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Images of Crime: Young People, Cultural Representations of Crime, and Crime Concern in Late Modernity

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Images of Crime:

Young People, Cultural Representations of Crime, and Crime Concern in Late Modernity

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Abstract

Set within the context of a late modern world where crime is both controlled and commodified, this thesis explores young people's crime concerns and their opinions on the cultural representation of crime. Following a reconceptualisation and widening of the notion of fear of crime, *crime concern* is employed to investigate young people's concerns regarding crime prevalence, crime management and crime representation. Encompassing a cultural criminological approach and an interpretive phenomenological attitude, this thesis utilises performative drama alongside focus groups to explore how crime concerns and the cultural representation of crime interact to inform everyday lived experience.

The thesis finds that the young people in the study demonstrate an acute awareness of the processes which shape their understandings of crime. Such awareness is rooted in their sense of agency and embedded in a resistance towards the dominant discourse of problematic and risky youth. The crime concerns that the participants expressed were primarily regarding the representation and management of crime. Varying concerns around crime prevalence were identified. The findings reveal that gendered implications play a key role in shaping crime concern and forming opinions on the cultural representation of crime. The thesis concludes by reflecting upon the research process and pointing towards future directions for criminology.

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Dedicated to the memory of my grandparents

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Introduction

Background

The starting point for this thesis was fear of crime. My initial research interests prior to undertaking my PhD were rooted in public perceptions of crime and how these may interact with the dominant representations of crime presented throughout the news and entertainment media. This interest led me to the concept of fear of crime, which I began to explore in-depth throughout my MsC research. Alongside this, I was interested in young people's contested and ambiguous position within society, so it felt natural that once I had identified young people's voices were seriously missing from the vast debate on fear of crime within criminology (see Goodey 1994; Cops 2013) I would endeavour to play a part in addressing the gap. It seemed illogical and iniquitous that the group arguably the most pertinent to the debate on fear of crime were so sorely lacking in research attention. Indeed, it can be considered remarkable that such limited attention has been paid to the concept from young people's perspectives given the increased academic interest in young people (Thomson 2008), their extensive media and political focus (Trickett 2009), their frequent occupation of public spaces (Gray *et al.* 2012), and their heightened vulnerability in becoming a victim of crime (Jackson 2009).

However, the more I understood about the concept of fear of crime the more I realised it was something that I wanted to distance myself from. I identified that, along with a lack of focus on young people, the field was fraught with methodological and conceptual issues (see Ditton and Farrall 1999; Farrall *et al*. 2008). The impersonal, positivistic methods employed at a distance, which are dominant within the field, did not appeal to me as I feel crime is a very personal and subjective issue.

I identified a growing body of literature under the banner of fear of crime that called for a wider reading of the concept and for more humanistic methods to be employed within the study (Pain 2000; Shirlow and Pain 2003; Paris *et al.* 2011; Lorenc *et al.* 2013). Inspired by this literature, along with my own personal feelings

on the field, I decided a reconceptualisation was necessary that broadened the scope of research. *Crime concern* emerged as a fitting concept to encapsulate a more nuanced approach and embody a wider reading encompassing concerns about the prevalence of crime, concerns about the management of crime, and concerns about the representation of crime[1]. Young people felt very central to this altered approach as they are disproportionately victimised (Francis 2007; Muncie 2015), excessively bear the brunt of its management (Giroux 2003, 2009; Kelly 2003), and are frequently the focus of its mediated representation (France 2007; Jewkes 2015).

Upon reading around the mediated representation of crime I became familiar with cultural criminology which appealed and seemed eminently suitable owing to its stance in opposition of 'voodoo criminology' and the 'bogus of positivism' (Young 2004) that the field of fear of crime research all too often suffers from. Moreover, its emphasis on the mediated meanings of crime and how they interact and overlap to inform everyday lived experience within a world where crime and transgression are commodified (Ferrell *et al*. 2015) emerged as a suitable aspect of the approach to incorporate. Indeed, young people are often the focus of the commodification of crime (Hayward 2002, 2012) and investigating their attitudes towards this felt necessary to build a platform to explore their crime concerns. Furthermore, cultural criminology's critical understanding of late modernity (Hayward and Young 2004) was particularly influential given that the mediated representation of crime is all the more relevant in a contemporary world where digital technologies have proliferated and shaped new meanings and understandings of crime and social control (Ferrell *et al*. 2015). As such, I decided to explicitly situate my research within this late modern context.

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[1] *Crime Concern* is thus my original concept informed from my reading of the fear of crime, and related areas, literature. It can be defined as a concept to explore concerns about crime prevalence, concerns about the management of crime, and concerns about the representation of crime. Prevalence is used to denote generalised and specific concerns regarding the extent of crime, the relative seriousness of crime and the likelihood of victimisation – this is in essence what fear of crime research traditionally seeks to capture. Crime concern has been developed to allow for an insight to be fostered into concerns regarding the prevalence, representation, and management of crime concurrently as I argue that these three spheres overlap and interact to inform overall lived experiences of crime.

The emphasis within cultural criminology on the 'image of crime' (Hayward 2010) encouraged me to employ visual methods which would be more finely attuned to exploring the nuanced lived experience of crime concern within late modernity through the use of a humanistic approach grounded in qualitative methods. Moreover, cultural criminology's desire to employ methods which capture the 'phenomenology of crime' (Young 2004) prompted me to employ interpretive aspects of phenomenology within my methodology which could explore the situated and embodied meanings crime concern encompasses. In this context, rather than explicitly incorporating phenomenology as a research philosophy or methodology I opted for a phenomenological attitude (Finlay 2012) which would complement my cultural criminological approach and be finely attuned to the visual.

Performative drama is inherently phenomenological (Garner 1994) and thus emerged as very fitting with this research approach. Indeed, the use of such a method that could portray the image of crime in a humanistic way appealed as a response to the reductionist positivism common within the fear of crime research that I sought to distance myself from. Moreover, it is considered to create a space where new understandings and connections can be forged via the blurring of fact and fiction and in doing so fashion an environment where 'fictional narratives might illuminate lived experiences' (Nicholson 2005: 66). This aspect of the method was particularly appealing owing to my desire to explore the overlapping and interacting of mediated cultural representations of crime and crime concern and the influence that they have upon young people's lived experiences. Furthermore, performative drama is regarded particularly helpful in research which aims to explore emotive and sensitive topics and elicit and express cultural ways of knowing (Barone and Eisner 2012), which are indeed central features of my research and associated framework.

I additionally opted to employ the draw and write method to help build rapport and focus attention on the subject at hand (Angell *et al*. 2015). Alongside these methods, I employed focus groups to juxtapose against the visual methods to provide deeper depth to my data and shape a more holistic picture of the

participants' lived experiences. Indeed, caution has been advised against employing visual methods in isolation as they may remove the picture created from its context (Firth *et al*. 2005). The draw and write method was essentially employed as an icebreaker and to act as a 'scaffold' for further research (Prosser and Loxley 2008). The performative drama method was utilised as a means to portray the phemenological image of crime that I endeavoured to capture.

As crime concern is an emotive concept with multifaceted elements that interrelate to inform an overall picture, a nuanced approach to its study which places an emphasis on the cultural dynamics that interact to shape it emerged as an eminently suitable approach. As such, alongside my desire to investigate crime concern I wished to explore young people's opinions on the cultural representation of crime by investigating their engagement with various forms of media that depict crime and the meanings and understandings they attribute to them. These two aspects of the research were designed to be investigated to provide a holistic picture of how the meanings embodied from cultural representations and the meanings embodied from their crime concern interacts and overlaps to inform young people's understanding of crime and overall lived experience. Owing to these features of the research, I distinguish between virtually lived experiences of crime, which are the abstract experiences encountered throughout mediated engagement, and actually lived experiences of crime, which are the more tangible experiences encountered throughout day to day life. These features thus overlap and interact to inform an overall lived experience of crime.

<u>Research Aims and Questions</u>

The research undertaken for this thesis will seek to explore young people's crime concerns. Alongside this, the research will also seek to explore young people's engagement with various forms of media that encompass elements of crime in order to investigate their opinions on the cultural representation of crime. These various forms of media will encompass both the news media and the entertainment media. Through exploring these areas a complete picture of the understandings and

meanings that young people's overall lived experience of crime embodies can be portrayed.

As such, these specific research aims have been formulated:

1) Explore young people's crime concerns.

2) Investigate young people's engagement with various forms of media in order to explore their opinions on the cultural representation of crime.

These aims of the research have guided the formation of the following research questions:

1)   What are young people's crime concerns?

2)   What are young people's opinions on the cultural representation of crime?

Fundamental Objective of the Thesis

These aims and questions have guided the fundamental objective of the thesis which is to explore how cultural representations of crime and crime concern intersect to inform young people's overall lived experience of crime.

Where and When

The research undertaken for this thesis was conducted across three geographical localities in the North East of England. All three localities are situated within traditionally working class areas and are characterised by social deprivation (Home Office 2015a). In the interests of confidentially, the research locations will be

referred to as 'B Town', 'C Town' and 'D Town'. The research was undertaken over a four month period across summer and autumn 2014.

The Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six parts. The first part (I) consists of one chapter which outlines and elucidates the philosophical and conceptual framework that shaped the approach to the research. The second part (II) consists of three chapters which comprise the critical literature review that shaped the research aims and research questions, alongside the underpinning framework. The third part (III) consists of one chapter which outlines and elucidates the methodological approach; the overall research process, the specific methods employed, and the reflections that arose from the field research. The fourth part (IV) consists of three chapters, which comprise the research findings and discussion. The first chapter in part IV discusses and analyses the main themes from the research regarding crime concern, the second chapter discusses and analyses the main themes regarding media engagement and opinions on the cultural representation of crime, and the third chapter then integrates the main findings from the previous two chapters to provide a holistic picture of the research findings. The fifth part (V) concludes the thesis by reflecting upon the research process, outlining the contributions of the thesis, and discussing potential future directions. The sixth part (VI) contains the bibliography and appendices.

PART I

Philosophical and Conceptual Framework

<u>Introduction</u>

This chapter of the thesis will document the philosophical and conceptual framework utilised for the undertaking of this doctorate, constituted by a phenomenological attitude and underpinned by a cultural criminological approach. The first part of the chapter will outline and elucidate the foremost philosophical and methodological aspects of phenomenology. The second part of the chapter will outline and elucidate the conceptual and methodological aspects of cultural criminology. The final part of the chapter will draw the previous parts together and provide a holistic picture of the framework embraced within this thesis.

The framework outlined herein has guided the epistemological and ontological approach adopted within this thesis, governed the research design and methodology embraced throughout the research process, and guided the presentation of the discussion and concluding chapters.

Phenomenology

> '*We are going to phenomenalise about crime...The phenomenologist tries to describe a total situation, not the individual as such but the man-in-his world, not the criminal, but a man who committed a crime, not a crime but an act that is called crime by others...Searching for the essence of crime we recognise and rediscover ourselves per se, and ourselves in relation to others, and we see crime as one mode of human behaviour among other modes, like brushing one's teeth and making love, as a phenomenon seen, judged and rated by others*' (Hoefnagels 1980: 39).

Phenomenology can be considered an umbrella term which encompasses a philosophical movement and range of research approaches (Finlay 2012). As such, phenomenologists are regarded extremely diverse in their interests, in their interpretation of the foremost features of phenomenology, in their application and understanding of the phenomenological method, and in their development of what they regard to be the phenomenological focus for future philosophy (Moran 2000). The general consensus amongst phenomenological researchers is that the primary

aim of phenomenology is to explore embodied, experiential meanings in an endeavour to unearth rich descriptions of how phenomenon is concretely lived (Laverty 2003; Freistadt 2011; Finlay 2012). It is commonly agreed that the research methods necessary to achieve this should be receptive to both the phenomenon which is the focus of the study and the subjective interconnection between the researcher and the research participants (Overgaard and Zahavi 2009; Miner-Romanoff 2012). Although a variety of phenomenological approaches exist it is widely accepted that 'all phenomenologists agree on the need to study human beings in their own terms. They therefore reject positivist, natural science methods in favour of a qualitative human science approach' (Finlay 2012: 27).

Origins, Concepts, and Contrasts

Edmund Husserl is widely regarded to have initiated the phenomenological movement and is frequently referred to as the father of phenomenology (Polkinghorne 1983; Scruton 1995; Moran 2005). Husserl was a critic of psychology as he regarded it a discipline which erroneously endeavoured to apply natural science methods to human issues, believing that researchers who focused solely on external, physical stimuli missed critical variables and ignored context which resultantly created artificial situations (Jones 1975). The study of phenomena arising through consciousness was the primary focus of Husserl's philosophical work, he viewed phenomenology as a new science of 'being', one which could reach true meanings and absolute truths through the study of experience (*ibid*). Husserl claimed that minds and object both occur within the realm of experience and as such, phenomenology intended to move away from and beyond the Cartesian dualism of reality being separate from the individual (Laverty 2003) and to return to things themselves (Husserl 1970), termed the 'phenomenological *epoche*' (Freistadt 2011) .

Husserl's (1970) concept of *Lebenswelt*, translated as 'life-world', is a central focus of investigation within phenomenology. The primary aim of a 'life-world' researcher is to describe and explain the life-world in a manner that expands understanding of human experience (Dahlberg *et al*. 2008) The life-world is essentially the world

which is lived and experienced, one which 'appears meaningfully to consciousness in its qualitative, flowing given-ness; not an objective world 'out there', but a humanly relational world' (Todres *et. al*. 2007: 55). The life-world is thus encountered in everyday life and fashioned through experiences independent of scientific interpretations, a viewpoint which stands at odds with traditional positivist philosophy.

As such, phenomenologists contend that under the influence of scientific presuppositions we apprehend the life-world as objective and external, existing independently of our interests and actions (Spurling 1977). In this sense, humans experience the life-world pre-reflectively without the need for categorisation or conceptualisation and thus life-world research endeavours to return and re-examine our-common-sense, daily activities and taken for granted experiences and in doing so potentially unearth new or forgotten meanings (Laverty 2003). It is the day-to-day world filled on one hand with familiar objects, routine tasks and mundane concerns, whilst on the other complex situations and meanings, all of which are set against a backdrop of everyday actions and social interactions (Spurling 1977; Finlay 2012).

The life-world is therefore concerned with an individual's lived situation within the social world as opposed to an introspective inner world. Consequently, 'there is no inner man, man is in the world and only in the world does he know himself' (Merleau-Ponty 1962: xi). Following this line of thought, phenomenologists rejected the traditional notion of the mind as a self-contained, inner realm and proposed that instead the mind, in a variety of ways, is directed upon objects external to it (Overgaard and Zahavi 2009). Husserl termed this object-directness 'intentionality' to denote the intentional relationship between an individual and the meanings of what they are experiencing (Freistadt 2011).

Although phenomenology is inherently descriptive with an emphasis placed upon describing lived experience (Spiegelberg 1982; van Manen 1990), there is a distinction between the two most common approaches; descriptive, or transcendental, phenomenology pioneered by Husserl, and hermeneutic, or

interpretive, phenomenology pioneered by Heidegger (1962) and revised by later philosophers such as Gadamer and Merleau-Ponty (Laverty 2003; Sloan and Bowe 2014). Despite emerging out of the shared beginnings of German philosophy and the desire to explore human experience, or the life-world, as it is lived by the individual, differences in epistemological, ontological and methodological perspectives vary between the two approaches (Laverty 2003).

Descriptive phenomenology is centred upon the premise that it is essential for the researcher to discard all prior personal knowledge in order to understand the essential lived experiences of research subjects, termed bracketing (Lopez and Willis 2004; Tufford and Newman 2012). The process and was proposed by Husserl in an endeavour to eliminate researcher subjectivity through the method of phenomenological reduction (Jones 1975; Polkinghorne 1983). Although bracketing is regarded an ambiguous concept which entails a number of different approaches (Hycner 1985) the general premise is accepted to involve a process of phenomenological reduction intended to fashion a non-judgemental study, free from researcher bias that will not impede the perception of the phenomenon under scrutiny (LeVasseur 2003; Tufford and Newman 2012). The process involves rendering oneself as neutral and non-influential as possible through bracketing past understandings, previous knowledge and assumptions in an endeavour to cast aside how things supposedly are and instead focus on how they are experienced by the research subjects themselves (Finlay 2012). Husserl termed the concept 'transcendental subjectivity' to describe this position (Lopez and Willis 2004), arguing that through a process of bracketing particular beliefs and suspending one's judgement only then can one achieve transcendental subjectivity and inquiry may then proceed unencumbered from assumptions concerning the nature of the phenomenon under observation.

Such views have been regarded to position Husserl as an absolutist who viewed phemenological philosophy as a discipline capable of attaining absolute objective non-relative truths (Soffer 1991). However, it has been argued that Husserl's later work was sympathetic to relativism, particularly cultural relativism, with certain concepts and themes paving the way for later phemenological philosophers to

reject the earlier phenomenological tenets of absolutism and adopt more relativist leaning epistemologies (Carr 1987; Soffer 1991).

Bracketing is most commonly associated with the type of descriptive phenomenology proposed by Husserl whereas the interpretive, or hermeneutic, phenomenology most commonly associated with Heidegger considers it undesirable and essentially impossible to bracket past experiences and understandings (Cohen and Omery 1994; LeVasseur 2003). Instead, interpretive phenomenologists assume a position of being in the world, where contextual meanings and interpretations are sought and valued (Tufford and Newman 2012). The concept of being in the world, termed *Dasein* (Heidegger 1962), as a means of coming to know the phenomenon of focus which acknowledges the importance of researcher subjectivity whilst accepting the limitations of reducing researcher bias is a central feature of interpretive phenomenology (Smith *et al*. 2009).

As such, proponents of interpretive phenomenology argue that it is not feasible for researchers to fully detach themselves from their research and thus instead of professing to do so they should recognise their experiences and knowledge as a useful grounding whilst maintaining openness towards the research process and subjects (Groenewald 2004). Indeed Gadamer (1975), an ardent follower of Heidegger's interpretive phenomenology asserted that knowledge in the human sciences always involves self-knowledge and rather than explicitly bracketing one must remain open to the other whilst recognising potential personal biases. In this context 'the important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert truth against one's own fore-meanings' (*ibid*: 269).

It has been argued that the primary purpose of phenomenological research is to establish what an experience means to the individual who has experienced it and who is able to give a thorough description of such experience (Moustakas 1994). Indeed, phemenological research is regarded to characteristically start with 'concrete descriptions of lived situations, often first person accounts, set down in everyday language and avoiding abstract intellectual generalizations' (Finlay 2012:

21). The next step involves reflective analysis of the descriptions in an endeavour to identify themes about the essence of the phenomena, the researcher then seeks to go beyond surface expressions to 'read between the lines' in order to access implicit dimensions and intuitions[2] (*ibid*). Researchers adopting a descriptive approach aim to uncover essential meaning structures of a phenomenon via remaining close to the richness and complexity of the data whilst not allowing their preconceived subjectivities to influence their research (Moustakas 1990, 1994).

In contrast to this, researchers adopting an interpretive approach argue that individuals are embedded in a world of language and relationships which are inescapable from the historicality of understanding and thus bracketing is not achievable or desirable (Laverty 2003). Historicality is a key concept within interpretive phenomenology, termed by Heidegger to describe how consciousness is a formation of historically lived experiences which are influenced by one's situatedness in the world (Koch 1995). Historicality denotes how a person's history or background formulate ways of understanding the world and determining what is 'real' (Laverty 2003). As such, Heidegger believed that individuals and the world are indissolubly connected in cultural, historical and social contexts and one's historicality can thus never be made entirely explicit (Munhall 1989). Such views are regarded to align Heidegger's phenomenology with a cultural relativist epistemic view of the social world, with his position embraced by the later interpretive phenomenologist philosophers Gadamer and Merleau-Ponty (Carr 1987). This is argued to sharply contrast with the absolutist outlook adopted by the earlier phenomenology of Husserl, with the work of Heidegger, Gadamer and Merleau-Ponty being considered 'so far removed from Husserl that it hardly makes sense to speak of a phenomenological tradition any more, let alone a school or unified method' (Carr 1987: 25).

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[2] 'Intuition' is a Husserlian concept which refers to the experienced presence, perceived or imagined, of any object to consciousness as opposed to the common usage definition in which an intuition denotes a tactic and elusive hunch.

