not have a relationship with the interview data. The idea of this project is to examine the various ways popular memory is developed and not to assume consensus between the dominant media discourse and the audience accounts; by considering the lifecycle of the reporting here, the aim is to assess key moments in the reporting but also consider the ways in which meanings around the case are built up over time and thus how they may be remembered by audiences. This encourages an examination of the reporting which is appropriately complex and that will also feed into a more nuanced and less notional analysis of the interview data.

The mnemonic value of the reporting presented here will eventually be assessed through the interview data presented in the following chapters. Any connections between these two data sets will ultimately show which features of the news discourse have an ongoing mnemonic value for audiences and the popular remembering of the case. For now the focus is to assess the temporal dimension of the news discourse on its own terms. This will begin with an account of the overall pattern of reporting followed in turn by a more detailed examination of the ways in which the key discourse is ‘reactivated’ at each peak in the lifecycle of the reporting. The aim of this to provide a broad longitudinal picture of the reporting alongside a

more in depth assessment, which will outline how the discourse is developed and utilised across the lifecycle of the case studies.

5.2 Patterns of reporting

The patterns of reporting for each case study seem to have their own rhythm and structure.[38] This chapter attempts to capture the dynamics by considering how the discourse develops at certain moments within the reporting, but first it is appropriate to set the scene by outlining the general pattern of reporting. The quantitative research, undertaken as a diagnostic exercise for sampling the textual data is very helpful in setting this out. The data provides a longitudinal assessment of the coverage in which the peaks and troughs in the level of reporting have been measured, presenting a longitudinal wave. The wave tracks the level of reporting over time, broadly showing the key moments of media interest within the lifecycle each of the case studies.

Within the Bulger case, the wave is a represented by two significant peaks in the early reporting; the disappearance and trial, followed by some low level fluctuation and then one further peak, Venables re-arrest. There are variations in the level of reporting between these high points in 1993 and 2010. Notably in 2001 when the perpetrators were released from prison there is a small peak, but this does not garner the same levels of reporting as the other three events.

The Sarah Payne case displays a rather different pattern in which the reporting rises sharply at the start of the case and then drops off substantially after the trial. This is followed by a much lower level in which the reporting which can be seen to ebb and flow overtime, but critically there are no further significant peaks.

In an attempt to build up a logical account of the temporal trajectory of the case reporting this chapter will deal with these peaks of interest in order. The following discussion will therefore begin with an account of the first peak, followed by a discussion around the trial which constituted the second peak, in both cases. Finally,

[38] See methodology discussion on the different ways the sampling was undertaken for each case study.

the ongoing trajectory of the case studies will be discussed, specifically noting the significant difference in the two patterns.

5.3 Peak one

In both case studies the first peak initially centres on the disappearance of a child. The body of each child is also found during this period of reporting resulting in scenes of public mourning. The reporting at this juncture therefore covers a series of significant events in the chronicle of the case.

It is worth reiterating here that the representation of these crimes is intertextual, TV being a particularly dynamic medium. Televised representations played a central role in the early case reporting in both cases. A prime example of this is that both crimes appeared on *Crimewatch* in an aim to solve the case. In the Bulger case CCTV which captured the abduction of James Bulger provided not just a reconstruction, as is commonplace in the C*rimewatch*[39] format, but a real life video of the event itself.

This CCTV, or more specifically, a still taken from it, which sees the victim and perpetrators walking away from the camera, has arguably become a key recognisable image related to the James Bulger case. Interestingly, this common assertion is not wholly based on the way the image was used during the first peak. Initially the function of this image was to find the perpetrators. Such a reading can be supported by a quote in 'Last Hours of Tragic Jamie' where a source states 'a parent would know from that picture' (Corless, & Taylor, 1993: 6-7). This quote suggests that the CCTV image has been used by the audience as a way of identifying the perpetrator locally and thus the original function of this image is a practical one.

The ways in which the CCTV allows the audience to wonder who this perpetrator is, and if they know them, is likely to be the reason that several different CCTV images featured in the reporting at this time. There were two different CCTV images present in the reporting during the sample period. The first shows a face on view of the perpetrators and the second is a still from an external security camera which sees the

[39] Chapter 4 discusses a still taken from the *Crimewatch* reconstruction of Sarah Payne's disappearance.

three children walking past a nearby construction firm. Notably, neither of these images is the now iconic CCTV image, they are also different to each other, and nor were they consistently and repetitively used. This is likely to be because the two perpetrators were arrested within days of the disappearance.

Given then, that no examples of the now infamous CCTV images appear in this peak there is a strong argument to suggest that this image has had various functions at different temporal moments and that it has come to ideologically frame the case rather than immediately possessing this value.

Arguably such images, displaying a clear surveillance frame, were less common in 1993 when this crime took place. It chillingly shows the time and date down to the second of James' abduction and is titled 'Mothercare' which relates to the positioning of the particular camera that picked up this moment being in the locality of a Mothercare store; as such the title has a disturbing irony about it signalling James' departure from his mother's care into the hands of his soon-to-be be murders. The novelty of such an image could in part be responsible for its discursive value in and over time.

The fact that this image is naturally occurring, rather than an example of traditional photo journalism may also be part of its novelty. Although this does not fully negate any journalistic influence (there would have been a process of selection regarding which still was published and in relation to which story, as exemplified by the various stills of the CCTV) it is fair to suggest that this image is not subject to the same kinds of camera works as most news images, which may be a factor of its discursive value. Although all photographs are technically a representation of a real situation the composition and particular framing of this image, as from a surveillance tape, reiterates the reality of the situation in a way which must impact on the audience.

However, Kember (1998) argues that this image was a source of great frustration at the time. The public considered it to be an inadequate representation of what happened because it lacked any definition, and as such the perpetrator could not be readily identified. Moreover, the image, even when cropped is immediately recognisable and does not depend on its framing to elucidate its origin. However the

absence of the frame does not conceal the nature of the CCTV or its ability to 'disturb the viewer on a number of levels'. This is not least because it makes us the audience witness this shocking event as it happens (Kember, 1998: 69-70).

In many ways Kember's account of the negotiation of this image is helpful in understanding its lack of visibility at this moment. The CCTV is significant at the time because it is a key piece of evidence. Given that the evidence is considered to be inadequate, the role of surveillance technologies is reported within the news within its own right, but the images may not have been used. This is especially likely after the perpetrators are identified, where the search for them is no longer relevant and conversely there is a need to protect their identities. This fits in with the findings of this research that the CCTV was discussed in the texts as significant, but the image itself was not highly visible. The visibility of this image within the reporting does change overtime however; this suggests that its discursive value changes over time.

5.4 Scenes of mourning

The initial function of the text is therefore practical but as I have suggested in the previous chapter there is a dependence of ideological frames which help to define the actors involved and to demarcate moral boundaries. The period of time in which the case gets solved appears to have some impact on the representation of the case and the balance of the moral dynamics. The media require any news story to engage their readers- to sell newspapers. In the Payne case a plethora of arguably generic stories, which often engaged with Sarah's family, are apparent in the weeks between her disappearance and the discovery of the body. This fairly long gap in which there were no leads and no development means that much of the reporting concentrates on the affective dimension of the case and building up empathy between the audience, the victim and family.

In contrast, the body of James Bulger was found quickly, within days of his disappearance. The fact that this case developed so quickly means that the discovery of the body, as a news event, competes with the reporting that the suspects were two younger boys and not two adults; an observation that sent shockwaves through the

nation. The absence of the family of the victim[40] in this case is therefore not an obvious gap, as the audiences need for information about the case itself is being fed through other events which are arguably more newsworthy. In this sense the trajectory of the criminal investigation can impact on the representation of the case.

Despite the apparent difference in the timescale of the cases and the discursive choices which are contingent on this, the discovery of the body is still a key moment in both case studies. Given that both victims were children, details of the discovery of the bodies is not reported in graphic depth, nor is it an ongoing topic of the reporting. Instead, the focus turns to the scenes of mourning which emerge in the immediate aftermath of the discovery of the body. Overall, the discovery of the body and the subsequent reporting around mourning provides a distinct end to the search for the missing child and thus, these performances provide a sense of closure, both in terms of the case but also in culminating the first period of reporting.

The reporting of scenes of mourning is apparent in both case studies, often focused on a particular place where grieving by the general public is being enacted. As such, the reports draw on the idea of coming to pay your respects, picturing tributes both individually and collectively which comprise of flowers and teddy's alongside grieving people who are crying or laying tributes. The function of representing these scenes in the reporting at this time is to provide a sense solidarity with the family, amongst the local community and with other right-minded people (the audience), therefore creating consensus.

These kinds of scenes clearly have a discursive value, reiterating the moral dynamics of the case, which were highlighted in the last chapter, as key concerns in the reporting. But despite their discursive value in building up and consolidating consensus, the following discussion considers such scenes are a temporally situated moment. In other words, because these representations are not revisited in more recent reporting they should be considered as discrete examples of the ways in which consensus is built up in time; important in reiterating particular meanings and consolidating particular discourse, but their discursive value doesn't go beyond this time.

[40] See the discussion around intrusive reporting in Chapter 4, on page 105.

Mourning by laying flowers for example, is a cultural tradition so its performance and representation in the context of the case studies is guided by this normative expression of grief and is thus something which one may expect to see represented in the media. Wardle (2007) notes that this kind of reporting is a widespread feature of the reporting of child crime stating that 'coverage from both the USA and the UK in the 1990s bore the hallmarks of unity through public grief, and images of packed funerals, road- side shrines, and close-ups of cards left by complete strangers were included in both types of newspapers' (Wardle, 2007:278).

However, the connotation of the scenes of mourning, (as described by Wardle and shown below) are more than a display of convention, it is a coming together of the public. By laying the same sort of tributes in the same place the visual discourse implies the sameness of feeling amongst the community. In line with this, the excess of tributes speaks to the depth of feeling for the victim. Through the performance of congregating and mourning in a communal place the subjects of these images show that they belong to the community. This is not only local consensus, but as Wardle suggests, the representation of these gatherings demonstrates unity; in this context this constitutes a sense of inclusion and belonging of the moral majority beyond the physical community.

This study endorses Wardle's finding that both broadsheet and tabloid newspapers report comparable scenes of grief. For example, across both titles the presence of toys and teddy's is apparent. Alongside the more traditional floral offerings this kind of token, when grieving a child, is quite common. As such, the presence of these items within scenes of public mourning replicates the personal mourning of a child and attempts to reiterate the affective dynamics of the case.

Both types of newspapers also represent adults and children as grieving the victim and placing these kinds of tributes. However, this performance by a child has a particularly emotive dynamic. It connects the mourning child with the victim child offering a semblance of the life and existence of a living child in the wake of the death of another. The giving of toys and teddy's in this context can be construed as one child offering comfort to another. Teddies in particular are a symbolic childhood companion. For the child, they represent safety, company and security, something

which is usual for adults to bestow on children. As such this is a particularly emotive cultural reference which is bound up in discourses of childhood and vulnerability; for a child to make this offering the visual discourse is even more emotive.

Figure 5.1

Images taken from Mulchrone, P. (1993a). ‘ Prayers as the city of sorrow says farewell to Jamie’ *Daily Mirror*. 22 February: 4-5

Figure 5:2

Image taken from Mulholland, H (2000). ‘We Seem To Know You’ *The Guardian* 25 July: 4

Another dimension shared in the representation of public mourning in both case studies and across both titles is the representation of religious iconography. Religious symbols such as crosses as well as words like pray, prayer, God, are all present. For example in 'Bye Bye Little Angel' (North et al. 2000: 4-5) relating to the Sarah Payne case, photographs of messages are reproduced each showing an emotive and religious rhetoric. The use of terms like 'bless you', 'safe with Jesus' 'little angel' 'may god' in these messages underpin this. A similar example in relation to the James Bulger case depicts a close- up photograph of a message with religious connotations. It states:

> 'Rest in peace little one. You didn't deserve to die the way you did. Please God look after him and cuddle him always. You can play with the angels now James. Sweet Dreams' (Corless, 1993: 2).

This quote has all the hallmarks of mourning a child as described above, using religious phraseology intertwined with words like 'cuddle' and 'play' which make the message more appropriate to a child.

Representing the traditional and often private actions, words and icons of grief relayed in a public setting, the media are able to illustrate the intensity of collective grief felt by audiences in a way that is universally recognisable. The public, who are 'often insulated from death and disaster, and generally discouraged from public displays of grief [can] go to these sites to see and touch real-life tragedy, to weep and mourn and *feel* in socially acceptable situations' (Doss, 2002: 70) in much the same way as a funeral functions within personal mourning. Therefore, performances of moral behaviour by citizens, such as laying flowers are re-mediated in the same terms by the media as an attempt to construct overt empathy and an identity amongst audiences of this crime as vicarious mourners.

It is notable then that this narrative is confined to the direct aftermath of the discovery of the body also echoing when private or familial mourning takes place. However, it is performed at 'the death site—not the homes or graves of those who have died—that has become the site of these spontaneous and unofficial public memorials' (Doss, 2002: 70) and thus there is a certain sense of separation between the public and private, the ostentatious and the modest, the communal and the

familial. Despite how personal each tribute may be to the mourner, the representation of these scenes as a gathering is therefore demonstrably separate to the traditional and very private mourning which usually occurs in the British context.

This distinction between a traditional and highly privatised funeral, as juxtaposed to an overt and public performance of grief, as in these representations is according to Wardle a source of tension for audiences. She states:

> One of the rituals of family life that does not get photographed is a funeral. That is perhaps why the images of the funerals of these victims sit uncomfortably with us. We are accustomed to seeing other people's family snapshots; we are not accustomed to sharing the grief of a family during a funeral. (Wardle, 2007: 277)

The uncomfortableness of these kinds of images with an audience is something which can only be understood through the interview data, but in advance of the presentation of this it seems that that Wardle's assumption is credible. Her consideration that the representation of this event takes the audience to a place of overt intimacy which is uncomfortable for them is salient. However, this is perhaps only relevant to a western context, or perhaps a British context, in which overt displays of mourning are considered to be a working class display of respectability, which is not, in non-working class contexts, considered appropriate.

Such concerns are reflected in an article by Mulholland (2000), published in *The Guardian*. Within the narrative of the article there is a sense of the displeasure towards the powerful response and the intensity of the grief demonstrated by the public mourning in the aftermath of Sarah Payne's death. This is done with some reflexivity, as expected for a broadsheet, but the text also serves to connect the public scenes of grief to tabloid style sensationalism and the assumed readership of such news. As such the narrative has undertones of disapproval.

The sense of disapproval present in this narrative is undoubtedly grounded in class ideology, which characterises the reaction to Sarah's death, as a 'Diana style outpouring of grief'. This assertion likens the rows upon rows of floral tributes and the hundreds of 'well-wishers' who have come out to grieve this child in the same

terms as the ways the public mourned Diana, the "people's princess" some years earlier.

In one sense, the collective outpouring of grief for a high profile stranger is normalised. For example, the connection to Diana draws on the idea of tragedy and grief rather than criminality and speaks to the intimacy which has been built up between Sarah Payne and the audience, rather than by way of her identity as the victim of crime. As such, this discursive formation situates the event of Sarah's death within cultural rather than criminal discourses. However, the comparison to this cultural event is not necessarily discussed in positive terms.

The overall rhetoric of the report is summarised by the sub-headline which describes how 'platitudes and clichés swill in the crowd. Emotion has long overtaken the lexicon of grief' (Mulholland, 2000: 4). There is a sense of condescension in this phrase which reiterates the class dimension of the disapproval towards public performances of grief. By analysing why people are mourning Sarah in this way, rather constructing a common empathy, the report suggests that public grief is a phenomenon to be understood and explained rather than something which is customary or appropriate. This rhetoric underpins how the audience may be uncomfortable with these scenes; in this sense the effort put into the portrayal of mourning by media seems to be misplaced.

5.5 Moral discourse and the trial

The second peak in the reporting in both case studies was the trial. In the Bulger case, this took place nine months after his disappearance and in the Payne case this took place almost eighteen months after Sarah first went missing.

The sample for both case studies can be broadly broken down into reporting before the verdict and after the verdict. It is separated and discussed in this way in order to take account of the impact of the verdict as key moment in the lifecycle of these case studies.

Given that some time had passed since the initial period of reporting, at this point in the lifecycle of the cases studies it would be important to recap the case and provide some context for the reader. As the court hear the events of the day, such accounts are often presented in the news reports via witness testimony. This is not unexpected given the trial context but although the courtroom provides a physical context for this period of reporting the representations which make up the sample do not necessarily present an overtly legal discourse.

As briefly noted toward the end of the last chapter, the media tend to reify moral discourse which, for audiences, arguably has more meaning and interest. What this means is that rather than focusing on the court or judge for example, there is a decision to construct family connections and emotions which focus on the moral, echoing the ways in which intimacy and empathy are initially built up in the case.

In terms of these case studies this means that the trial, rather than being reported as a singular discrete newsworthy moment, utilises core discourses, such as the visibility of the loved ones to re-frame the case. This involves the reader in dynamics of consensus and intimacy which are embedded as a feature of the moral narrative, as developed in the earliest reporting. Providing a sense of connectivity across the lifecycle of the case studies, through the re-use of this discourse, allows the reporting of the trial- an arguably separate issue- to contribute to the cumulative development of the meaning of this case.

In other words, the function of this reporting is grounded in a desire by the media to make this moment meaningful. This is achieved in the Payne case for example, through the reiteration of the 'goodness' of the Payne family and their close family unit, which has been explored as an important motif in the overall reporting. What this means is that a particularly legally grounded moment such as the trial is able to transcend its obvious reporting frame.

Clearly, the discourse of mourning, as discussed above, also functions in this way. In that example it was clear that the reporting reified the moral dynamics of the mourning being enacted. This suggests consensus and brings to the fore sentiments of intimacy, which, as has been previously suggested, are central to creating a meaningful narrative. However, the discourse of mourning and discourse of morals

have some clear parallels; the link between them is perhaps obvious at a time when a child disappears and is found murdered. In this example, the trial, which constituted a peak in its own right, is ostensibly a legal issue. The sustained suppression of legal discourse in relation to this event is therefore a particularly interesting dynamic of the reporting.

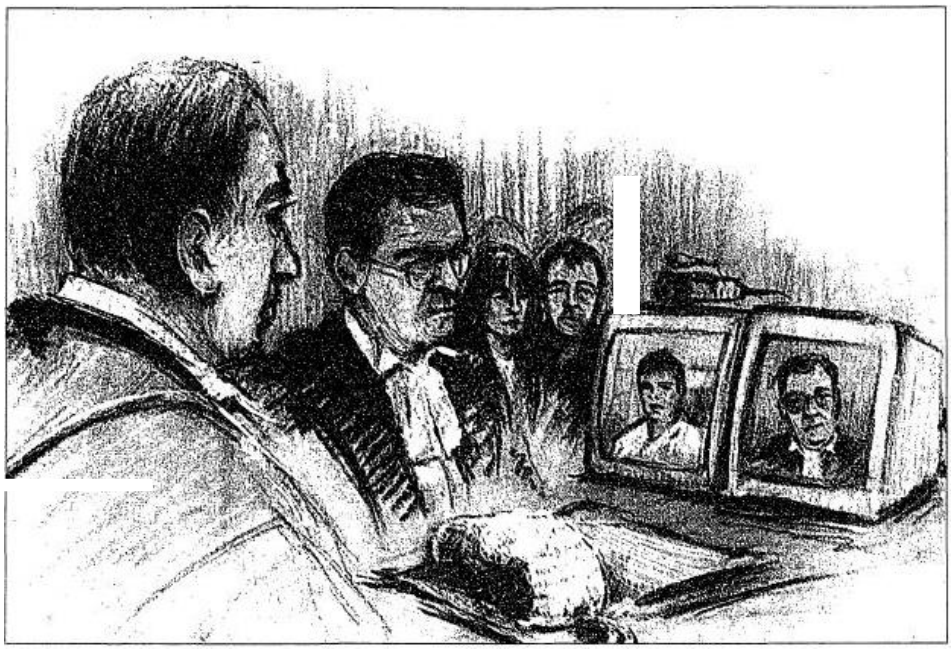
The following discussion shows how the parents of Sarah Payne are central in the reporting of the trial[41]. This is centred on two examples, one from each title, which are taken from the day that their son's gave testimony in the trial. While this may presuppose a familial focus, this example is used to show how different family connections are brought to the fore in this period of reporting. As such, it is an interesting, but certainly not exceptional representation at this point in the lifecycle of the case. Indeed, the reporting of the Sarah Payne case, as I have previously demonstrated, tends to centre on family. This is therefore only a notable example because of the ways the legal is supressed in relation to certain features of family.

Figure 5.3
Images taken from Arnold, H (2001). 'He has yellowish teeth, his eyes were standing out, there were white stubbles on his face and little bits of grey in his hair. He had dirt on his face. He looked greasy and stuff' *The Mirror*. November 20: 4

[41] The overt presence of Michael and Sarah Payne at this time is not comparable to the visibility of James Bulger's parents. Their invisibility is discussed further on pages 103- 104.

Figure 5.4

Impression taken from Morris, S (2001). 'Brothers tell how Sarah Payne vanished' *The Guardian.* 20 November : 8.



Despite this familial focus, in neither example is the child pictured at the trial recognisably Lee or Luke Payne[42]. However, the parents, in particular, the mother Sara Payne, is certainly recognisable. Her long dark hair, which is a key feature of her appearance allows her to be recognised from both the artists' impression and the photographs. As in line with an earlier discussion about the marginalisation of the father, it is only by proxy, that her husband can be identified in these images.

Lee and Luke Payne are therefore, like their father, characterised as secondary actors to Sara Payne who has maintained her centrality to the case since the last peak. This is not to say that they have no agency in the text - they do in a certain sense - but it is notable that the "good mother" is able to remain prominent even when she is not a central part of the event being reported, for she does not speak at the trial.

Where the brothers demonstrate agency in the reporting is in their description of the perpetrator. Both articles, within their respective sub-headlines make reference to the 'scruffy man with yellow teeth' (Morris, 2001: 8) who was seen in the van that

[42] The *Daily Mirror* does present an image of one of the brothers in this example but it is not contemporaneous with the trial as per the other images presented in these examples.

abducted Sarah. This is an attempt to visually construct the perpetrator, providing audiences with a ready-made image which fits in with the stereotype of a "pervert", a term reportedly used by Luke Payne to describe the perpetrator. The term pervert is a vernacular term which draws on the popular construction of a paedophile. It fits in with how such perpetrators are usually characterised, reiterating the accuracy and offensiveness of the stereotype. As such, the perpetrator is implicitly constructed and pre-defined in the stereotype of a "pervert". He is also overtly named a pervert, which also contributes to the repetitive "othering" of him in line with the embedded social norms found in narratives about perpetrators, which were explored in the previous chapter.

Although the brothers are both older children, there is a sense that this description is out of the mouths of babes. They show a wisdom and assurance beyond their years by providing an insightful testimony, and yet it is reported that they are not present in the court room, giving evidence via video link in order to protect them from the event. As witnesses, Lee and Luke Payne therefore have a specific value. This is because of the family connection but more so, any child witness has a specific incongruity which adds to the creation of horror and empathy in equal measures.

In the James Bulger case there are more reported witnesses than in the Sarah Payne case. These are not just those who are formal trial witnesses but also those who are defined by the media as witnesses. The media witnesses testimony appears before the trial in the earlier peak but is ostensibly similar to the kinds of testimony reported from the court case. For example, on Wednesday 17th February, three days after James' disappearance a 73 year old woman 'probably the last person to see James alive' tells the *Daily Mirror* that 'the little one had terrific bumps on his head and the side of his face' describing the 'the toddlers terrible final torment' which were according to police 'seen by at least four different witnesses' (Corless & Taylor 1993: 6-7).

Examples from the trial period also follow this pattern of reporting, reiterating the disturbing nature of the event by way of anonymous witnesses. For example, an anonymised mother gives evidence stating that Child A and Child B attempted to abduct her two year old son. Another witness who saw this states that 'the mother ran

after the little boy and took hold of him'. It is clear that these examples do not facilitate the intimacy and empathy between the audience and victim and as per the Sarah Payne example. None of the witnesses from the reporting are openly identified or characterised which means they each have a less defined or emotional attachment to the case than Lee and Luke Payne as witnesses to their sisters' disappearance. However, such examples are useful in generalising the possibility of victimhood and open up the dynamics of identification in a less obvious way.