Intersubjectivity[3] is a further central concept within both descriptive and interpretive phenomenology which denotes phenomenologists' acknowledgement of the dual and concurrent relationship between oneself and others (Smith *et al*. 2009), whilst striving to situate this relationship within the world as it is experienced through consciousness (Zahavi 2001). As such, phenomenology attempts to explicitly combine the individual and society, or subjectivity and sociality, instead of observing them as mutually exclusive, and aims to place their intersubjective connection within a word of lived experience (Overgaard and Zahavi 2009). The individual as a world-experiencing subject is regarded reliant on other world-experiencing subjects and thus intersubjectivity cannot precede nor be the basis of the individuality and distinctiveness of other subjects, consequently the role of the individual subject should not be downplayed but instead be understood as intersubjectively bound (*ibid*).

The Art of Phenomenology

It has been argued that phenomenology, particularly interpretive phenomenology, has the potential to intertwine science and art through seeking methods 'that retain their concrete, mooded, sensed, imaginative, and embodied nature' (Finlay 2012: 28). Indeed, interpretive philosophy has been regarded to possess a tradition of serious engagement with the arts with interpretive phenomenologists contending that art has the capability of illuminating the phenomena under consideration more directly, perspicuously and powerfully than any other philosophical prose could (Wrathall 2011). Interpretive phenomenologist van Manen considers phenomenology a 'poetizing project' (1990: 13) and advocates that the writing of phenomenological research should include an artistic dimension, stressing that 'not unlike the poet, the phenomenologist directs the gaze towards the regions where meaning originates, wells up, percolates through the porous membranes of past sedimentations – and then infuses us, permeates us, infects us, touches us, stirs us' (van Manen 2007: 12).

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[3] Intersubjectivity can be defined in a phenomenological methodological sense as the process whereby researchers 'explore the mutual meanings emerging within the research relationship' (Finlay 2002: 215).

The influential philosopher and interpretive phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty emphasised that the body is the primary source of knowing the world and the body and that which it perceives cannot be separated from one another (Merleau-Ponty 1962). Throughout Merleau-Ponty's work there was a strong analogy between phenomenology and art which centred on the embodied nature of the perceiving subject (Chaplin 2005). Merleau-Ponty asserted that thinking and expressing are inexorably linked as both perception and artistic expression are entirely bodily affairs. For Merleau-Ponty art is thinking and both art and phenomenology endeavour to offer an account of space, time and the world as it is lived by the perceiving subject (*ibid*). As such, Merleau-Ponty viewed interpretive phenomenological and modern art to encompass 'the same kind of attentiveness and wonder, the same demand for awareness, the same will to seize the meaning of the world' (Merleau-Ponty 1962: xxi).

Art is regarded as an original source of phenomenological insight and that art itself fundamentally maters 'because it is an irreducible mode of truth' (Crowell 2011: 37). Merleau-Ponty viewed interpretive phenomenology as a vehicle akin to art through which truths can be brought into existence, arguing interpretive phenomenological philosophy 'is not the reflection of a pre-existing truth, but like art, the act of bringing truth into being' (Merleau-Ponty 1962: xx). In this context, Merleau-Ponty considered art to parallel phenomenology in being a means to 're-achieve a direct and primitive contact with the world' (*ibid:* vii). Embracing such a philosophy is pre-reflective and pre-linguistic and consequently offers a more fundamental knowing that communicates in a way which does not represent itself as true but rather which is true within itself (Chapin 2005). Such embodiment and pre-reflexivity demonstrates that reducing experience exclusively to language limits our accounts and may indeed represent partial truths (Freistadt 2011). In this context, Merleau-Ponty argued that the value in art lies within the artist's ability to embody a vision which 'will make their idea take root in the consciousness of others' (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 19). The inter-subjectivity between the artist and the interpreter is emphasised here as having a central role in the representation of truth (Barber and Dreher 2014).

Phenomenological Criminology

Phenomenological approaches have been adopted throughout a wide range of academic disciplines including criminology and its parent discipline sociology. A phenomenological approach to sociology was developed by Alfred Schutz in the 1930s, predominately inspired by Husserl's thoughts on intersubjectivity and the life-world and Max Weber's thoughts on social action (Overgaard and Zahavi 2009). Schutz was interested in the life-worlds social structure, claiming that we experience the life-world as encompassing a variety of relatively distinct and independent realms of meaning (Schutz 1967). Through an attempt to combine Weber's interpretive sociology and Husserl's phenomenological methodology, Schutz was concerned with describing how subjective meanings give rise to an ostensibly objective social world (Natanson 1970). Schutz maintained that sociology cannot adequately distinguish and account for various fundamental aspects of *verstehen* unless it adopted a phenomenological understanding of consciousness (Backhaus 2005). Essentially, Schutz's project was to illustrate that the world of objective mind may be reduced to the behaviour of individuals (Hindess 1972) and sociality should be understood through intersubjectivity and ultimately anchored in individual subjects (Overgaard and Zahavi 2009).

Although explicit phenomenological approaches to the study of crime are relatively uncommon and arguably underutilized (Wender 2008; Miner-Ramanoff 2012), phenomenology has been used in a variety of ways throughout the discipline of criminology. However, such approaches are considered predominately auxiliary and partial, 'to the limited extent that phenomenology has a presence in criminological research, it is primarily in the subsidiary form of ethnomethodology (especially Garfinkel), symbolic interactionism, and various qualitative studies in the sociology of deviance' (Wender 2008: 42). The explanation for such a paucity of phenomenological criminology is largely attributed to the notion that criminologists have tended to dismiss phenomenology as a type of radical subjectivism which either relativises or totally discards all claims to truth (*ibid*). Resultantly, a discipline with its roots entrenched in positivism and empiricism has tended to view phenomenology with more suspicion than favour. Indeed, it has been suggested

that 'phenomenology is not represented as particularly salient to the resolution of critical criminological problems' (Downes and Rock 2011: 215).

Although there have been a variety of attempts to combine phenomenological philosophy with criminology, a recent review of studies on the phenomenology of violence highlighted that criminological research adopting a phenomenological approach tends to be more closely aligned with the interpretive phenomenology of Heidegger as opposed to the descriptive phenomenology developed by Husserl and adapted by Schutz (Freistadt 2011). None of the studies cited explicitly attempted to bracket out their preconceptions, leading the author to conclude; 'that the authors do not *fully* employ the phenomenological *epoche* confirms the general phenomenological conclusion that self-conscious reflection cannot directly access others' experiences' (Freistadt 2011: 23 emphasis in original). It has been suggested elsewhere that interpretive phenomenological approaches are more appropriate than descriptive phenomenology and particularly pertinent to the study of crime if criminologists desire to explore the nuances of lived experience (Miner-Romanoff 2012).

A Phenomenological Attitude

It has been argued that it is possible to embrace a 'phenomenological attitude' as opposed to explicitly adopting a specific phenomenological approach (Finlay 2012). Adopting a phenomenological attitude can be regarded particularly appropriate when guided by the principles of interpretive phenomenology as such an approach is considered more flexible and 'open' than traditional descriptive phenomenology (Laverty 2003; Freistadt 2011). When adopting an interpretive phenomenological attitude researchers acknowledge it is undesirable and essentially unfeasible to completely detach themselves; their beliefs and their knowledge, from the research process and so instead recognise their personal position and experiences as a useful foundation whilst remaining open to new ideas and understandings (Groenewald 2004). Adopting such an attitude within phenomenological research 'involves neither neutrality with respect to content nor the extinction of one's self but the

foregrounding and appropriation of one's fore-meanings and prejudices' (Gadamer 2004: 271).

As such, reflexivity[4] is an important concept to be acknowledged and implemented within research adopting an interpretive phemenological attitude. The process of reflexivity involves the researchers' continual awareness of participants' responses whilst actively encouraging them, where appropriate, to return and build upon previously articulated responses in an endeavour to 'draw out what is hidden' (Conroy 2003: 51). Such a process promotes a greater depth of response from research participants whilst simultaneously prompting the researcher to probe for further insights which may be grounded in, although not necessarily limited to, previously recognised theory (Finlay 2012). Indeed, when adopting an interpretive phenomenological attitude, existing theory is not avoided but rather employed in a cyclical approach where the theory informs and focuses research questions and research findings (*ibid*). In addition, although the participants' meanings are the most pertinent aspect of the research and are the focus of attention the researchers' knowledge, such as theoretical underpinnings, and skills are vigilantly utilised to encourage, enhance and extract participants' meanings in the form of concrete descriptions (Maxwell 2013).

Moreover, an interpretive attitude is considered attentive to the impacts and importance of cultural, social and political dimensions of lived experiences and the meanings they convey. 'Concurrent interpretation' (Conroy 2003: 43) is employed by researchers to situate such meanings within their wider contexts whilst recognising the non static nature of such interpretations and encouraging reinterpretations fashioned through reciprocal interactions with research participants. Furthermore, and importantly, adopting an interpretive phemenological attitude is considered particularly appropriate for the study of crime given that 'interpretive phenomenology elicits participants' fullest experiences and perceived meanings and utilizes researchers' often extensive

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[4] Reflexivity involves monitoring and reflecting on *all* aspects of the research process (Lumsden and Winter 2014 my emphasis).

expertise in the field of inquiry. Rich data are thus produced in the personal and social contexts of the participants' (Miner-Romanoff 2012: 28).

The next section of the chapter will now address the central features of cultural criminology.

Cultural Criminology

> '*Like all dimensions of social life, crime and crime control operate as cultural enterprises. Both are constructed out of ongoing symbolic interactions that themselves emerge across a range of intertwined social and political processes. The meaning of both crime and crime control resides not in the essential (and essentially false) factuality of crime rates and arrest records; it emerges instead from a contested process of symbolic display, cultural interpretation and representational negotiation. Mediated anti-crime campaigns, imagined crime waves and constructed crime panics, illicit subcultures appropriating mass media fabrications of counter-cultural imagery – all of these circulate within an endless spiral of meaning, a Möbius strip of culture and everyday life'* (Ferrell *et al*. 2004: 4).

Cultural criminology is a criminological approach that seeks to understand crime through the context of culture, broadly defined as 'the many ways in which cultural dynamics intertwine with the practices of crime and crime control within contemporary society' (Ferrell *et al*. 2008: 4). Via placing crime in the context of culture, it views both crime and crime control as cultural products, or creative constructs, and seeks to highlight the interaction between the two elements whilst emphasising the need to read them in terms of the meanings they convey (Hayward and Young 2004). Moreover, cultural criminology strives to situate this interaction within the endless proliferation of mediated images of deviance where all aspects of crime are reflected in a vast hall of mirrors (Ferrell 1999).

The origins of the approach are rooted in the interpretivist work of the Chicago School throughout the 1930s and the alternative and critical criminologies[5] of the

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[5] Critical criminology is considered 'a discipline characterized by a rich theoretical diversity' (Maclean and Milovanovic 1997: 15) which generally regards the major sources of crime to stem from unequal power relations and inequalities in class. It locates crime and deviance within their determining

1970s which emerged from the Birmingham School of Contemporary Studies, the National Deviancy Conference and the 'New Criminology' movement in Great Britain (Ferrell *et al*. 2015; Hayward 2015). During this time in Northern America, the symbolic interactionist approach emphasised the contested construction of meaning concerning issues of crime and deviance and over the following decades the two orientations co-evolved and laid the trans-Atlantic foundations for contemporary cultural criminology (Ferrell 2007). The publication of *Cultural Criminology* (Ferrell and Sanders 1995) which asserted that 'intersections of culture and crime have defined the evolution of public controversies past and present and increasingly shape the experience and perception of everyday life' (*ibid*: 3) marked the moment when a distinct cultural criminology began to emerge.

Cultural criminology has been described as 'quintessentially late modern' (Hayward and Young 2004: 259), as emphasised by two characteristics of the approach. Firstly, its approach to viewing crime and deviance is analogous to contemporary Western society's increasing emphasis on creativity, individualism and lifestyle coupled with the mass media's expansion and proliferation, which has resulted in the transformation of human subjectivity (*ibid*). The perspective asserts that the virtual is becoming as real as the actual and the boundaries between factual and fictional accounts of crime and deviance are blurring. Indeed, in a contemporary world where culture is created by a continuous circulation of images and symbols, cultural criminology highlights the permeability of these as they drift across criminal subcultures, crime control agencies and the mass media and emphasises the role of ideology and image in constructing crime control policy and practice (Ferrell 2007). As such, 'cultural criminology suggests that everyday criminal justice has now become in many ways a matter of orchestrated public display, and an ongoing policing of public perceptions regarding issues of crime and threat' (*ibid*: 894). Secondly, a shared understanding exists that the antecedents of cultural criminology emerged out of the late modern period with the approach emphasising

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contexts through broadening the scope of analysis to situate personal agency within wider institutional and structural relations (DeKeserdey 2011).

'the interpretive rather than the mechanistic; the naturalistic rather than the positivistic' (Hayward and Young 2004: 260).

Thus the approach seeks to restore criminology's humanistic orientation as outlined by the Chicago School of the 1930s and as demanded by the critical criminologies of the 1970s, and to continue the move away from positivistic, reductionist approaches commonly found within dominant administrative criminology[6] and its adherent quantitative methods (Ferrell 2009; Hayward 2010; Ferrell *et al*. 2015). Rather than reducing the social world to a plethora of numbers and statistics through survey based methods, proponents of cultural criminology instead call for a criminology which can grasp 'the phenomenology of everyday life: the experiences of joy, humiliation, anger, and desperation, the seduction of transgression and vindictiveness, the myriad forms of resistance and the repressive nature of acquiescence' (Ferrell *et al*. 2008: 205).

Indeed, cultural criminology is characteristically qualitative in nature and seeks to explore research participants' lives through emphatic understanding and a methodology of attentiveness whilst emphasising the value of a Weberian *verstehen*[7] orientated approach to the study of crime and society (Ferrell 1997; Ferrell and Hamm 1998). Advocates of the approach stress that data resulting from qualitative inquiries should be seen as imperfect human constructions that are situated in time and space as opposed to quantitative claims of certainty, precision and scientific objectivity (Young and Brotherton 2014). The methodological framework utilised by cultural criminologists' endeavours to explore experience

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[6] Administrative criminology is a 'term coined by Jock Young in the 1980s to refer to the reconstitution of establishment criminology in the UK and USA in the aftermath of the demise of positivist inspired correctionalist theory and practice and the emergence of radical criminology' (McLaughlin 2006: 7). The main focus of administrative criminology is on the offence rather than the offender and the prevention of crime rather than its causes. Administrative criminology employs positivistic methods which pay little, if any, attention to context (Young 2004). Presdee (2004: 276) has described administrative criminology as 'an overdetermined descriptive criminology, deprived of any social/human dimension. It is an anti-sociological methodology in 'denial''.

[7] *Verstehen* represents a process of subjective interpretation by the researcher and an element of sympathetic understanding between researcher and research subjects, via the partial sharing of situated meanings and experiences (Ferrell 1997). In this respect, there are significant overlaps with the central features of interpretive phenomenology.

from the perspective of the individual and place it within the wider milieu of contemporary social life, attuning itself to both the phenomenology of crime and the phenomenology of daily lived experiences (Ferrell *et al*. 2015). The methodological and epistemological focus of cultural criminology can be considered analogous with postmodern and critical criminologies which adopt a primarily phenomenological approach to 'understand the processes and practices of our sociocultural worlds, and the everyday lived experiences and meaning making practices we engage in' (O'Neill and Seal 2012: 10). Indeed, cultural criminology adopts a less predetermined, more naturalistic 'social ontology' where description and experience play central roles in influencing the research agenda (Hayward 2015). As such, the approach does not view the study of crime within a set of pre-scripted-ideological values.

The Image of Crime

It has been claimed that throughout modern society, images of crime are becoming 'as "real" as crime and justice itself' (Ferrell *et al*. 2004: 3) and although everyday life may not necessarily be pervaded by crime it is certainly increasingly pervaded by images of crime (Presdee 2000; Hayward 2010). From 24 hour news channels to a proliferation of crime-inspired television programmes and films, images of crime are omnipresent within contemporary culture. The actual is routinely sensationalised while the pretend is vicariously conveyed, blurring the boundaries of fictionalised accounts and factual incidents (Ferrell *et al*. 2015). Within the 'criminological society' (Jacobsen 2014) where the late modern public is increasingly exposed to mediated representations of crime, the line between certified and precise knowledge and popular opinions and hearsay is continuously crossed.

Indeed, crime is undeniably becoming more visual with the advent of smart phones, smart TVs, a multitude of satellite channels and the relentless expansion of the World Wide Web, all of which have the capacity to instantly supply graphic images of crime at the touch of a button or the tap of a screen (Carrabine 2008; Greer 2009; Jewkes 2015). As a result of the proliferation of the visual, social reality is

considered to not only be represented by images but also constituted and fashioned by images (Hayward 2010; Ferrell *et al.* 2015). Consequently, for an extensive understanding of social reality, emphasis must be placed upon 'the importance of pictures or images for practical action, their quality and capacity to provide orientation for our actions and our everyday practice' (Bohnsack 2008: 3). Such an understanding is further illuminated via examining the means through which the visual is constructed, produced, framed and interpreted (Hayward 2010).

Cultural criminology emphasises that the meanings of crime and crime control are under constant construction via such mediated representations of crime. The 'mediascape' (Appadurai 1996) which produces information and presents images by a continually expanding array of digital technologies has fashioned a world in which 'the street scripts the screen and the screen scripts the street'(Hayward and Young 2004: 259). The broad parameters of popular culture, ranging from films, television, music and video games, and the meanings they convey all lie within cultural criminologies' attentive gaze. Such meanings are often regarded to overlap and interact via media spirals in which 'multi-mediated constructions leak out into social life itself, embedding mediated meanings in everyday experience and creating situations in which crime and the mediated image of crime become indistinguishable' (Ferrell 2013: 262).

Given that crime is undeniably becoming more visual it would therefore follow that criminology would mimic this pattern. Indeed, it has been suggested that over the last decade or so criminology has seen a 'visual turn' (Carrabine 2012) which has witnessed an increased interest in visual representations of crime (Rafter and Brown 2011; Carrabine 2014; O'Neill 2016a) and an increased use of visual methods employed within the discipline (Frigon 2014; Gariglio 2015; Merrill and Frigon 2015).

However, it has been argued elsewhere that the origins of criminology were inherently visual through the work of phrenologists and anthropometrists[8] and

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[8] Phrenology and anthropometry is associated with the work of the Italian School of Criminology which was influential during the late 19th century. The work of the Italian School posited that criminal behaviour was inherited and people were essentially 'born criminals'. The methods the

rather than a visual turn contemporary criminology is experiencing a revival, or re-emergence, of older criminological traditions (Rafter 2014). Whether this increased attention on the visual can be classed as an emergence or re-emergence, it is commonly accepted that the main driving force behind it has been the cultural criminology movement which has flourished over the past two decades (Carrabine 2012; Rafter 2014; Young 2014; O'Neill 2016a). Indeed, cultural criminologists have increasingly used the visual aspect of crime 'as a critical and pedagogic vehicle to illuminate the power of images in shaping popular understandings and social constructions of crime, deviance, and punishment' (Hayward 2010: 4).

A cultural criminological approach can be regarded fittingly attune to explore the visual with proponents asserting that traditional positivist criminology is an inappropriate foundation to fashion a late-modern visual criminology (Carrabine 2012; Jacobsen 2014; Young 2014; Ferrell *et al*. 2015). Moreover, it has been argued that the use of visual criminological methods are becoming essential in cultural criminology's endeavour to account for meaning, representation and situation, and to challenge inequality and injustice (Ferrell 2006; Hayward 2010; Jacobsen 2014). Such an approach to social research can be considered to function as a form of 'visual resistance' to both the images produced, edited and presented by the powerful and to 'the milieu of social researchers who choose not to look at the world' (David 2007: 251).

The Image of Crime and Young People's Agency

Alongside this (re)emergence of the visual there has been a growing interest throughout social research in exploring and understanding the lives of young people from their own perspectives (Thomson 2008; Allan 2012). Moreover, it is becoming increasingly acknowledged that young people are not merely passive actors but rather they are actively involved in the creation and construction of contemporary culture. Indeed, it has been suggested that 'until recently research

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school employed to characterise criminals were based on measurements of body features and through diving the brain into various mental 'faculties' which influenced the size of the brain. Portrait photography was routinely used to study and compare their subjects. Such methods were dismissed as pseudoscience in the early 20th century (Rafter 2009).

on children and young people tended to regard them as objects of study rather than active social agents' (Aldridge 2009: 38). By placing an emphasis upon the image of crime and creating a space for young people to develop their own visual representations of their lived experiences, specific and unique insights from young people's perspectives may be unearthed (Thomson 2008). Furthermore, through focusing on the many dimensions of the image of crime within the realm of broader popular culture; music, video games, film, and television, emerging meanings may be uncovered (Ferrell 2009; Hayward 2010; Ferrell *et al*. 2015). Given that the image of crime is increasingly commodified throughout these mediums, packaged and marketed to young people as cool, exciting, fashionable and romantic (Fenwick and Hayward 2000; Hayward 2002, 2012) it can be asserted that along with young people being involved with the creation and construction of contemporary culture they are also involved in its consumption[9].

The next section of the chapter will outline the processes which have shaped the dominant contemporary criminological landscape and the conditions which cultural criminology seeks to resist and address.

The War on Criminology

The origins of contemporary criminological methods are regarded to be rooted in individualist and indistinct approaches to the study of crime that actually bear a very modest resemblance to the social scientific methods commonly advocated throughout the discipline today (Ferrell *et al*. 2015). Indeed, the groundbreaking criminological studies of the Chicago School throughout the 1920s and 1930s were embedded in an ethnographic tradition that advocated entering into and exploring the world of crime and criminals via primarily employing intuition and attentiveness (Bulmer 1984). Robert Park, an early, prominent member of the Chicago School, famously urged his students to go out and get 'your hands dirty in real research' (cited in McKinney 1966: 71). In a study on homelessness, Chicago School student Anderson recalls the only instruction he received from Park was to 'write down only what you see, hear and know' with Anderson further stating that 'I couldn't answer

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[9] Such consumption essentially acts in a continuousness cycle with the creation and construction of contemporary culture.

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if asked about my "methods"' (Anderson 1923: xi-xii). On the contrary to this, it may be argued that the real roots of criminology are actually scientific and lie within the nineteenth century positivistic work of Cesare Lombroso, however some cultural criminologists would contend that Lombroso 'was a performance artist, a cultural imperialist and a scientific fraud' (Ferrell *et al.* 2015: 204).

Although the research associated with the Chicago School was indeed pioneering and is still regarded seminal, by the mid-twentieth century the landscape of socio-criminological research had transformed and the earlier types of engaged and open-ended fieldwork had become usurped by positivistic survey research conducted at distance, with such methods holding sway throughout the disciplines ever since (Adler and Adler 1998). The introduction of the ostensibly objective survey was intended to position criminology as a science which could uncover criminological 'truths' (Young 2004; Ferrell 2014). Indeed, within criminology, as within its parent discipline sociology, the 'use of statistical instruments and the language of proof of the natural sciences was clearly a way to increase the scientific legitimacy of a discipline fully recognized neither in the university nor outside it' (Chapoulie 1996: 11).

For proponents of survey research, the supposed objectivity of sampling procedures and pre-set question depositories were intended to annul the human particulars of both researchers and research subjects from the research process for the purpose of positioning the researcher within the growing professional establishment of state-funded scientific criminology (Young 2004). Such a growth in state-funded scientific criminology appears to show no signs of abating within the realm of dominant contemporary criminology (Barton *et al.* 2007; Ferrell *et al.* 2015). There is a continual expansion of the criminal justice system, most notably in the United States, but also in the majority of Western nations (Garland 2001; Hayward and Young 2004). This expansion entails vast expenditure on police, prisons and crime prevention measures such as CCTV and electronic tagging, all of which have been supplemented and strengthened by the 'wars' against drugs and terrorism (Simon 2007). These developments have forged a backdrop within which the demand for evaluative and consultancy research has proliferated and are

palpably reflected by the ways in which criminology is delivered and taught in Western universities where departments react to the contemporary demands of training criminal justice practitioners (Hayward and Young 2004; Barton *et al*. 2007; Ferrell *et al.* 2015).

Moreover, the competitive nature of funding available for higher education establishments has created an environment where significant pressure is placed on departments to raise external funding from research (Piatt and Robinson 2001). Such developments are argued to have prompted the crime control industry 'to exert a hegemonic influence upon academic criminology' (Hayward and Young 2004: 261), within which quantitative facts and numbers are sought, the social basis of positivism is guaranteed and all else remains seemingly periphery. These developments, alongside the ascendance of neo-liberalism[10] within the economic and political realms and the advancement of unmediated markets where the dominant culture revolves around market value (Taylor 1999), have fashioned the foundations for rational choice theory, a theory which some cultural criminologist argue is a form of market positivism (Hayward and Young 2004).

These occurrences have led the discipline of criminology to be dominated by statistical testing, consequently downplaying theory and avoiding 'soft' data, particularly in the US (Young 2004; Barton *et al*. 2007). As such, the dominant journal format within contemporary criminology is regarded to commonly encompass ill-developed theoretical models, regression analysis and typically inconclusive results (Ferrell 2009; Ferrell *et al*. 2015). Such data is regarded technically weak which is indefinite and contested by its very nature whilst paradoxically being at odds with its objective truth seeking intentions, mirroring the commonly accepted inherent ambiguities in the statistical data of police services, victimisation studies and self-report studies (Hayward and Young 2004; Ferrell *et al*.

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[10] Neo-liberalism is broadly understood as 'economic liberalisation' through governmental policies which place an emphasis on deregulation, fiscal austerity, free trade and privatisation. Neo-liberal polices emerged during the 1970s and are closely associated with the policies of Margret Thatcher in the UK and Ronald Regan in the USA which advocated reductions in government spending in an attempt to develop the position of the private sector within the economy (Harvey 2005).

2015). Within criminology programmes throughout Western universities, quantitative methods take centre stage whilst meanwhile qualitative methods occupy a more lowly position[11] and even then 'bizarre attempts are made to produce software that will enable the researcher to quantify the qualitative' (Hayward and Young 2004: 262). Cultural criminologists contend that survey research methods and quantitative data analysis reign dominant throughout the discipline primarily due to their efficacy in producing the type of distilled data required for the administration of the criminal justice system and resultant social control (Ferrell *et al*. 2015).

Moreover, cultural criminologists argue that such approaches are particularly useful in this context because they remove crime from its situated meanings and seductive symbolisms, essentially rendering crime meaningless and reducing criminology to a plethora of impersonal statistics (Young 2004; Ferrell 2009; Ferrell *et al*. 2015). From the viewpoint of cultural criminology, criminological theories based on suppositions of instrumental rationality fail to recognise the inherent essence of many everyday crimes; the anger, excitement, pleasure and risk (Katz 1988), indeed the very phenomenology of crime (Young 2004). Such reductionist instrumental rationality approaches may act to reinforce appeals for individual responsibility and punitive justice measures and thus seem suitable within the current criminal justice climate, however, they scarcely account for the ambiguity, irrationality and sensuality of crime itself (Barton *et al*. 2007; Ferrell 2013).

On top of these developments, the available range and types of research have been reduced by the professionalisation of university institutions and the related bureaucratisation of the research process via academic committees overseeing every stage of the research from design and ethical approval to implementation (Adler and Adler 1998; Hamm and Spaaij 2015). This process of professionalism, managerialism and bureaucracy has sought to distance the criminologist from their object of study and has made the undertaking of covert research, ethnographic research on minors without parental consent, and research on vulnerable

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[11] Although this is common across Western universities it should be noted that UK universities place much more of an emphasis upon qualitative methods than US universities (Chamberlain 2015).

populations and sensitive issues (of which crime often pertains to) without signed consent forms very difficult and at times, impossible to conduct. Consequently putting; 'governmental and institutional bureaucratic mandates ahead of the research bargains and confidences previously forged by fieldworkers' (Adler and Adler 1998: xv). Such processes have palpably grown out of the excessive accountability of the 'audit society' (Power 1997) and disproportionate risk management of the 'risk society'[12] (Beck 1992). Resultantly, risk management within social research is placed ahead of methodological independence and innovation.

These developments are regarded to have fashioned an administrative culture within academia which is reflective of a wide-reaching and profound shift in the nature of postmodern ideology (Winlow and Hall 2012). However, such increases do not necessarily assure enhanced efficiency; rather they may actually be counterproductive to the primary purposes and principles of academic institutions (Collini 2012). Furthermore, such changes in the ways in which universities operate, with increasing workloads and diminishing deadlines, may foster an environment of anxiety within which wellbeing is withered away (O'Neill 2014).

It has been argued that 'mainstream article sociology' (Feagin *et al*. 1991), the efficient, routine production of journal length papers has, over time 'displaced the deeper intellectual, methodological and temporal commitments of 'book sociology' as the measure of professional achievement' (Ferrell *et al*. 2015: 189). This trend appears to reflect the bureaucratisation, managerialism and professionalisation occurring within universities where journals can be quantitatively ranked and individual scholars' articles calculated as a sum of their professional standing. In the UK, such moves towards objectivist measures of scholarly output and assembly-line research methods have been reproduced by the universities themselves with their growing dependence on a bureaucratic ethos of actuarial control and corporate management procedures (Wright *et al*. 2014). Growing out of such conditions, UK criminologists are now confronted by the demands of the Research Excellence

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[12] The 'risk society' will be explored in depth within the next chapter *Young People in Late Modernity.*

Framework (REF) which entails evaluation of research efficiency through which academics, programmes of study and universities are ranked. The REF is regarded to symbolise 'the degree to which criminological researchers are increasingly forced to forfeit scholarly independence in the interest of institutional over-sight' (Ferrell *et al*. 2015: 190).

The next section of the chapter will consider the significance of adopting a cultural criminological approach in response to this contemporary landscape of the dominant ethos prevailing within criminology.

The Case for Culture

It has been argued that the history of science can be regarded to resemble less of a straight line towards superior and increasingly objective knowledge than it does a carefully choreographed cavalcade meandering across the intellectual landscape (Feyerband 1975). As such, a 'fruitful disorderliness' (*ibid*: 118) which encompasses an attitude that acknowledges the uncertainty of conventional understanding is deemed necessary for scientific development. 'The only principle that does not inhibit progress is: *anything goes'* (*ibid*: 23 emphasis in original) and thus the lure of received wisdom should be circumvented for those intent on advancing knowledge. Such an attitude can be considered analogous with a cultural criminological approach which advocates that the 'only way to move a discipline forward is through a healthy disrespect for the rules by which it defines itself...*The problems of crime and crime control are too serious to take criminology seriously'* (Ferrell *et al*. 2015: 187 emphasis in original).

Indeed, when absolute knowledge claims are rejected, or perhaps more appropriately deconstructed, choices may still be made and inclinations conveyed. It is the basis for such choices and inclinations that are distinct from the alleged epistemic certainty of scientific method and thus such an anarchistic critique of knowledge does not necessarily produce extreme forms of relativism that result in epistemologically indistinguishable approaches (Ferrell 2009; Ferrell *et al*. 2015). An expansion of the 'criminological imagination' encompassing a *verstehen* orientated approach towards humanistic understandings of meaning through innovative

methods attuned to the phenomenology of crime is deemed necessary to counteract the 'bogus of positivism' commonly contained within sterile and scientistic criminology (Barton *et al.* 2007; Young 2011). As such, critics of the overarching ethos of contemporary criminology have called for a 'poetics of crime' which places the study of crime within critical, creative and cultural dimensions and claims room for a more sensitive approach which assists imaginative understandings (Jacobsen 2014). Moreover, it has been argued that criminological research should be regarded as an ongoing process that is critical and partial, encompassing a 'lack of commitment to any master plan' (Cohen 1988: 109). The partial or 'unfinished' (*ibid*: 232) in this respect materialises as a useful approach to negotiate the next meander and may be viewed as an intellectual strength rather than a barrier to fastidious progress.

Critics of contemporary criminology have considered the discipline a 'methodological kakistocracy – an upside-down world where the worst matters the most' (Ferrell *et al*. 2015: 187). It is a world in which the conventional methods that reign supreme are ineffective and insufficient in addressing the multifaceted and corporeal dimensions of crime and control whilst concomitantly disregarding innovations that may produce new knowledge and insights. Indeed, in a late modern world where multi-mediated constructions of crime permeate throughout social life and such meanings become embedded within collective everyday experience, creating an environment in which crime and the mediated image of crime become indistinguishable (Presdee 2000; Hayward 2010) the 'positivistic dream of a scientific sociology of crime, which attempts to objectively relate cause and effect, becomes all the more impossible' (Young 2004: 23).

Cultural criminologists would contend that the more the discipline has attempted to become 'scientific' the further the dehumanisation of the human subjects it allegedly seeks to understand has occurred, consequently reducing the complexities of human experience to numeric abstractions that provide limited insights into the subjects it professes to study (Young 2004; Hayward 2010; Ferrell *et al*. 2015). The war which has been waged on criminology through the distorted desire to make the study of crime an objective science and the increasing administration of all aspects

of criminal justice and social control can be considered to have fashioned a landscape which creates a case for culture (Young 2004). Such a landscape is a place of irony, 'characterised by the rise of a more individualistic, expressive society, where vocabularies of motives, identities and human action begin to lose their rigid moorings in social structure' whilst paradoxically the dominant voices demand 'a positivistic fundamentalism bent on rendering human action into the predictable, the quantifiable, the mundane' (Hayward and Young 2004: 263).

It is within this late modern context that cultural criminology emerges as a more suitable approach to the contemporary study of crime, standing at odds with the overarching disciplinary ethos which remains dominated by positivistic reductionism. Cultural criminology concerns itself with overturning such a methodological kakistocracy via placing itself within the indefinite dynamics of method, style and emotion and reproducing the messy uncertainty of people and their problems in the research undertaken under its rubric (Ferrell 2009; Hayward 2010; Ferrell *et al.* 2015). Moreover, cultural criminologists contend that if by opposing the lifeless numeric abstraction of positivistic criminology, challenging dominant definitions, concentrating on subjective emotions, and generally putting a human aspect on issues of crime they 'make a mess of the field' they will unreservedly not apologise for their actions (Hayward and Young 2004: 269).

A Cultural Criminological Approach Adopting a Phenomenological Attitude

Hence, following the implications of the philosophical and conceptual framework, the author adopts a 'phenomenological attitude', primarily guided by interpretive phenomenology, which will position and view crime firmly in the context of culture through the use of a cultural criminological approach. Such an attitude will place an emphasis on lived experiences and the embodied nature of perception. Moreover, in keeping with the cultural criminological approach an emphasis will be placed on mediated representations of crime throughout late modernity, which view crime as a cultural product and a creative construct interacting and entwining with our everyday perceptions. Adopting a phenomenological attitude encompassing a cultural criminological approach will thus aim to bring embodied 'truths', which are

contextually situated in time and space, into being so that lived experiences and attributed meanings can be uncovered and explored.

In accordance with interpretive phenomenology the author does not consider the process of phenomenological reduction desirable or indeed possible for the purpose of this study and so instead an emphasis will be placed upon the phenomenological concept of intersubjectivity and the wider sociological concept of reflexivity. The research design will therefore be underpinned by a cultural criminological approach, guided by a phenomenological attitude, which rejects impersonal reductionist approaches common within established positivistic criminology and will instead embrace an emerging methodology with an emphasis on the situated interpretive nature of human experience and its given meanings. As such, the focus of the research will be to explore the research participants' lived experiences before employing theory to discuss, analyse and interpret the meanings they embody.

A cultural criminological approach embracing an interpretive phenomenological attitude can be considered a particularly appropriate and complementary combination to explore lived experiences of crime as it is finely attuned to emotional, situated and subjective aspects of everyday life whilst set against a backdrop of wider social processes that shape understandings and the meanings they embody.

Summary

This chapter has sought to outline and elucidate the philosophical and conceptual framework that has guided the research process embraced throughout the thesis. The first section of the chapter outlined the foremost philosophical and methodological aspects of phenomenology. The distinction between the two main areas of phenomenology; descriptive and interpretive were discussed, followed by an outline of the phenomenological significance of art and then the relation of phenomenology to criminology. The first section of the chapter finished with an outline of the features which a phenomenological attitude encompasses. The second section of the chapter then outlined cultural criminology. The historical

background to cultural criminology was summarised followed by an outline of cultural criminology's emphasis upon the visual aspects of crime. The next section outlined the conditions which cultural criminology seeks to resist and address before the penultimate section of the chapter put forward the case for employing a cultural criminological approach. The final section of the chapter then drew together the implications of the philosophical and conceptual framework to provide an overall framework fitting to the aims of the thesis.

The following chapter will explore and critically review the literature pertaining to the landscape of late modernity which shapes and influences young people's overall lived experiences and how such experiences overlap with issues of crime and control. The following chapter will thus contextualise the late modern landscape contemporary youth are situated within to provide a platform to further explore the socio-cultural and political implications of crime and how these overlap, interact and impact on the overall lived experiences of young people.

PART II

Young People in Late Modernity

'The movement into late modernity is like a ship which has broken from its moorings. Many of the crew cry to return to the familiar sanctuary of the harbour but to their alarm the compass spins, the ship continues on its way and, looking back, the quay is no longer so secure: at times it seems to be falling apart, its structure fading and disintegrating. The siren voices which forlornly, seriously, soberly try to convince them that going back is possible are mistaken' (Young 1999: 193).

This first chapter of the literature review will explore and document the body of academic work regarding young people, risk and crime in late modernity. This chapter will then provide a platform to explore the mediated representation of young people in late modernity and young people's engagement with late modern media within the following chapter. The late modern context outlined within the first two chapters of the literature review will then be used to critically engage with the literature on fear of crime and outline a reconceptualisation of crime concern in the final chapter of the literature review.

This chapter will be divided into four sections. The first; *The Problem of Youth* will contextualise young people's position within contemporary society, the second; *Risky Youth* will explore the literature documenting issues of risk affecting young people and the influence of risk on youth justice, the third; *The Youth Justice Terrain* will explore the current state of youth justice in England and Wales and chart the historical significances which have shaped it, and the fourth; *Gendered Implications* will explore sociological conceptions of gender and the literature documenting gendered differences concerning youth crime and the youth justice system.

The Problem of Youth

Young people have been central to the debate of crime for centuries (Shore 2002), with young offenders increasingly becoming a focal point within academic discourse and political policy (Hendricks 2015). Indeed, 'the problem of youth' has become

embedded in the socio-political consciousness and emerged as a staple feature of contemporary media (France 2007). As such, youth has come to represent a metaphor for social unease and has become an enduring locus for displaced social anxieties (Binken and Blokland 2012). Critics have noted that within the Westernised world young people have come to symbolise societal fears rather than hopes and that youth is seen as an increasingly problematic time with recurring moral panics stemming from perceived deviant and risky behaviour (Muncie 2015). Since the turn of the century, concerns surrounding young people have primarily focused on anti social behaviour, such as 'hoodies' and binge drinking (Squires and Stephen 2005; Millie 2008), and violent youth offending, such as gang and knife crime (Goldson 2011).

The United Kingdom, along with the majority of Westernised nations, is regarded to have experienced a 'punitive turn' in regards to youth justice over recent decades with vast expansion into the management and control of crime (Muncie 2008). Such a punitive turn is characterised via the increased politicisation and problematisation of crime and is situated in broader economic, cultural and social transitions (Garland 2001), reflected by successive governments 'governing through crime' (Simon 2007) which have shaped late modernity through the politics of neo-liberalism (Wacquant 2009). The notion of a 'punitive turn' has however been questioned (Matthews 2005), particularly in light of the dramatic decrease in the use of youth custody throughout England and Wales over recent years (Bateman 2011, 2012; Hamilton *et al*. 2016). The extent to which contemporary youth justice has experienced a punitive u-turn will be assessed later in this chapter.