Despite this difference, in both case studies witness testimony, "emotive" or not, is used to define the perpetrator. In the Sarah Payne example the perpetrator is defined by the brother-witness as a pervert, a term which suggests a corrupt perpetrator, an indecent act, but also intent. The portrayal of the event given by the witnesses in the Bulger case also supports the notion that the defendants had intent and were seeking a victim. The rhetorical value of building consensus ahead of the verdict is that it encourages the audience to make a judgement and to consider that the perpetrators are culpable for their actions.

In both cases there was a sense that the perpetrators were guilty at this point. The issue of culpability in the Bulger case is a particular feature of the pre-verdict reporting, several articles noting how the prosecution and defence attempted to blame the 'other boy. There is no sense within these example that either boy is innocent, rather the aim is to apportion blame as part of the "othering" process in which the audience are lead to wonder which boy is *more* bad? The expectation of a conviction in the Payne case is also evident. The trial and the verdict in this sense are almost a rubber stamping exercise, the media having already labelled the perpetrators guilty. Such a view denotes a successful campaign by the media to build up revulsion and create consensus up until the verdict is announced; at this point it is not just the media and the public, but the state that gets to label the perpetrators too.

5.6 Judgement and blame

As I have noted, the period of time following the verdict does not constitute a peak in its own right. However, this moment is so important in the lifecycle of the case studies, that a discussion about the representation at this time is requisite.

The verdict is the moment in the case when the inexorableness of what happened becomes unavoidable. There is finally a formal adjudication that states these children were murdered at the hands of these perpetrators. It is also upon this judgement that the identities of the perpetrators become openly negotiated, the media's role in this means that they play a part in justice being seen to be done. This is construed differently in either case study and so it is appropriate here to discuss each case in turn, separately.

5.6.1 Sarah Payne

Upon the announcement of the verdict in the Payne case the legal dimension of the case studies comes more to the fore than in the earlier reporting of the trial because of the centrality of the judge in this decision. The judge is clearly always important in terms of the practical function of the trial, but in terms of the textual construction the judge only becomes actively constructed in relation to his judgement, thus it is only at this point that the role of the judge becomes rhetorically important.

Because the term judge evokes an important judicial figure there is perhaps a more formal and legal tone to his representation within the report; he is clearly an authoritative source and thus his opinion is widely quoted, and at length, meaning the reporting takes on this tone. However, his agency and validity in the text is assumed by way of his title, rather than actively constructed, so even though there is a tendency for this reporting to take on a legal undertone, the judgement functions in much in the same way as the witness testimony to emotively and directly define the perpetrator.

Following the verdict in the Sarah Payne case the *Daily Mirror* publish an article under the headline 'You'll Die In Jail' (Arnold & Shaw, 2001: 4-5). The trial judge, Judge Justice Curtis who has been introduced at the start of this article is quoted several times both directly and indirectly over the nine paragraph article. His words reiterate the prior construction of the folk devil in this case by eventually 'branding' him 'every parent's and grandparent's nightmare' (*ibid.*).

In building toward this, the Judge states that Whiting is an 'absolute menace to every little girl' (*ibid.*). This statement is constructed in the widest and most definite sense, using terms like 'absolute' and 'every' to fully incorporate the subject into the statement. To take out these terms leaves us with *a* menace to *a* girl, but the generalisation of his offensiveness through the inclusion of the definite terms makes the preposition stronger. As such, the reader is left with a sense that it could have happened to their child, which, like the witness statements, opens up the possibility of victimhood, presumably adding to the heightened concern about child predators at this time. Beyond this, the focus on the generalisation of Whiting's actions allows him to be reiterated as an ongoing risk. The reason for this is to fix the notion of risk and danger with Whiting who stands in for all paedophiles. By generalising the risk, but fixing it to Whiting through extracts from the Judge's testimony the report reiterates the pejorative view of sexual deviance within the frame of an expert opinion.

For example, various items found in Whiting's van are listed. This is as an indirect quote from the judge. These items ' including a knife, rope, cushion and baby oil and plastic ties looped like cuffs' are presumably listed in this way instead of as a direct quote because together they appear to be suggestive of a serious sexually motivated crime. This is followed up with the judges account of what happened. In which he states 'you stripped Sarah naked and you suffocated her and buried her and got rid of her clothes – you are indeed an evil man' (*ibid.*).

This passage in particular highlights how the judge is speaking directly to Whiting. He constructs Whiting as an actor by repeating the term 'you'; you did x, you are y. In this sense the judge is used to establish the salient facts of the case and other elements of the trial that might not have been forthcoming in other press reports. However, the choice of focussing on the specific actions of Whiting again, individualises and fixes this crime in relation to him, rather than constructing relations between adults and children as a broader social problem. It is therefore still a very personal and affective narrative even though it draws on specific criminal issues.

Following on from this the judge embarks on his précis of Whiting's character. Whiting is again constructed not as a deceptive criminal but as an "other"; a much more morally inflected description. By calling Whiting a 'nightmare' and 'a menace' the actor is de-humanised which allows him to represent the folk devil of a paedophile. As such, Whiting becomes a character who is once again firmly placed outside of "us" becoming more of a characterised folk devil. These terms all contribute to an impression of Whiting which is précised in the phrase, 'every parent and grandparents nightmare come true'.

By drawing on the pejorative expression: "Every parent's nightmare" which is commonly used to communicate a sense of worry about a lost child or grief regarding the death of a child, the judge leans on the emotive parent-child relationship and widespread concerns about safety and risk to make a point about Whiting's deviance. Indeed, this phrase does speak to every parent and grandparent as the carers and protectors of children, whom are understood to be horrified by such an event, encouraging the audience, and we as citizens to be concerned too.

The judge's expression is thus a valuable summary, having acuity and brevity. In many cases the judge is able to provide a newsworthy evaluation of the case, in particular of the perpetrator whom they have just sentenced. It is the value of this voice but also the authoritative insight which comes from it which means their words are widely used within reporting. In this example the judge is able to summarise for the audience, a significant and complex set of events. His quote has thus been widely disseminated, used in headlines and sub-headlines and is, as a result, discursively anchored to the case. As such the quotes may also have an ongoing salience and mnemonic value for audiences too.

In the Bulger case the phrase which came out of the judge's verdict- an "act of unparalleled evil" does not seem to have the same rhetorical value. Like "every parent's nightmare" this is a pejorative expression which draws on the moral dynamics of the dominant discourse to define the perpetrator. However, the phrase is more formal and does not translate into an everyday vernacular expression hence the judgement did not receive the same level of reporting.

This analysis has hitherto shown that the extent to which the legal dimension of the cases is drawn on in the reporting, is limited. The full extent to which it is described can be demonstrated by looking at the aforementioned article, 'You'll Die in Jail' (Arnold & Shaw, 2001: 4-5). in which the judge states to Whiting 'I shall recommend... that you be kept in prison for the rest of your life so that no further child is added to the list of your victims'. The subtext of this is that if Whiting were to be released, he would, without question reoffend. The reader can be clear about this as there is a direct line of causality running through the statement - I will do this (life imprisonment) so that this (another victim) doesn't suffer at your hands. By asserting the on-going danger that Whiting, as a representative of all sex offenders, presents to the public, notions of risk and the unreliability of rehabilitating such criminals is drawn on. A similar, matter-of-fact description of the sentence is given in a comparable, post-verdict article in *The Guardian.* However, like the tabloid example any legal dialogue is filtered by the moral. For example, it is asserted that 'the jury sobbed' (Morris, S. & Hall, 2001: 1) as the verdict was read out. This example again illuminates how the legal discourse, through its juxtaposition with the moral and affective dynamics of the narrative, allows the reporting of the trial to become part of the ongoing, morally imputed narrative, reifying an affective dynamic for audiences.

5.6.2 Bulger Case Study

The immediate post-verdict reporting in the Bulger case is significant for different reasons than outlined above. Although like the Payne case, the verdict is guilty and the judge's précis of the case is reported, it is the decision to publish the identities of these perpetrators which seems to have the greatest impact on the reporting at this moment.

Two articles taken from the *Daily Mirror,* published on consecutive pages provide an example of the kinds of representations which appeared following the release of the identities. Generally, there is an attempt to delve into the lifestyle of the perpetrators through accounts of their character and behaviour which are used to shed light on whether these children were really evil (or not).

The headlines (as follows) suggest an apparent deviance in their everyday behaviour. Whether this is in terms of violence (bully) or strangeness (weirdo), both terms emphasise a level of deviance. These traits are brought to the fore in the text through frequent references to the school life and experiences of Jon Venables and Robert Thompson. Such a focus is a clear attempt to suggest that there were signs of their deviant nature from their early life, and that answers to their deviance lie in the past, giving further evidence of their essentialised evil. This also signals a search for answers in the hope of understanding what happened and why, in a way which is not so prominent in the coverage related to Roy Whiting.

The headlines therefore set the tone for the subsequent accounts of their behaviour which suggests that they were difficult students and together became even more difficult. One teacher says of the two, 'I deliberately kept Thompson and Venables apart in class'. Such a description also supports the general feeling that they encouraged each other to abduct James, then to beat him and then to kill him. Robert Thompson is also described as 'arriving hungry at school' suggesting he was neglected within his household, but also paying slightly more attention toward Thompson who was seen to be the more brutish, violent child as opposed to Venables who apparently became drawn into the bad behaviour through Thompson's bullying. By discussing school and the view of the teachers in relation to this, the reader is given an apparently neutral yet authoritative perspective on the lives and personalities of the killers.

Figure 5.5
Reporting of Antonowich, A. & Corless, F. (1993).'Strange, shifty .. the weirdo who tried to throttle a school pal' *Daily Mirror.* 25 November: 22-23.

GRANADA
3 DAY PRICE BLITZ
EXTENDED ENDS SATURDAY
VIDEO
SAVE £30 ONLY £89.99
FRONT LOADING VHS VIDEO
20/22" COLOUR TVs
51cm FST TELETEXT TV
SAVE £20 ONLY £69.99
SAVE £20 ONLY £129.99
AMSTRAD 48 CHANNEL SATELLITE SYSTEM
BRAND NEW REMOTE CONTROL VIDEO
SAVE £50 ONLY £199.99
ONLY £99.99
3 X 3 HOUR TAPES £4.95
GRANADA
YOUR LOCAL SHOP

JAMES BULGER Beyond Belief
CHILD B – MAKING OF A MONSTER
I don't think we went wrong, our boy has had more love and affection than a lot of children I know
Strange, shifty.. the weirdo who tried to throttle a schoolpal

Figure 5.6
Reporting of Mulchrone, P. (1993b). 'Bully who sucked thumb for comfort' *Daily Mirror*. 25 November: 24-25.

JAMES BULGER Beyond Belief
ANGUISH OF THE PARENTS
CHILD A – MAKING OF A MONSTER
Bully who sucked thumb for comfort
He's a liar, devious, he robs and plays truant. Where will it all end for my son? In a coffin
"Christmas Savings on lager and cheese,
and lots of others in store like these."
Thank goodness for Gateway!
PRICE CHECK
GATEWAY SOMERFIELD

The use of the pseudonyms Child A and Child B on the top right hand of both double page spreads is particularly significant here. The immediate aftermath of the verdict is the moment when the pseudonyms comes together with the perpetrators' true identities. These articles therefore function to introduce Venables and Thompson to the readership in a way which had not been possible before. However, although it is parents and teachers - people who know these children well - who speak for them, (much in the same way as the family speak for the victim) in this example the accounts serve to uncloak the subjects rather than to give them any agency.

It is also notable that these articles appear out of the obvious alphabetical order; the double page spread on Venables - Child B is presented first, followed by a double page spread on Thompson - Child A. This journalistic decision puts Thompson on the central, colour, double page spread and as such it is a decision that clearly sets Thompson up to be the more responsible child.

Another interesting feature of these reports is the overall visual discourse. Neither article uses a photographic image of the perpetrators. This is particularly interesting given that at this point in the reporting, images of the perpetrators become available. Having said this, the options were limited to the mug shots or school images, a fact which may account for the creative visual construction seen at this juncture. For example, an artists' impression, which can be seen on the following page, is a particularly interesting re-appropriation of the CCTV image.

There are several examples of caricatures relating to the Bulger case in the *Daily Mirror* at this time. Although most are not a part of the reports in the textual sample they are all in broader reporting from the peak. The function of a caricature is to comedically or satirically represent the subject. Within the UK press this is usually used to make a political point or as a jibe at politicians. As such the re-appropriation of an existing image (as follows) into a cartoon form is unusual and does not fit in with the conventional use.

Figure 5.7

Antonwicz, A. (1993) 'Boy 11, cries in dock as court hears of toddler's last horrific moments' *Daily Mirror*, 2 November: 5.

Tversky and Baratz (1985) define that caricatures are closer to schematic memory representations than photographs because they include stable features and emphasize distinctive ones (1985: 45). As such the re-appropriation of this image, in this medium functions to re-educate of readers on the case details.

However, it is also possible that this was an attempt to disassociate this image from the surveillance frame, both physically due to the time stamp etc, but also to rhetorically distance the image from surveillance discourses and to present it as symbolic of the Bulger case in an attempt to reframe the events. The realignment of this image may therefore represent an attempt to provide the audience with an imaginative resource within which to revisit the trial, thus the cartoons, as a subset of visual discourse may represent an active aim to 'iconicise' the image making it representative of the case and turning away from issues of surveillance and identification.

While this is a realistic argument, the actual reason for the caricaturisation of this image remains unknown. However, what we can say is that these examples shows the specific visual rendering of the perpetrators and victims as used to create a sense of foreboding through incongruence. There is something disturbing about the way the children are depicted in the same way; a likeness which implicitly connotes the wolf in sheep's clothing.

In line with this the following example also characterises the CCTV. This is reported during the reporting of Venables re-arrest, not during the trial but it relevant here as it shows how the meaning of this image can be stretched whilst retaining the Bulger frame. Although, not a classic caricature the aim of the image is political, offering an open critique on the tabloidization of the Bulger case.

Figure 5.8
Bell, S. (2010) 'Bulger mother backs Straw on secrecy over Venables' *The Guardian.* 8 March [online] Available at http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cartoon/2010/mar/08/jamie-bulger-murder-venables-straw [accessed 4/10/2013].

The significance of this image at this point in the case is that it is specifically reflects on the pressure the tabloids were seen to be putting on the justice system to release information about the re-arrest of Jon Venables on the grounds of 'public interest'.

As a result of critiquing the tabloidisation of the Bulger case this image also draws on the notion of mob rule in general. This is elucidated through the two central characters Justitia, the roman goddess of justice who, in this picture is depicted with the scales but stands in for the vulnerable child Bulger. Holding the hand of Lady Justice as she is commonly known, is an armoured man emblazoned with the St George's cross. This figure is the logo of the Daily Express so represents the tabiold's but stands in for the evil perpetrator Venables.

The point of this image is that it offers a reflexive view of the way the case is reported suggesting that sensational reporting, which leads readers to put pressure on the government, is actually a shroud in which the tabloid news is attempting to subvert justice. The artist who created this image is therefore delving in to a more

complex debate about the values of the press, but uses the frame of Bulger to contextualise the image and make it relevant to the current news discourse.

Despite recognising the nature of the broadsheet press to deliver a more considered account of news events to a readership who seek to be well informed, such critiques on the tabloidisation of the case have not been a common feature of the broadsheet reporting it. Although it is usual to see commentary on these kinds of issues, as demonstrated but *The Guardian's* article 'We Seem To Know You' in which the mourning of Sarah Payne was described as a 'Diana style out-pouring of grief' suggesting a popularised or "celebretised" reaction, which is beyond the bounds of convention; This critique of the tabloid reporting can be regarded in much the same way.

Although the images presented here have different purposes it is useful to note that they appeared at different times and in both broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. It is therefore not appropriate to consider that the use of cartoons is a simple dumming-down of the visual discourses of the news and to take seriously their value and meaning within the news discourse and for readers.

Greenberg (2002) states that 'cartoons help to render infinite amounts of detail into practical frameworks that are relevant and appropriate to social actors understanding the everyday world' (2002:183). In this sense they are a useful journalistic tool; they impart information about an event or problem within a relevant and easy to understand frame, but more than this they present the event or problem from a specific point of view.

Notably Greenberg states that 'the persuasiveness of any claim about a given "social problem" will resonate only when the audience being addressed is living in and experiencing a set of socio-historical conditions that enable those claims to "make sense,"' (*ibid*: 185). The temporality mentioned in this quote is important because it suggests that taken out of their temporal context cartoons in particular have less resonance, and unlike photographic content, do not retain the same sort of on-going meaning. This is as a result of the way audiences interact with the image and attribute meaning to the signs in the image which change depending on the present context. As such it is unlikely that audiences will remember these specific images. However,

through each re- presentation of the CCTV and the various re-appropriations of it, the reader is prompted to make a connection back to the original CCTV image and to reconsider its value in relation to a new set of circumstances or concepts provoking conversation and negotiation. Despite the medium used to convey their particular message, the value of these images is that they contribute to the understanding of the case both at particular moments in the life of the case and over time.

As noted in the previous chapter, the visual discourse of the Bulger case is quite complex, and is made up of several commonly used, recognisable images as well as the more novel images as described above. This moment in the case is significant for the development of the visual discourse as it is the moment when not only the official identities, but the faces of Thompson and Venables are published too. The images of Thompson and Venables were introduced in the last chapter but it is worth reiterating the function of these images within the temporal context. Notably the school photos of the perpetrators conform to the same genre conventions as the victim school photographs. However, rather than acting as a point of identification, in the case of the perpetrator, these images attempt to provide retrospective evidence of their essentialised evil by seeking answers for their behaviour in the past. This is not only in relation to Thompson and Venables but also in relation to Whiting.

Although, not well known or repetitively used, as in the Bulger case, a comparable school image of Roy Whiting was published by *The Guardian* (see following page). This image shows Whiting as a boy, cross legged in the front row of what was presumably a class photograph. The image appears to have been taken years before, illustrated by the poor quality of the black and white image's composition, the fashions also suggesting that this is a less recent school photo.

Figure 5.9

Image taken from Morris, S. (2001). 'How an eight-year-old misfit became a notorious killer' *The Guardian.* 13 December: 3

Although, the school photos of all perpetrators appear after the conviction of the perpetrators, they obviously depict them before their crimes. This means that upon the representation of these images, the actors have already been labelled criminal by the courts and we, the moral majority are certain of their guilt. The event of the trial therefore labels them 'guilty' and allows the reader to retrospectively label the actor in the picture as deviant: to believe and accept that the person pictured, already possessed the capacity to commit terrible crimes.

Such images are arguably not salient preceding a conviction because the discursive frame suggests innocence and childhood, dynamics which do not help to build consensus about the act for which the subject of the image has been arrested. Instead, it is only when were are certain of their deviance and attempt to dissolve ourselves, society, of the blame, that we seek answers deep in the past to help us make sense of these acts of deviance. By using the image in this way the reader is therefore engaged in a search for signs of the perpetrators transgression prior to the crimes occurrence.

The use of the school image in the Bulger case arguably has additional functions. Unlike in the picture of Roy Whiting which must have been taken some thirty years prior, the images of Thompson and Venables provide an up-to-date picture, thus having a close resemblance to the child now. Providing an up to date portrait in post-

verdict reporting was particularly important because until this point the public had been denied the identities of the killers. These images therefore carry out this primary function but also demonstrate the age of the perpetrators which is central to their deviancy. An image which discursively situates them within a school setting demonstrates their young age very obviously. In this sense these images function in a similar way to the mug shot discussed in the previous chapter; by promoting "the normalizing gaze" of media audiences through these kinds of representations, in which those who transgress normative behaviours are differentiated and judged through their overt visibility.

5.7 Refractions in the pattern of reporting

The data shows us a clear third peak in the Bulger case – Venables re-arrest. However, in the Payne case there is no third peak. Instead of clear rise in reporting there is a more consistent low level of activity since the trial. The activity is much more generic and speaks to the general on-going concern about the risk of sex offenders in the community rather than a particular key event which occurs in relation to the Sarah Payne case.

Research undertaken by Berry et al. (2012) suggests that 'in the area of serious crimes against children the media, and in particular the tabloid press, can create climates of opinion which can constrain politicians' ability to locate and implement appropriate criminal justice policy' (2012: 572). This statement suggests that the high profile nature of particular crimes and the deviant behaviours that underpin them become politicised within the reporting of these crimes and as such, politicians become involved in the negotiation of discourses surrounding the crime. This is arguably what has happened in the Payne case, in which constant negotiations by various partners in and around criminal justice mean that the discourse has become diffused. The consistent low level of reporting around the case demonstrated by the quantitative research therefore signals the ways in which the case has become assimilated in to political landscape around these kinds of issues rather retaining a strong case-specific discourse. For example, in recent years the case has become linked to broader issues such as child protection and recidivism, so in this sense the

discursive container around the Sarah Payne crime has dissolved leaving an impression or a trace rather than the discourses around her being definitively related to her case.

In stark contrast, the third peak in the Bulger case is the highest peak. This is when Venables, one of James Bulger's killers breaks his parole. This event, in March 2010, reignited public interest in Venables and more broadly in the Bulger case**.** It is perhaps an obvious expectation that his past offences will feature in the reporting but what is revisited and reactivated in this peak tells us something about the ways we are meant to make sense of this new event. By framing the re-arrest in way which relies on his identity as a Bulger killer, the reports at this time are attempting to provide further evidence for the essentialised evil of the perpetrator. In other words, by centring the representation of Venables re-arrest on Bulger, the reporting builds on pre-existing concerns about this offenders. This demonstrates a clear attempt to reiterate Venables deviant nature in line with his criminal past, also using concerns about an early release to justify the Bulger frame.

The first thing to note at this point in the reporting is that the alphabetical pseudonyms are not used in this peak. The perpetrators are reported by way of their pre-crime/post-verdict identity, as Venables and Thompson, suggesting the audiences understanding and personification of these actors has shifted. This change means that their (current anonymity) and pseudonyms, which were heavily used in the last peak, are not central to the ways their identity is represented at this moment in the lifecycle of the reporting.

Secondly, the reporting here not only attributes blame to Venables in relation to his new offence, but also to attribute more blame to him, than to Thompson, in relation to the Bulger case. This is a departure from the previous pattern of reporting and tells us two things. First, that blame has shifted, but also that Thompson, despite not being part of this re-arrest, is still a central actor in this case and is intrinsic to the ongoing "tellability" of the case. In other words, although more blame is now attributed to Venables, Thompson is still a character in this saga and is thus crucial to any reporting of the Bulger killers.

Indeed, before Venables' offence is published the ongoing deviance attributed to him and to a lesser extent, Thompson is generalizable and often appears to be linked to the pre-trial reporting which constructed them as equally culpable. In other words there is a reliance at this juncture on the frames central to the initial reporting of Bulger case; that the perpetrators of such a crime must be evil, setting up a moral judgement about the killers' innate, irrevocable deviance.

For example, in the first part of the peak, Venables is described in *The Daily Mirror* as a 'cokehead with a raging temper' (Gregory, 2010a: 4-5) which is an attempt to highlight his on-going deviance. This is in terms of drugs and violence which draws on endemic issues within crime and criminality thus setting up a generic but clearly "othered" frame within which to situate Venables current lifestyle and upon which the offence of his arrest could still be constructed.

The undercurrent within this reporting is the frustration felt about the gagging order which prevents the media from releasing any details of Venables current identity or appearance. In his review of the handling of Venables re arrest, Sir David Omand suggests that revisiting the arrest in terms of a Bulger story meant that for some media 'their circulations could be boosted' (Omand, 2010: 5). However, due to ongoing concerns about vigilante acts against these perpetrators, the media are still prevented from releasing their identity and thus were 'publishing lurid stories about the offenders that would keep the case controversially in the public eye but in terms that did not breach the injunction' (Omand, 2010: 5).

The infamy of their actions, the need to identify and then vilify these perpetrators has in fact lead to their life long anonymity. Fuelled by on-going concerns about their safety within private and public spaces the perpetrators of James Bulger's murder will always be expected to use a new identity, though within the representation of the cases, their identity as the Bulger killers, including their youthful faces and original names seem, within this period of reporting to have come to represent evil and the way it lives on. In this sense, the killers become an empty vehicle upon which the fears of a nation can be projected and then personified. This association with evil is maintained after the offence for which Venables was re-arrested, is published. His new offence which is related to sexual deviance only adds to the constructions set out

above and in relation to the Bulger case giving weight to the ‘essentialised evil’ of this perpetrator.

Notably, although the focus at this point is overtly on the nature of Venables new offence, Thompson is still constructed. The examples below, which are typical of the representations from this time, shows these dynamics at play. Visually and textually Venables is the central and more dominant focus and yet Thompson is also constructed in a separate but intertextually connected article.