Concern about a criminal underclass blighted with youth crime is, however, hardly a new occurrence. Dysfunctional families and disorderly youth living at the margins of society have frequently been portrayed as mired in crime and poverty for well over a century (Welshman 2006). Moreover, young people have been the primary focus of socio-political scares and panics since the origins of the concept of childhood emerged during Victorian times (Springhall 1998). Contemporary research has highlighted the relative 'normality' of current youth offending and has revealed that youth crime rates are actually declining (Goldson 2010; Pitts 2015). Youth is

considered as a period of paradox and ambiguity with the socio-political representation of young people being broadly centred around two apparently contradictory cultural discourses, on one hand youth are seen as dangerous and deviant whereas on the other they are viewed as innocent and vulnerable (Spencer 2005; Smith 2010, 2011a). This is reflected via the fact that young people, particularly young males, are the group most likely to become both the perpetrators and the victims of crime (Francis 2007; Furlong and Cartmel 2007; Muncie 2015; Hopkins Burke 2016).

The politicisation of youth justice policy appears to encompass what has been termed a 'knowledge/evidence-policy rupture' (Goldson 2010), highlighted by the relative normality of offending whilst policy is rooted in abnormalisation and intolerance, and the relative stability of offending whilst policy tends to amplify and define crime up. Moreover, research has highlighted the need for diversion and minimum intervention whilst policy is broadly centred on actuarialism and early intervention (Goldson 2013a; McAra and McVie 2015). Recent research has however demonstrated a shift in the youth justice system away from intervention and towards diversion (Smith 2014; Kelly and Armitage 2015), the extent to which this has occurred will be assessed later in the chapter.

Alongside this changing political landscape young people are currently experiencing profound social transformations in a fast changing world characterised by the continuous expansion of information technology (France 2007). Increased access to the internet and smart mobile phones, and the growth of social media have fashioned significant changes in the ways young people interact with and contribute to the social world (Coleman 2012; Chambers 2013). Such changes are considered to have substantial implications for criminal behaviour and crime control as these platforms are noted to be sites of increasing criminal activity where young people have the potential to be both victims and offenders (Pitts 2015).

Moreover, changing education and employment structures and adverse economic circumstances have impacted upon young people in a variety of ways. At a time when there is increasing socio-political pressure for young people to continue into

further education the associated costs are rising whilst access to employment is decreasing through lessened opportunities and heightened competition (Simmons *et al*. 2014). Issues surrounding access to higher education are particularly marked for young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds and for males in general (Independent Commission on Fees 2014). Furthermore, at a psychosocial level it has been documented that the occurrence of mental illness and suicide amongst young people is rising in the UK (Casswell *et al.* 2012) at a time when mental health services are experiencing a decrease in funding (BBC News 2015a).

Such socio-political transformations are regarded to have shaped an unpredictable and uncertain late modern landscape for contemporary youth resulting in extended and fragmented transitions for many young people as they progress into adulthood (MacDonald *et al*. 2005; Furlong and Cartmel 2007; Côté and Bynner 2008). Whilst these changing transitions haven been theorised as forging the emergence of a distinct stage of the life course between adolescence and adulthood (Arnett 2004) cultural criminologists have argued that late modernity is actually witnessing 'life stage dissolution' (Hayward 2012, 2013), characterised via the blurring of boundaries between being a young person and being an adult which has resulted in indistinct life stages. Indeed, elsewhere research has demonstrated the eroding of distinct life course stages fashioned through the incessant march of late modern consumer culture (Hall *et al*. 2008).

Although the late modern conception of what it means to be young is a contested terrain, there is an acknowledgement that contemporary youth encounter ambiguities and inconsistencies regarding their competencies as they progress into adulthood (James and James 2004). Resultantly, young people find themselves situated within a precarious position caught between boundaries and capabilities and have a tendency to be viewed through the lens of vulnerability which often detracts from their sense of competence (Smith 2010). A growing emphasis has been placed on the need to recognise young people's personal sense of agency within the contexts of their rights and their 'evolving capacities' (Lansdown 2005). In this sense, a balance should be negotiated between the tensions arising from young people's lived position within late modernity. On one hand, a refusal to

accept young people's dependencies and limitations can serve to inflict responsibilities that they may not be fully competent to negotiate, whilst on the other, a failure to recognise that young people have the capacity to make informed choices and perform rational actions can minimise their meaningful contributions to society and reinforce normative assumptions of power (Crawford 2013).

The next section of the chapter will explore the notion of risk regarding the problem of youth in the context of the late modern landscape.

<u>Risky Youth</u>

A central characteristic of late modernity is the notion of risk, particularly in regards to young people (Case and Haines 2009; Mythen 2014). The work of Giddens (1990, 1991) and Beck (1992) is widely credited with coining and popularising the notion of a 'risk society'. The risk society is defined as 'a systematic way of dealing with hazards and insecurities introduced by modernisation itself' (Beck 1992: 21) and is considered 'increasingly preoccupied with the future (and also with safety)' (Giddens 1999: 3). Contemporary society, or late modernity, is regarded to be characterised by 'existential anxiety' and 'ontological insecurity' (Giddens 1991: 84) which have been shaped by the paradoxical rise of technology. On one hand, society has experienced an increase in science and technology which has led to more knowledge, whilst on the other there is less certainty as science and technology is being perpetually challenged and changed, leading to questions surrounding the veracity of such knowledge (Davidson 2001). These developments have created the conditions that Giddens describes as the 'double edged character of society' (1990: 7). Ontological insecurity is understood as the increased ambiguities embedded in late modern socio-political processes which challenge trust relations, self-integrity and biographical continuity (Giddens 1991).

A sense of ontological insecurity is considered more pronounced for marginalised young people as their domestic and material circumstances may have not provided adequate provisions for reassurance and resilience, resulting in their existence being characterised by 'high' ontological insecurity (Chan and Rigakos 2002). The risk society places an increased emphasis on individualization, whereby young

people are increasingly required to construct their own lives throughout late modernity (Beck 1992). As such, the role of class has become a contested area with the tensions between structure and agency lying at the heart of the debate (Wyn and Woodman 2006; Roberts 2007). The increasing influence of individual choice is recognised whilst acknowledged as limited by structural position, termed 'bounded agency' (Evans 2002). In this context, class is regarded to remain objectively important but subjectivity it appears to have less significance (France and Haddon 2014).

The concept of risk has received significant academic attention over the past three decades and has increasingly infiltrated an extensive range of public policy (Case and Haines 2009; Mythen 2014). In the United Kingdom, risk-based criminal justice policy is widespread and deemed disproportionately centred on young people, particularly males (Turnbull and Spence 2011). The origins of risk-based policy are rooted in the *Children Act 1989* with its focus on risk-based approaches to 'early intervention' and 'child protection' (Parton 2006). During the 1990s a proliferation of risk-based policy was developed as a consequence of the green paper *Misspent Youth* which resulted in a focus on risk-based prevention and multi-agency and partnership working becoming integrated into the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* (Haines and Case 2015). *The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development* (Farrington 1989; 1995) is considered as the most influential piece of research that shaped the trend towards risk-based policy (Armstrong 2004).

The concept of risk is a recurring topic of interest in the social sciences and related disciplines. Indeed, Mythen and Walklate (2011: 101) note the process of 'risk creep' which has 'spread its tentacles into almost all aspects of mainstream criminology'. It has been suggested that the increased acceptance that crime ought to be managed rather than solved has led to contemporary criminal justice policy becoming dominated by risk profiling and risk assessment (Garland 2001; Case and Haines 2009). However, it has long since been acknowledged that the notion of risk is an ambiguous and relative term which can be interpreted in many contrasting ways (Green *et al.* 2000). This is highlighted through the usage of the word risk in policy documents in which the term has come to be employed in numerous

conflicting contexts (Turnbull and Spence 2011). Moreover, it has been argued that a risk is never fully objective or knowable outside of a belief system and a moral position and thus what is measured, identified and managed as a risk is always constituted via pre-existing knowledge and discourse which are anchored in personal subjectivities (Lupton 1999).

Social risks have been suggested as the predominant influence that characterise the construction of biographies and lifestyle decisions and choices (Cebulla 2009). Scholars have noted that risks are often specific to the environment in which they are encountered and thus 'variable risks that individuals face and embrace cannot be separated from the broader social context within which their lives, and risks they experience, unfold' (Garside 2009: 13). It has been argued that young people's experiences are shaped by local dimensions of class and as such risk should be analysed within this context (Green *et al*. 2000). Whilst risk might be generated 'at distance' by global social and economic processes, risks are tended to be experienced on a localised level (*ibid*: 124). Through underplaying the importance of culture and context, Armstrong (2004: 110) has suggested it has 'resulted in an almost total absence in the risk literature of any consideration of the social construction of risk'. Although there has been some theoretical consideration on the social construction of risk (Douglas 1992) and empirical investigation (Austen 2009), the body of literature remains limited.

The lived experiences of exclusion and marginalisation are considered to characterise individual pathways fashioned through risk and chance (Furlong and Cartmel 2007). Young people face increased uncertainty as a consequence of a restructured labour market, a greater demand for an educated labour force and an influx of social policies which have prolonged the period of family dependency (Furlong and Cartmel 2007; Simmons *et al*. 2014). These factors can be regarded particularly pronounced for young people from traditionally less affluent, working class communities owing to the likelihood of limited resources and opportunities when compared with more affluent communities. An 'epistemological fallacy' (Furlong and Cartmel 2007: 138) is noted to have arisen in this context as risks are

experienced and addressed at an individual level although they are likely to result from wider socioeconomic processes.

Indeed, critics have noted that the risk policy discourse is overly concerned with intervening in the lives of a small minority of trouble-makers rather than addressing more fundamental structural factors (Garside 2009). Such a risk-based approach towards young people encompasses the striking paradox that through individualisation, young people are regarded as being responsible for their own present and future, while concurrently youth is regarded as an increasingly problematic and unpredictable time owing to changing social structures (Turnbull and Spence 2011), which echoes the 'double edged character of society' postulated by Giddens (1990: 7). Moreover, critics have noted that through increased uncertainty, notions of risk may actually self-perpetuate leading to the 'social amplification of risk' (Kasperson and Slovic 2003).

The risk policy discourse can be considered to ostensibly act to safeguard children and assist families through framing concerns under the rhetoric of responsibility with a wide range of involvement from state bodies if requirements are not met. As outlined in the literature, when 'interventions are underpinned by the very real prospect of compulsion and informed by tabloid-style stereotyping of families and children, it is difficult not to conclude that professions of 'help' and 'support' are meretricious rather than sincere' (Garside 2009: 6). Through risk-based policy the family becomes the basis of surveillance and control via 'people professions' or 'human services' (Turnbull and Spence 2011: 943). Both the family and the individual are considered responsible for their current or potential future negative outcomes and may become subjected to a range of preventative interventions centred on their perceived risk. Such an approach can render those of lower social status to disproportionate intervention and consequently reinforce class inequality (Case and Haines 2009; Smith 2011a).

By using the family as the basis for social problems it essentially removes the culpability of wider socioeconomic processes and the role of the state, which ultimately gave rise to the risk society (Garside 2009). In this context, discourses of

risk act as a form of governmentality (Foucault 1991) through regulating and shaping social groups behaviours and norms to align with governmental policies whilst individual biographies are negotiated via technologies of the self (Foucault 1988) to manage and mediate risk on a personal level. New public health and lifestyle discourses are regarded to encompass the possibility for individual self-governance via the use of expert norms to shape behaviour and produce responsible citizens (Petersen and Lupton 1996).

Critics have noted that as a consequence of the language of risk 'the entire population can be the locus of vulnerability' (Dean 1999: 147) and specific populations can be disproportionately represented to exhibit such risks. Within the risk-based discourse, youth is regarded as being a period of high risk, both for the young people themselves and for the people that encounter them (Case and Haines 2009). This occurrence has resulted in being a young person becoming a risk factor within itself, particularly males, and especially those from socioeconomically disadvantaged areas (Armstrong 2006). Such net-widening can lead to the stigmatisation and criminalisation of young people and may result in a large population of 'permanent suspects' (McAra and McVie 2005) and 'institutionalised mistrust' (Kelly 2003). Echoing Stanley Cohen's (1985) far sighted assertion that net-widening and mesh-thinning through excessive youth based criminal justice interventions can result in the smallest fishes getting caught. These developments have led scholars to question whether the end justifies the means regarding risk-based policy; 'what are the implications for both young people and for society if 'positive outcomes' comes at the cost of turning an increasingly large population into 'permanent suspects' subject to surveillance, stigmatisation and prevention intervention?' (Turnbull and Spence 2011: 956).

The next section of the chapter will outline the contemporary youth justice terrain set against the back drop of the problem of youth and risky youth.

The Youth Justice Terrain

The origins of contemporary youth justice in the United Kingdom[13] can be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century with the *Probation of Offenders Act 1907* and the *Children Act 1908* (Muncie 2015). These two Acts are considered a precursor to a series of reforms during the early to mid twentieth century in which welfare rather than justice emerged as the dominant principle of youth justice policy (Hendricks 2015). It has been noted that although from time to time there were shifts in emphasis between the two principles, the general topography of youth justice remained dominated by 'welfarism' until the 1970s (Crawford and Newburn 2013). The decades since the 1970s are considered to have been primarily characterised by authoritarian drift and neoliberal styles of governance firmly rooted in justice principles (Carrabine 2010). The late 1980s and early 1990s experienced emergent actuarialist and managerialist discources, termed the 'new penology' (Feeley and Simon 1992), where risk calculation and the management of offenders became the formeost concerns for the justice system. Coupled with a growing 'populist puntiviness' (Bottoms 1995) concerning youth offending, the catalyst for which is widely considered the James Bulger case (James and Jenks 1996; Goldson 2013b), youth justice is argued to have witnessed a 'punitive turn' during this period (Muncie 2008). The notion of a punitive turn has however been question in that such an apparent surge in punitiveness fuelled by a new populism remains vague and undefined (Matthews 2005) and that youth justice is essentially a cyclical process that tends to shift between lenient and harsh approaches (Bernard 1992).

The youth justice system experienced a radical overhaul under New Labour, ushering in a 'new youth justice' (Goldson 2000). The *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* established a re-branding of youth justice, witnessing the creation of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) at a national level and Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) at a local level (Souhami 2015). Such reforms are considered to have heralded the onset of a

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[13] The United Kingdom comprises three separate territorial jurisdictions; England and Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland. There is a growing acknowledgement that the notion of England and Wales as a single jurisdiction is increasingly questionable (Goldson 2013a). The primary focus of this thesis concerns the youth justice system in England.

new era in the history of youth justice which saw fundamental changes to both policy and practice and shifted the ethos from its historic location within probation practice and social work to an arguably more relevant but potentially detached discourse (Palmer 2011). The actuarialist strategies adopted by New Labour are regarded to have given rise to significant 'net-widening', intensive supervisonal and correctional regulations, and the detention of more young people for longer periods in penal custody (Goldson 2013a). These widespread changes implemented by the new youth justice have been extensively criticised for being overly politicised and unjustly punitive (Pitts 2001; Furlong and Cartmel 2007; Goldson 2010; Hopkins Burke 2016). However, there is an argument that these changes were initiated under the previous government before the new youth justice took hold and continued the trend of an increasingly intrusive and controlling approach towards young people (Smith 2011b). Moreover, there has been debate concerning the degree to which actuarialism and risk have actually embedded into everyday youth justice practice (Phoenix and Kelly 2013; Hamilton *et al*. 2016).

Whereas crime and disorder had been central to election campaigns over the previous three decades, the defining feature of the 2010 UK election was concern around the global economic crisis (Bateman 2015a). Indeed, the newly elected Conservative-Liberal Coalition was quick to propose a radical neoliberal style of governance and reduce the deficit though austerity measures (Yates 2012). During the Coalition governments' time in power, youth crime, and indeed crime more generally, became a less significant public and political concern, resulting in a 'depoliticization' of youth crime (Bateman 2012). The Coalition governments' rhetoric indicated the dilution of New Labour's centralist and prescriptive approach to the management of youth justice and witness a return to more welfarist based approaches to crime control through an endorsement of community-based restorative justice (Briggs 2013; Smith 2014a). As such, contemporary criminal justice policy has incorporated an increased welfarist approach, termed the 'rehabilitation revolution', to the management of crime with an emphasis upon community penalties and a decrease in the use of custody (Fox and Grimm 2015). Moreover, recent research has demonstrated a shift in the youth justice system

away from intervention and towards diversion (Smith 2014b; Hamilton *et al*. 2016), although the extent to which this can be considered 'interventionist diversion' reflecting the continued influence of New Labour has been debated (Kelly and Armitage 2015). Furthermore, the dramatic decline in youth custody that has occurred in recent years and continues to fall during the current Conservative governments reign has been regarded as predominately rooted in fiscal constraints rather than an underlying welfare driven ideology (Bateman 2014, 2015b; Goldson 2015).

The next section of the chapter will explore the gendered implications of young people in late modernity in order to establish a platform for how the notion of gender may influence lived experience. As such, an overview of sociological conceptions of gender will be assessed followed by a concise critical review of the literature regarding gender and crime.

Gendered Implications

Gender is differentiated between sex in the literature in that sex constitutes the biological categories male and female whereas gender refers to the socially ascribed roles of being male or being female, i.e. masculinity and femininity (Walklate 2004). Gender is therefore only one of a number of social variables, such as age and social class, which shape and frame lived experience (Davies 2011). Moreover, research has acknowledged that gendered risks are inexorably linked and interconnected to wider inequalities and social processes (Hannah-Moffat and O'Malley 2007).

Gender is regarded as a routine process embedded in everyday interaction. We 'do gender' continually throughout our everyday lives (West and Zimmerman 1987). As such, gender is a product of social interaction that does not simply define what a person is rather it is something a person does. We do gender, conscious that it will be judged and that we will be accountable for our performance of gender. Gender is thus considered as a cultural construct and a central aspect of social structure which becomes perpetuated through the continual doing of gender by engaging in and reproducing the processes society assigns to males and females (*ibid*). 'True

gender' is considered a narrative which is maintained by a tactic collective agreement to produce, perform and maintain distinct and polar genders with the credibility of such narratives judged and punished if not maintained and performed within culturally accepted boundaries (Butler 1990). Gender thus 'proves to be performance – that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always doing' (*ibid*: 25).

It is commonly accepted that traditional sociological accounts of gender focus primarily on the dominant position of males relative to the subordinate position of females (Connell 1995; Wharton 2012). The notion of masculinity has tended to be centred on the dominant ideal of masculine heterosexual authority and power, termed as hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1987). Within Western culture, the hegemonic ideal of masculinity is regarded to embrace a series of well distinct characteristics which epitomise the white, heterosexual, economically successful male (Connell 1995; Lorber 1998). The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been extensively employed within a wide variety of academic disciplines to describe the masculine and feminine processes embedded and perpetuated throughout socio-political discourse (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Charlebois 2011). However, there have been numerous criticisms levelled against the concept which regard it as a vague and imprecise model of social reproduction of male identities (Wetherell and Edley 1999; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

In recent decades, research and theory exploring the concept of masculinity have developed and evolved to emphasise the concept as complex and multi-faceted (Kimmel *et al*. 2005). As such, contemporary thinking around the concept of masculinity emphasises that there are multiple was of 'doing masculinity' within a broad spectrum of masculinities (Connell 1995; Whitehead 2002). Although men in general are recognised to benefit from the 'patriarchal dividend' (Connell 1997), which describes the material, social and political advantages bestowed on them from their position as the dominant gender, male power is deemed not an absolute. Indeed, working class masculinity, homosexual masculinity, and ethnic minority masculinity is frequently marginalised or subordinated. As outlined in the

literature; 'other groups of men pay part of the price, alongside women, for the maintenance of an unequal gender order' (*ibid*: 64).

In response to these criticisms, it has been acknowledged that it is necessary to reconceptualise the normative assumptions of hegemonic masculinity to recognise and emphasise the agency of women, the geography of masculinities, the embodiment of context of privilege and power, and place a stronger emphasis on the internal contradictions within the dynamics of hegemonic masculinity (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). The 'hegemony of men' has been argued as a more useful concept which highlights that men are both a social category created by dominant socio-political structures and collective and individual agents within those structures (Hearn 2004).

Traditional routes to manhood are considered progressively prolonged, complicated and confusing throughout Western post-industrial societies, resulting in uncertainly among young men about what being a male means (Seidler 1994; Pattman *et al*. 1998, Kimmel *et al*. 2005). Young males who have been assimilated into the youth justice system may experience increased strain during such routes, which in turn can distort and further prolong progression into manhood (Collier 1998). We are aware that crime is predominantly committed by young males and is essentially seen as a male activity (Walklate 2004; Wykes and Welsh 2009; Muncie 2015). Crime has been regarded as a means of 'doing masculinity' for groups of marginalised young males who have reduced resources to accomplish hegemonic masculinity through conventional pathways (Messerschmidt 1993). However, such a view of crime and masculinity has been criticised for placing too much emphasis on structural determinants with critics highlighting that the majority of marginalised young males do not act out their masculinity through crime (Jefferson 1997, 2002).

Indeed, whilst structural constraints are as regarded influential, such an approach to crime and masculinity should encompass the role of subjectivity and acknowledge the agency of the individual (Collier 1998). Moreover, it has been acknowledged by cultural criminologists that socio-criminological theory has

minimised the subjective satisfactions embodied in doing masculinity and doing crime (Katz 1988; Presdee 2000). Furthermore, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has been applied to a vast array of crimes committed by individuals from varying circumstances, leading critics to question the value of the concept within the discipline of criminology (Collier 1998).

It is widely acknowledged that the criminal justice system is designed for males and does not sufficiently meet the needs of females (Carlen 2002; Worrall and Gelsthorpe 2009; Wykes and Welsh 2009; Davies 2011; Gelsthorpe and Sharpe 2015). As such, prison has long since been argued as an inappropriate option for the vast majority of female offenders and should be reserved for only the most serious offenders (Carlen 1990). Although gender-specific programming has emerged during the past two decades as an approach to reconfigure justice for females (Hubbard and Matthews 2008) such an approach is deemed grounded in erroneous assumptions concerning female pathways into and out of crime (Sharpe 2015). A reconceptualisation of justice for women, particularly young women, has been claimed as necessary to acknowledge the role meso-level cultures and practices at institutional levels throughout education and welfare agencies play in influencing female offending pathways (*ibid*).

Alongside these issues with the management of female offenders concerns have been levelled at the socio-cultural representation of women who commit crime. Indeed, female offenders are considered to occupy an anomalous cultural location in that they are regarded to not only contravene society's laws but are also regarded to contravene societal gender norms through engaging in behaviour which is perceived as conflicting with alleged feminine passivity and appropriate femininity (O'Neill and Seal 2012). This is considered especially true for violent female offenders, particularly females who commit murder (Seal 2010). Such a contravention of gendered norms is argued to have contributed to a disproportionate representation of violent female offenders in the news media because it is precisely the fact that violent female offending is regarded much more extraordinary than male offending that it is deemed more news worthy (Greer 2009; Jewkes 2015). As such, research has shown than although males commit

roughly 80% of violent crime, around one third of British news stories about acts of violence centre upon female perpetrators (Marsh and Melville 2014). Moreover, socio-cultural representations of female offenders rarely acknowledge that the vast majority of female offenders have also been victims of crime (Russell 2013).

The media representation and gendered implications of young offenders will be explored during the next chapter.

Summary

This chapter has sought to outline and elucidate the fundamental features underpinning the landscape of late modernity as experienced by young people. The first section outlined the problem of youth by reviewing the literature regarding the socio-political conceptions of young people and the resultant societal implications. The next section of the chapter situated this problem of youth within the notion of risk and outlined the processes which have made risk a central feature of late modernity, resulting in the risk society. The chapter then explored the impact that notions of the problem of youth and risky youth have had upon the youth justice system. The history of the youth justice system was succinctly outlined before the contemporary youth justice landscape was discussed. The final section of the chapter addressed the sociological conceptions of gender and outlined the influence they have had upon the youth justice system and late modern socio-political processes.

The following chapter will use this late modern context to first explore and critically review the literature pertaining to the mediated representation of young people and then to secondly explore and critically review the literature pertaining to young people's engagement with various forms of entertainment media that embodies and commodifies elements of crime. The chapter will thus provide a platform to foster a better understanding of the mediated socio-cultural and political representations of crime and transgression[14] and how these impact and interact

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[14] In the traditional sociological sense, transgression refers to going beyond normative boundaries (Jenks 2003). Cultural criminologists extend this definition to include escape, protest and resistance (O'Neill and Seal 2012).

with young people's lived experience of late modernity where crime is not only committed and controlled but concomitantly routinely commodified and consumed. The final chapter of the literature review will then explore the literature within the field of fear of crime before outlining the concept of *crime concern*.

Young People, Mediated Representation, and Media Engagement

'In late modernity the growth of young people's use of new technology and media is creating a range of anxieties. Such concerns about new technology are not new. In fact contemporary moral panics around technology tend to be ahistorical, failing to recognise that similar concerns have been raised at different historical times over different forms of 'new' media...Unlike in the area of crime, modern risks associated with technology are focused on the danger to the young person rather than the dangers of the young' (France 2007: 122).

This chapter of the thesis will explore and critically review the recurring themes from the body of academic work regarding young people and the media. The media is of particular importance given that late modernity is characterised by the 'mediascape' (Appadurai 1996) where global cultural flows of information are continuously circulated to create and shape meanings which entwine and interact with every day lived experiences. Moreover, the late modern media is specifically significant owing to the extensive mediated representation of crime in the news media (Greer and Reiner 2012; Surette 2014; Jewkes 2015) and the entertainment media (Jacobsen 2014; Ferrell *et al.* 2015), of which young people are often the focus of as both subjects of concern and targets of consumption (Presdee 2000: Hayward 2002, 2004; Marsh and Melville 2014; Muncie 2015).

The chapter will be divided into two main sections; *Young People and the Media*, which will outline the historical and contemporary mediated representations of young people, and; *Young People's Engagement with Late Modern Media,* which will outline young people's engagement with various forms of entertainment media within late modernity that embody elements of crime and transgression.

Young People and the Media

For centuries young people have been a significant focus of public and political anxieties with crime being a central feature concerning the 'problem' of youth throughout mediated representations (France 2007). Within Victorian England,

moral panics were arising from press reporting on purported deviant behaviour among young people long before the term was coined (Springhall 1998). As far back as the 1800s, sensationalist newspaper reporting, explicit popular fictions and violent, dramatic and exciting entertainment had established purchase within rising urban culture (Marsh and Melville 2014; Cronin 2015). Social critics during this period viewed such sensational popular depictions as symbolic of increasing moral decline, arguing that such representations would be likely to encourage further immorality and incite crime, of which young people were particularly susceptible (Murdock 2001).

The arrival of cinema in the early 20th century further compounded fears surrounding the corruptibility of young people and fuelled the perception that films were injurious to public morality and would lead to crime and disorder (Kuhn 1988). Films were regarded to encompass 'too much sex and crime' than was deemed appropriate and healthy for young people to experience (Charters 1933: 60). With such fears especially prominent concerning young males owing to their perceived propensity towards delinquency (McLynn 1989). Although films and other forms of popular entertainment were considered morally corrupting, various socialising forces upon young people such as parents, school and the church were acknowledged as influencing the experience and behaviour of young people (Charters 1933). However, early social condemnation of media influence on the corruptibility of youth produced an enduring 'legacy of fear' where the entertainment media came to be seen by the public as the dominant agent of moral and social change, which had the capability to damage young people and disrupt the very fabric of society (Lowery and DeFleur 1995). Such concern about the influence of media on young people and disorder has repeatedly recurred since (Wartella and Reeves 1985; Ferguson 2013), and with each new technological development fears are founded that new forms of media have the potential to bring previously unidentified dangers and fashion new forms of lasting harm (France 2007; Cronin 2015).

Indeed, within late modernity films are still popular topics of debate throughout public and political discourse with concerns continuing to be expressed surrounding

the potential of films to corrupt youth and incite criminality (Maloney 2015). The most notable incident occurred in 1993 when the James Bulger case prompted a heated debate around young people's exposure to 'video nasties' and violent films, resulting in a widespread moral panic concerning youth criminality and knee-jerk policy changes surrounding young offenders (Collett 1993; Critcher 2003; Boyle 2005).

Other forms of media engaged with by young people have continued to be condemned by society's collective gaze. Music has long been associated with youth culture and various genres have sparked debates about the damage they may incur upon vulnerable and impressionable young people. Like film, music has periodically become to be seen as symbolic of a perceived break down of socially stability and a threat to traditional norms. In the 1950s rock music was the genre of focus until the music associated with the mod subculture of the 1960s took hold (Cohen 1972). In the 1970s punk music was the emergent genre through which fears surrounding young people were projected (Clark 2003). Throughout the late 1980s and into the 1990s genres of music associated with the 'rave culture' replaced these outdated forms of music and owing to their perceived relationship with youth culture and drug use, moral panics ensued from sensationalist media reporting (McRobbie and Thornton 1995). Throughout the 1990s and up to present day, widespread moral panics and social condemnation have surrounded rap music, particularly 'gangsta rap', which is broadly considered to embody gratuitous violence, misogyny and endorse criminal lifestyles (Springhall 1998; Bogazianos 2012).

A further medium commonly associated with youth culture has been video games since their emergence in the 1970s, and they too have been the subject of heated socio-political debate with successive panics emerging with each generation of games around the moral and social implications of violent video games (Karlsen 2015). From *Space Invaders* and *Death Race* in the 1970s, to *Cluster's Revenge* in the 1980s, to *Mortal Kombat* in the 1990s, and into the millennium with *Grand Theft Auto*, violent video games have once again been seen as a symbol of disorderly youth and social decay (Spinghall 1998; Ferguson 2010).

The concept of moral panic is regarded to have become mainstream throughout criminological discourse and common place within political and everyday usage (France 2007). As a result, there have been numerous criticisms concerning the reliability and the usefulness of the concept which view it as a flawed conceptual tool that lacks depth of understanding and employs limited definitions (McRobbie 1994; Jewkes 2015; Wright 2015). Although there are certainly weaknesses and limitations concerning the notion of moral panic, the influence that the media has on shaping understandings of crime cannot be underestimated (France 2007), this is considered particularly true of youth crime (Critcher 2003; Muncie 2015). As such, when employed in its broadest sense, the notion of moral panic is useful to contextualise the recurring societal unease that is apparent around issues of youth culture and youth crime.

Alongside the recurring moral panics outlined around various media associated with youth culture, contemporary news reporting in the United Kingdom has been criticised for fashioning a widespread moral panic towards young people with youth itself becoming symbolic of a perceived societal breakdown (Omaji 2003; Muncie 2015). It has been argued elsewhere that 'total panic' (Brown 2009) is a better term for the late modern attitude towards children and young people. Such a total panic is considered part of the 'media orchestrated twenty-first-century meltdown language that links all domains from banking systems to military strategies' (*ibid*: 23).

Regardless of whether the attitude to young people is most accurately portrayed as a moral or total panic it is commonly accepted that the media, in large part the news media, has shaped a generalised anxiety towards youth culture and youth crime (France 2007; Larsen 2013; Marsh and Melville 2014). Indeed, contemporary news reporting on issues of youth crime is regarded to frequently encompass harmful and reductive stereotypes which can result in an unfounded representation of young people and serve to further stigmatise and marginalise those who are experiencing structural disadvantage (Brown 2009; Banks 2013; Muncie 2015). Although youth crime has actually declined over recent decades public sentiment is not considered to reflect this reality (Pitts 2015). Paradoxically, during the period

when youth crime was starting to experience a steady decline, the reporting of youth crime within the news media was increasingly portraying a contradictory picture.

The early 1990s is considered to have witnessed a significant shift in the ways in which young people were framed within the British news media with notable linkages between youth and crime becoming more pervasive (Newburn 1996; Wayne *et al.* 2008; Silverman 2012). A 'populist punitiveness' (Bottoms 1995) is regarded to have arisen during this time as a consequence of politicians tapping into and exploiting public sentiment seemingly outraged with spiralling levels of youth crime. In large part, as a result of this populist punitiveness a plethora of public policy was shaped around issues of youth crime and anti-social behaviour, which many critics have deemed unjustifiable and detrimental to young people in general (Muncie 1999; Pitts 2003; Goldson 2010).

As a consequence of this increasingly punitive and cynical attitude towards young people within the media, throughout political discourse, and seemingly reflected by the wider public, females have become increasingly viewed as potentially violent (Worrall 2001), although it has been argued that there is no evidence to suggest this is actually the case (Batchelor *et al.* 2001; Worrall 2001). Indeed, such an over representation of violent female offenders has been symbolised by the recent media hysteria around young violent female gang members which has been claimed as largely a mediated construction rooted in an imaginary reality (Young 2013). Moreover, violent offending by young males is on the decline although this has not been emphasised by the media (Pitts 2015).

In more recent years, news reporting on youth crime has become less pervasive, in large part due to the global economic crisis and the ostensible rise of global terrorism (Lee 2007; Rowbotham *et al.* 2013; Pitts 2015). However, the significant shift that occurred before youth crime became a less significant socio-political concern, coupled with a historically embedded anxiety around the 'problem' of youth, will no doubt produce a long lasting legacy (France 2007). Moreover, the tentative nature of a reduction in populist punitiveness towards youth crime, and

indeed young people in general, emerged during the media representations and political and public responses surrounding the 2011 riots (Bateman 2012).

Alongside these negative mediated representations of young people, there is a growing acknowledgement that young people are creating their own representations through the rise of citizen journalism via the use of digital technologies and social media (Buckingham and Willett 2009; Davies and Enyon 2013). The next section of the chapter will outline young people's changing media engagement within late modernity and explore the associated 'problems' and 'risks'.

Young People's Engagement with Late Modern Media

Introduction

Young people's engagement with media is extensive throughout the Western world and is on the rise owing, in large part, to increased affordability and availability (Rideout *et al*. 2010; Coleman 2012). In recent decades, young people's media engagement has transformed with the emergence of the internet and the proliferation of digital technologies, such as DVDs players, videogame systems, MP3 players, and satellite television (Boyd 2014). These developments have led to widespread changes in the landscape of late modern youth culture and the means through which young people interact and engage with the world (Davies and Enyon 2013). In the United Kingdom, research has shown that children aged between five and 16 spend six and a half hours a day on average behind a screen compared to around three hours in 1995 (Childwise 2015). Research conducted in the United States has revealed similar findings, suggesting that teenagers spend an average of nine hours a day engaging with entertainment media, whilst eight to 12 year olds spend an average of six hours a day (Common Sense 2015). Within this context, the term 'screenagers' has been coined to denote the intensification of young people's engagement with screen based media (Rushkoff 2006).

Although the mass media is globalised, media consumption is regarded to remain primarily rooted within national boundaries (Conboy and Steel 2015), which is

considered particularly the case as a mechanism for the ritualised formation of identity (Carey 1989). Within late modern times, the growing sense of individualism and identity is contrasted against a milieu of increased uncertainty and insecurity (Beck 1992; Giddens 1997). Indeed, contemporary society is considered inherently individualist and insecure, characterised by the promotion of the pursuit of individual liberty at the cost of collective security (Bauman 1997, 2001; Young 1999). These inexorable features of late modern life are reflected via young people's changing methods of consumption and reproduced through their daily engagement with media and culture which embody elements of crime and transgression and blur the boundaries between fact and fiction (Hayward 2002; Ferrell *et al*. 2015).

Young Consumers

Young people were first regarded as consumers in the period following World War II when the concept of the teenager was 'invented' through market research (Osgerby 2004; Savage 2007). Market research undertaken into young people's consumer potential revealed that 'working-class' youths' spending power had doubled in real terms between 1938 and 1958 owing to their progression into 'modern jobs', leading to higher levels of disposable incomes which were primarily spent on media and leisure (Abrams 1959). According to modern market research, contemporary youth still primarily consume media and leisure but owing to a rapidly changing world the young people of today are unlike their predecessors, resulting in greater uncertainty among marketers (Livingston 2010; Wells 2011). However, it is claimed elsewhere that modern young people are in many respects similar to previous generations and still driven by the fundamental desire for 'social proof' or esteem among their peers (Benjamin *et al*. 2011). As such, it is what constitutes social proof and the ways in which young people are targeted by the market that is changing rather than young people *per se*.

Contemporary youth are increasingly viewed as savvy, sophisticated and discriminating, as opposed to vulnerable and open to manipulation, and therefore considered active agents and participants within consumer culture in contrast to

the 'passive consumers' of days gone by (Buckingham 2014). Within this context, modern marketing of products to young consumers is considered to recognise, emphasise and engage with young peoples' personal sense of agency (Arvidsson 2006). The proliferation of digital technologies such as mobile communications and social networking has shaped spaces where such marketing techniques can occur. These techniques are characteristically much more covert and pervasive than traditional marketing, appearing personalised as they ostensibly reflect individualised wants and needs (Buckingham 2014). A sense of connection through digital technologies is considered to create an impression of empowerment which can foster interaction, cooperation and active participation (Johnson 2006). Within these new digital spaces where modern marketing occurs, data mining is rife through the online tracking of cookies[15], which gives rise to the paradoxical position of these new marketing techniques 'empowering' young people through offering 'personalised' products whilst simultaneously providing a powerful method of surveillance for marketers (Buckingham 2014).

Critics have considered late modern consumer culture to overly sexualise and routinely commodify adult themes to young people (Gunter 2014; Shewmaker 2015). Indeed, cultural criminology has noted changing Anglo-American marketing practices that 'actively seek to erode traditionally demarcated adult and childhood roles, differences, and oppositions' (Hayward 2013: 525). Within this context, an 'adultification' of products aimed at young consumers is occurring whilst concurrently occurring is an 'infantilization'[16] of products aimed at adult consumers

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[15] Cookies can be used to log and track web browsing history through the sending of data from a user's computer to an Internet Service Provider, online shop, 'third-party' advertising network, and a whole range of other online organisations such as media providers. This data can then be used in a variety of ways. The sale and usage of the data to advertise products 'personalised' to a person's browsing history is a very common online practice (Potter 2016).

[16] For example, recent major advertising campaigns have used childhood nostalgia and child centred themes to promote their products to adults in the forms of; cartoons (Redbull, Lloyds/TSB), Lego bricks (Santander), teddy bears and nursery rhymes (o2), kites, crayons and ribbons (Orange – 'Good things should never end campaign'), skateboards and water balloons (Nissan), children's toys (Renault) (Hayward 2012: 217/218). A further example of this is the major advertising campaign currently being used (2016 through to 2017) by Halifax bank which uses Hanna-Barbera characters to promote its products and services.

(Hayward 2012). Late modern adulthood is considered as a prolongation of narcissistic characteristics of the infantile world whilst faux-adulthood is imposed on young people from a very early age through changing marketing practices (Hall *et al*. 2008).

Throughout this changing late modern landscape, crime is increasingly commodified and consumed by young people via a wide variety of mediums (Presdee 2000; Ferrell *et al*. 2015). With transgression frequently marketed to youth via ambiguous and contradictory means (Hayward 2002, 2004). Indeed, it has been proposed that the late modern landscape of entertainment media embodies a greater willingness from mainstream corporations to utilise allusions to transgression to portray an edgy appeal towards their products whilst still operating in the interests of conservative consumer capitalism and its control mechanisms (Muzzatti 2010). Transgression has materialised within late modernity as an attractive consumer choice for young people through the routine marketing of crime as a desirable cultural symbol (Fenwick and Hayward 2000). As such, the following section of this chapter will outline the recurring themes from the literature regarding young people's engagement with various forms of media which embody and commodify elements of crime and transgression.

<u>Young People and Video Games</u>

The video game industry is evidently big business as indicated by contemporary sales figures. The global video game market, not including hardware sales, is estimated to be $85bn, with the UK accounting for $3.5bn (UKIE 2016). Video games are a very popular medium among contemporary youth, with people under 18 estimated to make up 26% of video game players (ESA 2016). Research has revealed that the amount of time young people spend playing video games is increasing internationally (McLean and Griffiths 2013a; Harvey 2015). Studies have consistently indicated that males are more frequent players of video games than females (Anderson *et al*. 2007; Rideout *et al*. 2010; Harvey 2015), although female videogame usage is still common (McLean and Griffiths 2013b; Harvey 2015). The gendered differences concerning video game players have been primarily attributed

to socialisation factors, video games being typically designed for males, and males having superior spatial ability skills and thus being more prone to engage with video games (Griffiths 2008; Olson *et al*. 2009).