Figure 5.10

Reporting from Gregory, A. (2010b).‘Once Evil..Always Evil’ *Daily Mirror*. 8 March: 7

ONCE EVIL .. ALWAYS EVIL

Bulger dad’s fury as murderer faces sex probe

EXCLUSIVE

ANDREW GREGORY
agregory@mirror.co.uk

JAMES Bulger’s father Ralph vented his disgust yesterday at news that his murderer Jon Venables is back in jail for an alleged sex crime.

Venables, now 27, could soon be charged with a serious offence that could keep him behind bars for at least two years.

But Ralph, 42, made clear his resolution that Venables and Robert Thompson - aged 10 when they battered James, two, to death - had ever been granted freedom.

He said: “Once evil, always evil and I have never felt any differently about Venables or Thompson.

“They will never care how much they hurt people and destroy lives.

“I am sickened to the stomach to hear Venables is back in jail for an alleged sex offence.

“If he’s guilty I’m horrified to think another family faces a lifetime of torture because he was free to hurt more innocent victims. But I can't say that I am surprised.

“This is why we never wanted either of these twisted killers released in the first place.”

It was reported in yesterday’s Sunday Mirror that Venables is facing child porn allegations. Justice Secretary Jack Straw has admitted the allegations are “extremely serious”. The Daily Mirror is banned from revealing precise details.

Last night sources indicated the killer may be given yet another false ID before any court case.

Reports have suggested Venables has himself been revealing his true identity. It has also been claimed his alias had been blown at the jail where he is currently held.

National probation officers’ spokesman Harry Fletcher said: “It’s an extremely difficult position for the authorities.

“If they go ahead with court proceedings it could undermine his anonymity. But the fact he’s disclosing his identity means giving him another becomes almost inevitable.”

However, James’s mum Denise Fergus, 42, insisted Venables should no longer be shielded by anonymity.

Her spokesman said: “She can't understand why he doesn’t appear in a dock under his own name, if that’s where he ends up.

“She’s appalled. She doesn’t think he should be at liberty anyway.”

Denise is due to meet Mr Straw this week.

The Mirror last week told how Venables has defied a ban on returning to his native Merseyside to have booze and drugs sprees.

Psychiatrist Ian Cumming said: “Double lives are a burden for people and the secrecy takes its toll.”

They will never care how much they hurt people and destroy lives

KILLED TOT’S FATHER RALPH

FACE OF A YOUNG KILLER Venables as boy

OUTRAGED James’s angry father Ralph

BATTERED Tragic toddler James

VENABLES MAY FACE PUBLIC COURT TRIAL

By IRAN BARRY JON Venables faces an uncertain future as the Ministry of Justice considers what to do with the child killer after his return to jail.

Venables, on a life-long licence for the 1993 killing of James Bulger, may have to appear in a public court after “serious allegations”, probably under an assumed identity.

Otherwise his case goes to a Parole Board panel, where James Bulger’s family have the right to have a written statement read out. Venables, 27, is probably being held at the jail nearest his home. He will be sent a letter explaining why his licence was revoked. Bulger’s mother Denise Fergus has called for the allegations to be disclosed but Labour Deputy Leader Harriet Harman says his anonymity should be protected.

“Court proceedings could undermine his anonymity,” said Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the probation union, Napo. “A new identity is almost inevitable.”

Ms Fergus, 42, appears on ITV1’s This Morning today in her first interview since Venables’s recall to jail. A Ministry of Justice spokesman refused to comment on the case.

Figure 5.11

Reporting from Kelly, J. (2010). 'It's brought back all the horror' *Daily Mirror*. 3 March: 5.

IT'S BROUGHT BACK ALL OF THE HORROR

4FT

Name JON VENABLES

There are several interesting features of this report. For example, the focus on the parents of James Bulger, who are pictured, albeit separately, which contrasts the previous pattern of reporting in which their representation is marginal[43]. The combination of images used is also very interesting. In particular the fact that the images of Venables and Thompson are not paired; or that they are both pictured but separately, one in the mug shot and one in the school photo. This is unusual as the perpetrators are commonly depicted side by side, in a format which reiterates their collective and equal culpability. In this example, this pattern is not upheld. Venables is the key and central actor, but the desire to reiterate Thompson's deviance is clear through his representation which supplements the article on Venables.

[43] Given the relatively recent date of publication, Ralph Bulgers' presence could be a result of his own change in attitude toward the press. This was outlined in an interview between him and Winifred Robinson (2013), in relation to the 20th anniversary of James' death. The representational strategy around Denise Bulger and more widely, the parents of the child victims, is dealt with in Chapter 4, starting from page 96.

The mug-shot of Thompson overtly reiterates his deviance, although it should be noted that most of the contextual signifiers of this genre have been cropped which means the image may not impart this reading to the audience so clearly. On a practical level if you are to contextualise the case by revisiting the past you need to re-educate the reader. The function of using a mug-shot image in this report is that the frame defines the subject as a perpetrator and thus serves to re-inform the reader more easily of the criminal nature of the actor involved; this is therefore appropriate for constructing Thompson. Because Venables has clearly proven himself to be evil in relation to the new offence, it is not appropriate to assimilate the images of the perpetrators to denote equal culpability, for Venables can now clearly be characterised as the more evil. As such, there is a need to attribute more blame to him but also to suggest innate and embedded evil which is perhaps more obvious through the school image, rather than an old mug shot for an old crime.

An interesting feature of the reuse of these old images, in the format of new representations, is that they appear to be slightly pixelated and grainy. This ages the images, highlighting the passing of time. The re-use of an old image as opposed to new images which may similarly speak to the issues being reported therefore suggests not only a convenient frame but an active aim to historicise or anchor the case to the past. An attempt to bring the past into the present suggests a reliance on previous events to appropriately contextualize currents events. In the longer term it forces the audience to reconsider their connection to the case provoking the audience to reconcile the new information imparted in the text with the historic information. Given this assertion it will be interesting to understand how the Bulger killers' are personified by audiences and whether this can be connected to any of the peaks given that their representation at each juncture is distinct.

5.8 Conclusion

In the post-modern context, in which there is almost unlimited multi-channel access to the news and its televised and digitised offshoots, public interest in the ongoing saga of one particular event is interesting. The combination of the immediate spectacle *and* what is a profound on going interest in these events proves the need for

a temporally sensitive approach to understanding the value of crime news in and over time.

The following chapter will look more closely at the connections between crime news and its audience, giving a sense of the mnemonic value of the reporting which may, or may not echo the discursive values set out here.

The discursive value of depicting performances of public mourning is that the local and national fellow-feeling is connected through these constructions. The analysis attempts to show that such representations, despite not being re-visited in more recent reporting, are not totally set apart from the usual frames of the reporting. In this regard they still depend on moral dynamics and the development of intimacy and consensus to reiterate and consolidate the moral judgement, which maintains a meaningful and emotive narrative for the reader. For this reason, it can be argued that these moments still contribute to the accumulation of meanings overtime even though they may not have a specific mnemonic value.

In this sense, it is not just consistency and repetitive representation that define the discourse of the case. The less obvious moments that intersect within these case studies bringing new directions and different meanings to bear on the representation of these crimes also help to develop the overarching narrative. For example, focussing on the issues of justice as reported through a moral frame means that the representation of the trial contributes to the ongoing development of meanings that are important in the broader lifecycle of the case.

Indeed, the shift in blame that can be seen in the representation of the perpetrators of James Bulgers' murder, clearly demonstrates how certain meanings resonate over time, but critically how certain discourse can and does change. This research has therefore captured a notable change in the construction of Venables and Thompson which is thus likely to be echoed in the audiences' accounts.

The re-imagining of the CCTV image at different points throughout the lifecycle of the case also adds weight to the notion of continuity and change overtime. Because the denotations and connotations of the CCTV image are connected with ideological congruence and incongruence which utilise established moral principles the

consensus about the meaning of this image is almost guaranteed despite who the audience is. The caricatures, in particular show us that the process of signification is still ongoing, a critical finding in thinking about how discourse develops over time, within and beyond each discrete moment of representation.

The caveat on this understanding is that the meaning of the cases can only be read by citizens who understand the cultural norms of British society and engage with this society in order that they share the same collective past and national identity and thus form similar ideas about what an image like the CCTV for example, is telling us. As such it is important to note that the consumption of these images and the reports they are situated within is not open to interpretation. Rather, the meaning of this particular image is so interconnected with cultural norms and fears that although there is always the possibility for other meanings, for the citizens of this culture at this time; only one meaning can be read.

The strength of this proposition can only be tested by speaking to an audience; this is the purpose of the following two chapters which discuss the remembering of the cases.

Chapter 6: Meaning-Making and Memory

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have paid attention to the textual features of the news reporting of the James Bulger and Sarah Payne cases. They have outlined particular characteristics or motifs which appear to be significant in the framing of the case studies and considered how these features might be important in the development of their meaning over time.

While textual analysis is a valuable tool in understanding the representation of cases over time and the ways in which particular representational strategies open up the possibility of the cases of child crime being received by audiences, the durability of and significance regarding the meaning of any news item can only be determined through practices of reception and interpretation by audiences. This assertion speaks to the central hypothesis of this thesis; that any high profile event, including these case studies, is undoubtedly constructed through its textual reporting *but* is only made sense of, and thus given cultural value and significance over time, by audiences. It is the audience who actively negotiate the reporting to understand and make sense of the event in the context of their everyday lives. Memory facilitates this negotiation; it is the mode by which we connect past, present and future and is therefore an appropriate lens through which to consider the ways in which a past event, in this instance an occurrence of child murder, is made sense of by audiences. This is broadly the focus of the following two chapters.

In these chapters, it is not assumed that the audience will directly recollect the case providing facts and dates. The nature of memory is more fluid. It is a remediated version of events, filtered by an individual's own personal experience and thus the memories of these case studies performed by these audiences is no different.

As we know, the case studies represent the deaths of two children. This event has intervened directly into the life of the family in question, disrupting its expected trajectory. Such an event is so significant that emotions such as grief, sadness and

pain at the event are naturally felt. This is true not only of the victims' family, but when such cases are prominently reported, as in these examples, these emotions are felt by a wider community too. The ways in which audiences, as part of a national community, articulate how they identify with the actors present in the reporting of these events, or how they relate to the case studies, will therefore tell us something about the ways in which audiences understand these kinds of experiences.

The following chapter will set this out in more detail by using examples from the audience accounts. Primarily, this concerns remembered accounts of the case as situated through the connection between personal and public. This will show that the remembered accounts are often based on a fit between the discursive containers used in the textual discourse and people's own experiences. Although none of the participants was directly involved in the events of either case study, this reconciliation is possible because the reporting of the cases draws on universal issues and historically embedded ideals. In other words, the generic, normative frameworks and moral discourses set out in the texts speak to our various identities (child, mother, citizen), providing audiences with social and moral frameworks within which to filter or make sense of the personal experiences (of family, childhood, parenthood and crime for example), in combination with public events like the case studies, and vice versa.

It is important to note that even those who suggest they have no recollection of the mediated reports should still draw on the same discourses. As the previous chapters have shown, the discourses of the case studies are so intertwined with normative human experiences: like parenthood: like childhood: like grief and fear, notions which are a part of the fabric of our everyday life, as well as features of these crimes. As such, when audiences lack an evidential basis for identification with a particular case, they use common-sense and intuition which often relates to the human experience (Irwin-Zarecka, 1994: 5, 17-18). The audience are thus likely to talk about their experiences in much the same terms by utilising the same ideological frames of reference, imputed with moral dynamics, which are common to the human experience. This will be the case whether or not this has been retained from the reporting of the case or through other forms of mediation.

In this sense collective memory is always bound to something tangible, although not necessarily situated. This study considers that although the '"realities of the past" are indeed socially constructed, the process is not a discursive free for all' (Irwin-Zarecka, 1994: 17). In other words, whilst we know that memory is a process of constant reconsideration and remediation, the ways people share and make sense of their past and the public past is a way of discovering their cultural frames of reference and experience.

Given the ways that the personal and public discourses interact, the remembering of the audience set out in the following discussion cannot be described as linear. Although there is a common agreement across the participants on some features of the case studies, the data presented here also shows us that some other features seem to be displaced or conversely, particularly entrenched in that person's memory. What this means is that where there is a specific and close discursive fit between the discourse and an individual's own thoughts, views or experiences, the memory of a case can take on different layers of meaning. In other words when some features of the reporting speak especially strongly to a participant, their memory may not fit in with the media texts or public memory.

Garland's claim that 'media representations [of crime] undoubtedly give shape and emotional inflection to our experience of crime' (2000: 363), is thus broadly true. He goes on to suggest that this is done so 'in a way that is largely dictated by the structure and values of the media' (*ibid.*). While the accounts presented here show the great difference in the ways audiences reflect upon and negotiate media discourse, it is also demonstrates the common values (not necessarily directed by the media) which audiences draw on. In this regard Irwin- Zarecka's conceptulisation of the ways audiences might develop their knowledge is notable here. She considers that 'people's expectations and responses are very much informed by the distinct modes of understanding possible within given formats' (1994: 29). Her account gives less weight to the power of the media, acknowledging that the ways in which meaning is attributed is also the way which the subject comes to be understood, but not restricting this to media representations. In one sense, both these accounts agree that the reporting of the crime, which is a primary source of information about the case, would provide a framework for memory but it is critical to be aware, as Irwin-

Zarecka is, that there may be other sources of remembering. In other words, we can broadly assume that the particular moral discourses used to structure the reporting and direct the audience's reactions are also those which structure their remembering. However, in cases where the news values and the mnemonic values of the text are not aligned it is possible that information from other formats or experiences may affect a persons' account. For example, personal experience of place may encourage a strong connection which supersedes the textual reporting of place.

It is these tensions that form much of the following discussion seeking to demonstrate that while there is some consensus about the way the case studies are remembered, the accounts of the participants are deeply inflected by personal feeling, moral understandings and experiences of the individual.

6.2 Reciprocal constructions of self

As I have noted, in order to make sense of the case studies, participants often connected their personal pasts to public memories of the case. In the following examples key discourses on offer within the texts are reconciled with autobiographical narratives showing how the personal past and the public past become intertwined, each contributing to an understanding of the other.

Here, Joanna intertwines the autobiographical memory of herself as a mother with the public memory of the case. The extract itself shows how she situates the case within the temporal trajectory of her life and thus how the case studies become intertwined into people's own personal and familial memories.

> *Joanna*: Well, the twins were about five and I was expecting my other twins, so it was around the time I was pregnant with the boys.

What is particularly interesting about this example is that Joanna constructs a specifically maternal memory, something which has a specific resonance to the major themes in the reporting of the case. Such examples therefore establish that audience accounts generally demonstrate a discursive fit between the generic, normative discourse apparent in the texts and our various personal identities (child, mother,

citizen). Discussions of motherhood are a particularly good example of this, as this discourse represents both a central dynamic of the reporting and an especially important feature of people's own lives. The ways participants relate to and discuss this particular identity demonstrates the way they have made a connection to the case and a consonance between the public and private interpretive frames in play. It is notable however, that there are no sites of identification for fathers in the texts and similarly participants who are fathers do not demonstrate particular engagement with the discourse of the case. This issue, is returned to in a moment.

Motherhood, apart from being universally relevant and particularly visible in the accounts of women, who often referenced their autobiographical family life, is also relevant to the construction and reflection on the mothers of the victims of crime.

For example, in the following statement Marie doesn't connect herself to a specific event, rather she described the actions and behaviours of Sara Payne, the mother of Sarah Payne. Marie does this within an emotional narrative, which firmly aligns herself with this actor and thus with the victims of this case.

> *Marie:* I felt that if anything remotely like that happened to my child, I hoped and would have been proud to have done what she did.

As a mother herself, Marie places herself firmly in Sara's shoes in this statement by saying 'if anything remotely like that happened to my child' that she would have been 'proud to have done what she did' thus reinforcing the goodness of Sara Payne, echoing the way that Sara was represented as a good mother. The implicit suggestion is that Marie has the same level of commitment to her family as Sara has demonstrated.

In these accounts, rather interestingly, Denise Bulger is seen as a victim rather than an activist despite the latter changes in her representation as outlined in the previous chapters. This quote by Joanna typifies the almost pitying constructions of Denise Bulger by participants:

> *Joanna:* Yeah you sort of felt what she felt- well not what she felt but you can imagine how frightened and worried she would have been, and what she was going through.

In this sense the representation of Denise Bulger does not seem to be contingent on the media representation, rather Joanna's extract shows how personal feelings about motherhood and parenthood influence her sense of empathy and sympathy toward the victims. It could be argued that because Denise Bulger's representation ebbed overtime, her public persona is not strong enough to provide a singular characterisation within which she can be solely framed. As such participants own imaginative resources about motherhood are seen to have more influence on their perceptions of her. In line with this, the framing of Sara Payne which is so strong and consistent is symptomatic of her construction within the interviews as a good mother; this is demonstrated by Marie, above.

Overall these notions of motherhood, and co-parenthood including the participants' accounts of their personal morality and identity seem to be particularly pertinent to the way they relate to key actors with whom they share an identity as a parent, or indeed, as a future parent. Notably, this is in generic terms where participants talk of their impression of the actor and not any specific action or statement. The ways that audiences impressions coalesce with notions of the good and bad parent are therefore important in the remembering of them. Participants remembering of these actors could therefore be understood within the terms set out in the introduction to this chapter, as reliant on the media texts but ultimately given value through their own imaginative resources.

The implication here is that the media reports do not define the remembering of these actors. Although it is clear that the remembering bears hallmarks of the representational strategies used to frame key actors, the audience actually give accounts which are inflected with their own impressions. This is not only true of the parents but other actors in the case, which I will come to later.

For some participants, notably female participants, the role of mother and the significance of motherhood as a caring, nurturing identity, as is portrayed in the texts and broadly remembered as above, represents an opportunity to think about future parenthood and family life. In both examples presented here this future is constructed in relation to traditional gender norms adding weight to the gendered concerns which are apparent in the previous examples.

This conceptualisation is pertinent to the ways forward projection is apparent in Marie's narrative (below). Her experience of pregnancy encourages her to consider the life of her child and the role she, as the mother of this child, is taking on. Although this happened in the past, her memory of this time describes the ways she imagined motherhood and the life of her as yet, unborn baby.

> *Marie:* I can remember when I was pregnant – if I had a girl I could really look after her and keep her safe and if I had boys I had to reign in protectiveness to make them tough because I didn't want to have "namby-pamby" boys. I might have different views if I'd have daughters.

Marie's account is based on her perceptions of motherhood relaying her thoughts about the gender norms of the child and how this impacted on her experience of pregnancy and parenthood. The future is therefore already ideologically situated; it is not only what it means to be a parent, but also what it means to be a child in the future that is significant in these accounts. The fact that the future dimension is discussed in relation to parenthood is again particularly pertinent to the discourse of the case.

According to Irwin- Zarecka the future is significant because 'as a vision [it] - enters the process of constructing and framing "realities of the past"' (Irwin- Zarecka, 1994: 101). In her own work she uses this phrase to describe the ways in which we build, collect or retain objects in personal and institutional contexts, which we will look at in the future in order to remember the past. Although memory objects are not a container for the process of remembering undertaken by audiences, the quote is still relevant. It speaks to the way audiences use their experiences, views, thoughts and interactions as imaginative resources to make sense of these cases. The future, as she notes, is just as important as the past in making sense of the world around us. Indeed audiences do not only discuss the case studies as a past event, but a dynamic imaginative resource for considering risk, parenthood, crime, safety, in the present and future too.

> *Evie*: When I have children, even them playing round the street. I'm going to be losing my mind thinking where are they? What are they doing?

This example shows Evie projecting into the future. It illustrates how the reporting of the cases, which clearly utilises moral frameworks of parenting, act as a clear way of constructing and communicating normative models of parenthood. Indeed this is part of the process by which ideologically embedded ideas are continuously made relevant in everyday life; these frameworks coalesce in the reporting of the case, almost reifying the victimhood of families and bolstering the moral ideals of parenting. These examples show how participants have intertwined the case studies into their expected life trajectory in a way which echoes how they intertwine with the personal past. This authentically underpins how and why such cases can have lasting resonance and ongoing cultural significance; they cease to become irrelevant because they speak to such a significant feature of people's lives, given that parenthood is part of the usual trajectory of adult life. What can be concluded from this is that the framing of public memory of iconic cases acts as a discursive framework for the transmission of social norms, not in an abstract sense, but in the ways that they become imaginative resources for the understanding of personal experience.

Now to return to the issue of gender more broadly. Generally the men interviewed did not, as traditional stereotypes would have us suggest, display as much emotion as the women interviewed. Despite this, their responses certainly contained empathy which, bearing in mind the undoubtedly tragic subject matter, should not be unexpected. However, the responses were different and these differences could be attributed to gender in which it is expected and assumed that women will be emotionally impacted by these cases. Such differences are articulated by participants in their accounts of the cases studies. For example Tod suggests that women may be attracted to the affective dimensions more than men.

> *Tod*: Possibly maybe females are more interested and they think about things a bit more… a bit more sensitive to things like that.

Tod's statement is centred on traditional gender differences whereby women are sensitive and tend to mull things over, whereas men are traditionally straightforward and practical. In line with this Evie also considers the differences between men and women in negotiating the cases and their significance. She states:

> *Evie*: Maybe the men are less of worriers. The women are more… worrying, looking at the details and the words; maybe they take that in more- the images. The family images.

It is interesting that Evie focuses on the images as a particular feature of the reporting that would interest or affect women. According to Keightley (2007), of particular importance to her participants, in a study of women's experiences of the past, 'was the family album in constructing feminine identities, such as mother or daughter, and in constructing a more longitudinal sense of familial identity'(Keightley, 2007: 10). Evie's understanding of the importance of images within the news context may therefore be a reflection of the ways she utilises photographs in her everyday life.

Although Walter, another male participant, didn't overtly discuss gender as a particular feature of the case studies, his view that this type of crime wouldn't happen to his family exhibits a similarly gendered response akin to Tod and Evie. This is in respect of his pragmatic approach to parenting which I suggest results from his role within a traditional and patriarchal family unit; he is at the head of this family and his wife takes responsibility for child rearing.

> *Walter*: I was much more concerned that they would get run over or drown in a swimming pool or get injured in some way than they were going to be abducted or murdered that wasn't even something that crossed my mind to be honest…I think I just take the view that I'm not likely to win the lottery so it's got to be very bad luck for that to happen and in general you don't get terribly terribly bad luck and you don't get terribly terribly good luck. That's where I'm at really- what is likely to happen? They're likely to get married. It's unlikely they'll father quintuplets. That's not the sort of thing that generally happens.

In remembering the fears he had when his own children were young, Walter's example displays, not only a less emotional approach to the case studies and to the idea of child victimhood, but it also seems to exemplify the attitude of the traditional strong and silent father**.** This role compliments and contrasts with the outwardly emotional mother who he suggested would have been the one to warn the children

about strangers; ‘it’s a mother to child thing rather than a father to child thing’ he states. This has parallels to the ways in which Sara Payne and Michael Payne were framed within the reporting. While I don’t suggest that Walter is influenced by this representation in any direct way, it shows how prevalent social norms are both within the texts and in the accounts of the participants. The effect of both such examples is that the masculine and feminine norms of father and motherhood are legitimised. However, it is important to note that the hegemonic familial ideology which is represented by these examples is not a performance of natural categories of social life.

The ways in which masculinity and femininity are embedded within society means that it is all too easy to consider them as natural. Like other binaries reported in this analysis (evil/innocent for example), the ways in which we react to people defined by these categories is historically and social pre-determined and is reliant on the ongoing representation of the ideology, such as within the reporting of the case studies. The ways in which men and women react to the cases is as much as a result of the gendered nature of the textual reporting of the cases as it is of the ways these roles are reiterated in other media and within daily life. As the textual analysis shows, the mothers of the victims were key actors due to the specific, ideologically valuable relationship between mother and child. In this sense it is not only the fathers of the victims who are marginalised but also men, who as audiences of the news, who are provided with little in terms of identification to the case. The plethora of opportunities for maternal identification as opposed to paternal ones is in line with the broadly different accounts of the case given by the participants. Where a case like this focuses on fatherhood, the remembering would likely be different; however this would represent a non-traditional attitude because the points of identification in texts and frames would differ from the status quo of maternal identification. It is clear then that it is not only what people ‘remember’ but also the constructed past, including commonly shared and collectively commemorated ideas or events, which not only reflect the past but also shape the way we can articulate ourselves in the present. Memory as an imaginative resource, which cuts across all temporal dimensions, functions alongside the texts we consume, to provide a symbolic framework which enables us to make sense of the world, the case studies and what they mean to us.