Concerns have been expressed that the negative effects of playing video games are more significant than the effects associated with film and television viewing (Anderson *et al*. 2007; Jin-Hsuan 2013). These concerns have primarily revolved around violent video games, primarily located within the 'Action' and 'Shooter' genres, which are the most popular in terms of total sales, accounting for approximately 50% of all videogames sold (ESA 2016). As a result of the widespread and increasing popularity of these genres, violent video games have become a subject of significant scrutiny and a fiercely debated topic throughout public and political discourse in recent decades, with a steady series of moral panics stemming from the perceived link between violent video games and violent behaviour among young people occurring (Springhall 1998; Ferguson 2010; Puri and Pugliese 2012; Karlsen 2015). Indeed, notwithstanding the separate debates about gun-control legislation, violent video games have been linked to school shootings in the USA (Ferguson 2008; O'Neill and Seal 2012) and acts of gun violence within Europe (Strasburger and Donnerstein 2014).

A plethora of academic research has been undertaken into the subject of violent video games, producing diverse and conflicting findings. The vast majority of the body of research on video games involves quantitative experiments on the psychological effects of video games, with a large amount of the research claiming to find correlations between violent video games and heightened levels of aggression (Anderson 2004; Gentile *et al*. 2014; Bushman and Anderson 2015; Milani *et al*. 2015). Such research generally states that prolonged exposure to violent video games increases aggressive thoughts and increases risk of violent behaviour. However, there have been numerous criticisms of the methodologies employed within studies that claim to find correlations between violent video games and aggression (Griffiths 1999; Ferguson *et al*. 2014) and accusations of confirmation bias (Ferguson 2015a). Conversely, a growing body of research has asserted that there is no significant correlation between playing violent video

games and aggression (Ferguson 2008; Cunningham *et al.* 2011; Ferguson *et al.* 2012; Puri and Pugliese 2012; Tear and Nielsen 2013; Ferguson *et al.* 2014). Moreover, an increasing number of studies have highlighted the potential positives of playing violent video games, revealing that higher levels of visuospatial cognition are associated with all genres of video games (Ferguson 2007; Ferguson 2010; Connolly *et al.* 2012; Przyblyski 2014), and furthermore, that violent video games may help young people to develop empathy and in doing so act to reduce aggressive behaviour (Puri and Pugliese 2012). Further still, a 'catharsis hypothesis' (Sherry 2007) has been postulated to suggest violent video games may provide a platform to express violence and reduce stress.

The American Psychological Association (APA) has backed research which asserts violent video games contribute to aggression (APA 2005). However, in response to this a group of 228 academics have written an open letter to the APA voicing concerns about the methodologies employed in the studies they endorse and pointing out the fact that youth violence in the US and most parts of the world is at a 40 year low (Consortium of Media Scholars 2013). Indeed, research has highlighted that young people have been increasingly playing violent video games over the past two decades and violent crime has declined or remained relatively stable throughout the majority of Western nations during this time (Griffiths and Sutton 2013; Ferguson 2015b). As such, violent video games have been linked to the crime drop widely experienced throughout the Western world over the past two decades, posited as the 'crime substitution hypothesis' (Griffiths and Sutton 2013; Griffiths and Sutton 2015). Elsewhere, research has shown that an increase in video game playing has influenced the crime drop via people spending more time in their homes and thus limiting the opportunity to potentially commit crime, theorised as the 'incapacitation effect' (Cunningham *et al.* 2011, 2016; Ward 2011).

Although specific criminological research on the subject of video games is regarded scarce (Whitson and Doyle 2008), cultural criminology has paid some consideration towards the subject. Hayward (2004) notes that whilst violence has always been a staple feature of video games, in recent years criminal activities have become an increasingly prominent central theme, citing the *Grand Theft Auto* series of games

as the classic example. Such themes are regarded to provide their primarily young audiences with access to questionable activities through vicarious forms of entertainment (Fenwick and Hayward 2000). However, research has highlighted that violent video game players understand their actions within virtual gaming environments as fantasises devoid of consequences and acknowledge the boundaries between such virtual spaces and the real world outside of them (Atkinson and Willis 2007). In this instance, violent video games act as 'cultural zones of exception' where the performing of socially extreme actions are seemingly lacking in consequence or connection to daily forms of social being and normative direction (Atkinson and Rodgers 2015).

A call to supplant the stale debates concerning the effects of violent video games with research sensitive to culturally contextual analysis is considered necessary to foster further understanding of how the reproduction of hegemonic norms and values occurs through the consumption of such games (Rodgers 2014). The need to analyse the role of culture in greater depth in research on video games is regarded necessary as the vast majority of the current research on the subject is deprived of real-world context and resultantly of limited use (Atkinson and Rodgers 2015). Indeed, such research 'has tended to bypass considerations of video games' wider cultural significance as purveyors of value systems and the social contexts in which they are shared, discussed and incorporated into many peoples' lives' (*ibid*: 12).

<u>Young People and Television</u>

Television has been a significant feature of young people's lives since its meteoric rise during the 1960s (Livingstone and Bovill 1999). Indeed, television has become regarded as a core institution which has integrated into our daily lives, with the experience of television providing emotional significance, cognitive significance, and spatial and temporal significance (Silverstone 1994). Crime has always been a staple feature of television, ranging from the apparent facts espoused from news reporting to the sensational and dramatic depictions emanating from fictional programmes (Reiner *et al*. 2000; Reiner 2007; Carrabine 2008; Greer and Reiner 2012; Jewkes 2015). Research has indicated that television news reporting on crime

has become increasingly pervasive (Surette 2014) and crime accounts for a significant proportion of fictional television programmes (Lam 2014; Colbran 2014). The crime fiction industry has become increasingly globalised (Jacobsen 2014) within which 'the televised industry of entertainment has transformed crime and prison into entertainment objects' (Mathiesen 2000: vii). As such, the widespread televised representation of crime has, whether intended or not, reached many young people.

However, recent studies have shown that television consumption is falling dramatically owing to an increased usage of online platforms such as *YouTube* and *Netflix*, and changing with online catch up services such as BBC *iPlayer* (Ofcom 2015). These trends are particularly pronounced among young people (Ofcom 2015; Palm and Pilkington 2016) with the overall time spent online among young people eclipsing the time spent viewing television in recent years (Childwise 2016). This waning television consumption among young people has recently prompted the BBC to move its channel BBC3, which is primarily aimed at the under 25 market, from television to online access only (BBC News 2015b). Although changes in the late modern digital landscape have resulted in young people spending less time watching television programmes, television consumption among young people remains significant. Indeed, it is estimated that the average five to 16 year old spends 2.1 hours watching television a day (Childwise 2016).

The widespread significance of television in young people's lives has prompted debate in social, political and academic spheres for decades, with the majority of the debate revolving around the potential negative effects of television on young people (Escobar-Chavez and Anderson 2008). The vast bulk of the research around television effects has been conducted in the United States and has tended to revolve around young people's television exposure to violence (Signorelli 2005; Hargrave and Livingston 2009). The overall consensus is that the research has produced conflicting findings (Hargrave and Livingstone 2009; Kirsch 2012) and as such, a divide between so-called media pessimists who support the notion of media violence being harmful to young people and media sceptics who claim there is a lack of reliable evidence to support this position has occurred (Browne and

Hamilton-Giachritsis 2005). There is a growing acknowledgement that some young people may be more susceptible than others to the effects of mediated representations of violence which has provided a balance between these two extremes (Roskos-Ewolsden *et al*. 2007; Hargrave and Livingstone 2009). The role biological and environmental factors may play have primarily been used to explain such individual differences (McDonald 2009; Valkenburg and Peter 2013).

Cultural criminology has endeavoured to read television representations of crime and violence in a different light to these traditional positivistic based methodologies to emphasise such approaches are insufficient for 'untangling the complex, non-linear relationships that now exist between crime and the media in our increasingly media-saturated world' (Ferrell *et al*. 2015: 183). The televised world is regarded to encompass 'media loops' (Manning 1998) within which one image becomes the content of another, resulting in the circulation of images of crime whereby the distinction of mediated images and its effects are continually challenged. Such loops have been reconceptualised as 'spirals' to denote how the mediated collective meaning of crime and deviance represented throughout television, and indeed all forms of media, is an amplifying spiral that meanders throughout media accounts and public perception (Ferrell *et al*. 2015). As such, 'the next loop of meaning never quite comes back around, instead moving on and away to new experiences and new perceptions, all the while echoing, or at other times undermining, meanings and experiences already constructed' (*ibid*: 158). The approach cultural criminology embraces in this context is to explore the fluidities of meaning that are embedded into young people's interaction with television through nuanced, insidious, ambiguous, rewarding, enjoyable, and largely imperceptible ways (Carter and Weaver 2003).

<u>Young People and Film</u>

As with television, young people are commonly associated with film. Cinema admission data has revealed young people aged 15-24 accounted for an average of 31% of total British cinema audience between 2003 and 2013 (BFI 2014). Data from the United States has revealed very similar figures with 30% of young people aged

12-24 accounting for the cinema audience in 2014 (MPAA 2015). There has been a long running debate surrounding the potential negative effects of films, particularly encompassing violence. Although violence has been a staple feature of film since the 1930s (Kuhn 1988) contemporary cinema is regarded to encompass more violence within film (Huesmann 2007; Bushman *et al.* 2013). Research has additionally demonstrated film classification systems have become progressively lenient resulting in younger people being exposed to increasing levels of violence (Nalkur *et al*. 2010; Bushman *et al*. 2013). Exposure to violent film is acknowledged to increase during late adolescence owing to lessened parental supervision and increased access (Madan *et al*. 2014). However, young adolescents are regarded to have increasing access due to digital technologies which make it easier to circumvent age restrictions when watching films in private spaces (Hargrave and Livingstone 2009).

The effects of violent films on young people have been widely debated within academic discourse with research findings producing an ambiguous picture (Strasburger *et al*. 2014). A significant body of research purports to find relationships between violent films and aggressive behaviour (Anderson *et al*. 2004; Huesmann and Taylor 2006; Fanti *et al*. 2009), although there is little evidence to prove such aggressive behaviour transfers into criminal behaviour (Dahl and DellaVigna 2009). Research has shown that individual differences in trait aggression should be further acknowledged within the debate on media violence as aggressive behaviour is likely to be strongly influenced by such differences (Alia-Klein *et al*. 2014). Rather than via the statistical methods adopted within laboratory based psychological research on the effects of media violence, cultural criminologists have called for a wider reading of the influence of films upon young people and society to include the emotive and multifaceted aspects of violence and crime that scientific study washes out (Rafter and Brown 2011). Indeed, aspects of crime, conflict, deviance, law, order and punishment have been a central feature of film since its inception and the intersections of these are regarded to need greater consideration and theorisation (Yarr 2010).

<u>Young People and Music</u>

As outlined earlier, youth culture has strongly been associated with music for decades, periodically arising as a symbol for deviant and transgressive behaviour. The late modern digital landscape has created new spaces for the widespread consumption of music via means such as the immensely popular online platforms *iTunes* and *YouTube* and in doing so forged distinct ways in which young people engage with music (Nowak 2016). As with all other forms of media discussed, a large body of the research into the medium has been concerned with the potential negative effects of music on young people and has yet again produced conflicting and ambiguous findings (Allen *et al.* 2007; Council on Communications and Media 2009; Theorell 2014). A significant portion of such research focuses on the genre of rap with studies tending to investigate the negative effects associated with listening to rap music and watching rap music videos (Conrad *et al*. 2009; Aubrey and Frisby 2011; Gourdine and Lemmons 2011; Bryant *et al*. 2013).

Within recent decades, rap has emerged as the most prominent music genre associated with and consumed by young people (Williams 2015). Rap, like many youth associated music genres before it, has been widely criticised in political circles and throughout the media for its apparent potential to corrupt young people and incite criminality (Schneider 2011). However, scholars have pointed out the fact that rap is a very diverse genre and noted the tendency for rap music to embody a variety of messages ranging from the pro-social, to the antisocial, to the extremely violent and misogynistic (Quinn 2005; Jeffries 2011). In the United Kingdom, an offshoot of rap music that emerged in the early 2000s termed 'grime' has proven very popular with young people and achieved commercial success (Independent 2015). Within cultural criminological literature mainstream grime has been noted to have discarded traditional themes of crime and violence and instead adopt more socially positive themes such as attaining educational qualifications and promoting positive employment opportunities (Ilan 2012).

Summary

This chapter has sought to outline and elucidate the recurring themes regarding young people in the media building on from the late modern context established in the previous chapter. First, the chapter critically reviewed the mediated representation of young people and the mediated representation of young people's media use by providing a historical overview and juxtaposing it with the contemporary context. This section of the chapter revealed that historical and contemporary media representations of young people share many similarities and can be read in terms of problematic and risky youth. The chapter then used this context to explore and critically review young people's engagement with late modern entertainment media that embodies and commodifies elements of crime and transgression. This section first outlined the historical and contemporary conceptions of young consumers and in doing so built a platform to investigate late modern young media consumers in further detail. The mediums of video games, television, film and music were then discussed with the literature review identifying that the vast majority of research around young people's engagement with these mediums revolves around 'effects' and is conducted outside of the discipline of criminology. Although a paucity of criminological research was indentified within these areas, it was noted in each section that cultural criminology has considered mediated engagement and questioned the value of 'effects' research. However, the literature review further revealed that vast majority of this cultural criminological literature does not focus upon young people.

Building on the late modern context outlined within the previous two chapters, the next chapter will seek to explore and critically review the literature regarding the concept of fear of crime so that a reconceptualisation can be used to undertake the empirical research for this thesis in keeping with the philosophical, conceptual, and methodological approaches employed within.

Fear of Crime, Young People, and Crime Concern

'The enumeration of fear of crime has created a concept that has become embedded in truth games and strategies of power that concern crime, its definition, its prevention and the politics, bureaucracies and instrumentalities engaged in these practices. Moreover, fear of crime has become a cultural theme, not only providing the conditions under which discussions of levels of fear of crime and the like become intelligible but also democratising the discourse and allowing the very methods of enumeration to be reproduced as part of popular culture' (Lee 2009: 41).

This chapter of the thesis will critically examine fear of crime. The chapter will start by outlining the origins of the concept fear of crime and documenting the politicisation of the concept within the United Kingdom. Definitions and explanations of fear of crime will then be addressed followed by a synopsis of the conceptual and methodological issues surrounding the notion. The chapter will then summarise the existing literature concerning young people and fear of crime. The final section of the chapter will draw together the findings unearthed throughout the literature review and offer a reworking of the concept as 'crime concern' to allow for a more nuanced, spatially attuned, and embodied approach and for wider parameters to be included within the concept in keeping with the cultural criminological approach and phenomenological attitude embraced within this thesis.

The Origins and Politicisation of Fear of Crime in the United Kingdom

Over the past five decades, the concept of 'fear of crime' has received vast attention from academics, politicians, policy makers, the media and the general public (see Katzenbach *et al*. 1967; Clemente and Kleiman 1977; Warr 1984; Ferraro 1995, 1996; Stanko 1995; Hale 1996; Ditton and Farrall 2000; Jackson 2004b; Lee 2007; Walklate and Mythen 2008; Farrall *et al*. 2009; Lorenc *et al*. 2013; Henson and Reyns 2015). The concept was coined (Ditton and Farrall 2000), or invented (Lee 2007), in the United States in 1967 as a result of a series of victimisation

surveys carried out by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. The concept was born out of a time of increasing crime rates and exasperated concerns expressed throughout public opinion polls and within political parties regarding law and order in an attempt to achieve accurate estimates concerning levels of unreported crime and to gain a more informed account of personal experiences of crime (Ferraro 1995; Lee 2007). Indeed, recorded crime rates were sharply rising during this time throughout the United States (Zimring 2006) and a series of Gallup polls conducted throughout the 1960s revealed many citizens feared becoming a victim of crime (Moore and Trojanowicz 1988).

It has been suggested however, that it would be incongruous to assume that people did not harbour concerns about crime prior to 1967 rather 'from about 1965 all the socio-political elements, paradigms of knowledge and truth, and anxieties fell into place that made fear of crime a social scientific concept and so a legitimate cultural theme' (Lee 2007: 8). Concurrent to the emergence of fear of crime as a social scientific concept was the emergence of social constructionism[17] which criminologists began to employ to analyse the processes whereby 'facts'[18] of crime and crime control are produced (Rafter 1990). As such, understandings of crime became to be increasingly understood as shaped by abstract experiences fashioned through mediated socio-political representations alongside more tangible day to day experiences (Barak 1994).

Fear of crime quickly became a staple part of administrative criminology in the United States and was promptly picked up on by right-wing politicians and positivistic criminologists in the United Kingdom during the 1970s (Lee 2007; Farrall *et al*. 2009). Although crime was also rising in the UK throughout this period (Ratcliffe 2008), critics have commented that disproportionate moral panics,

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[17] The social constructionist approach was popularised by Berger and Luckmann (1966) in their work *The Social Construction of Reality*. Their approach to viewing the social world was heavily influenced by symbolic interaction and phenomenology, particularly the work of the Chicago school and Alfred Schutz.

[18] 'Crime' is considered as both a historical and social construction without spatial or temporal consistency in its definition (Christie 1986). As such, it has been suggested 'there is no 'ontological reality' of crime' (Hulsman 1986: 66).

primarily around street crime (Hall *et al*. 1978), fuelled the rhetoric of fear and raised public awareness of issues previously not considered serious, which consequently increased populist punitivism (Rock 1990). Community crime prevention measures started to gain momentum and issues of crime and insecurity became a major vote winner for political parties (Evans 2016). As such, the 'lock it or lose it' campaign, which encouraged the use of situational crime prevention measures, emerged during this period (Crawford 1998), along with environmental modification strategies and community surveillance strategies (Hope 1995) which acted as a precursor to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme rolled out in 1982 (Gilling 1997). Indeed, the notion of fear of crime has been attributed in assisting Margaret Thatcher to a landslide victory in the 1979 elections, prior to which she emphasised the importance of citizens 'feeling safe in the streets' (Riddell 1985: 193) whilst concurrently calling for an increased spending on law and order (Downes and Morgan 2007).

The fear of crime and crime control agenda continued into the 1990s when John Major called for further expansion into law and order in 'the crusade against crime' (Dunbar and Langdon 1998) whilst notoriously urging the public to 'condemn a little more and understand a little less' (Haydon and Scraton 2000). Although crime rates began to sharply decline during the mid 1990s Tony Blair's stance, under the guise of New Labour, of 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' proved to be a major factor in his rise to power (Young and Matthews 2003). The punitive outlook towards crime control continued to increase during the late 1990s accumulating in the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*, which introduced a plethora of new laws and placed significant emphasis upon the management of crime and insecurity through the creation of multi-agency partnerships (Goldson 2000; Garland 2001). The politicisation of crime abated somewhat during the end of New Labour's time in power with the trend continuing into the 2010s with the Coalition and Conservative governments (Bateman 2012). Indeed, in recent years crime and insecurity have taken a backseat as economic issues have become the most prevalent political concern (Bateman 2015b). Such concerns are argued to have shaped a privatisation

agenda, which critics fear will have serious negative outcomes for young people (Jones 2015).

Defining Fear of Crime

Although the concept of fear of crime has been acknowledged and studied for nearly fifty years, in which time an immense body of work has been carried out on the origins, prevalence, explanations and implications of fear of crime (see Ferraro 1995; Hale 1996, Ditton and Farrall 2000; Farrall *et al*. 2009), there is no universally accepted definition. Indeed, defining the concept has become one of the most prominent and recurring topics of debate throughout the field (Henson and Reyns 2015). For some academics, the lack of a precise definition entails adverse consequences with the phrase 'fear of crime' acquiring sufficient divergent meanings in the literature to render it ineffectual and lack specificity (Warr 1984). However, for other academics, this lack of a precise definition is not considered problematic as it has been argued the definition of fear of crime is obvious and thus an over emphasis on its definition is needless (Ferraro 1995). While the definition of fear of crime varies throughout the literature there are three common key themes that reoccur; (i) fear of crime is an emotional response (ii) to a danger or threat (iii) of an actual or potential occurrence of crime (Lane *et al*. 2014).

Explaining Fear of Crime

Throughout the field of fear of crime, researchers have examined a wide range of potential factors in an endeavour to explain what influences an individuals' fear. Such factors have included exposure to crime programmes, both factual and fictional, news media, previous experience of victimisation, perceptions of local crime and community cohesion, and demographic characteristics (Hale 1996; Farrall *et al*. 2008). Early research into fear of crime tended to focus solely upon the demographics of age, race and gender whilst more contemporary research has been more likely to incorporate a variety of measures (Henson and Reyns 2015). It is worth noting here however, that although there has been a historic emphasis upon age the vast majority of research in this area has been conducted upon the

elderly and younger people's fears have been largely ignored, minimised or downplayed (Gray *et al*. 2012; Cops 2013).

Early research was inclined to hypothesise that fear of crime was merely a product of age with the elderly being the most fearful (Warr 1984). Additionally, as young males have consistently been the group most likely to be both the victims and perpetrators of crime and thus females and the elderly are less likely to directly experience crime research has postulated that a 'fear of crime paradox' exists where those least likely to experience direct victimisation are the most fearful (Ferraro 1995). More contemporary research upon older people's fears has somewhat dispelled the paradox surrounding age-based fears, suggesting that younger people may actually be more fearful of crime than older people (Jackson 2009; Brunton-Smith and Sturgis 2011). However, research in this area is lacking and markedly requires more academic attention (Goodey 1994).

However, the fear of crime paradox surrounding women's fears appears to largely remain the case, with both historic and contemporary research demonstrating that females consistently report higher levels of fear than males (Katzenbach *et al*. 1967; Clemente and Kleiman 1977; Ferraro 1996; Reid and Konrad 2004; Haynes and Rader 2015). The gender fear paradox has been criticised for implying female fear is irrational and suggesting that women are inherently fearful of crime (Gilchrist *et al*. 1998; Rader 2005; Wilcox *et al*. 2006). Feminist criminology has sought to move beyond the paradox by arguing that fear functions as a social control agent as women are constantly exposed to messages concerning victimisation (Madriz 1997; Stanko 2001). Indeed, research has highlighted the importance that cultural representations, situated narratives and varying levels of symbolic meanings may contribute towards shaping the dynamics of female fear (Lupton and Tulloch 1999).

A common theoretical approach to addressing the gender fear paradox and explaining women's heightened fear of crime is the shadow of sexual assault hypothesis (Ferraro 1996), which asserts that women's fear of being sexually assaulted or raped increases their overall fear of crime. In this respect, women may employ various methods of 'safe keeping' which are situated in time and space and

may be experienced differently through variations in race and class (Stanko 1997; Fanghanel 2016). Numerous studies have been undertaken in the US to test and support the shadow hypothesis (Fisher and Sloan 2003; Wilcox *et al.* 2006; Lane and Fox 2013), however, UK based research on the hypothesis remains limited and is considered inconclusive (Hirtenlehner and Farrall 2014). Moreover, the vast majority of the research into the hypothesis has been conducted from adult female perspectives (Lane *et al.* 2014) and as such, research into young female fears is lacking.

Throughout the fear of crime literature, contextual-level theories have been proposed to assess the impact that environmental factors may have in facilitating fear of crime (Wilson and Kelling 1982; Maxfield 1984; Ferraro 1995; Brunton-Smith and Sturgis 2011). Literature on the contextual perspective has identified that environmental disorder is a primary pathway towards fear of crime whilst social cohesion is a primary pathway away from fear of crime (Lorenc *et al.* 2012, 2013). Environmental disorder has two dimensions; it can be physical, characterised by broken windows, derelict buildings, graffiti, dirt and litter, or social, characterised by groups of people - particularly young people, drug dealers, substance users, prostitutes or other person-based signs of disorder, while social cohesion is characterised by closely knit and integrated communities (Lorenc *et al.* 2012; Henson and Reyns 2015). Further research has indicated that such environmental disorder my act as 'warning signals' which can heighten levels of fear (Innes 2004a).

Environmental disorder is regarded to be positively associated with fear of crime as undesirable physical and social environmental characteristics symbolise that the locality is prone to crime, whereas social cohesion is regarded to be negatively associated with fear of crime as close communities are theoretically more inclined to respond to early signs of crime and disorder and thus limit its reach (Lorenc *et al.* 2012, 2013). The findings of a recent systematic review of UK based qualitative research on fear of crime and the environment supported the contextual perspective that fear of crime appears to be consistently associated with adverse physical and social environmental conditions, however, findings regarding social cohesion are regarded equivocal (Lorenc et al. 2013). The authors conclude that

fear of crime is at least a partial response to social and physical environmental factors and that such factors increase fear primarily because they symbolise high levels of socio-economic disadvantage. Again, the overwhelming majority of the research reviewed disregards the views of young people and resultantly, little is known concerning where they stand on the debate. Moreover, the authors' acknowledge the relative void of qualitative research on fear of crime, particularly in the field of criminology.

An early theoretical approach to explaining fear of crime suggested that direct personal experience of victimisation and the statistically estimated risk of victimisation would be the strongest indicators in assessing levels of fear (Clemente and Kleiman 1977). Thus the more actual victimisation experiences a community encountered the more fearful the community would be (Skogan 1987). This explanation of fear of crime is now considered reductionist as the theoretical perspective has only been partially supported via empirical data (Farrall *et al.* 2009). Indeed, such weak correlations between fear and risk gave rise to the aforementioned fear of crime paradox which suggests those individuals least likely to experience victimisation are amongst the most fearful (Ferraro 1995). It has therefore been argued that people's perceptions of their risk of becoming a victim of crime is unlikely to be based on a direct experience of crime and by contrast, fear of crime is argued as more likely the result of hearing about events via the mass media or through interpersonal communication (Jackson 2009).

Indeed, the media has been considered by numerous critics to have a significant influence on shaping attitudes towards crime and justice and is regarded as the primary outlet through which fears and risks are communicated to the general public (Altheide 2002; Furedi 2006; Lee 2007). The 'problem of youth' is regarded to unduly bear the brunt of such fears and as a result young people are commonly labelled as risky and susceptible to criminality (France 2007). It has been postulated that contemporary news reporting, particularly in the 'popular media'[19], has

[19] The popular media is used to refer to the newspapers which account for the largest percentage of readership. The *Sun* and the *Daily Mail* have consistently been the most popular newspapers over recent decades in terms of sales. Moreover, whilst overall newspaper readership is declining, the

intensified societal anxiety and uncertainty through 'stimulating unrealistic and irrational fears by exaggerating and sensationalising the risks and seriousness of crime' (Reiner *et al*. 2000: 107). Crime has been identified as the most recurrent topic throughout the media with a disproportionate focus often placed upon youth crime (Reiner 2007; Greer 2009; Jewkes 2015). However, the complexities of young offender's lives and the circumstances surrounding and giving rise to criminal behaviour are regarded a seldom part of media discourse (Greer 2009). Critics have noted that when crime is framed as a general problem that can potentially affect the lives of anyone, people are more prone to view offenders as 'others' which allows for a less nuanced and more punitive orientation and may perpetuate fear of crime (Girling *et al*. 2000).

Numerous studies have endeavoured to investigate a link between media influence and fear. In the United States, the work of Gerbner and Gross (1976) through the cultural indicators research project demonstrated that adults who watch large amounts of television have perceptions of a 'mean world' which consequently leads to an increased compliance and reliance on governmental authority. The concept of 'cultivation theory' was coined to infer that persistent exposure to television cultivates its audience's perceptions of reality. Subsequent research regarding the impact of sensationalist media representations of crime and its potential effects on its audience has arrived at similar conclusions and provided support for cultivation theory (Chiricos *et al*. 1997; Aday *et al*. 2003; Callanan and Rosenberger 2015). However, elsewhere research has questioned the validity of cultivation theory (Potter 1993; Shanahan and Morgan 1999; Dowler 2003). This research has also been conducted from adult perspectives and resultantly little is known regarding young people and cultivation theory.

Research into the sociology of deviance in the United Kingdom during the 1960s, heavily influenced by Becker's (1963) labelling theory, proposed a deviancy amplification theory whereby the mass media define a group as deviant and isolate its members resulting in increased deviancy and increased   societal reaction

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Sun and the *Daily Mail* online platforms are growing in popularity in terms of unique monthly visitors (NRS 2016).

(Wilkins 1964). These works in turn were very influential in Stanley Cohen's (1972) seminal work on moral panics. Although the notion of moral panic has not been without its critics (McRobbie 1994; Wright 2015), it has held sway within criminology, and related disciplines since, and is commonly used to provide a framework for discussing media effects on fear of crime and related notions (Springhall 1998; Jewkes 2015). Indeed, fear of crime, the problem of risky youth and moral panics are frequently conflated within late modernity (France 2007; Muncie 2015; Jewkes 2015).

Research has continued to demonstrate the influence that the media possess in socially constructing perceptions of crime and criminality. The media is regarded to provide the public with a national picture of crime whilst local perceptions of crime are deemed more tangible. Indeed, the public appear to hold more realistic perceptions concerning levels of local crime whilst holding more unrealistic attitudes towards national crime levels (Home Office 2011; Leverentz 2011; ONS 2015). Further research into the social construction of fear of crime has highlighted that people who watch nonfictional crime programmes tend to be more fearful of victimisation than those that do not (Kort-Butler and Hartshorn 2011). Moreover, whilst recorded crime rates have fallen over the past two decades, reported levels of fear of crime are regarded to have remained relatively consistent during this period (Farrall *et al*. 2009), termed within the fear of crime literature as 'the reassurance gap' (Jackson *et al*. 2009). Such divergent trends between crime rates and levels of fear of crime are argued to have significantly contributed to the emergence of 'reassurance policing' which is predicated on revitalising relationships between communities and policing (Innes 2004b). The basis for these divergent trends which gave rise to the reassurance gap are argued to be primarily rooted in media representations which have created an unrealistic public perception of the relative risk of victimisation (Callanan 2005; Lane *et al*. 2014).

Issues of crime and criminality are unquestionably a staple part of the entertainment industry (Jacobsen 2014). Fictionalised accounts of crime have been considered to fashion an atmosphere of anxiety and uncertainty through which fears are shaped and vicariously experienced. 'The discourse of fear is constructed

through evocative entertainment formats promoting visual, emotional, and dramatic experiences' (Altheide 2002: 242), resulting in such fear legitimising surveillance, punishment and punitive laws (*ibid*). The media may indeed be more influential in shaping people's fears of crime and resultant lived experiences of crime than tangible events, however, it has been suggested that the relationship between media consumption is complex, multifaceted and dependent upon the operationalization of the concept of fear of crime (Heath and Gilbert 1996; Custers and Van den Bulck 2011). Furthermore, numerous studies have questioned research on media effects, considering it reductionist and inferring that fear of crime research should pay closer attention to the embedded practices of everyday lived experiences and the spatial context within which they arise (Sparks 1992; Hollway and Jefferson 1997; Pain 2000; Banks 2005).

The Consequences of Fear of Crime

A degree of fear could be deemed necessary as it is an emotional response that signals to potential victims of crime to be cautious and avoid situations that could result in victimisation (Warr 2000). However, when fears become excessive and disproportionate to actual risk they may manifest into unconstructive forms which have the potential to negatively impact upon health and wellbeing (Lorenc *et al*. 2012). Indeed, research has demonstrated that negative environmental characteristics, both physical and social, are likely to adversely influence wellbeing, particularly through restricting activities (Lorenc *et al*. 2013). Connected to this, research within the field has highlighted that a common consequence of fear of crime is a constraint on an individuals' behaviour (Renfigo and Bolton 2012; Rader and Haynes 2014). Constrained behaviours are regarded to take two forms; avoidance behaviours and protective behaviours. Avoidance behaviours result in changes to an individuals' routine, customs and habits, such as avoiding certain locations, situations and people, whereas protective behaviours result in a desire to avoid victimisation through enhancing perceived protection via extra security measures, such as alarms and locks, carrying weapons or learning self defence (Henson and Reyns 2015). Furthermore, it has been posited that constrained behaviours, as a result of fear of crime, may have reciprocal effects in which fear

provokes constrained behaviour and such behaviour elicits further fear (Liska *et al*. 1988).

Exposure to the very products and systems that are intended to secure us and reduce our fears may indeed amplify fears or construct fears that were not previously present. As outlined in the literature; 'community can be artificially produced, moulded and delineated...Yet, with each security purchase, with each new safety device aimed at managing our fear, at securing our security, our anxieties seem to increase' (Lee 2007: 167). Such an amplification of fear and insecurity is evident in the work of Bauman (2001) who has argued that the uncertainties fashioned through globalisation have led to an increasingly diffuse notion of society which has created a sense of insecurity and resultantly increased the need for community. However, we search for individual solutions to shared troubles which 'is unlikely to bring the results we are after, since it leaves the roots of insecurity intact; moreover it is precisely this falling back on our individual wits and resources that injects the world with the insecurity we wish to escape' (*ibid*: 144). Such globalised insecurity fashioned through late modern globalisation is regarded to have created a crime control industry with boundless potential for growth through the relentless reproduction of insecurities and fears that overlap and interact throughout global and local processes (Christie 1993).

Further still, a disproportionate and unjust focus of fears on young people can serve to stigmatise and marginalise, resulting in mistrust (Kelly 2003) and result in increasingly difficult transitions becoming more problematic and challenging (Binken and Blokland 2012). Indeed, the problem of youth may have wider problems for society through institutionalised intolerance perpetuating notions of insecurity and risk which become embedded into everyday life (Garland 2001; Simon 2007).

Young People's Fear of Crime

Although an enormous amount of attention has been placed on the concept fear of crime throughout the field of criminology the vast majority of existing research has been conducted upon adult's perspectives (see Hale 1996; Farrall *et al*. 2009;

Henson and Reyns 2015). As such, relatively little attention has been placed on young people's perspectives and research around young people's fears remains scarce (see Deakin 2006; Trickett 2009; Gray *et al*. 2012; Cops 2013). This gap in the literature is particularly surprising given that it was acknowledged over two decades ago that due to young people's vulnerability to crime 'childhood would seem like an obvious starting point for a comprehensive insight into fear of crime' (Goodey 1994: 198). It has been suggested that the limited insight into young people's fears is remarkable given their extensive political and media focus in the UK (Trickett 2011) and owing to young people's frequent occupation of public spaces, which is regarded especially true for young males (Gray *et al*. 2012).

The limited attention paid towards young people's fear of crime within criminology has highlighted that fears surrounding becoming the victim of a violent crime are commonly held (Green *et al*. 2000). Further research around young people's fears, conducted in the North East of England through the lens of social disintegration theory, has revealed that young people fear violent crime (Cockburn 2008). Moreover, research has revealed that young people tend to worry about personal crime more frequently than older people (Jackson 2009). Research has also highlighted that fear of violent victimisation has adverse effects on educational attainment (Barrett *et al*. 2012). Research has additionally shown that neighbourhoods with younger populations tend to be more fearful of crime, suggesting that environmental structural features, visual signs of disorder, and recorded crime rates all have direct and independent effects on young people's fear of crime (Brunton-Smith and Sturgis 2011). Further research into young people's fears has indicated a lower fear of crime is related to more frequent occupation of public space (Cops 2013).

Studies into masculine fears and violence have revealed that young males may mask their fears and anxieties and that such fears and anxieties are ultimately the driving force behind their potential tendency towards violence (Trickett 2009, 2011). Research has demonstrated that gendered differences exist within young people's fear of crime, with females reporting higher levels of fear, which is regarded primarily due to socialisation processes (De Groof 2008). Additional

studies on gender socialisation have indicated that young females are socialised into being fearful whilst young males are socialised into being fearless (Cops 2010; Goodey 1994, 1996, 1997). Further research on gendered fears has found similar findings, suggesting that fear is associated with feminine emotion and 'doing gender', although the authors conclude by saying the relationship is ambiguous and additional research in this area is needed (Cops and Pleysier 2011). Moreover, research into young people's fears of sexual victimisation has shown that females are more likely to fear sexual victimisation, particularly if they perceive their locality to exhibit signs of incivility (May 2001).

Such existing research is primarily rooted in the criminological tradition of a quantitative methodology underpinned by a positivistic epistemology. Outside of the discipline of criminology, the fields of social and cultural geography have paid some attention to young people's fears through the application of alternative approaches, compared to traditional criminological methods. Research within these fields tends to focus upon the influence of spatial context by exploring fear via young people's lived experiences of locality through qualitative methods in an attempt to bring the dimensions of place, social relations and social exclusion together (Pain 2000). Such studies have revealed that young people's fears are common and shaped through both their localised environment and by wider external forces (Pain 2006; Pain *et al*. 2010) and that young males do not necessarily face their fears with bravado (Shirlow and Pain 2003). Moreover, a study conducted in the North East of England revealed that fears are common among working class white youth (Alexander and Pain 2012). Research within this field has highlighted how young people's awareness of their locality can illuminate a broader understanding of crime and yield rich empirical data (Nayak 2003; Alexander 2008). As such, more nuanced and spatially attuned approaches to understanding the complexities of young peoples' lived experiences of insecurity and fear are considered necessary to provide new knowledge and insights (Shirlow and Pain 2003; Nayak and Keyhily 2013).

Further research conducted in the North East of England has highlighted how young people's experiences of place and space can be influential in shaping their fears of

crime, and related notions. *The Teesside Studies of Youth Transitions and Social Exclusion* (MacDonald *et al*. 2005; Shildrick 2006; Shildrick and MacDonald 2007), which broadly explore how 'leisure careers' can impact on the social networks and potential criminality of socially excluded youth, have revealed that young people's occupation of public space is often operated within territorial boundaries and familiar neighbourhood spaces which may strengthen senses of localised safety and weaken notions of security in less familiar territories and localities. Moreover, recent research has highlighted that precarious work and underemployment in socially disadvantaged localities in the North East of England has significant implications for young people's localised sense of security and social mobility (MacDonald 2013; King 2015).

Over the past decade, criminology is regarded to have 'witnessed a more sustained and critical analysis of 'space'' with a number of interrelated approaches emerging which have been broadly concerned with 'specificity, granularity, and detail' (Hayward 2016: 208). Although none of these approaches have been directly developed regarding young people's occupation of public space, they collectively point towards the need for a more politically nuanced spatial criminology which acknowledges that privacy in public space is potentially more problematic (i.e. occupying spaces where insecurity, surveillance, and voyeurism are common) than access to public space for marginalised groups. Indeed, in a late modern world 'the tension between publicity and privacy is growing ever more intense as surveillant assemblages become increasingly sophisticated and pervasive' (*ibid:* 213), which could be argued as more pronounced and harmful to disadvantaged and disaffected youth. Such an argument would thus point towards the need for a more youth-centred, late modern spatial criminology which would explore the attendant fears and anxieties connected to young people's occupation of place and space.

Conceptual and Methodological Issues Surrounding the Fear of Crime

Throughout the fear of crime literature the concept has received numerous criticisms which regard it as convoluted, complex and confusing, and despite an enormous body of research, primarily focusing on adult fears, and spanning across

several decades, little is considered to be conclusively known about it (Ditton and Farrall 2000; Vanderveen 2008). The traditional survey methods used to conduct the vast majority of fear of crime research have been questioned concerning their validity and reliability as an absolute measure of fear of crime (Farrall *et al*. 1997). Indeed, critics have argued that 'we must abandon positivistic notions that fear of crime is a stable object of knowledge that can be attributed specific causality' (Lee 2007: 204). The use of questionnaires employed in the study of fear crime has been considered too blunt an instrument to effectively explore the nuanced perceptions and experiences of crime and disorder (Girling *et al*. 2000; Farrall *et al*. 2009). As such, studies have posited that traditional survey methods may act to exaggerate and misrepresent the incidence of fear through limitations in theory and methods that do not significantly capture the conceptual richness of the phenomenon (Jackson 2004a).

Moreover, the term fear of crime has been criticised for not accurately encapsulating the broad range of emotions and issues related to crime. 'Anger' about crime has been suggested to be a more accurate term in some instances (Ditton and Farrall 1999). Furthermore, 'worry' about crime has also been postulated as a more precise terminology (Farrall *et al*. 2008). Fear of crime is regarded to involve 'experience'; everyday worries about personal risk, and 'expression'; general attitudes towards social change, stability, order and cohesion (Farrall *et al*. 2009). As such, research into the wider parameters of fear of crime has demonstrated that the concept can be interpreted as a sponge which absorbs wider insecurities and anxieties at local, national and international levels. In this sense fear of crime is regarded as 'a metaphor for social problems in the local community and wider society' (Jackson 2004b: 963). Subsequent arguments have stressed the need to integrate more generalised attitudes towards societal concerns in the study of fear of crime (Jackson 2006). Further still, fear of crime is considered to condense other, less tangible feelings of social unease resulting from fundamental macro-sociological changes (Cops 2010). Such feelings have been suggested to represent an expression of a deeper, diffuse anxiety inherent in contemporary late modern societies (Hirtenlehner 2008; Britto 2013). These

thoughts could be considered comparable with Bauman (2002) who has suggested that contemporary social life is perforated with complicated and omnipresent messages concerning risk and safety, leading to an apprehensive society and the creation of an 'ambient experience of generalized insecurity' (*ibid:* 55).