6.3 Recoiling from and reconstructing deviance

The examples above demonstrate that the participants actively negotiate the connection between themselves and the victim families, even if they do not align themselves with the victim and the affective dynamics of the case. The same cannot be said for the families of the perpetrators who are not remembered as actors in their own right, in fact any connection to them rarely negotiated. Although it isn't surprising that participants didn't consider themselves in the role as child perpetrator or parent of perpetrator, the lack of any consideration highlights how people separate themselves from the deviant behaviours and lifestyle of the perpetrators by simply avoiding it.

This is in line with Jewkes' summary of Morrison's work on youth stating that 'we recall and recoil from our own memories of ourselves as youths, we hang on to the ideal of children as precious innocents who must be protected from the sordid and spoiled' (Jewkes, 2004: 99). This is not to say that the participants are hiding memories of a dark youth which they might be able to reflect on to understand these crimes. Rather, Jewkes' summary helps us understand that participants are more likely to focus on the victim and themes of innocence and protection for this can be easily intertwined into the cultural memory and supported by social norms and ideals. The alternative is to try to understand the actions of the perpetrators. To do so would go against the cultural norm and uncloak a paradox whereby we suppress the youthful experiences which as adults we consider to be wrong, shameful or misguided.

In memory studies terms this is interesting for these accounts are not personally traumatic. 'Forgetting' is usually associated with trauma, but in this instance the avoidance of certain aspects of the case is largely to do with social acquiescence. History is often considered to be written by the winners and in this sense the public memory of these cases is no different. There is a sense of conformity in the audience accounts which sees audiences affiliate themselves with the moral majority, rather than taking account of realities of society which may in part have led to these crimes. This is not assenting to the *Invention of Tradition* model (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1992), which describes how new 'truths' can be constructed by changing the way we account for the past in the present. Rather than describing these accounts as invented,

the narratives show the audiences' frame of reference. The utilisation of long standing, universally accepted ideas such good vs. evil, rather than personal experience, newspaper reports or popular rhetoric, to make claims about the case is a more principled discourse. This allows audiences to have the last word, so to speak, to assert their views in a way which cannot easily be disputed because such views are based on long standing and embedded moral teachings.

The exception to this is Tod who states, 'I can't imagine it ever crossed my mind to do something like this'. Although he asserts that as a child he would not have committed such a crime, his statement shows that he has been able to reflect on this case in a personal way. As a young man originally from Liverpool, his was the closest profile to that of the actual perpetrators and as such this open reflexivity is surprising. It suggests a genuine contemplation of the events of the case rather than a more expected, defensive approach. In this sense the case is being used as a critical framework for evaluating and reaffirming Tod's own sense of self, but as above, this is within the moral boundaries set by the reporting of the case. What this means is that Tod is using the case as a way of thinking about his own actions and behaviours; this helps him to affirm his position as a 'good' person because he wouldn't have done something bad – the bad being the actions of the perpetrators as defined by the reporting of the case.

Although this shows that participants do not explicitly affiliate themselves with the perpetrators families there are similar examples in which audiences contemplate the family life of the perpetrators. This broadly contrasts with earlier accounts of the victim as it is done in generic rather than familiar terms. Participants were generally unable to draw on any factual information about the lives of these children and their families but in several examples utilised the stereotype of a bad family to consider the lifestyle of the perpetrators and their actions. This particular frame – the bad family or bad home – is used as a search for answers in the individual pasts of the perpetrators. This is used here, particularly in relation to the James Bulger case, in which the families of the perpetrators were specifically described as 'bad'. This term allows participants to ignore the structural social and economic factors which create the conditions for these children to be neglected (if they were) or at the very least marginalised from society. Several examples follow:

> *Evie*: It's unbelievable, the fact that two young boys could do that. I'd want to know a bit more about the boys like the families and maybe why they done it. Did they come from a bad family?

Evie's statement is a typical example of the ways in which a consideration of home life is drawn on by participants as a specific answer to the question of why these two young children committed such a heinous crime. Work by Machado and Santos (2009) helps us to understand this conceptualisation. Their argument states that 'the intense and emotionalized reporting of high profile cases, particularly in the sensationalist press, provides a path for the public's engagement as "mediated witnesses", by which readers are invited to take sides, to identify themselves with victims and their victimhood, and to "experience" crime for personal consumption' (Machado and Santos, 2009:150).

As such the bad family, in combination with other moral dynamics, offers a more socially acceptable way of making a judgement and taking sides, which we as citizens and as moral guardians are expected to do. Whereas the idea of innate evil is arguably less rational and more reactionary, by explaining the deviance of the perpetrators through the notion of a bad family, the participant is able to situate themselves as being on the right side of the moral boundary, whilst also engaged in the debates and issues at hand. Although potentially neither judgement is accurate or constructive in discerning the reasons for the perpetrator's behaviour, these ideas serve as convenient frames within which to "other" the life and lifestyle of those who are "to blame".

The parents as the head of the family unit in normative constructions are responsible for the actions of their child and thus the respective parents of Venables' and Thompson could be expected to shoulder much of the blame for the boys' bad upbringing. Such an account would be in-line with some of the post-trial reporting which focussed, if fleetingly, on the parents of Jon Venables and Robert Thompson.[44] However, as noted in Chapter's Four and Five, the reporting of the Bulger crime had various foci and whilst the parents were discussed, the idea that the boys themselves were evil was also reported heavily. Notably where the family life was discussed it

[44] See Chapter 5, section 6.2, from page 143, for an account of the post trial reporting in the Bulger case.

was done as a soap opera saga rather than a genuine attempt to understand the perhaps deep-rooted structural problems which create the conditions of neglect, poverty and social ostracism which arguably had a part to play in this tragedy.

This discourse of bad parenting, although not tightly bound to media representations, is certainly a feature of popular notions of criminality and class. The disciplining effect of this discourse is an unanticipated feature of the audience accounts, judgement and blame, clearly still at the forefront of people's mind when making sense of this crime. These ideas are combined in the following extract in which Joanna discusses the perceived effect of bad parenting: 'to do what they did obviously their parents never sat there and told them right from wrong -you shouldn't do this you shouldn't do that'. This quote provides a general description of a "bad" parent in relation to this case, *sans* label. As noted above, the onus is on the parent to bring their child up with values and discipline and so we assume that such a responsibility was not a feature of Venables and Thompson's upbringing. This issue is discussed further in the coming pages.

According to Young (1996), there is a 'generalised insistence that children are only the sum of their parents' virtues or faults' (Young, 1996: 96). These notions were most obviously identified in the reporting of the Bulger trial when the identities of the perpetrators, and therefore their families, was released to the public. There were discernible facts (divorce, truancy from school, violence in the home, absent father, depression) in both perpetrators' family histories that enabled them to be labelled as deviant and attempted to show that family life was to blame for the boys' behaviour. The fact that children are seen as the sum of their parents' education and moralisation has therefore allowed or enabled the parents of Jon Venables and Robert Thompson to be held to account for their children's actions. Given the cursory manner in which these families were dealt within the text, it is interesting that the bad family is negotiated in such depth by the participants.

A particularly interesting and reflexive view on the impact of family life on the perpetrators of James Bulger's murder is again provided by Tod who suggests that 'it's not always the parents fault, but an upbringing can be a factor'. He states: 'I've known people who the parents are fantastic and they've turned out a bit… off'.

Although Tod identifies that upbringing could be factor in the perpetrator's criminality, he asserts that there could be other reasons. He is not forthcoming in what these reasons are, but displays a more personal perspective on the reason for criminal behaviour as opposed to relying on the "bad" frame.

The utilisation of this frame should therefore be seen as a way of policing the moral boundaries of family life, thus denying the impact of social structural influences and placing the blame on the family, whether implicitly or explicitly. In this sense the mediated, sensationalised version of events, however limited, has some lasting value, although this is almost certainly underpinned by the inability of the public to take note of social structural inequalities in various contexts, and not just as feature of this case.

In this sense the fact that participants seek a reason for the behaviour of the children and look to the family in order to absolve society of any blame is therefore unsurprising; but in blaming the parents the boys themselves are also absolved of some of the blame, which again creates tension because we seek to define them as evil. The continual shifting from social to naturalistic explanations thus allows people to make sense of the crime through various frames, and to identify one, that perhaps is more fitting with their wider understanding of crime and criminality. In this sense the mediated version of events lacks a specific mnemonic value but contributes to a more general matrix of understandings about crime, something which has ultimately filtered into the public memory of this case.

The fact that two differing perspectives (social and natural causes) exist within the same discourse is evidence of the confused attitudes we have towards children in modern society. Altheide convincingly argues that 'children are a powerful symbol for "protection" as well as "punishment"' (Altheide, 2009: 1356). In isolation these dichotomous views encourage us to either defend or condemn them. However, when both these arguments are convergent, as they are within the James Bulger case, the line between good and bad cannot be so easily drawn. What the participants' accounts therefore show is how the case has become a site for struggle between the ideologically embedded binary of evil versus innocence.

The obvious tensions that exists in participants' attempts to explain the behaviours of the perpetrators suggest that a sense of cultural and personal unease has seeped into the discourses of the case. Participants are still tied to the ideologically embedded dichotomy of evil versus innocent but also reveal concerns about the education and moralisation of the children in an attempt to be more reflexive and less reactionary. The ongoing concern about this is built on in the following chapter.

6.4 Class and discipline

The examples I have presented in this chapter so far have a common thread; they tell us about notions of normative parenthood and childhood in modern society. Particularly in the last section, through the participants' reflections on the deviant nature of these cases, an insight into the disciplining nature of these cases can be foreseen. In these examples, both the concerns about child victimhood and fears about child criminality seem to be closing in around the family, promoting conformity and discipline. These pressures appear to come from the fact that family life has become more privatised, which means parents now have a greater responsibility to educate their children with 'increasing isolation from the rest of society' (Cunningham, 2005: 6). In practice this means that children are 'under greater scrutiny and adult control' (Honeyman, 2005: 29), and to paraphrase Young (1996), are thus a reflection of their parents and family. This means that a child's behaviour is seen as deriving from parenting practices and family life.

In bringing this discussion back to the individual and to exploring a synthesis between the personal and public, the following quote from Joanna is interesting. She uses an example from her own past, within which she notes why she would not have behaved badly as a child. She states:

> *Joanna:* It was a bit about my mum and dad finding out- if they found out they'd go mad, but you wouldn't do it – would you? We were brought up to respect people. I think as well our parents probably drummed it into us more because they didn't want us to go out and be disrespectful to people they knew. So it was possibly why we were brought up like that. You know, you

> don't give cheek, don't be disrespectful. If we did give cheek they'd come round to see me mum and dad and we'd be told off.

This account is clearly bound up in notions of community and moral values which she describes as being lost; 'Now that community spirit has gone I feel that no-one cares like they used to do'. More than this Joanna's extract gives a sense of the ways family and society have always come together, but how they can collide too. This is especially relevant to issues of deviance, which often spark community concern or outrage even when they are not highly mediated.

The discursive spaces of personal and social can therefore be seen to come together in the remembering of these cases in several ways. In Van Dijck's words the case studies 'act as "mediators" between individuals and collectivity' (Van Dijck, 2007: 2). While this happens in the present, it is clear that the past, recent and distant, contributes to this process of mediation too. Our sense of identity and community are altered and subject to constant remodelling over time, in this instance distant pasts meet with more recent ones highlighting how our own experiences, in combination with texts, act as resources for the negotiation and articulation of our ideas.

Similar ideas were present in various accounts given, which centred on the wider social-cultural climate of the day. It is in these examples that the wider impact of the case and the ways that they remain closely linked to issues of childhood, parenthood and morality can be seen.

> *Harriet*: We're much more lenient with our kids because of ….of people saying you can't smack your children anymore and you feel like you can't discipline them in front of your friends anymore because *you're* seen to be behaving badly so it's always you're the problem not the child. There are too many influences of 'busy bodying' in parenting these days, I think, you know, the fact that… when I had my children I had four under five and I could take them all swimming so I'd take them swimming once a week and we'd feed the ducks - we were always out. Now you can't take your children swimming- there's a limit. You can only take two, so if you have four kids you can't go swimming so, you know, things are changing.

In line with this statement Evie discusses the social pressures on parenting more broadly:

> *Evie:* People think you should know where your children are, like with the riots- you should know where your children are and if you don't you're a bad parent and that was very much - *you* should know where they are. If they're in the riots - you're a bad parent. So I guess society does think you should know where your kids are…

Evie's statement highlights the link between the behaviours of the child and parent and by drawing on the 2011 London riots she relates to a context more relevant to issues of crime and criminality. Because of this, her account reflects the ways in which participants discussed the misgivings of the parents of Robert Thompson and Jon Venables, by describing how the deviance of the child is a reflection of the parent. Evie does this in a way which describes an increasing social pressure but nevertheless the same link between parent and child is made. This gives weight to the idea that these cases, and the network of cases they are related to, have a disciplining effect on audiences.

In combination, these examples highlight the disciplining nature of the cases, in particular the normative ideals of good parenting as dictated by "a Society". The idea that we should worry about our children, or certainly that mothers should, is an implicit but strong undercurrent of the participants' statements. This is borne out through the remembering, where participants reproduce the discourses around risk, fear and childhood and utilise a moral framework to consider solutions and safety measures which are relevant to their lifestyles, something which again, is compounded by class and their socio-economic standing.

Clearly the connection to parenthood and discipline is an important one, but the focus in the statements on an all-seeing society, which deems our behaviours to be proper or not is particularly noteworthy. This has notions of "Big Brother" and suggests that the disciplining discourse of the case studies are more far reaching than for parents alone. In another later extract by Evie, she goes on to state that 'with all the stories you hear on TV, you just think "oh no" because it could happen to anyone'. Although not displaying any sense of parental concern, her feeling that it could happen to

anyone suggests a genuine empathy, but also awareness of social pressure and an agreement with these concerns. The following passage, also from Evie, provides an interesting juxtaposition showing how the disciplining nature of the case and class seem to come together.

> *Evie*: I don't want to stereotype but people from maybe poorer backgrounds might think more like this. I guess that's a massive generalisation but to think that [they have committed a crime] about your kids maybe they're out all the time, maybe they belong to gangs and they're all, look out for each other, stick up for each other so maybe you might think well, they're all like that.

Although in this example Evie attempts to be reflexive about her viewpoint – 'I don't want to stereotype'- it poorly disguises a class-based stereotype. She identifies that it is probably an inaccurate assessment, and yet still depends on the generalisation to construct the parenting practices and childhood of 'poorer' people. By doing so she asserts that she isn't from a poor background because she doesn't think these things. As such, she is constructing her autobiographical childhood as normal in comparison to the poorer socio-economic background of the people who are represented in the case. Class can therefore be seen as a frame of memory and of autobiographical experience.

Tod is able to assert that he too has had a normal childhood, although the class dimensions in his case are not so overt. He states: 'I'd like to think I was kept an eye on most of the time'. Such responses are generic expressions; note that Tod is not remembering a specific time but identifies with the scenario where parent supervises the child and considers it to have been a feature of his childhood. He, like many of the participants, uses this expression as shorthand to describe his family life as 'normal', indicating a safe and secure childhood on his part. In this and in Evie's example there is a drawing of boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. This allows 'us to feel 'normal' and to narrate, in this case, childhood in a normative frame. These accounts therefore are not articulated as directly connected to the case but illustrate how normative discourse around childhood and parenting, which frame the case, are drawn on to make sense of the event and the personal in combination.

Unlike the rest of the interviewees who discussed the horror of these cases as child crime, Lara didn't dwell on childhood as a factor. She suggests, in relation to the Sarah Payne case, that sexual deviance is 'particularly sick' but frames this in terms of all violent crime being problematic, not just that some adults are violent towards children. This is notable because every other participant specifically focussed on the issue of childhood in relation to the case studies.

What this means is that the convergence between childhood and crime is not a concern for this participant, where it was a key concern for the rest of the cohort. Lara's ambivalence to this feature of the crime is rooted in the way she sees herself as a young person rather than an adult. She was the youngest participant in the study and within her own family is the youngest of four children and currently living at home with her parents. This situates her, physically and emotionally, as a child within the dynamics of a parent/child relationship. Continuing financial and emotional dependence on parents has become a norm of modern family life. In Lara's case her prolonged dependence on her parents seems to allow her to situate herself much more strongly with the victim than with the parents of the victim, aligning herself with the child as opposed to the adult. Having been born in 1989 Lara would have been a similar age to both James Bulger and Sarah Payne, another factor which may cause her to affiliate herself more strongly with the victims themselves than with the parents and thus to understand the cases in these terms, rather than in respect of her identity as an adult. Age, in addition to class, is thus a factor that impacts on frames of memory and of autobiographical experience.

6.5 Mnemonic values

Other, perhaps more specific examples of the way participants demonstrated a negotiation between public and private can be seen in alternative readings of the case. Choosing the word alternative here is an attempt to note a disparity between these non-linear accounts and resistive readings, to which I refer later. Here, accounts in which the public memory is not relied upon are discussed. These show that key frames may not always be brought to the fore and is an example of instances where accounts diverge from the normative and/or media view.

Consideration of location is a particular example in which participants relied on their own frames of reference, using this to inform their accounts and in some cases leading them to refute the status quo. Notably participants often stated they were not always sure of the location of the crime, thus suggesting a need to lean on their personal experiences of place to negotiate the public place of the crime. This is akin to the ways Irwin-Zarecka states that people rely on intuition, as discussed in the introduction, but here the accounts are much more personal and knowledgeable.

First, a caveat; the following examples demonstrate these place negotiations in regards to the Bulger case. The representation of place was a particularly significant feature of the reporting of the Bulger case and as such it is posited that some understanding of place would have been remembered by participants. Adding weight to this assessment is that in contrast, the Sarah Payne case, (apart from more generic references to the rural location) was not framed in relation to location within the textual reporting. As a result, the place was not expected to be a key feature of the remembering by participants. The participants' accounts are strongly in-line with this place/case specific bias.

> *Tod:* Because the case was in Liverpool it may have stood out in my mind. You think Christ, that's where I was born and it is quite associated with the place. I was born in Hunt's Cross- it's not a bad area - it's a nice area. I don't really think of myself as a Scouser. I was born there but I don't really think of myself as being from anywhere… but it hits home you do think yeah, I was born there, lived there….This case in particular probably stood out more because it was in Liverpool. There was something recently in Bristol - last year Christmas time. That stood out - Christ I used to go there a lot, in that exact area. It was in Clifton wasn't it and I used to do martial art there and I think Christ I recognise that place- it stood out in my head.

> *Lara*: With the London riots I felt more involved. We get the London news. I go to London all the time… like Clapham - I know it. This, being in Liverpool - what I associate with Liverpool is green station and all the football fans - I guess that's quite naive.

In reference to the quotes themselves, they show that in order to make sense of the Bulger case the participants use their own personal understandings of the place where it happened, and compare and contrast their relationship with this place with other locations and crimes in order to illustrate how connected or disconnected they feel to it. Vicinity and experience of place in everyday life therefore affect the ways in which these participants perceived the place and whether what happened there is relevant or important to them.

Notably, the examples are very personal. The participants are not reflecting on the cultural significance of the case they are reflecting on its personal significance for them. It is this kind of active negotiation which is so central to understanding how high-profile cases like the case studies become important imaginative resources and contribute to our understandings of the world beyond the discourse of crime.

As I have suggested, the practice of remembering is not dependant on factual knowledge *per se*. The examples above demonstrate the ways in which personal experience can have an impact on the particular mnemonic value of the case. However, the negotiation of public and private can still function when there appears to be a lack of evidential understanding. In the following example, Lily is able to reflect on her (perceived) lack of knowledge about the case by recalling her personal past.

> *Lily*: I don't know why I didn't take particular notice [of this case] that was 2001 well it could be that I'd not long been widowed and I wasn't really taking too much attention to the news. You know. There are all things that happen in your own life that obscure what's going on… but I do remember the case… If you've had an operation and you feel… I realise then um I had an appendix burst which was really rather horrible because I had to have a nasty operation to drain …and then about 4 months later I had to have a another operation to have that messy bit of bowel removed- I'm alright- they've joined it up again! but I suddenly realised one morning that I'd woken up and gone downstairs and put the kettle on and so on and so forth and haven't wondered how I felt … and if you're ill or if you have something else you realise that you don't think of anything else that's happening.

This account is interesting because it shows how our memories are not rigid but meander around what we see as being relevant at a particular time. Instead of identifying an experience which led her to engage with the case, Lily has focussed on the way a difficult event forced her to become disengaged with the outside world because 'you don't think of anything else'. Although she is saying that her illness meant she became more insular, she is still intertwining the personal and public past and making sense of the event; it is just that she is making sense of a void rather than any knowledge of the case. In this sense, visibility of the case does not necessarily index iconicity. Lily's private memories are more dominant at this time but the case is still remembered, not in terms of detail, but in terms of what it represents and is iconic of.

6.6 Resistive readings

In his own work on the active audience Philo (2008) states that audiences, rather than outwardly rejecting a narrative, are 'likely to criticise the content of the message in relation to another perspective, which they hold to be correct. They are therefore aware of the encoded meaning and the manner in which it has been constructed they just do not agree with it' (Philo, 2008: 537). This description of the ways audiences oppose a particular narrative, by drawing on other experiences and understandings to underpin their own views, is clearly displayed in audience accounts presented here. The examples set out above do not necessarily display such an awareness of the encoded message and thus it was appropriate to separate them.

More relevant here is the following view from Lara. 'So many people overreact to their children's safety' she states. This rebuttal is still centred on the issue of how seriously people take the safety of their children in everyday life, but it refutes the issue. What this clearly shows is that the audience - the person interpreting the text - decodes the text in a particular way. This may or may not be in line with the intentions of the framing of the text, and is based on 'an individual's meaning-systems [which is] developed through a whole series of social interactions' (Wren – Lewis, 1983: 195). Resistive readings such as Lara's are not necessarily aiming to be in opposition to the frames in the reporting but they nevertheless actively reject them.

This is most often due to the influence of socio-economic factors, as outlined earlier in this chaptr, which provide different frames of reference for understanding the world around us. As such, it can be concluded that media frames do not determine the ways people react to or read the news but they provide a particular reading that audiences can use to negotiate the text.

A further example more in line with Philo's description, showing the audience critiquing an opposing view, is visible in accounts of the mourning. Given how the reporting of mourning attempted to reify the grief as personal, rather than a distant intangible event, the general absence of discourses of grief and loss in the audience accounts is notable. The reporting about the widespread grief felt by the community was significant in the reporting of both case studies and a likely area of identification for audiences. However, few participants reflected on this in their accounts of the case other than in generic terms, such as 'wasn't it sad?

Lily's account is a notable exception, typifying a resistive reading. She is very cynical about why public mourning has become such an event. Through the process of textual elicitation in the interviews she links this with the 'Diana Style Outpouring of Grief' which is detailed in the textual analysis chapter and also compares the event to 'the people of Wooten Bassett' describing how this community comes together to mourn the loss of soldiers when they have been repatriated.

> *Lily:* Mark you, that is somewhat similar to the people in Wooten Bassett, but their demonstration I could cope with because it was a silent show of sympathy - that was alright… [This is] totally….I would feel horrified if that sort of situation came to someone in my family. Especially... at least with [Wootten Bassett], they're just throwing the odd flower [at Sarah Payne's grave] these are still shop-wrapped. And when they have to clear them… from Kensington Palace they must have been stinking. Horrible!'

For Lily, the public mourning as displayed in the reporting of the Sarah Payne case is improper and impersonal. By comparing the way the public grieved Sarah to the repatriation of the troops, she infers that the Wootten Bassett way is more appropriate because it is a restrained, modest display of respect. This type of mourning, which is clearly favoured by Lily, is rooted in the distinctly British ways of life and death in

which the stiff upper lip reigns. Her dislike of the more overt style of mourning is further articulated by comparing the single flower being thrown to the mass of shop-bought flowers being laid.

The general lack of discussion of mourning could be explained by the fact that the public mourning cannot be intertwined with the personal past as tightly as discourses of motherhood for example, and thus has less resonance over time. It may also be the case that these events took place at one temporal moment and do not, as was argued in Chapter 5, constitute a key feature of the case or event which is required for the case to retain its horror and significance. Instead scenes of mourning may constitute a highly emotive but banal feature of such crimes and as such audiences consider them to be a convention of public grief rather than constituting a personal memory.

More generally however, I suggest that resistivity is visible in the way participants, rather than re-stating the more salacious elements of the reporting of the crime, actually give carefully considered accounts of the case studies which utilise their broader social frameworks of understanding of crime and criminal justice, as well as personally derived experience of family relationships; this can be seen throughout this chapter and within the next. This perhaps undermines the notion that audiences tend to be drawn to, and remember the more shocking features of these cases. In fact, this research provides evidence to show that audiences are resolutely active in the reception process.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter clearly shows that the moral discourses on offer within the texts are echoed in the audience accounts. But more than this, the chapter has sought to show how the media text works in combination with the audience's own thoughts, views and feelings about crime, criminality and the moral dynamics of case, enabling them to present an account of the case study which is meaningful to them.

As has been noted at several junctures, the reporting of the cases used the visibility of the family as a key frame. In the audience accounts, the dominance of the frame was upheld. This was literal, for example in comparisons between the family unit of the

victims and the participants and in defining the norms of a family such as the mother as the sole care giver. It was also metaphorical, such as in the accounts of the family as part of society and the ways in which community and family intersect. The uses of the family therefore provide an important point of identification and connection between the audience and the actors involved in the case, not only allowing audiences to identify with the victims but also to make sense of their own experiences of family life in juxtaposition. The relationship between memories of the case and memories of audiences own family lives are therefore reciprocally constructed.

These accounts show us how the dynamics of intimacy, consensus and judgement, which are so central to these case studies, are formulated and made meaningful by audiences. The demarcation of boundaries, whether around the family and the outside world, or between 'us' and 'them' more generally, is an example of the ways case-specific discourses coalesce with the personal; with us the audience and the moral majority. Consensus in particular, is thus implicitly demonstrated within the narratives. Memories of the case are not only being used to retell the story of the case or to explicitly condemn such abhorrent crimes, but also to perform a sort of social acquiescence most obviously demonstrated in section 6.4 in relation to discipline. As these issues are so central to understanding crime and criminality generally they are returned to in Chapter Seven. In this chapter, a broader approach to the connection between the case studies and the audience accounts is taken, looking at the changing negotiations and the ways the significance of the crimes is built up and retained.

The following chapter will also retain a focus on the temporality of these cases which has been referred to within this chapter. In particular it will look at the way these past cases remain significant in the present and future. This builds on the examples presented here that show how texts don't just act as a filter for past experiences, but also allow people to negotiate present and future experiences too. The ways in which audiences continue to negotiate these case studies and to consider their impact and significance constitutes a key aim of this thesis and is thus an important issue to discuss further.

Chapter 7: The Cumulative Nature of Memory

7.1 Introduction

This, the final analytical chapter of the thesis, offers an account of the interview data that focuses on the broader social and cultural context around the audiences' understandings of the case study crimes. Like the previous chapter, it explores the extent to which the meanings of these crimes and the interpretation of the media representations of them relies on audiences bringing to bear their own accumulated experience of crime in order to render the cases as meaningful events. However, the aim here is to consider the audience's positioning and negotiation of socio-cultural meanings of child crime, as opposed to the ways it helps audiences negotiate personal experiences and identities, as per the last chapter.

This feature of the analysis closely connects to the central understanding of the thesis. This can be summarised in the following terms: that our understanding of crime is accumulated over time and synthesised through the process of remembering. As well as being based on the knowledge gained from the representations of the crime, this is also based on first-hand experiences and cultural understandings, which audiences activate in any negotiation of the meaning of a crime in the present.

The following chapter therefore builds on the argument set out in the preceding one. Both chapters share a focus on the synthesis of personal experience and mediated representations, but here the discussion attends to the ways in which the case studies themselves are invested with meaning. For example, how our understandings of these crimes, and issues of crime and criminality more generally, are informed by moral categories and social norms that are embedded both within mediated representations and in accounts of everyday lived experience.

As I have noted, these particular instances of child abduction and murder can, for the audience, only be experienced through mediated representations. This means that participants cannot directly draw on similar real life experiences to make sense of these crimes. Instead audiences will draw on other lived experiences, such as

parenthood for example, or experiences of crime in their local area or in other contexts, to negotiate the significance of these case studies to them. Although this complicates the notion of there being a direct synthesis between mediated and experienced understanding, participants still draw on their own relevant, although not identical lived experiences to negotiate the meaning of the crimes and to make sense of the broader cultural meanings of crimes of this kind. This process does not necessitate a first-hand experience of the same crime. Rather, a broader set of experiences will be drawn on in the participants' negotiation and understanding of these crimes which, in combination with media reports of other crimes, may 'signal' different, more pertinent concerns in their everyday lives.

Innes' concept of the signal crime, set out in Chapter Two, provides a conceptual framework within which to understand the ways both mediated crime and experienced crime are negotiated by the public. This concept echoes the conceptualisation of popular memory, in terms of constructing the ways audiences make sense of the world around them, but is derived from criminology as opposed to memory studies. Like the process of popular memory, the audience within the signal crime perspective is considered to be engaged in an active process of negotiating mediated narratives and what Innes calls 'co-present experiences' to make sense of, interpret, and define experiences of crime. Innes work therefore adds weight to this notion of audiences using mediated information in combination with what relevant lived experience they have, to make sense of crime.

The purpose of the ensuing analysis is therefore to identify these negotiations in action, highlighting where personal experience and mediated narratives are synthesised and how these help audiences make sense of the crimes. This builds on the work of Philo (2008), as set out in the previous chapter. The theory of the active audience thus remains an important. The concept provides a broad framework for understanding why and how audiences combine or negotiate their personal and mediated understandings in practice. This assertion is useful in helping to make sense of the changing significance of these cases to audiences, and in demonstrating the unanimity of their accounts, whilst suggesting a broad salience of the "facts".

All such points will be addressed in the following discussion preceding the final section of the chapter. Here a key finding in the reporting and remembering of the case studies is examined, this is that participants struggled to assimilate the Bulger case into their everyday understandings of crime and criminality. This struggle indexes a particular a-typicality in the ways audiences continue to negotiate this case. The frames of the reporting and lived experience seem to be inadequate to explain such an event, leaving audiences with profound complications in their remembering of this crime. This is in contrast to the Payne case which audiences conceptualise as normal, although not acceptable.

The lofty aims of this chapter seek to demonstrate how the structures and values of mediated representations, as well as other imaginative resources drawn from the lived experience, are used by individuals in tandem, to construct their own account of the case study crimes. Where there are connections in the accounts of the participants this represents a salience in the meaning invested in the crime across audiences and across time denoting a level of iconicity. These features are thus important in considering why some cases live on beyond the moment of newsworthiness, an argument for which I will outline in the final chapter of the thesis.

7.2 Linking the reporting and remembering through elicited reactions

An opportunity to explore the particular synthesis between personal experience and mediated representations was harnessed, within this study, through the use of elicitation. Elicitation was a helpful methodological tool in overcoming the gaps in knowledge, allowing myself in the role of researcher to prompt the participants without leading the conversation. An account of the overall efficacy of the method is set out in Chapter Three, but for the purposes of the analysis, it is helpful to note here, that most participants considered that the news reports used for textual elicitation were not in line with their remembering of the case.

This in many cases shows the active audience in action, negotiating the value of the mediated information in the present. The resistive aspect of this was dealt with in the previous chapter, from page 179 onwards, but here, through the example of

elicitation, we can see more broadly the ways in which audiences bring to bear their own frameworks of understanding to bear on their reading of the text.

For example, in reference to idea that he was killed on the railway line which was reported in the *Daily Mirror* during the trial of Venables and Thompson, Joanna considered that she 'didn't know' the circumstances surrounding James Bulger's death in such detail.

> *Joanna*: I didn't know exactly what happened to him but I know he was murdered with things like this. I knew he was on a train line. The way he laid him across the railway- no I don't remember that I must admit. I think when people are talking about what happened to him you sort of don't want to know. I know that sounds awful but it's just too hard.

What Joanna is describing here is how this article is informing her pre-existing knowledge of the case. She states that she didn't know what weapons were used against him, but that she did know it was on a railway line. Although this is perhaps resistive, it seems more useful to reflect on the accounts as highlighting how some details are lost in the remembering of the case, and how these details are re-negotiated in the present.

There were fairly graphic descriptions of the ways Bulger died in much of the reporting, and indeed in much of the sample used within this study. However, as I have discussed, the early reporting was rapidly developing and innately quite shocking, rendering much of this detail incompatible with the aims of the period of reporting. As such, this level of detail was predominantly only printed during the trial when the key defining elements of the Bulger case had already been consolidated.

Joanna is a mother who, as has been shown in the previous chapter, often draws on her identity as a parent in her account of the case studies. This identity is particularly relevant here as she talks about how it is just 'too hard' to think about what happened to James. This is in much the same way that it may be too hard to think about such a thing happening to her own child. Joanna is therefore thinking about the meaning of the text and the case and concurrently drawing on her real and imaginary life experiences to situate this.

The result is that Joanna puts a caveat on her remembering of the case, showing how she uses the emotional identity of herself as a mother to avoid thinking about the sensational narrative. This is not an outright rejection of the text but a negotiation which outlines why she doesn't want to engage with these types of representations. Again, this is in line with Philo's account of the ways audiences negotiate mediated narratives, giving a reasoned account of why they do not agree with the message of the reports rather than missing the point, or refusing to acknowledge the presence of such accounts. But more than this, the extract shows in practice how the synthesis of mediated narratives and personal accounts come together in the negotiation of these cases.

This is particularly noticeable where there is a disconnection between the textual elicitation and the participants' accounts of the crime, in which the audience utilise their own interpretative frameworks to make sense of the cases. In cases where there is a connection, this synthesis is less clear to see because the audiences then seem to rely on the features of the reporting to frame any narrative, often responding, in the interview context, in simple terms and in very closed answers.

A text with an image of the CCTV was used, in which a particularly closed answer by Walter was provided.

> *Walter*: I can recall there was CCTV, but it's not something I have dwelt upon.

The closed answer given here shows how the elicitation seemed to close down opportunities for audiences to think about and negotiate the crimes although, as has been noted, this was not always the case. The CCTV is a particularly important feature of the Bulger case, will be built on in the next part of this chapter, but in terms of using it within the elicitation, its value was mixed.

Unlike the above example, the following, similarly short, extract demonstrates the process by which the CCTV has become part of the meaning of this crime and its re-representation has helped it to transcend the specificities of the original reporting.

> *Tod:* That picture is very familiar. I think I remember seeing this picture. That's normal – a pencil drawing of the judge you can associate that with-numerous cases – but that's unique.

This extract is in reference to the cartoon image published in the *Daily Mirror* (Antonowicz & Corless, 1993: 22-23).[45] Tod describes the image as both familiar and unique. This highlights how the image was re-appropriated in a way which speaks to the original (familiar), but is re-contextualised in a way which says something new. He juxtaposes this to the 'normal' drawing of a court scene highlighting that some features of crime news, such as pencil drawings of the court, are a banal feature of the representation of a trial. Despite the similar medium used to draw both images, they clearly represent different things and Tod is able to differentiate between the banality of one image and the novelty of the other.

The re-imagining of the CCTV image through the process of elicitation contributes to the signification process,[46] by revisiting the sign in a new way. In each incidence the reader is prompted to make a connection back to the original CCTV image and to reconsider its value in relation to a new set of circumstances or concepts in the present moment. In this case the ideological incongruence of the CCTV image always leads the reader to similar conclusions no matter what the temporal context.

This is despite the fact that some participants didn't recognise (or verbalise) the connection between the sketch and the original CCTV. The reasons for this have already been posited, but suffice to say that audiences don't straightforwardly adopt the features of mediated representations into their accounts, rather showing the ways which they ponder the meaning and significance of the text. This adds weight to the central argument of the thesis that the popular memory of a crime is a synthesis of the normative social frameworks of everyday life, people's everyday experience, and the public discourses which feature in the reporting. The popular meanings of the crimes also accrue over time, transcending the specificities of the framing in the original reports. The CCTV is a specific and valuable example for exploring this issue further, and so it is to that which we now turn.

---

[45] For an account of the textual qualities of this and similar images image see page 145 onwards.
[46] A more detailed discussion of Barthes definition of signification can be found on page 193.

7.3 Intertextuality and CCTV

The reuse of the CCTV (even in a different format, as above)[47] helps to restate the significance of this image. Notably this image is re-appropriated at different moments within the lifecycle of the case, seemingly transcending its initial framework, but it still signals the initial crime and is thus iconic of it.

> *Interviewer*: What do you remember about the [Bulger] case?
>
> *Evie:* The CCTV- I've seen that quite a lot of times of him being taken away. Yeah… seen that quite a few times. Apart from that really, his face and the image of the CCTV- that's probably about it really.

This extract demonstrates a significant connection between the frameworks of reporting and frameworks of remembering of the case. The CCTV is, for this participant, a primary definer of the case; it is memorable. Notably, Evie mentions how she has seen this image a few times. There is a sense that this is at several different moments, not only, or not necessarily in reference to the initial reporting, and thus that the repetitive representation of this image has contributed to her understanding of it as significant to the Bulger case.

In contrast, the following extract seems to reference the use of the image at the moment the case broke. Like the above example, there is a connection between reporting and remembering, but in this example it is temporally bound.

> *Joanna:* I remember seeing footage of it - yeah definitely remember seeing that. It was on the TV. It was on TV showing you the footage of him being led away. Yeah, I remember seeing that on the television.

What is particularly interesting to note is that where the CCTV was discussed by participants, including Joanna above, most of them reflected on the *scene* from the CCTV rather than considering it as a *still* image. This is demonstrated within their narratives which relay that James was 'walking away', for example. Such a phrase constructs movement and time passing, as happens within a film rather than a photograph. Joanna uses the word 'footage' for example. In Harriet's extract which

[47] A discussion of these novel representations of the CCTV can be found on pages 146 – 150.

follows, she too recollects how she 'watched' the boy being taken in an active construction of what happened.

> *Harriet:* I remember seeing the images from the shopping centre and watching the little boy being taken away by two youngsters and the feelings of helplessness of the poor mother when she didn't know where he was.

Although these examples show that participants are not always drawing on the textual reports and the still images, which are the comparative data set for this research project, it also means that they are drawing on other imaginative resources to articulate their understanding of the crime. What this demonstrates is the intertextuality of memory and how an engagement with different representations and different formats of information are intertwined within the participant's popular memories. This is not a new finding. Van Dijck and others discuss the intersection of the personal and private, the material and the virtual within memory. In *Mediated Memories* Van Dijck outlines that 'shoe box' collections, made up of a range of material, concrete and undefined, act as a container for our cultural memories. In this empirical study, we see that audiences themselves cannot always recognise what imaginative resources they draw from the 'shoebox' or indeed how they intertwine them, but it is clear that a range of forms and content are brought together in participants' accounts of the case studies.

This is particularly interesting given the lack of representation of the CCTV as a still within the textual analysis. The CCTV is often considered in its still form, as exemplified in how Young talks about the 'technology of the image' (Young, 1996:90), but this leads me to question whether it is simply the absence of the image within the reporting that has led to participants not remembering it in this form.

The lack of remembering of the CCTV as an image is not just assumed to correspond to the lack of reporting of it as an image. Rather the ways in which participants use the CCTV is an example of the ways they read cues from within the text to make sense of it. It is useful here to draw on the work of Roland Barthes and to think about the CCTV in terms of the way a signifier and signified work together to make meaning. In this case we understand that CCTV is surveillance camera footage, the form is a moving picture and in knowing this we draw on both ideological

understandings about surveillance culture, the witnessing of a crime and the retrospective reinterpretation of it. But we also take a practical cue for the image that informs the content - an abduction happened in the film and a boy was taken. These are active events which lend themselves to being animated rather than static and allow the audience to build up a moving picture of what happened, even if it was only a still that they engaged with. This does not mean that audiences invent facts about the case, but rather that they use what is on offer to them – an understanding of the event in various forms with different contents at different temporal moments - to articulate their understanding of the case at this particular moment. In this regard the CCTV can be conceived as being a part of this ongoing and cumulative process.

The dynamics of the CCTV is discussed by a journalist speaking in the documentary *James Bulger: Eyes of the Detective* who states that, as a result of the CCTV, the case was 'made for TV'. Although this suggests that the CCTV was shown as a moving image frequently, and presumably that the ways in which participants engage with the CCTV could be as a simple mnemonic device. However, it is more likely that it is a combination of these factors; the dynamics of the form, the novelty of it, and the dynamics of memory. In combination this enables the participants to draw on the CCTV in a way which helps them show an understanding of the case, but central to this is an understanding that the image or the moving picture was taken from CCTV which in its original form is a film.

The example of the CCTV is helpful in proving that an overt and ongoing engagement with news discourse is not required in order to make judgements about particular criminal acts or behaviours. This assertion is based on a disconnection, not only between what is present in the news discourse and what is remembered by audiences and vice versa, but also on the understanding that audiences bring to bear their own sense of the crime to their discussions.

In this sense it is most interesting that there is an agreement about the meaning and significance of the CCTV by audiences. The consensus about this image, as a representation of the Bulger crime, allows for a particular set of meanings to solidify and for the image to become iconic. Only in some cases does this process facilitate the text becoming an iconic representation of the issues it stands for, but in the case

of Bulger the image has clearly transcended its initial representational function and been able to resonate with audiences both in and over time.

7.4 The persistence and mnemonic value of the texts

The CCTV has a specific mnemonic value which has allowed it become situated within the popular memory of the case. Other features of the texts are not so successful in remaining central to the 'tell-ability' of the cases, suggesting that they lack a mnemonic value.

A particular example of this is the trial reporting. Although reporting around the trial constituted a specific subsection of the textual analysis, because in both cases a peak was identified at this time, the process of the trial in neither case is evident in the interview data. On the surface this constitutes a disconnection between the reporting and remembering of the crimes. However, the reason for this is a result of the ways the trial as is invested with meaning by audiences.

The reporting of the trial, as discussed in Chapters Five, provides the audience with information about what is going on in court, but more than this the information given, in particular, constructions of the witnesses, the police and other actors, served to define the perpetrators rather than consider the legal particularities of the court case. As such, the narrative is presented in a moral rather than legal framework. These journalistic decisions have thus had an impact of the mnemonic value of the case for audiences.

Because of the way the trial is represented, reifying the actor's behaviours and notions of 'us' versus 'them', these dynamics become the crucial frames for making sense of this period of reporting. The focus on these dynamics, which encompass the broader personal and social aspects of the case, is a way to encourage audiences to relate to the case, in a way which the legalities of the case may not. Put differently, the dynamics used in the reporting are the organising principles for the synthesis of personal experience and iconic crimes, which are performed through processes of remembering. These features speak more strongly to audiences, meaning that they are

more memorable and have more resonance than the institutional features of the reporting.

This is also visible in the lack of discussion about signifiers such as the police, courts and judges, which again suggests that the real life criminal context and proceedings are not a key feature of the understanding of the cases. Audiences are generally more concerned with the morality of the actors' behaviours and the scale of deviance enacted within the events of the case, something which is returned to in the final section of this chapter.

It is also possible that the predictability of the police being involved in crime, and the known routine of a trial and court proceedings following criminal events, means that such elements are too banal to be 'remembered'. Such features are thus considered to be mundane and do not feature as an imaginative resource for audiences in a way that the CCTV image may do. These signifiers are also an incredibly generic part of everyday life; the high profile crimes are not, and thus the interest and speculation around these cases and their mnemonic value, must rely on other factors.

This is also the case in relation to the mnemonic value of the representation of Roy Whiting. It was posited in Chapter Four, that due to the rigidity and predictability of his framing, his representation became a banal feature of the case as opposed to a shocking feature, and thus he was unlikely to be remembered. This has proven to be the case. None of the participants interviewed focused on Roy Whiting; their attention in relation to this case focused entirely on Sarah and the Payne family or on acts paedophilia more generally. The lack of focus on perpetrators is not unique, but in terms of a case study comparison with the Bulger case, it is a specific feature of the Payne case. Our generalisation of this case and a further discussion of attitudes towards sexually motivated crime, like the Sarah Payne case, follows on page 201.

Finally, it is important to note here that there is no mention of video nasties as a cause of the Bulger crime, a factor which constituted a concern in the earlier reporting of the case. We know, through the textual analysis presented earlier, that this issue was not drawn on consistently but the lack of recollection of this by audiences is more likely to be related to its lack of resonance in the present context. Given the proliferation of violent and sexualised content on TV, video games and on the internet in recent years,

concerns about “inappropriate content”, as it has become known, are no longer linked specifically to Bulger. In this sense, they no longer feature as part of the network we draw on to make sense of this case. Instead these issues are part of a (much bigger) network of concerns about technology and childhood. The absence of this issue in relation to the Bulger story means that technology is not a key feature in the ongoing narrativisation.

7.5 Networks of crime

Although there is clearly much about these case studies that participants did not recall in the interviews, this is balanced by in-depth accounts of their broader cultural experience and knowledge about crime. The negotiation of these issues, in response to questions about the case studies, suggests that they are significant imaginative resources for the participants.

In the following examples the audience use their experiences to situate the case studies within a broader network or landscape of crime and criminality in social life. The ways participants do this gives a sense of the connections they make between the crime itself and broader discourses of crime and criminality. This is important because these cases were identified by audiences as memorable within the diagnostic survey. This suggests that they have an underlying cultural value which, so far, has been attributed to the ways in which the cases are presented as contravening moral boundaries. This connects to the goodness of the victim and their family, which is reified in the text, recognised and reciprocated within audience accounts of the case.

Innes’ signal crimes perspective suggests that the ways crime, rather than other social issues, becomes iconic, is through a consonance between experiences of crime in the mediated and real world. He suggests that what we see happening around us weighs on our understanding of risk and danger within society. This too represents a synthesis between the public and private frames of reference but takes note of the broader influences and interests on citizens. In other words when it comes to crime Innes suggests that the conditions of the physical world around us play as much on the conceptualisation as the private identities we hold dear.

For example, in the following extract Tod is using the category of technology to understand the risks of online predators to children. This is a contemporary risk proliferated by the increase in production of personal technologies and access to the internet. He uses his own experiences of being a young person with access to these kinds of technology to frame these concerns. Through this, a link between his personal experiences and the potential to be a victim of crime is made, as well as a link between children as victims (as a link to the case studies) and the various modes of criminality which they can be subject to.

> *Tod*: In this day and age perhaps technology has something to do of it. There's always ways and means they find using technology but I'm not entirely sure. It seems easy. There's Facebook – we had 'MSN' and 'bebo' back in the day when I was growing up. It was quite easy to get someone's e-mail and people at that age are vulnerable – they meet up with people.

Although neither of the case study crimes are manifestly to do with technology, Tod is demonstrating the ways in which personal experience is used as a framework to make sense of the crimes and their ongoing significance in daily life. In the extract, Tod considers the way crimes involving children play out in a today's world, where online predators are seen to be a problem. This focus on the present context is connected to Tod's experiences of childhood within a similarly modern context; he is not a parent, he is a young man who can empathise through his own experience, with how children who have access to the online world may be vulnerable. He therefore uses his personal frames of reference to make sense of the risks towards children which are pertinent 'in this day and age'. The focus on the current temporal context shows how Tod situates the case studies as historic examples, most likely because they, in their original form, are not a feature of his popular memory. He therefore considers that the circumstances of the case studies have been superseded, perhaps by technology, something he understands to be a more relevant concern, and through which he can link the dangers of childhood to his own personal experiences.

In a similar vein, Joanna talks about drugs. These are particular issues which relate to the broader network of crime, deviance and risk which Joanna has imagined and has situated the case studies within.

For example, the way Joanna situates the Bulger case in the following extract is to draw on a range of other deviant acts which help her to diagnose the problems in society of which abduction, related to the cases studies, is one.

> *Joanna:* No, I don't think it's [abduction] a massive big problem- it's getting worse now isn't it… but I wouldn't think this - young boys abducting little children. It seems to be more, men prey on young women. They seem to be a problem, Wasn't there a thing with a young guy about 15 who was raping young women, well girls about 11 years old or something like that. I think that is a bit of a problem, but this [Bulger case] isn't as common… but I think crimes against children are on the increase, especially neglect. Children are growing up now with drugs, and mothers, even the parents are on drugs. It's worse now because the parents don't know what their children are doing because they're so high themselves and the money they get they spend on drugs and alcohol and their children are neglected.
>
> *Interviewer:* Can you think of an example of this?
>
> *Joanna:* I don't know… it's just it's common- you just know it. You talk about Liverpool and [here] as well. You know people who are on drugs, like rough looking - I know you shouldn't judge, but you know they're on drugs and their kids aren't being cared for because they can't be if they're high. You can't be looking after your children can you? You see kids running around in gangs and you know the parents are on drugs- they're only kids themselves.

Drugs and gangs seem to be particular issues that have been woven into Joanna's cumulative understanding of the causes of deviance. It is likely that these issues have become part of her framework for understanding crime because she states that she has seen it happening in her hometown. However, the way she discusses this issue suggests that her account is largely based on populist attitudes towards drugs and deviance which proliferate in tabloid news. For example, the statement 'the money they get they spend on drugs and alcohol and their children are neglected' is a negative conceptualisation of benefit claimants.

She suggests that these people are on benefits through the use of the phrase ‘ money they get’ rather than using a term like ‘earn’, and then states that they ‘use this money on drugs and alcohol’, which suggests that these items are purchased instead of more “worthwhile” items such as food and thus the ‘children are neglected’. The implicit suggestion is that this leads to the children themselves becoming deviant. She also draws on the notion of children having children – ‘they’re only kids themselves’ - which has become a well-used way of describing teenage parents, an identity which has its own set of norms and stereotypes.

Joanna’s extract therefore serves as an example of how she has intertwined her wider mediated experiences of crime into a framework, which allows her to think about the problems in society and the causes of them. It is clear that normative, ideological experiences of childhood and family life, and stereotypes like teen parents being bad parents, play a part in Joanna’s conceptualisation of crime and criminality through the ways she makes sense of crime as a feature of modern society and her everyday experiences of society. What is interesting to note is how she prioritises all of these issues above the circumstances of the James Bulger case making no explicit connections to the case in her account of crime, demonstrating that the crime doesn't fit into her mental map of crime, childhood and risk. This is therefore a good example of the way in which participants disassociate themselves and society from being responsible for the Bulger crime and allow for ‘people’ to take the blame for their own actions and circumstance, but above all it shows how the Bulger crime is a profound complication to normal frameworks of understanding, an issue which requires more attention and is developed toward the end of this chapter.

As a precursor to that discussion it is useful to note that unlike Bulger, the Sarah Payne case does fit into the ongoing discourse of risk/childhood and crime, which are part of everyday life. The case thus lends itself to an interrogation of risk in everyday life through discourses of child protection, Sarah’s law, rehabilitation of sex offenders etc

> *Evie*: I think it’s just, there seems to be an increase in sex offenders. You’ve got Holly and Jessica Wells, especially, not just a ‘randomer’ from the street, in schools and also in places of trust- the whole religious things, schools -

> places you wouldn't expect it – places where you think children would be safe. It seems to be increasing in areas like that. I think that's why people are really concerned.

There are several important points to note from this passage. First, the way in which Evie links the case of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapmans' murders[48] into her concerns about sex offenders which have come about, in the remit of this conversation, as a result of discussing Sarah Payne. Clearly these cases are connected in a network of similar cultural and criminal events for Evie, highlighting the way she maps crime and criminality relevant to sex offenders. This is most important because the crimes are different. The perpetrator of Holly and Jessica's' murder, Ian Huntley, was known to them. They were lured, by someone whom they assumed to be trusted figure, into a house where they were sexually assaulted and murdered. Although it is widely believed that Huntley was a serial sex offender, he was not, unlike Whiting, a convicted paedophile. Highlighting the difference in these circumstances may seem tangential to the issue at hand, but it must be shown that there are differences between these crimes. Given the differences, the fact that these cases have become intertwined within the same discourse by audiences is interesting. Foremost it shows how our understandings develop over time and how new information becomes woven into our understandings of crime. More recently concerns about the safety of children in traditionally safe environments have become a cause for concern, and as this example shows, have become bound up in our understanding of child crime.

In addition to this, the connection to Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman relates to the point Greer raises in relation to victim photographs in Chapter 4[49], giving weight to the idea that due to the gendered frames used in the reporting on these types of cases that the remembering around them is likely to be more intertwined. In other words, such cases are understood as pieces of the same puzzle and cannot be separated from one another easily, whereas the Bulger case stands alone as an icon in and of itself. What this means is that that the Sarah Payne case, along with the Holly and Jessica case is part of a cumulative understanding of this type of crime. These cases are

[48] Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman were murdered in August 2002 by Ian Huntley their school caretaker. Their deaths are collectively known as the Soham Murders relating to the place they lived, but the victims are also widely referred by just their first names: Holly and Jessica.
[49] A discussion of victim photographs can be found on page 88 onwards.

meaningfully connected by audiences and I suspect, will become meaningfully connected to new and different issues in the future as and when cases, which share similar hallmarks, unfortunately occur.

The current concerns are therefore not unattached to the Sarah Payne case, they do not constitute a lack of memory, or a complete transformation in discourse. Rather, these memories show how the way we understand a particular problem in society is constantly developing. In contrast to the conceptualisation of popular concerns in moral panic theory, the concern does not dissipate. Sarah's case is still central to much of the discussion outlined here, the crime she was victim of, is certainly relevant and important in the overall discourse; the ways audiences discuss the case shows that they have taken evidence from different cases to make sense of this crime and now situate it within a much broader criminal context. In other words, while retaining the facts of the case, audiences present an account of the case that is modulated by their up-to-date knowledge of the issues at hand; these nuances having been taken from other temporal contexts which they see as being relevant.

The fact that many participants discussed the same developments and noted a similar change in attitudes suggests a significant cultural shift in the way that child sexual abuse is viewed, and a specific salience in shared memory. This, in terms of memory and remembering is most important. The creation of a common feeling at one moment in time could generally be accredited to the proliferation of that view through the media for example. But, retaining a broad consensus about the meaningfulness of an event overtime is arguably less straightforward. The opportunity for misalignment within the shared memory is presumably greater as time passes if we assume, which this study does, that our personal experiences, different media and new discourses are cumulatively gathered into audience accounts. In this sense the consensus denotes compatibility in the meaningfulness of the case, its resonance and relevance between audiences and citizens over time. Such consensus is a precursor to iconicity for the agreement about the meaning of a text, image or case is central to its ability to function as a representation of the issue. The Sarah Payne case, is therefore an icon of child crime. It is not clear that her image is iconic, but the case is certainly symbolic for many of the participants interviewed in this study.

In a discussion about Sarah Payne within the interviews a discussion of issues around child sex abuse ultimately ensued. Although, as I have noted, she is iconic of this issue, this is not to say that all participants agree about all issues related to this wider concern. Generally the tensions that occur around shifting concerns about child sex offences are apparent within the audience accounts, for not all participants were in line with new concerns. Lara states that 'you have to have faith in the people who look after them [children]…the walls around their schools'. Such a view is directly opposed to that of Evie who identifies a shift in concerns about danger, stating 'you can't really trust teachers anymore; you can't trust members of society so much'. Evie is describing a particular shift in concern from stranger danger - 'a randomer in the street' - to intimate danger - 'places where you think children would be safe'. Underpinning both of these types of concern is the generic concern about children and more specifically a concern about paedophiles (although this is not explicit).

The consideration of "intimate danger" displayed by Evie is echoed by other participants who identified albeit implicitly that those who we once trusted to protect children are no longer exempt from suspicion or guilt. This connects to the work done by Stanko (1996) who asserts that 'domestic abuse (of adult women) is perceived as "ordinary", although not acceptable'. Although the crimes themselves are different, I suggest that the ways in which participants articulate concerns about, and understanding of, child abduction is comparable to the ordinariness of domestic abuse. Although these are both abhorrent crimes, there is a sense that these instances are a normal part of everyday life.

This is further elucidated in the following statement by Lily, who describes her disgust about such crimes, linking to Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman, but also making a link to Sarah's Law. She considers Sarah's Law as a realistic and useful safeguard to such types of crimes underlining the normalcy of our attitude towards paedophilia in everyday life. Interest and engagement with Sarah Payne was clearly strong enough to warrant an investment in Sarah's Law as a new branch of reporting related to the initial case. However, when directed to answer questions on Sarah's Law specifically, participants were generally either unaware of Sarah's Law or unsure of its aims. Across the interviews there was a general lack of engagement with this topic, Lily being the exception.

> *Lily:* I just remember that the mother [Sara Payne] then, felt that people should be warned if there was a paedophile living next door, that they should be allowed to be told because it would be… It's probably essential… I mean because if you….it happens anywhere and they don't always know that somebody is a paedophile until they've done the dirty deed so to speak. And they're all over the place I mean we've had quite a few cases [here]. If people, if they want to ask about a next door neighbour it may be against the human rights of this person but rather that than the child get friendly with the next door neighbour and get abused.

Lily's statement notes the ways in which children become 'friendly' with people and so open themselves to potential abuse. The implicit suggestion is that children are innocent and do not understand the dangers they may be in. As such, Lily suggests that it is probably helpful that people 'ask about a next door neighbour' rather than the child 'get abused'. The normalcy of risk management within family life and the ways in which the community are encouraged to weigh in on these issues is clearly apparent. Unlike in other accounts, Sarah's Law is seen by Lily, as a way of managing this danger. The writing of such as law is undoubtedly related to the popular concerns about child protection, and yet it is generally absent in the discourse. The obvious legal nature of any reporting may underpin the missing discourse, again suggesting that it lacks an ongoing mnemonic value. This is not to say that the broader discourse around the Payne case is stagnant. It is just transforming in a different way to the Bulger case, and for this audience it is more connected to similar, more recent crimes, which continue to cause them concern. This suggests a resounding interest in people, victims and real world cases, as opposed to the policies and principles of child protection, which are not visible.

The public concern, rather than political discourse was certainly a feature for Raymond, who also gives a perspective on this issue.

> *Raymond:* We used to watch [his] brother doing cross country and as I say he was about three or four and I sat down with him and there was a neighbour over the way and I didn't know her and she didn't know me and she was looking at me rather strange. You know what - you get the feeling that she

> looking at me to say what am I doing with a three or four year old? It's awful but that's how it's become.

First, it is right to note that his memories are clearly quite painful, but are brushed off. Raymond, purely by being older and male, seems to feel like he cannot protest too loudly about his apparent mistreatment. There is a sense then, that not only the act and the issue of sex crimes is gendered, but also that the discussions about them are burdened by gendered stereotypes and experiences, which marginalise (some) men from engaging with this discourse.

Raymond's experience of society is that people are, as Lily suggests, wary of child abuse happening in their communities. Rather than seeing this as Lily does, as a risk which can be managed in a formal, legal way, Raymond conceptualises a concerned community, and a mistrusting public. He states, 'I think it's because of a lot of the stuff they read in the paper. Paedophilia seems much more prevalent now than when our children were small'. Although Sarah's Law could be a feature of newspaper content around paedophilia that Raymond suggests, it is not a significant aspect of his account of the case or the public furore. He ultimately sees the social, personal issues around a risk aware society rather than conceptualising this as a result of the Law itself; although clearly they are one and the same, the former is arguably the more tangible. The ways that Raymond and others talk about these crimes is closely connected to the hypothesis in signal crimes, which suggests a discussion and interest in particular crimes is piqued through one's own experiences, not through political aspects or the representation of policy.

These accounts set out a concern about sexual deviancy in traditionally safe environments. This arguably denotes a shift in what the public are concerned about, whether or not the participants are afraid of it or not. This finding contests Greer's statement that 'there is little doubt that media representations have contributed to the generation of this climate of mistrust and suspicion of "otherness"… reinforced by a strong cultural resistance to thinking about child sex abuse as a domestic problem, images of stranger – abuse are highly potent' (Greer, 2003:157). Although stranger abuse continues to be highly potent, the reflections of participants suggest that the cultural resistance to thinking about child abuse in traditionally safe environments is

changing. Only from an absence of any discussions with the participants about sexual deviance within domestic settings could it be suggested that there is still a taboo around this topic and that therefore some resistance to it remains. However, it remains the case that participants spoke broadly about sexual violence against children, both by those familiar and unfamiliar to children. It should however be noted that participants were not asked about sexual deviance in the home, nor do either of the cases deal with this issue and thus the value of these claims is limited.

What the research can claim however, is that where concerns about sexual deviance exist (because for some there was no concern), there has been a shift in what constitutes risk, danger and fear in relation to this issue. In respect of this, Sarah Payne remains a key cultural reference and an important feature of the ever developing discourse around sexual violence. However, most participants cited other deviant acts which they felt were more significant concerns for them such as gangs, riots and drugs (see Tod and Joanna's statements above) suggesting that the more mundane low-level crimes do constitute a concern for citizens. The fact that audiences discuss these issues shows how the personal is always brought to the fore. The case study crimes are not relevant to local issues, to current trends in criminal behaviour or to anti-social behaviour and yet participants discussed these issues because they are important to them. These issues are clearly at the forefront of their mind in terms of their wider understanding of crime, something which has been in constant negotiation since before the case study crimes occurred. The presence of these issues in the discussion adds weight to Innes' argument that real word, co-present experiences, impact on the ways audiences negotiate mediated representations of crime and also shows how our understandings of crime are undoubtedly cumulative.

As a result of the cumulative nature of our understandings of crime, this research argues that such views change over time. Whilst high-profile crimes such as the case studies constitute only discrete elements of our understanding about crime, they are interconnected with and situated within a broader pattern of the social and cultural meanings of crime and deviance. It is through our engagement with news reporting that we integrate our understandings of these cases and the relevant discourse into our personally experienced but socially shared networks of understanding about crime and criminality more generally. By thinking about where these cases fit within a

particular network we can see how participants have negotiated the cases and how they feature as a part of a cumulative understanding of crime. With this in mind it is important to note the focus on the present within many of the extracts above. The personal experiences of participants have been shown in these examples to help them form a particular understanding of crime and criminality and to consider what is meaningful to them in the present. This assertion leads me to suggest that responses may have been different in the wake of the Moors Murders or the West Killings in which concerns about female deviance or being the victim of serial killing may have been more pertinent. This is not to say that audiences are drawn into a setting out of their concerns purely as a result of the moral panic of the day, but that such crimes clearly fit into and fall out of audience conceptualisations of crime, depending on the present circumstance. It is likely that as time goes on, events in the audience member's own life and events within the public arena, will encourage audiences to re-negotiate their thoughts about these cases again and reconsider other cases too. The way these accounts are presented will ultimately depend on the context and the way the connections between mediated narratives and personal experience can be synthesised with that temporal moment.

7.6 Complications and considerations of the moral categories of the crime

As I have noted briefly, the Bulger crime cannot, unlike the Sarah Payne case, be assimilated into a broader landscape of crime so easily. This is predominantly because the notion of child perpetrators complicates the moral categories we usually draw on to understand these crimes. In this sense the case is atypical and as such participants' accounts display real concern in their responses to the horror of the case. This is as opposed to an interrogation of the usual discourse around child crime which was identified in the account of the Sarah Payne case, set out above.

The key issue in the Bulger case is that the crime was perpetrated by children as opposed to an adult. This is unusual and greatly complicates the normative frameworks we use to make sense of childhood and crime. In addition to this the crime took place during the day, in a shopping centre; this is a normal everyday

situation that is familiar, and as a result we cannot easily ward ourselves, or our families, against dangers. We, the audience, therefore feel unable to manage the risk of the Bulger case, because for these reasons it is so profoundly disconnected to the frameworks we usually evoke to understand crime. What this means in practice is that the participants tended to focus on the shock and horror of the case in order to make sense of the disconnectedness in a meaningful way.

Marie's extract shows this working in practice and highlights how the horror and shock of the case underpin the way it is understood.

> Marie: I just couldn't bear to listen to it. I think it was as much that he was so young himself – the victim and also that the culprits were. It was just too awful to, to even contemplate. Possibly because I had children of my own, the idea that children, well anybody, would do anything that awful to a child well it's something I didn't want to know. The horror of the reality that it could happen… It's a bit like an ostrich with it head in the sand. I guess it was just too awful to contemplate. I didn't like it at all.

Marie refers several times to the fact that she didn't want to contemplate the case, reiterating that it was 'so awful'. Notably she refers to the fact that it was a combination of the child victim and the child perpetrator that made this case so difficult to think about. Marie has implicitly identified that this case goes beyond the normative conventions of understanding the crime and that for this reason she chooses not to think about it. Although this statement is clearly framed within her experience as a mother, her account also demonstrates the sense of shock about such an event happening in society, as well as a more specific concern about her own children in relation to this. It seems that she falls back on her experience as a mother because she has no other adequate framework to make sense of the case, illustrating how the case is difficult for audiences to make sense of. The consequences for memory are that it cannot emancipate us from the horror of the event, no matter how far we move past the moment. To paraphrase Irwin- Zareka, memory although incorporeal, is always bound to something real (Irwin- Zarecka, 1994: 17). Not necessarily something palpable, not a necessarily an object, but certainly to a truth.

For Marie, her shock and concern is channelled through her experiences, which she clings onto as a way to make sense of the difficulties of the case.

This shows how the particular tragedy of James Bulger's death is considered to be so sick and so perverse that although it is framed as an unthinkable act by participants, it is still thought about. It is not ignored - the reluctance of people to think about the crime as a feature of everyday life just means that the only way to understand it is in oppositional terms such as good versus evil. This is well described by Greer, who states that 'our sense of what we are derives to an extent from what we are not' (Greer, 2003: 139). This suggests that the ways in which participants make sense of this crime is in opposition their own sense of self. They draw the moral boundary between themselves and the "other" and in doing so the audience place the crime in a context which is beyond any understanding. However, it is not only "othering" which creates a climate whereby an actor becomes memorable or iconic, as noted earlier, Roy Whiting is not specifically remembered by audiences. This is the case even though he is subject to overt "othering" within the textual sample.

Journalistic narratives which seek to marginalise certain (criminal) actors are an often blunt instrument, but in many cases the interviewee's accounts highlighted some awkwardness with taking such a view against the Bulger killers. Even though these actors transgressed the moral boundaries so extremely, constructing a totally disparaging account of these two children goes against our own morality which tells us we should protect children. Again, Philo's understanding of the ways audiences reason and negotiate their understandings in order to reject or accept arguments they come in to contact with is relevant here.

In each interview participants attempt to explain how heinous they find the crime and do so in a way which helps them to demarcate a boundary between us and them, creating a dichotomy between the actions of a perpetrator and "us". However, the extent to which participants '"other"' the Bulger killers varies, displaying an active negotiation of the discourses around this case though a synthesis of personal and mediated experiences.

Joanna's account (see the following page) highlights the tension between outwardly "othering" the perpetrators due to her sense of moral concern about them being

children, and caught up in something so awful. There is no outward vilification of the killers but her narrative demonstrates an understanding of the argument of essentialised evil, which punctuated the reporting.

> Joanna: They don't look like killers do they? You know, when you look at them, so innocent. Especially… Robert Thompson he doesn't look…. If anything, sounds silly looking at Jon Venables he looks a bit - not a murderer but he's got that look …a bit more about him than the other boy. You know you would never think it, would you? It was Jon Venables was he the murderer and the other boy - can you remember which way round it was? Or were they both equal? I think as well, you look at these, and you think that they're killers but they're still only young boys. As a mum… but anybody would think what they did was awful but you still have a bit of worry about them you know.

Clearly, whatever Joanna's feeling, her words are tempered by her identity as a mother which means she seems to find it hard to denigrate any child. This is set out in the first line, that they're 'so innocent' and in the last, 'you still have a bit of worry about them' shrouding the central narrative which singles out Venables as the key culprit of the crime and echoing the notions of essentialised evil which were set out in the reporting.

Within this statement Joanna focuses on Venables as the more deviant-looking child, stating 'he's got that look …a bit more about him than the other boy', noting his more corrupt nature, which is particularly interesting. She is drawing on the norms of innocence and then discusses the congruence and incongruence of the boys' images and actions with this. However, more than underpinning the "otherness" of the children, her statement actually serves to reinstate the current loathing of Venables.

The focus on Venables as a result of his re-arrest has allowed him to be singled out, become more maligned and seen as the more responsible culprit. This is echoed in textual narratives[50] and in other interviewee's accounts which suggest that the reinterpretation of the events surrounding the Bulger case, which have been more recently framed with Venables as a central actor, have become part of the cumulative

[50] See page 155 onwards.

understandings of crime. Rather than a direct memory of the boys as children, Joanna's extract represents an account which has developed over time by way of periodic renegotiation of the case within textual reports and through memory work. Her statement is therefore not related to the Bulger case *per se* but relevant to characterisation of Venables as the more evil person which underpins his continuing status as an outcast "other".

This construction of Venables echoes the concept of adultification, as outlined in Chapter Two. This the notion that children are, through their textual construction, often extracted from a framework of childhood and innocence, instead being connected to adultified experiences and traits, a process which makes them a more acceptable site for blame and vengeance. Thompson and Venables were subject to this specific kind of adultification which allowed them to be constructed as "evil" or as "monsters" and for this to be acceptable. In a sense, Joanna's overt focus on Venables shows how his recent deviant behaviour serves to justify the concern about him and fill in for the imagined concern, set out in the early reporting.

The reason for demonising child offenders in this way is that it serves to 'consolidate moral boundaries and promote social solidarity' (Greer, 2003: 139). This again suggests that the moral feature of the reports is more useful in helping audiences, as members of society, to make sense of the crime rather than the legal framework. This is not only demonstrated in the accounts of Venable's and Thompson's actions, looks and behaviour but also more generally in relation to the notion that 'offenders are clearly distinguishable from 'normal' people' (*ibid.*), which is articulated by Lara:

> Lara: My view would be a forty year old man, like, he is a stranger. I'd never see other friend's mums or sisters as strangers, you'd have a view of a 40 year old man with a beard but maybe that's because I'm a girl?

As noted earlier, Roy Whiting is not specifically remembered by audiences, although this account does seem to mirror the textual construction of Roy Whiting very closely[51] This doesn't necessarily mean that Lara read the reports that constructed him in this way; rather it highlights how the ideas around strangers and victimhood are proliferated through this stereotype. The fact that the description of Roy Whiting

[51] See the account of Lee Payne's testimony on page 136.

connects to the stereotype means that he comes to stand for all that we fear and his actions become assimilated into what we fear. Lara's account of the stranger therefore describes an icon of criminality and sexual deviance, not Whiting himself. The stereotype is propagated through each report and through each account of the stranger and as such has become part of Lara's popular understanding of fear and risk and criminality. This extract is also significant in the sense that there is a very clear stereotypical construction of the kind of person who would have committed the Sarah Payne crime whereas the same cannot be said of the Bulger case.

This final extract taken from Evie provides reflections on both of the case studies. It shows the different ways that the cases are constructed in one cohesive account.

> *Evie*: The other case [Bulger] definitely stood out more for me than this one I do remember this one… but not as much even though this one was more recent. Which is funny isn't it? Maybe what strikes me about Madeleine [Sarah Payne] is because it's a man. It's not expected but because it's a man who has abducted a young girl, whereas they're teenagers, that stands out more- why did they do it? I mean they were only 11 at the time so that kind of stands out to me more. I'm more interested in that one. I'm interested in this one as well but there's so many cases like this. A man abducted a young girl – it happens more frequently whereas that one's very different it's a bit more interesting, you want to know more.

Within this account there is a sense of adultification, describing the Bulger killers as teens as opposed to thinking about them as children. Just this small adulteration to the understanding of the case makes it more acceptable as it draws on notions of youth as opposed to notions of childhood which are bound up with innocence. However, they are still described in this youthful manner and not as the adults they are now. This suggests that the frame of childhood is still central to their characterisation. The intrigue and interest in the Bulger case is a palpable feature of Evie's extract showing how the horror of the case leads audiences' understandings of it. Clearly her questions about why it happened cannot be answered – they are rhetorical, reiterating the audience's attempts to try to understand it, but their overriding inability to do so within the usual frameworks. In Evie's account her horror in relation to Bulger is

juxtaposed to the almost ordinariness of the Sarah Payne case. She considers that the frequency of such stories, and the fact that a man committing a crime, is almost expected. This speaks to the normative conventions we draw on to understand crime which tell us that men commit such crimes and that this is normal. The assertion to this effect, allows Evie to construct the Bulger case as a-typical and to think about it as beyond the normative conventions of crime.

What this means is that participants have chosen not to accept the Bulger crime as a feature of everyday life. In this sense the Bulger crime is an exception as opposed to the Payne crime, which although horrific, does not contravene the normative conventions of crime in the same ways. The Bulger crime is constructed as an exception in the sense that participants see it as an anomaly because they can't understand it. Put another way, participants don't understand why a child would kill another child because it is so extreme and so far removed for normal childhood behaviour, whereas adult deviance, however extreme, is more usual. The Bulger case is therefore concerning for participants in the sense that it is shocking, but it does not constitute an everyday risk or concern.

7.7 Conclusion

When a crime such as Sarah Payne's abduction or James Bulger's murder comes into the public consciousness it does so through the media. The media in turn represent the case in the most impactful way. To do this they draw on our ideas of what is, and is not legitimate, focussing on the deviant nature of the event, because these are the appropriate news values within which to frame these sorts of cases.

This chapter has built on these frameworks, which we know to be present within the textual reporting of these case studies, in order to consider how the cases are utilised as on-going mnemonic resources for understanding crime and criminality.

It is clear that from the interviews that most participants had at least some knowledge of both of the case studies. Notably, participants spent much longer discussing the Bulger case and so it could be considered that the remembering of the Bulger case was greater and thus, that the case has more long term resonance with the

audience. Further to this, some participants stated that they had very little knowledge of the Sarah Payne case. This is surprising given that 98% of people acknowledged they had heard of Sarah Payne in the diagnostic survey.[52] As such, there was significant variation in what was and what wasn't remembered but the cases and the discourse around them still represented an understandable social concern for participants, however small. Because of the consensus around the cases it is possible to suggest that they have become cultural referents for audiences. These referents are situated as part of a network of understanding providing frameworks for understanding crime and criminality more generally.

It is also notable that participants remembered the cases within the same general terms as described within the analysis of the reporting. Such a finding was anticipated because the media set out the framework within which the audience are able to understand the events around them, a framework, which would in many cases, impact on the audience. Such a finding is supported by Miller and Philo's 1999 study, which found that 'some participants could accurately reproduce the language of headlines over a year after they had seen them' (Greer 2003: 142). What this suggests is a clear connection between reporting and remembering. However, the possibility of this connection lies in the way journalists reproduce ideologically embedded, normative categories of social belonging and exclusion in the organisation and content of reporting to frame high-profile crimes. These are then taken up by audiences and brought to bear on and in everyday personal and social experiences. It is these dynamics, rather than headlines or specific factual elements of the reports, which are memorable and become features of popular memory. Put differently, it is not the details of the case study crime that are particularly memorable at a collective level but the frame; the frame is memorable because it draws on pre-existing moral understandings which are already embedded in discourses of crime and criminality.

Although the connection between the reporting and remembering are consistent with broad ideological concerns, the ways participants made sense of and attributed meaning to the discourses underpinning this was much more individual. It is therefore clear that the social lives and experiences of participants played a part in

[52] See Chapter Three, for an account of the results of the diagnostic survey.

their accounts of the case studies. This gives weight to the argument that it is a synthesis of mediated narratives alongside life experiences, which together contribute to audience's general understanding of crimes. Any engagement with different narratives encourages audiences to negotiate the meanings of crimes and their significance in daily life in a way that is personally meaningful for them.

Finally, it is important to reiterate the ways audiences attribute meaning to certain issues, including the case studies as examples of child crime, is a constantly developing process and can only be articulated within the current context. In reference to this, Zelizer states: 'for over time as people look at news images in different contexts they may accept their preferred meaning by taking the fastest if not the fullest more reliable or most all-encompassing route. What remains is what makes sense' (Zelizer, 2010: 5). To this summary it is important to add that, what remains is what makes sense *to them*. In other words it is what makes sense to the individual, by way of their personal identities and experiences which, as this chapter has proved, are the central to the way audiences make sense of the case studies in the present context.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Evaluations

In Chapter One a quote by Fogg (2013) was used to consider the role of the media in creating news content. It said: 'newspaper editors and broadcasters have always known what sells their products and rule No 1 in the book is this: if it bleeds, it leads' (Fogg, 2013). While such a simplistic attitude to representations of crime may underpin editorial decisions to report crime, this study concludes that such a one-dimensional understanding of crime, criminality and victimhood is far from visible in the public memory of such cases.

This study has considered that an understanding of crime is built up through the interplay of lived experience, personal identity and the media, all of which contribute to audience understandings of cultural events. The hypothesis is upheld by the empirical research, in particular through examples which show the ways audiences bring their personal experiences to bear on their understandings of these crimes. The way that audiences rely on stereotypes to fill in memory gaps, or utlise new evidence to justify historical concerns (Jon Venables re-arrest for example), are also specific features of the research which help to prove in practice what has long been set out in principle: multiple voices, contribute to our understandings of the social world.

This assertion necessitates an understanding that the reporting of these events relies on normative frameworks in its presentation of actors and events. Highlighting the universal nature of the discourse and the close connection of such discourses to historically embedded ideals was the contribution of the first two analytical chapters. Chapter Four outlined the key and consistent cast of characters, which appear across the life cycle of the case studies. These actors were utilised to present a familiar and yet shocking discourse which creates empathy and intrigue for audiences, in equal amounts. While their representation was based on historically embedded norms, the case studies provided an opportunity to present such discourse, in a novel way, which is the catalyst for renewed interest. In other words, although the case studies are novel in their own ways, the discourse, which is used in both cases, is remarkably

rigid; as Pearson (1983) states, while such cases 'may be news, they are not new' (*ibid*: 12).

Chapter Five then attempted to contextualise the reporting, giving a sense of the connections and disconnections across different periods of reporting. This chapter also focused on the features of these cases which were not fixed over time. The novel and curious parts were also found to be tied to moral dynamics, as for example, with the scenes of mourning which allowed the audience to legitimately act as vicarious mourners after the bodies of the child victims were found. Despite not being a visible feature of the ongoing discourse, the representation of this discrete period of intense grief helped build up emotion in terms of both empathy toward the victim and family, and anger toward the perpetrator. In this sense the discrete moments are like chapters of a book; they have their own plot and purpose but always contribute to the overarching story.

Accordingly, each representation which draws on the discourse of these two cases, which sets out the plot to contextualize a new case, and which pictures and names the key actors, is a part of the process by which these crimes have been able to persist. And yet, note the disparity between the representation of the CCTV and the remembering of it. The disconnection between the representation and remembering of this text shows that the remembering of the case studies doesn't always reflect key areas of reporting and does not always reflect consistent or high levels of reporting

It must therefore be that what the CCTV represents, or more specifically, has come to represent, is the basis for its persistence and importance to audiences within their accounts of the case. As was highlighted in Chapter Seven, the meaning of this particular image has transformed over time. It has come to represent the extremes of innocence and evil within children and is now closely bound to our understanding of children and crime. Even within this iconic example, the universal nature of the discourse remains central, the level of reporting simply provides audiences with more opportunities to reconsider this story and to renegotiate its significance.

That is why the interview data, as set out in Chapter Six is so personal, for it is evidence of the audience renegotiating the significance of the cases. But these cases

are not only personal. Through the accounts of the audience the process of remembering is elucidated, which shows how the personal and public are intertwined. The universal discourse is salient and it is this which provides audiences with similar points of identification and thus their accounts may be similar. The powerful nature of these case studies is thus underpinned by their universal nature, which retains relevance to audiences beyond the newsworthy moment. Because of the salience in popular memory it has often been assumed that audiences directly recollect media content. However, the process is shown to be more complex. We can conclude from this that the extent to which a case is memorable is not tied to media representations as tightly as has previously been conceived.

The commonality in the audience accounts was not just apparent in their construction of the actors, but in how this was used to reflect upon their autographical experiences. For example, the accounts of a remembered childhood, or memories of one's own children were overwhelmingly personal, the common construction of a positive, safe and happy childhood. It seems that in light of these cases, the audience felt so positive, for nothing so horrific was or had become a feature of their own lives. While it is true to say that no-one in this study was a victim of such an appalling crime, it cannot be said that they have not experienced challenges and have all had equally idyllic life experiences. So it is not only what people 'remember' of the case but also how this affects the (constructed) past, including commonly shared and collectively commemorated ideas or events. This not only reflects the past, but also shapes the way we can articulate ourselves in the present.

This is put well by Edy, who states that while 'memories can … influence the ways future events are understood and managed', memory 'is always an imperfect representation of the past despite the fact that we often treat it as the equivalent of the past' (Edy, 2006b: 2). This is not to say that the accounts presented here are untrue, but rather that the account is tempered by our experience to date and how we utilise that in the present. In this sense, through the discussion of these case studies the audience accounts of their pasts regain or reinforce significance for them. This highlights the imaginative process of memory which synthesises our cumulative and cognate experiences over time, allowing us to articulate something about the case studies, and ourselves in the present.

Accuracy is not the central concern here, and even accounts which are inaccurate tell us something about the attitudes and ideal of that individual. In this sense the commonality of such accounts tells us not only about the individual but about society and how we are encouraged to ascribe certain fears and concerns to certain different events and behaviours. Even dissenting arguments showed consensus and a commitment to the same overarching ideals, even if the narrative was couched in different frames of reference. It was this that was dealt with in Chapter Seven which highlighted the broader connections and disconnections between the reporting and the remembering of the crimes.

A particular disconnection between the reporting and remembering of the cases was the representation of Roy Whiting. It was clear from the analysis of his representation in the media that Roy Whiting was predictably characterised; he was stereotyped. This is not a new finding. However, considering that audiences did not discuss him, and that he was absent from the remembered accounts, it is clear that the utilisation of known and embedded frameworks does not necessarily equate to "memorable-ness". This is certainly a very important finding and is a notable contribution of this research. It is hinged on the ways audiences constructed the perpetrators differently. In Chapter Four the analysis of the reporting shows how, while Roy Whiting is pre-defined as a folk devil, through the remembered accounts we can understand that his stringent and consistent connection to the familiar stereotype means that his representation within the reporting is not memorable. The James Bulger case is different and shocking, complicated and confusing, and seems to be more memorable as such.

The Bulger case is not just more memorable. It is a site for struggle. The inability of audience to make sense of the case is intriguing and troubling, and is the second overarching finding in the thesis. It was clear through the audience accounts that audiences feel unable to manage the risk of the Bulger case. Specifically the dimension of the child perpetrator was a profound complication because it is so disconnected to the frameworks we usually evoke to understand crime. However, the persistence of this particular range of emotions was very strong, and unlike many of

the other factors of the case studies, was not tempered, by age, class or gender. Social acquiescence is certainly a factor in the ways audiences collectively abhor deviant actions, but the reaction to the Bulger case went beyond this. In contrast, the Payne case was accepted by audiences as a feature of modern life rather than consistently questioned. This is not say that audiences consider the Payne case to be acceptable – certainly not – but there was a sense of recognition that these types of crimes happen, however regrettably, in a way which was definitely not consistent with the reaction to the Bulger crime. The nature of the Bulger case is thus confusing and complicated for audiences. It appears that this does not diminish over time allowing the case to remain iconic through its extreme discordance with moral values, proportionate to the extent of "evil" this particular crime is seen to be representative of. We cannot get it out of our heads because we cannot properly understand it.

Overall it seems that the Bulger case retains its own set of discourses. It is still hinged on the issue of childhood deviance and the extreme transgression of social norms. For this reason is has not become part of the network of associated cases, in which it is viewed as one of many; rather it stands alone as an iconic representation of ideological incongruence. This is juxtaposed to the Sarah Payne case. The case is perhaps better described as well-known, rather than iconic, for it is notable within the discourse of child crime, but not beyond this. What it means is that the murder of James Bulger is an iconic case, whereas Sarah Payne is an icon of child crime; the case itself all but forgotten.

These specific examples highlight how this research has developed knowledge about the interplay between the media, memory and crime, but the study has also contributed to the field of memory studies more broadly by presenting empirical work which elucidates the process by which audiences remember. The interweaving of personal and public is particular evidence of the imaginative process of remembering, something which has been conceptualised, but not widely realised in scholarly work to date.

The empirical presentation is certainly a significant feature of this thesis, but like the research on which the study is based, the theoretical framework provided the pathway for achieving the presentation. The findings came to fruition by re-hinging the

reporting and reception of the case study crimes through the memory studies lens. Memory studies critically provided a temporally sensitive and appropriately sociological grounding for the research. In relying on this framework the research was able to go beyond the moral panic framework, which has so rigidly conceptualised the reaction to child-crimes, and other occurrences of high profile deviance, as fleeting moments of public concern. Rather, the universal nature of the discourse, and the close connection of such discourses to historically embedded ideals, should be seen as a key feature of popular remembering and an ongoing feature of our understanding of deviance. It can therefore be seen that the attitudes and knowledge about the appropriate ways to speak about and behave in the social world are reiterated and reflected by these cases; their negotiation thus provides cultural capital for audiences and allows them to demonstrate their legitimate interests and values. The continual reassertion of these values is salient, at the time of reporting, in re-representation and within the audience accounts. They are universal, discursively powerful and ultimately allow audiences, repeatedly to restate the boundaries of acceptability and situate themselves within it as part of the moral majority.

8.2 Reflections

The contribution of this project is closely tied to the way it has extended and refined our understanding of how child-related crimes retain significance over time. While specifically relevant to the field of criminology, the analytical model which preferences temporal sensitivity could be applied to a range of other contexts. The importance of a holistic approach which takes note of a range of factors and methods, and in this case, a range of temporal dimensions, is thus not only relevant in an abstract sense, but can be utilised to help us understand the world around us in the present as well as to make assertions about the past and future.

Extending the study by looking at additional contemporaneous cases would add to our understanding of the connections between crime and memory in different contexts. By relying on the conclusions set out above, one would expect the

representational strategies to closely mirror the cases analysed here, but the mnemonic value is much more difficult to predict. As such it is particularly important to investigate more deeply why certain crimes are profoundly difficult for audiences to understand, why some are more easily assimilated into our social understanding of crime, and how this changes over time. I suggest this ought to be explored further by comparing additional case studies and by increasing the number of interviewees. Whether a larger scale project is possible within the constraints of any further project remains to be seen.

The biggest potential for further analysis is of high-profile crimes and their persistence in vernacular and popular memory. In particular a further study to track the ongoing connections and disconnections of the case studies presented here would be increasingly interesting as time passes and the representational value of the case is yet again revisited. Such a study could also include an analysis of other forms of media output in order to question the salience of representational strategies, not only with the audiences of crime news, but across different types of content. Given the time and resource restrictions of this study, the inclusion of such analysis was not possible here. However, it would certainly be a useful benchmark and make interesting comparative data through which to further interrogate the audience accounts, and the persistence of high-profile child-related crimes, within them.

.

Bibliography

I Primary sources for the textual sample

James Bulger Case - Peak 1: February 1993

Tabloid Cluster

Corless, F. (1993). 'How can anyone be so evil' *Daily Mirror* 16 February: 2.

Corless, F., & Taylor, N. (1993). 'Last tortured hours of tragic Jamie' *Daily Mirror*.17 February: 6-7.

Mulchrone, P. (1993a). 'Prayers as the city of sorrow says farewell to Jamie' *Daily Mirror*. 22 February: 4-5.

Broadsheet Cluster

Ward, D. (1993a). 'A community left numb by rage and grief' *The Guardian* 18 February: 3.

Ward, D. (1993b). 'New picture offers clue to Bulger killing' *The Guardian*. 19 February: 3.

Ward, D. (1993c). 'Anyone with boys of that age expected the police. I kept looking at my kids to see if they fitted the descriptions' *The Guardian.* 23 February: 2.

James Bulger Case - Peak 2: November 1993

Tabloid Cluster

Corless, F, & Mulchrone, P. (1993). 'In his Noddy t-shirt, James skipped happily by his mother's side. Suddenly he was whisked away and she was never to see him again' *Daily Mirror*. 4 November: 5.

Antonowicz, A. & Corless, F. (1993).'Strange, shifty .. the weirdo who tried to throttle a school pal' *Daily Mirror.* 25 November: 22-23.

Mulchrone, P. (1993b). 'Bully who sucked thumb for comfort' *Daily Mirror.* 25 November: 24-25.

Todd, R. (1993). 'Save the boys with cuddles' *Daily Mirror.* 26 November: 6-7.

Broadsheet Cluster

Sharratt, T. (1993). 'Boys 'changed their story over James Bulger murder'' *The Guardian.* 3 November: 3.

Pilkington, E. (1993). 'Tell them I'm sorry' sobs child after verdict announced' *The Guardian.* 25 November: 1.

Ward, D. (1993d). 'Tears and flowers at victim's grave as council stresses that tragedy contains no feature peculiar to Merseyside' *The Guardian.* 26 November: 2.

James Bulger Case - Peak 3: March 2010

Tabloid Cluster

Kelly, J. (2010). 'It's brought back all the horror' *Daily Mirror,* 3 March: 5.

Gregory, A. (2010a). 'Cokehead with a raging temper' *Daily Mirror,* 4 March: 4-5.

Gregory, A. (2010b). 'Once evil always evil' *Daily Mirror,* 8 March: 7.

Broadsheet Cluster

Travis, A. (2010).'Jon Venables return to prison is a setback for the cause of prison reform and rehabilitation' *The Guardian,* 3 March: 3.

Davies, C. (2010). 'Jon Venables: the making of James Bulger's murderer' *The Guardian,* 4 March: 16.

Walker, P. (2010). 'Jon Venables back in prison 'over child pornography offenses'' *The Guardian,* 8 March: 5.

Sarah Payne Case - Peak 1: July 2000

Pre-discovery

Arnold, H., & Pilditich, D. (2000). 'Family of Tears' *Daily Mirror,* 5 July: 7.

Hall, S (2000). 'Brother may have seen kidnap' *The Guardian,* 8 July: 4.

Post-discovery

North, N., Arnold, H., Williams, A., Fisher,. & Yates, N. (2000). 'Bye Bye Little Angel' *The Mirror.* 19 July: 4- 5.

Mulholland, H. (2000). ''We seem to know you…'' *The Guardian*. 25 July: 4.

Sarah Payne Case - Peak 2: November 2001

Pre-verdict

Arnold, H (2001). 'He has yellowish teeth, his eyes were standing out, there were white stubbles on his face and little bits of grey in his hair. He had dirt on his face. He looked greasy and stuff' *The Mirror*. November 20: 4

Morris, S. (2001). 'Brothers tell how Sarah Payne vanished' *The Guardian.* 20 November : 8.

Post-Verdict

Arnold, H., & Shaw, A. (2001). 'You'll Die in Jail' *Daily Mirror.* 13 December: 4-5.

Morris, S. & Hall, S. (2001). 'You should never be freed- judge' *The Guardian.,* 13 December: 1.

II Additional primary sources

Media Content

Antonwicz, A. (1993) 'Boy 11, cries in dock as court hears of toddler's last horrific moments' *Daily Mirror*. 2 November: 5.

Bell, S. (2010) 'Bulger mother backs Straw on secrecy over Venables' *The Guardian.* 8 March [online] Available at http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cartoon/2010/mar/08/jamie-bulger-murder-venables-straw [accessed 4/10/2013].

BBC (1998) 'James Bulger: a murder that shocked Britain', 6 March [online] Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/62446.stm [accessed 13/12/12].

Daily Mirror (2004). '£1m plea for crime victims' 27 April: 10.

Fogg, A. (2013) 'Crime is Falling. Now let's reduce fear of crime' 24 April [online] Available at http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/24/crime-falling-reduce-fear-crime [accessed 16/09/2014].

James Bulger - Eyes of the Detective (2001) BBC, 21 June. [online] Available at http://churn.tv/c/vbnhb2wig65u/v/1jetblyw9m0df [accessed 15/10/13].

Lyons, J., & Fricker, M. (2010). 'Just not enough' *The Mirror*, 2 August: 4-5.

Morris, S. (2001)'How an eight-year-old misfit became a notorious killer' *The Guardian* Dec 13: 3.

Robinson, W. (2013). *Remembering James Bulger*. Interview on: BBC Radio 4, 12 February at 21.30.

Rozenburg. J, (1993). 'Q&A: The Bulger case'. *BBC*, [online] Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/567744.stm [accessed 15/10/13].

Walker, P., & Travis, A. (2010) 'Bulger killers prove child criminals can be rehabilitated' *The Guardian*, 22 January [online] Available at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jan/22/edlington-brothers-bulger-rehabilitation [accessed 24/09/14].

Other

Children and Young Persons Act 1933 S. 39.

Criminal Justice Act 1925. S. 41.

Omand, D (2010). Omand Review Independent Serious Further Offence Review: The Case of Jon Venables. *Ministry of Justice*. [online] Available at http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/corporate-reports/moj/2010/omand-review [accessed 03/07/12].

R v. Secretary of State for the Home Department, [1997] Ex parte V. and Same v. Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte T per Lord Steyn.

III Secondary sources

Altheide, D. L. (1997). 'The News Media, the Problem Frame, and the Production of Fear'. *The Sociological Quarterly*, *38*(4): 647–668.

Altheide, D. L. (2002). 'Children and the Discourse of Fear'. *Symbolic Interaction*, *25*(2): 229– 250.

Altheide, D. L. (2003). 'Mass Media, Crime and the Discourse of Fear'. *The Hedgehog Review*, 9–25. [online] Available at http://www.iasc-culture.org/HHR_Archives/Fear/5.3CAltheide.pdf [accessed 24/09/12].

Altheide, D. L. (2009a). 'Moral Panic: From Sociological Concept to Public Discourse'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *5*(1): 79–99.

Altheide, D. L. (2009b). 'The Columbine Shootings and the Discourse of Fear'. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *52*(10), 1354–1370.

Altheide, D. L., & Devriese, K. (2007). 'Perps in the News: A Research Note on Stigma'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *3*(3): 382–389.

Anderson, M. (1980). *Approaches to the History of the Western Family*. London: Macmillan.

Aries, P. (1962). *Centuries of Childhood*. New York: Vintage.

Baer, J., & Chambliss, W. J. (2005). 'Generating Fear : The Politics of Crime Reporting'. *Social Change*: 87–107.

Bandalli, S. (1998) 'Abolition of the Presumption of *Doli Incapax* and the Criminalisation of Children'. *The Howard Journal*, 37 (2): 114-123.

Banks, M. (2005). 'Spaces of (in)security: Media and fear of crime in a local context'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *1*(2), 169–187.

Barak, G. (2012) 'Mass Media and the Social Construction of Crime' In DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz eds. (2012). *Routledge Handbook of Critical Criminology*. [online] Available at http://www.greggbarak.com/whats_new_6.html [accessed 19 July 2013].

Barthes, R. (1982). *A Barthes Reader*, Sontag, S. ed. London: Vintage.

Barthes, R. (2000). *Camera Lucida*, Howard, R. ed. London: Vintage.

Bergin, T. (2013). 'Identity and nostalgia in a globalised world: Investigating the international popularity of *Midsomer Murders'*. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 9(1): 83-99.

Berry, M., Philo, G., Tiripelli, G., Docherty, S., & Macpherson, C. (2012). 'Media coverage and public understanding of sentencing policy in relation to crimes against children'. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, *12*(5): 567–591.

Bessant, J., & Watts, R. O. B. (1998). ‘History, Myth Making and Young People in a Time of Change’. *Family Matters*, (49): 5–10.

Bietti, L. M. (2010). ‘Sharing Memories, Family Conversation and Interaction’. *Discourse & Society*, *21*(5), 499–523.

Birkland, T. A., & Lawrence, R. G. (2009). ‘Media Framing and Policy Change After Columbine’. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *52*(10): 1405–1425.

Bluck, S. (2003). ‘Autobiographical Memory: Exploring its Functions in Everyday Life’. *Memory*, *11*(2): 123– 133.

Boulahanis, J. G., & Heltsley, M. J. (2004). ‘Perceived Fears: The Reporting Patterns of Juvenile Homicide in Chicago Newspapers’. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, *15*(2): 132–160.

Bretherick, D. (2006). *Crime from below: an examination of the role of popular cultural representations of crime in criminology*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Portsmouth.

Brown, A. D., Gutman, Y., Freeman, L., Sodaro, A., & Coman, A. (2009). ‘Introduction : Is an Interdisciplinary Field of Memory Studies Possible ?’. *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 22 (2): 117-124.

Butler, I., & Drakeford, M. (2008). ‘Booing or cheering? Ambiguity in the Construction of Victimhood in the Case of Maria Colwell’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *4*(3): 367–385.

Buckingham, D. (2001) ‘Electronic Child Abuse? Rethinking the media’s effects on children’ in Barker, M. & Petley, J. eds. (2001) *Ill Effects: the media/violence debate.* Second Edition London: Routledge: 63-77

Chadee, D. (2005). ‘Fear of Crime and the Media: Assessing the Lack of Relationship’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *1*(3): 322–332.

Cheliotis, L. K. (2010). ‘The ambivalent consequences of visibility: Crime and Prisons in the Mass Media’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *6*(2): 169–184.

Chiricos, T., Padgett, K., & Gertz, M. (2000). ‘Fear, TV News, and the Reality of Crime’. *Criminology*, *38*(3): 755–786.

Cohen, S. (2011). ‘Whose side were we on? The Undeclared Politics of Moral Panic Theory’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *7*(3): 237–243.

Cohen, S. (1972: 2002). *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* .Third Edition. London: Routledge.

Cole, P (2006). *The Myth of Evil: Demonizing the Enemy*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Cornwell, B., & Linders, A. (2002). ‘The Myth of “Moral Panic”: an Alternative Account of LSD Prohibition’. *Deviant Behavior*, *23*(4): 307–330.

Connerton, P. (1989). *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Connerton, P. (2009). *How Modernity Forgets*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Corsaro, W. A. (2005). *The Sociology of Childhood*. Second Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Cottle, S. (2005). ‘Mediatized Public Crisis and Civil Society Renewal: The Racist Murder of Stephen Lawrence’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *1*(1): 49–71.

Critcher, C. (2011). ‘For a Political Economy of Moral Panics’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *7*(3): 259–275.

Cromer, G. (2004). ‘“Children From Good Homes”: Moral Panics about Middle-Class Delinquency’. *British Journal of Criminology*, *44*(3): 391–400.

Cubitt, G. (2007). *History and Memory.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Cunningham, H. (2005). *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500*. Second Edition. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Curran, J., & Sparks, C. (1991). 'Press and Popular Culture'. *Media, Culture & Society*, *13*(2): 215–237.

David, M., Rohloff, A., Petley, J., & Hughes, J. (2011). 'The Idea of Moral panic - Ten Dimensions of Dispute'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *7*(3): 215–228.

Davidoff, L., & Hall, C. (2002). *Family Fortunes Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850*. London: Routledge.

Dayan, D., &, Katz, E. (1994). *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Deacon, D., Pickering, M., Golding, P., & Murdock, G. (2007). *Researching Communications*. Second Edition. London: Hodder Education.

De Groof, S. (2007). 'And My Mama Said: The (Relative) Parental Influence on Fear of Crime Among Adolescent Girls and Boys'. *Youth & Society*, *39*(3): 267–293.

Deacon, D. (2007). 'Yesterday's Papers and Today's Technology: Digital Newspaper Archives and "Push Button" Content Analysis'. *European Journal of Communication*, *22*(1): 5–25.

Ditton, J. (2004). 'From Imitation To Intimidation: A Note on the Curious and Changing Relationship between the Media, Crime and Fear of Crime'. *British Journal of Criminology*, *44*(4): 595–610.

Doss, E. (2002). 'Death, Art and Memory in the Public Sphere: The visual and material culture of grief in contemporary America' *Mortality*. 7(1) : 63- 82

Drotner, K., & Livingstone, S. eds. (2008). *The International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture*. SAGE Publications.

Edy, J. A. (1999). 'Journalistic uses of Collective Memory'. *Journal of Communication*, *49*(2): 71–85.

Edy, J. A. (2006a). 'Reporting through the Lens of the Past: from Challenger to Columbia'. *Journalism*, *7*(2), 131–151.

Edy, J. A. (2006b) *Troubled Pasts: News and The Collective Memory of Social Unrest*. Temple University Press: Philidephia

Feagin,J., Orum, A., & Sjoberg, G. eds. (1991). *A Case for the Case Study*. London: The University of North Carolina Press.

Feilzer, M. Y. (2007). 'Criminologists making news? Providing factual information on crime and criminal justice through a weekly newspaper column'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *3*(3): 285–304.

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

Fitzpatrick, T. (2004). 'Social Policy and Time'. *Time & Society*, *13*(2-3): 197–219.

Fox, R. L., Sickel, R. W. Van, & Steiger, T. L. (2007). 'Tabloid Justice : Criminal Justice in an Age of Media Frenzy'. Second Edition. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers [online] Available at https://www.rienner.com/uploads/47d9507ee3854.pdf [accessed 01/02/13].

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish*. London: Penguin.

Frost, N. (2011) *Rethinking Children and Families: The Relationship Between Childhood, Families and the State*, Continuum: London.

Galtung,J. and Ruge, M.H. (1965). 'The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers', *Journal of International Peace Research* 1: 64–91.

Garland, D. (2000). ‘The Culture of High Crime Societies: some Preconditions of Recent “Law and Order” Policies’. *British Journal of Criminology*, *40*: 347–375.

Garland, D. (2001). *The Culture of Control, Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*, Oxford University press, Oxford and New York.

Garland, D. (2008). ‘On the Concept of Moral Panic’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *4*(1), 9–30.

Gavin, H. (2005). ‘The Social Construction of the Child Sex Offender Explored by Narrative’. *Children*, *10*(3), 395–415.

Gilchrist, E., Bannister, J. O. N., Ditton, J., & Farrell, S. (2007). ‘Women and the Fear of Crime ' Challenging the Accepted Stereotype’. *British Journal of Criminology*. *38*(2): 283–298.

Greenberg, J. (2002). ‘Framing and Temporality in Political Cartoons : A Critical Analysis of Visual News Discourse’, *Canadian Review of Sociology*, 39(2):181-19.

Greer, C. (2003) *Sex Crime and the Media: Sex Offending and the Press in a Divided Society*, Cullumpton and Portland: Willan Publishing.

Greer, C. (2007). ‘News Media, Victims and Crime’. In Davies, P., Francis, P., & Greer, C. eds. *Victims, Crime and Society*. London: SAGE Publications.

Grylls, D. (1978). *Guardians and Angels*. London: Faber and Faber.

Gumham, D. (2003). ‘The Moral Narrative of Criminal Responsibility and the Principled Justification of Tariffs for Murder: Myra Hindley and Thompson and Venables’. *Legal Studies*, *23*(4): 605–622.

Habermas, J. (1996). *Between Facts and Norms*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Haggerty, K. D. (2009). ‘Modern Serial Killers’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *5*(2), 168–187.

Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On Collective Memory*. Coser, L., eds. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Hall, S. (2006). ‘The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power’. In Maaka, R., & Andersen, C. eds (2006) *The Indigenous Experience: Global Perspectives*, Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press.

Hall, S., Critcher, C., Jefferson, T., Clarke, J., & Roberts, B. (1978). *Policing the Crisis - Mugging, The State and Law and Order*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Hall, S (1980). ‘Encoding/Decoding.’ In Hall, S., Hobson, D., Lowe, A. and Willis, P. eds. *Culture, Media, Language*. Hutchinson: London.

Hariman, R. and Lucaites, J. (2007) *No Caption Needed: Iconic photographs public culture and liberal democracy*, London: The University of Chicago Press.

Harper,D. (2002). ‘Talking about Taking pictures: A case for Photo Elicitation’. *Visual Studies* 17(1): 13-26.

Haydon, D., & Scraton, P. (2000). ‘“Condemn a Little More, Understand a Little Less”: The Political Context and Rights’ Implications of the Domestic and European Rulings in the Venables-Thompson Case’. *Journal of Law and Society*, *27*(3): 416–448.

Hayward, K., & Presdee, M. (2010). *Framing Crime: Cultural Criminology and the Image*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Hirsch, M. (1997). *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Hobsbawm, E., & Ranger, T. eds. (1983). *The Invention of Tradition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Holland, P. (2008). ‘The Child in the Picture’. In Drotner K,. & Livingstone, S. eds. *The International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture*. London: SAGE Publications.

Honeyman, S. (2005). *Elusive Childhood: Impossible Representations in Modern Fiction*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

Hunt, A. (1997). ‘‘Moral Panic’ and moral language in the media’. *British Journal of Sociology*, *49*(4): 629–648.

Huyssen, A. (2000). ‘Present Pasts: Media Politics and Amnesia’. *Public Culture*, *12*(1): 21–33.

Innes, M. (2003). *Understanding Social Control. Deviance, Crime and Social Order*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Innes, M. (2004). Reinventing Tradition?: Reassurance, Neighbourhood Security and Policing. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, *4*(2): 151–171.

Innes, M. (2004a). ‘Crime as a Signal, Crime as a Memory’. *Journal for Crime, Conflict and the Media*. 1(2): 15–22.

Innes, M. (2004b). ‘Signal Crimes and Signal Disorders: Notes on Deviance as Communicative Action’. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *55*(3): 335–55.

Irwin-Zarecka, I. (1994). *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamic of Collective Memory*. London: Transaction Publishers.

Jarvis, B. (2007). ‘Monsters Inc.: Serial Killers and Consumer Culture’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *3*(3): 326–344.

Jenkins, P. (1992). *Intimate Enemies: Moral Panics in Contemporary Great Britain*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Jewkes, Y. (2004). *Media and Crime*. London: SAGE Publications.

Jewkes, Y. (2005). ‘The Construction of Crime News’. In Muncie, J. ed. *Criminology Volume 1: The Meaning of Crime: Definition, Representation and Social Construction*, London: SAGE Publications.

Jones, P. J., & Wardle, C. (2008). `No Emotion, No Sympathy’: The visual construction of Maxine Carr. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *4*(1): 53–71.

Kearney, M. C. (2009). ‘Coalescing : The Development of Girls’ Studies Coalescing : The Development of Girls’. NWSA Journal, 21(1): 1–33.

Keightley, E. (2008). ‘Engaging with Memory’. In Pickering, M. ed. *Research Methods in Cultural Studies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Keightley, E. & Pickering, M. (2012) *The Mnemonic Imagination. Remembering as Creative Practice.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kember, S. (1998). *Virtual Anxiety: Photography, New technologies and Subjectivity*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

Kenway, J., & Bullen, E. (2008). ‘Dividing Delights: Children, Adults and the Search for Sales’. In Drotner, K, & Livingstone, S. eds. *The International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture*. London: SAGE Publications.

Kuhn, A. (2002). *An Everyday Magic, Cinema and Cultural Memory*, London and New York: I.B. Tauris.

Landsberg, A. (2009). ‘Memory, Empathy, and the Politics of Identification’. *International Journal of Politics*, 22: 221–229.

Lashmar, P (2013). ‘How to Humiliate and Shame: A Reporter's Guide to the Power of the Mugshot’, *Social Semiotics*, 24 (1): 56-87.

Leurs, R. (2009). ‘The Cultural Sublime and the Temporal Dimension of Media: The Case of Child Murderer Marc Dutroux’. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, *12*(4): 395–414.

Lippert, R., & Wilkinson, B. (2010). 'Capturing Crime, criminals and the public's imagination: Assembling Crime Stoppers and CCTV Surveillance'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *6*(2), 131–152.

Liston, R. (2008). 'The Child in Criminology : Site of Intervention , Site of Control , Site of Blame'. *eSharp*, 11. [online] Available at http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/esharp/issues/11/ [accessed 16/11/2011].

Littlechild, B. (1997). 'Young Offenders, Punitive Policies and the Rights of Children'. *Critical Social Policy*, *17*(53): 73–92.

Livingstone, S. (1996) 'On the Continuing Problems of Media Effects Research'. In Curran, J., & Gurevitch, J. eds. *Mass Media and Society*. Second Edition. London: Edward Arnold.

Lumby, C., & Funnell, N. (2011). 'Between Heat and Light: The Opportunity in Moral Panics'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *7*(3): 277–291.

Machado, H., & Santos, F. (2009a). 'Popular Press and Forensic Genetics in Portugal: Expectations and Disappointments Regarding Two Cases of Missing Children'. *Public Understanding of Science*, *20*(3): 303–318.

Machado, H., & Santos, F. (2009b). 'The Disappearance of Madeleine McCann: Public Drama and Trial by Media in the Portuguese Press'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *5*(2): 146–167.

Magnussen,S., & Helstrup, T. (2007). *Everyday Memory*. Hoboken: Taylor & Francis.

Mannheim, K. (2005). 'The Problem with Generations'. In R. Miller ed. *Biographical Research Methods*. London: SAGE Publications.

McRobbie, A., & Thornton, S. (1995). Rethinking "Moral Panic" for Multi-Mediated Social Worlds. *British Journal of Sociology*, *46*(4).

Meredith, V. (2009) ‘Victim Identity and respect for human dignity: a terminological analysis’. *International Review of the Red Cross.* 91 (874): 259-277.

Meyers, O. (2009). Book Review: Ingrid Volkmer ed (2006) ‘News in Public Memory: An International Study of Media Memories across Generations’. *Journalism*, *10*: 527.

Middleton, D., & Brown, S. (2005). *The Social Psychology of Experience: Studies in Remembering and Forgetting* London: SAGE Publications.

Mihelj, S. (2013).’ Between Official and Vernacular Memory’. In Pickering,M. and Keightley, E. eds. *Research Methods for Memory Studies.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Miller, R. (2005). *Bigraphical Research Methods*. London: SAGE Publications.

Misztal, B. (2003) *Theories of Social Remembering*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Newburn, T. (2007). ‘Youth Crime and Justice’. In Maguire, M., Morgan, R., & Reiner, R., eds. *Oxford Handbook of Criminology.* Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Newsom, R. (2001). ‘Fictions of Childhood’. In *The Cambridge companion to Charles Dickens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Olick, J. (1999). Collective Memory: The two Cultures. *Sociological Theory*, *17*(3): 333– 348.

Olick J. (2007). *The Politics of Regret. On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility.* New York: Routledge.

Olick, J. (2009) Between Chaos and Diversity: Is Social Memory Studies a Field? *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 22: 249–252.

Olick, J., & Robbins, J. (1998). Social Memory Studies: From “Collective Memory” to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *24*: 105–140.

Parton, N. (2004). ‘From Maria Cowell to Victoria Climbie: Reflections on a Generation of Public Inquiries into Child Abuse’. *Child Abuse Review.* 13:80-94.

Pearson, G. (1983). *Hooligan.* London: The Macmillan Press.

Peelo, M. (2006). ‘Framing Homicide Narratives in Newspapers: Mediated witness and the Construction of Virtual Victimhood’. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *2*(2): 159–175.

Pickering, M. (2001). *Stereotyping*, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave.

Pickering, M. and Keightley, E. (2006). ‘The Modalities of Nostalgia’, *Current Sociology*, 54(6): 919-941.

Ponte, C. (2007). Mapping News on Children in the Mainstream Press. *European Societies*, *9*(5): 735–754.

Prout, A. (2008). ‘Culture-Nature and the Construction of Childhood’. In Drotner, K. & Livingston, S. eds. *The International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture*. London: SAGE Publications.

Radstone, S. (2005). ‘Reconceiving Binaries: the Limits of Memory’. *History Workshop Journal*, *59*(1): 134–150.

Radstone, S. (2008). ‘Memory studies: For and Against’. *Memory Studies*, *1*(1): 31–39.

Ravenhill, M. (2004). ‘A Tear in the Fabric: the James Bulger Murder and New Theatre Writing in the Nineties’. *New Theatre Quarterly*, *20*(04): 305–314.

Reinarman, C. (1994). 'The Social Construction of Drug Scares'. In Adler, P., & Adler, P. eds. *Constructions of Deviance*. California: Wadsworth.

Reiner, R. (2001). 'The Rise of Virtual Vigilantism : crime reporting since World War II'. *Criminal Justice Matter.* 43(1):4-5.

Reiner, R. (2007). 'Media made criminality: the representation of crime in the mass media'. In: Maguire, M, Morgan, R and Reiner, Robert, (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Criminology*. Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reiner, R.. Allen, J., Livingstone, S. et al. (2001). 'The Audience for Crime Media 1946-91: A historical approach to reception studies'. *LSE Research Online*. [online] Available at from http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/1007/ [accessed 10/09/12].

Rohloff, A. (2011). 'Extending the Concept of Moral Panic: Elias, Climate Change and Civilization'. *Sociology*, *45*(4): 634–649.

Schissel, B. (1997). *Blaming Children Youth Crime, Moral Panic and the Politics of Hate*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Schudson, M. (1993). *Watergate in American Memory: How We Remember, Forget and Reconstruct the Past*. New York: Basic Books.

Schudson, M. (1995). *The Power of News*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Silverman, J. & Wilson, D. (2002). *Innocence Betrayed Paedophilia, the Media and Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Skilbrei, M. L. (2012). 'Sisters in crime: Representations of gender and class in the media coverage and court proceedings of the triple homicide at Orderud Farm'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *9*(2): 136–152.

Smith, A. (1790). *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Sixth Edition. Sen, A., and Hanley, R. eds. London: Penguin Books.

Smolej, M. (2010). 'Constructing ideal victims? Violence narratives in Finnish crime-appeal programming'. *Crime, Media, Culture*, *6*(1): 69–85.

Springhall, J. (1998). Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics. Basingstoke: Macmillan - now Palgrave.

Stanko, B. (1996). 'The Commercialism of Women's Fear of Crime', at International Victimology 8th International Symposium, Australian Institute of Criminology. In Mason, P., & Monckton-Smith, J. (2008). 'Conflation, collocation and confusion: British press coverage of the sexual murder of women'. *Journalism,* 9(6): 691-710.

Stone, L. (1977). *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Tagg, J. (1988) *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories,* Amherst: Massachusetts.

Thornton, S. L. and Mc Robbie (1995). 'Rethinking 'Moral Panic' for Multi-Mediated Social Worlds'. *The British Journal of Sociology*. 46(4): 559–574.

Trigell, J. (2004) *Boy A*. London: Serpents Tail.

Tversky, B., & Baratz, D. (1985). Memory for faces: Are caricatures better than photographs? Memory and Cognition, 13: 45-49.

Van Dijck, J. (2006). 'Record and Hold: Popular Music between Personal and Collective Memory'. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23(5): 357–374.

Van Dijck, J. (2007). *Mediated Memories*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

van Swaaningen, R. (2014). 'In memoriam: Jock Young', *Punishment & Society* 16(3): 353-359.

Volkmer, I. (2008). 'Conflict-related media events and cultures of proximity'. *Media, War & Conflict*, *1*(1): 90–98.

Volkmer, I. ed. (2006). *News in Public Memory: An International Study of Media Memories across Generations*. New York: Peter Lang.

Wardle, C. (2007). 'Monsters and Angels: Visual press coverage of child murders in the USA and UK, 1930—2000'. *Journalism*, *8*(3): 263–284.

Williams, K. (2008). *Textbook on Criminology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wren-Lewis, J. (1983). 'The Encoding / Decoding Model: Criticisms and Redevelopments for Research on Decoding'. *Media Culture Society*, 5: 179-197.

Wykes, M. (2001). *News, Crime and Culture*. London: Pluto Press.

Wyness, M., Harrison, L., & Buchanan, I. (2004). 'Childhood, Politics and Ambiguity: Towards an Agenda for Children's Political Inclusion'. *Sociology*, *38*(1): 81–99.

Young, A. (1996). 'In the Frame: Crime and the Limits of Representation'. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, *29*(2): 81–101.

Young, Jock. (2011). *The Criminological Imagination.* Polity Press: Cambridge.

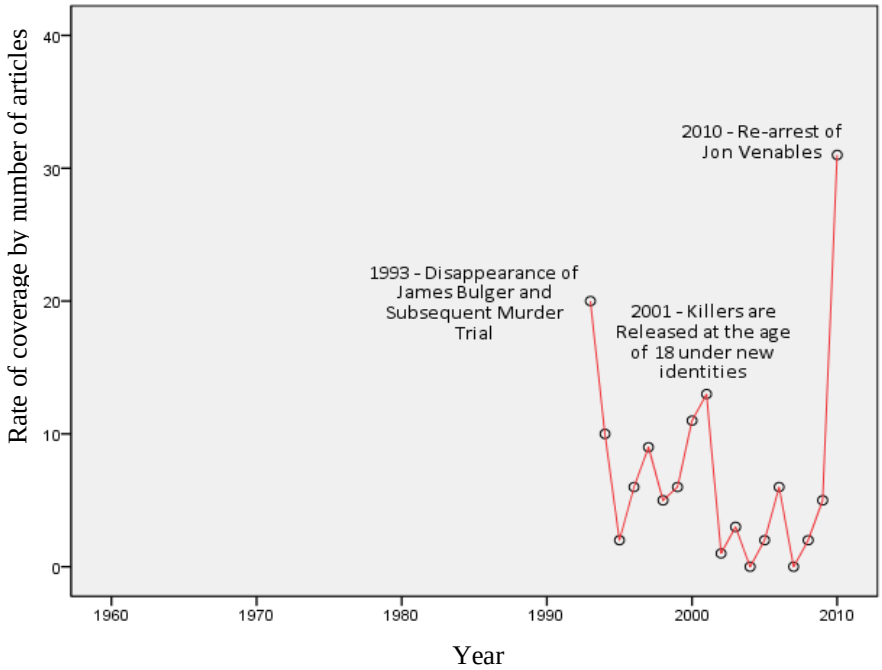
Zelizer, B. (2008). 'Why memory's work on journalism does not reflect journalism's work on memory'. *Memory Studies*, *1*(1): 79–87.

Zelizer, B. (2010). *About to Die: How News Images Move the Public*, Oxford University Press: Oxford.

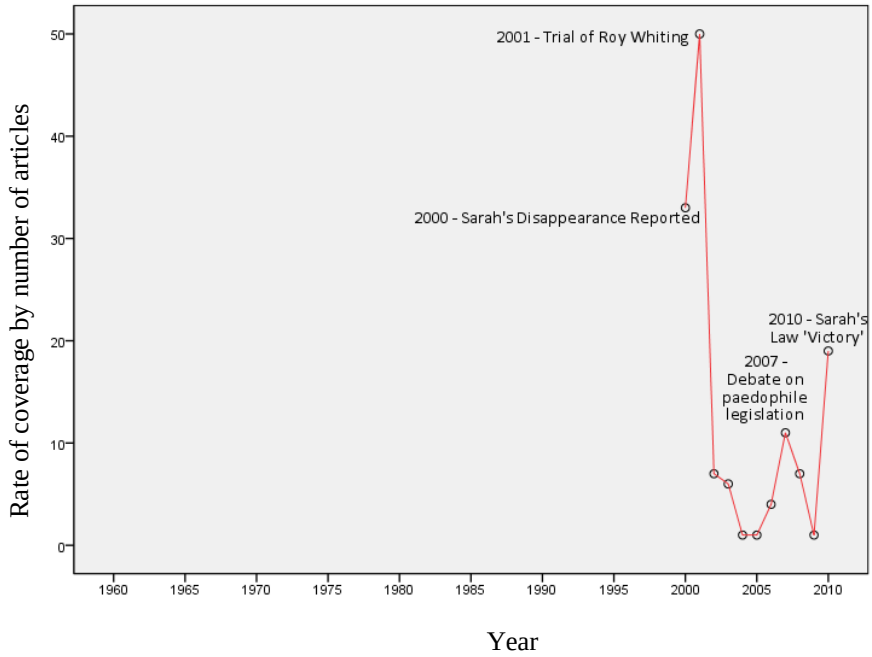
Appendices

Appendix I - Longitudinal analysis showing peaks of reporting

i. James Bulger



ii. Sarah Payne



Appendix II - Elicitation

i. Antonowicz, A. & Corless, F. (1993).'Strange, shifty .. the weirdo who tried to throttle a school pal' *Daily Mirror*. 25 November: 22-23.

ii. Mulchrone, P. (1993b). 'Bully who sucked thumb for comfort' *Daily Mirror*. 25 November: 24-25.

iii. **Ward,** D. (1993c). ‘Anyone with boys of that age expected the police. I kept looking at my kids to see if they fitted the descriptions’ *The Guardian.* 23 February: 2.

2 HOME NEWS

Crowd vents its anger on police and media as boys accused of abducting and killing two-year-old James Bulger appear in court

‘Anyone with boys of that age expected the police. I kept looking at my kids to see if they fitted the descriptions’

Confusion over boy's arrest

iv. CCTV image of the Abduction of James Bulger [online] available at https://www.google.co.uk/search?tbm=isch&q=james+bulger+cctv+image&hl=en&authuser=0&gws_rd=ssl [accessed 01/04/2011]

v. Morris, S. (2001). ‘Brothers tell how Sarah Payne vanished’ *The Guardian.* 20 November : 8.

Jury hears video evidence of chase across cornfield that ended with the sight of a 'scruffy man with yellow teeth' speeding away in a van

Brothers tell how Sarah Payne vanished

vi. North, N., Arnold, H., Williams, A., Fisher,. & Yates, N. (2000). ‘Bye Bye Little Angel’ *The Mirror*. 19 July: 4- 5.

I still cry for our tragic girl

BYE BYE LITTLE ANGEL

Parents of murdered Sarah visit the field where she was found