Fear of crime has thus become to be regarded as an 'umbrella term' which actually embraces varying attitudes about crime and society; ''fear of crime' exceeds fear and exceeds crime likewise' (Vanderveen 2008: 47). Such developments of the concept have been argued to have prompted a 'paradigm shift' (Cops 2010) within the field that recognises the complex and changing nature of the concept whilst attempting to develop new knowledge through the use of revised methods. Such a paradigm shift should evidently feature young people in the endeavour to develop new knowledge through more nuanced methodological approaches (Cops 2013).

Although it was acknowledged decades ago that too much emphasis is placed on quantitative, questionnaire-based statistical inquiries within the field and that the knowledge acquired through statistical inquiries would be 'enriched rather than impoverished by the deeper insights from alternative approaches' (Hale 1996: 132), empirical investigations employing qualitative methods have been scarcely used since. The findings of a recent systematic review on the use of qualitative methods in fear of crime research have revealed that qualitative methods are indeed uncommon within the discipline of criminology but stress that 'the contribution of new knowledge obtained by using qualitative methods in research on fear of crime could be to give a whole new configuration to this field of study' (Paris *et al*. 2011: 295). The review suggests that research into fear of crime is contradictory when compared to other fields within criminology where an increased usage of qualitative methods can be observed. The authors conclude that for fear of crime research to offer new and insightful knowledge, it is essential to encourage the development of qualitative methods based on sound epistemological approaches. The authors of a UK based systematic review on the use of qualitative methods in the investigation of fear of crime arrived at similar conclusions, suggesting that; 'qualitative research may be of value in understanding the place of fear in individuals' lives, and the determinants which shape it' (Lorenc *et al*. 2013).

Studies employing qualitative methods are indeed much less common than quantitative methods within the discipline of criminology. Research has revealed that during 2000-2005 89% of studies in top tier and 85% in non top tier criminology journals used quantitative methods (Tewksbury *et al*. 2005). Moreover, a further study on the prevalence of quantitative methods published in top tier criminology and criminal justice journals revealed that during 2004-2008, less than 6% percent of the articles published in American journals and less than 27% in international journals relied on qualitative methods (Tewksbury *et al*. 2010). However, it has been argued that qualitative methods are actually superior for the study of criminology because of their unique contributions and their depth of understanding which are more finely attuned to the emotional aspects of crime (Tewksbury 2009). Indeed, qualitative methods are regarded to have the advantage of allowing the nuanced mechanics of fear to be explored through participants lived experiences to facilitate 'the exploration of fear of crime as multifaceted and dynamic; an emotion which is situated in the local details of individuals' circumstances and life courses...and sensitive to spatial, temporal and social contexts' (Koskela and Pain 2000: 271). In this context, they may be particularly suitable for exploring the paucity of research around young people's fears, and related notions, to explore the wide variety of meanings that young people ascribe to issues of crime.

Young People and Crime Concern

The 'bogus of positivism' (Young 2004), which the majority of fear of crime research appears guilty of, is argued as all the more apparent in a late modern world, where lifeless statistical insights fail to uncover the phenomenology of crime and the complex and rapidly changing socio-political world. Indeed, the fear of crime literature has highlighted that the concept has been extensively researched within criminology and tends to be methodologically investigated via traditional positivistic means with the majority of the more phenomenological research being undertaken within the disciplines of social and cultural geography.

Although a wealth of academic knowledge has been fashioned through numerous studies, the overall concept is considered ambiguous and has become increasingly accepted to symbolise an umbrella term which evokes a variety of emotional responses to a broad range of interrelated social concerns. The 'paradigm shift' (Cops 2010) which has occurred in the field through the widening of the concept and an increased focus on the potential benefits of qualitative methods has shed light on the methodological limitations of the commonly accepted methods and called for a greater focus on people's wider attitudes and perceptions to be integrated into the study of fear of crime. Given the intense academic scrutiny on the concept it is remarkable that such a limited focus has been placed on young people and fear of crime (Goodey 1996), especially considering that young people are the group most vulnerable to crime, susceptible to media demonisation, and that youth is a recurring topic of interest in other fields within the discipline, throughout political discourse and throughout the media.

Owing to the theoretical and methodological transformations within the field, these factors point towards the need for alternative approaches to be applied to the investigation of fear of crime which acknowledge the limitations of the concept and allow for people's wider perceptions and attitudes to be incorporated. The research undertaken for this PhD, and its subsequent analysis, will therefore disband the use of the term fear of crime and instead employ the broader notion of *crime concern* to reflect a wider reading of crime related issues. In particular, the research aims to explore the hidden, minimised and seemingly ignored voices of young people within the wider parameters of crime concern.

The notion of crime concern will thus not merely focus upon young people's concerns about becoming a victim of crime but instead incorporate their feelings, attitudes and perceptions towards the wider criminal justice system and the mediated representation of crime to create a holistic picture of how overlapping spheres of late modernity interact to underpin and inform such concerns.

Summary

This chapter has sought to chart how the concept of fear of crime grew out of late modern processes in order to establish the contemporary context of the concept. Once this context was established a critical review of the recurring conceptual and methodological issues surrounding the concept and an outline of the paucity of research conducted into the concept from young people's perspectives followed.

The review highlighted that fear of crime research is an extensive area within criminology and that the vast bulk of research has been investigated through positivistic methods which pay little attention to context. However, a body of research within the fields of social and cultural geography was identified which emphasise the importance of spatial context. Moreover, the review highlighted that the effects of media on fear of crime is a contested subject with the research suggesting it may play a role alongside other factors. Furthermore, the review identified that a growing body of research within criminology acknowledges the need for a different approach to the study of fear of crime, and related notions, and a widening of the concept to explore the associated nuances. Along with these findings, the literature review identified that young people's voices are sorely missing from the debate and further insights from their perspectives would add new understandings and increased knowledge to the field.

The literature review has thus allowed for a reconceptualisation of the concept to be shaped and used as a basis to undertake empirical research, in keeping with the phenomenological attitude and cultural criminological approach employed within this thesis. The reconceptualisation has been termed *crime concern* to allow for a more nuanced approach and a wider reading which encompasses concerns ranging from crime prevalence, to its representation, through to its management. This reconceptualisation has been designed to explore how the various spheres connected to crime may overlap and interact throughout late modernity.

The next chapter will outline the methodology employed throughout the field research to explore young people's crime concerns and their opinions on the cultural representation of crime. The chapter will then outline the reflections that

arose from the research process. This will subsequently provide a foundation to present the findings unearthed throughout the empirical research.

PART III

Methodology

'Method meets art at the intersection of social and political progress, the emergence of alternative theoretical and epistemological groundings, overarching social-justice orientated research initiatives, and the academic shift towards the transdisciplinarity. The merging of the world of science with the world of art has caused a renegotiation of the scientific standards that traditionally guided social research practice while also highlighting the points of convergence between these two falsely polarized worlds' (Leavy 2015: 290).

This chapter of the thesis will document the methodology that I employed to undertake the field research for the completion of this PhD. The chapter will begin by outlining the methodological framework, the research questions and the scope of the research. The next section of the chapter will document the field research sites, access to the sites, the sampling strategies used to recruit the research participants and the demographics of the research participants. The following sections will outline the methods utilised to conduct the research and the data analysis techniques that were employed during the research process and after the completion of the field research. The penultimate section of the chapter will document the ethical considerations that were addressed prior to and throughout the research process. The final section of the chapter will outline the methodological reflections that arose from the field research.

Methodological Framework

The methods chosen to undertake the field research for this PhD were underpinned by a cultural criminological approach employing a phenomenological attitude. Cultural criminology and phenomenology can be considered inherently compatible and to share significant similarities concerning their approaches to subjectivity, experience, interpretation and meaning[20]. A cultural criminological approach

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[20] Cultural criminology employs phenomenology in a generalised manner as a means to evoke the dynamic nature of experience generally and the experiential dynamic that underpins crime and transgression more specifically, as opposed to being employed in a formal methodological sense (Hayward 2004). These are the themes of the philosophy I intend to capture within my overall approach.

emphasises the necessity to place crime in the context of culture via focusing on 'situational, subcultural, and mediated constructions of meaning around issues of crime and crime control' (Ferrell 2013: 257). Such a methodological approach examines how crime is constructed, experienced, made and understood (O'Neill and Seal 2012). The perspective is inherently qualitative, endeavouring to move away from positivistic notions of absolute truths and scientific validity and instead move towards interpretive analysis which focuses on the meanings generated by human actors (Young and Brotherton 2014). An intereipretive phenomenological attitude strives to explore the embodied, experiential meanings situated within the context of lived experiences (Laverty 2003; Freistadt 2011). Indeed, employing such a phenomenological approach 'calls attention to subjectivity, or the lived-experience of the 'lifeworld' in first-person terms' (Mackenzie 2009: 204) and is regarded particularly appropriate in exploring participants' subjective experiences and the meanings they convey regarding issues of crime (Miner-Romanoff 2012).

Such an approach was deemed finely attuned to explore both the participants' virtually lived experiences of crime fashioned through mediated representations of crime and their more tangible actually lived experiences shaped through day-to-day life situated within localised spaces. The intertwining of these experiences and the meanings and understandings encompassed within them could thus be explored to illuminate the participants' overall lived experience of crime.

Scope of the Research

The literature that underpinned the rationale for the field research was accumulated from Western sources, primarily the United Kingdom and the United States. The field research was designed via a qualitative methodology and conducted in the North East of England. In keeping with the framework adopted, the nature of the research infers that it may not be representative of, or generalisable to, young people *per se*, rather it is anticipated that such an approach will unearth nuanced insights into young people's lived experiences of the cultural representations of crime and their lived experience of crime concern which are

situated in time and space. Such insights may then be used as a basis to build theory and propose future research directions.

Research Sites

The research was undertaken with young people from three locations in the North East of England across three research sites. All of the locations are in areas that are historically working class and are regarded as socially deprived (Home Office 2015a). For the interests of confidentiality the research sites will be referred to as 'B Town', 'C Town' and 'D Town'.

The B Town research site was in a local Academy and the research was undertaken with drama and performing arts students aged 14-17. The C Town and D Town participants were made up of young people aged 13-17 who attended a youth based Community Interest Company. The C Town research site was at the company's head quarters in C Town and the D Town research site was at the local town hall.

The field research was undertaken with rigorous ethics after my research project had been approved by the Durham University ethical committee. The ethical considerations of the study are outlined in further detail below.

Sampling and Access

The research employed a mixture of purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling is an approach which seeks to select a sample that illustrates characteristics the research is interested in and is achieved through thinking critically about the parameters of the population that is being investigated (Silverman 2013). Convenience sampling is used to select a sample because of its expediency and geographical accessibility (Miles *et al*. 2014). A purposive sampling approach was initially utilised and identified that young people from socially deprived areas were more pertinent to the debate than young people from more affluent backgrounds as they are regarded to be at higher risk of becoming both an offender and a victim of crime (Farrington 1996; Case and Haines 2009) and as such, are more likely to have had more actually lived experiences of crime.

Moreover, drama and performing arts students were selected because the methodological approach endeavoured to employ visual and arts-based performative methods and it was considered that these young people would be likely to engage with and embrace the methods adopted. Convenience sampling was then employed through the use of existing and local contacts who could grant me access to groups of young people who matched these characteristics.

Access to the B Town sample was granted via a contact who I previously knew through a family member. Access to the samples from the Community Interest Company, the participants from D Town and C Town, were negotiated via gatekeepers that I was put in touch with through a contact at The University of Durham.

Research Participants and Duration of Research

The total number of research participants was 57 young people aged 13-17. 28 of the participants were young women and 29 were young men. All of the young women were White British, 26 of the young men were White British, two were Asian and one was mixed race African-Caribbean/White. 34 young people from B Town took part in the research over 10 sessions. The sessions were undertaken during their Drama and Performing Arts classes and lasted approximately an hour each (which corresponded to lesson length). The majority of B Town participants' participated in multiple sessions[21]. The participants were made up of students in years 10, 11, 12 and 13 who were part of the Drama and/or Performing Arts classes, some of whom were in both the Drama and Performing Arts classes. 15 young people from C Town participated in the research, spread over two sessions, six participants in the first and nine in the second, each lasting approximately 90 minutes. Eight young people from D Town participated in the research during one session, also lasting approximately 90 minutes.

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[21] Not all of the B Town participants played a role in a performance. A number of participants were only present in sessions where the draw and write and/or focus group methods were undertaken. Approximately half of the B Town participants featured in the performances. A number of B Town participants featured in multiple performances.

In total, 13 research sessions were undertaken and approximately 15 hours worth of research data was collected. All of the sessions were digitally recorded using a Dictaphone and were subsequently transcribed and analysed. There were a total of 11 drama performances performed by the B Town participants lasting between 30 seconds and three minutes and made up of groups of between two and six participants. Eight of the performances were recorded with both a Dictaphone and a video camera whilst three performances were recorded with just a Dictaphone. The three performances that were recorded with just a Dictaphone took place during a session when a video camera was unfortunately not available to be used. The performances were subsequently transcribed and analysed.

Research Questions

The research questions underpinning the methodology are:

1)   What are young people's crime concerns?

2)   What are young people's opinions on the cultural representation of crime?

Methods

Qualitative Methods

A qualitative methodology was employed which adopted focus groups and visual methods; draw and write methods and arts-based performative methods. These methods were purposively chosen in keeping with the cultural criminological approach and phenomenological attitude embraced within this thesis.

The research sessions conducted with the participants from C Town and D Town took the form of focus groups. The research sessions conducted with the participants from B Town took the form of focus groups, visual methods and arts-based performative methods. The use of more than one method within social research is termed 'mixed methods' and is most commonly used to refer to research that embodies both qualitative and quantitative elements but can be

additionally used to describe research that involves more than one qualitative method (Silverman 2013). Mixed methods research is regarded particularly useful when a researcher wishes to investigate complex social situations (Koro-Ljungberg *et al*. 2012) and for 'identifying and communicating the breadth and depth of information' (Mayoh *et al*. 2012: 22).

Qualitative research refers to the definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, concepts, meanings and descriptions of things (Berg and Lune 2012). The purpose of qualitative research is to explore and understand specific social situations, events and interactions and is regarded as primarily an investigative process in which the researcher attempts to make sense of social phenomenon (Creswell 2013). The strengths of qualitative research are considered to derive from its inductive approach, its focus on specific groups, people or situations, and its emphasis on words as opposed to numbers (Miles *et al*. 2014). Researchers employing a qualitative methodology typically study a small number of individuals, or situations, and strive to preserve the individuality of these in their analyses, rather than gathering and aggregating data from large samples (Maxwell 2013). A qualitative methodology employing an interpretive phenomenological attitude seeks to describe the lived experiences, or 'lifeworlds' (Husserl 1970), for a small sample of individuals concerning a concept or phenomenon (Creswell 2013). Once these experiences are described, subsequent interpretive analysis and theorisation is then sought to explain the meanings attributed to such experiences.

<u>Focus Group Methods</u>

A focus group can be defined as a discussion upon a particular topic or a series of interrelated topics with a group of people who share similar characteristics or experiences (Silverman 2013). The origins of focus groups lie within the interview method which was developed in the 1930s by sociologists who were dissatisfied with the traditional survey instruments that were pervasive at the time (Bachman and Schutt 2014). The defining characteristic of the method is the interaction between group members; this interaction differentiates the method from a group interview where the primary interaction is between the researcher and the

participants (Maxwell 2013). Focus groups can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured and the design of the focus group is typically guided by the purpose of the research. Unstructured focus groups tend to be employed within exploratory research to gain an understanding into a topic or generate questions whereas more structured focus group designs are employed to guide discussion (Maxfield and Babbie 2015). Focus groups should not, however, be considered merely a group discussion as the primary purpose of the method is to explore participants' thoughts and ideas (Ellis *et al*. 2010). The size of a focus group is generally accepted to be between six and 12 participants. If the size is any smaller there may be a lack of group atmosphere and participants may feel too visible to make contributions, conversely participants may 'get lost' in larger groups and have limited opportunities to join in with the discussion (Finch and Fafinski 2012: 328). A typical focus group session is regarded to last about 90 minutes (Ellis *et al*. 2010).

Although focus groups are commonly associated with marketing they are frequently used to explore a broad range of topics within the discipline of criminology (Dantzker and Hunter 2012). As with all research methods there are a number of advantages and disadvantages associated with the use of focus groups. Flexibility, limited expenses and stimulation are regarded as some of the advantages of the method, whereas dominant responder and group culture are regarded as some of the disadvantages (Creswell 2013; Maxfield and Babbie 2015). Focus groups are considered particularly useful for exploring research participants' attitudes and perceptions (Finch and Fafinski 2012), and are regarded especially effective in research on young people and vulnerable groups (Vander Laenen 2015). Moreover, focus groups have the dual advantages of enabling the collection of data from a group of participants in a short space of time and of having participants hear and respond to the comments of other participants (Silverman 2013). Furthermore, focus groups may help to neutralise the power differences between the participants and the researcher via counterbalancing the direct impact of the researcher on the discussion (Madriz 2003). Further still, focus groups may allow access to research participants who find one-to-one interaction intimidating or

frightening, such participants are likely to be more willing to discuss sensitive topics with peers than researchers (Large and Beheshti 2001; Madriz 2003).

Focus group methods were employed across all three research sites during the field research undertaken for this PhD to explore issues surrounding the cultural representation of crime and to explore the participants' crime concerns. The focus group design for each session was semi-structured in an endeavour to explore hidden meanings and discover unanticipated findings whilst allowing the researcher to guide discussion and keep the participants on topic where necessary (Bachman and Schutt 2014). Three focus groups were undertaken through the Community Interest Company. Two of these took place at the company's head quarters in C Town whilst the other took place at the local town hall in D town. The first C Town focus group had six participants, the second had nine participants and the D Town focus group had eight participants. All three of the sessions lasted approximately 90 minutes. Each participant received £10 to act as an incentive to take part in the research, thank them for their time and to reimburse any travel costs. The use of incentives is common practice in focus group research (Litosseliti 2003) and is considered particularly useful in recruiting children and young people to participate (Wirsing 2008).

I discussed with my gatekeeper the potential pros and cons of having the gatekeeper present during the focus groups. It was considered that the presence of the gatekeeper could potentially make the participants feel more comfortable and open with their responses or alternatively it could potentially make the participants more apprehensive and conscious of their responses. Bearing these factors in mind it was decided that the participants should vote on whether the gatekeeper would sit in. The participants voted for the gatekeeper to sit in on two focus groups, the first C Town session and the D Town session. The condition of the vote was that the gatekeeper would be present and observe the session but have no input. The data unearthed through these sessions will be presented, discussed, interpreted and analysed in later chapters.

Focus groups were employed with the B Town participants to explore issues surrounding the cultural representation of crime and to explore the participants' crime concerns. The focus groups were additionally used to underpin and inform the drama performances which were subsequently undertaken by the participants. Focus groups were undertaken in six sessions in B Town, consisting of between five and 10 participants and lasting approximately 45 minutes on average. Incentives were deemed unnecessary in these sessions as the B Town participants were already present within the field work location and thus they were not giving up their time or incurring additional travel expenses. The data unearthed though these sessions will be presented, discussed, interpreted and analysed in later chapters.

Visual Methods

Visual methods can be considered an interdisciplinary approach to social research based on a broad range of practices and theories which intend to produce innovative outcomes and contributions to knowledge and theory (Pink 2012). As such, they are not considered to encompass a common aim or heritage rather it is a shared emphasis on the visual which is their uniting factor. An array of visual methods have been developed for social research including; graphic elicitation, photo elicitation, photographic and video interviewing, ethnographic film making, participatory film making, and performative and arts-based research (Bagnoli 2012; Pink 2012; Rose 2012; Banks and Zeitlyn 2015; Foster 2016). The use of visual methods within social research can be undertaken by the researcher, the research participants or through a collaborative approach between both parties.

Visual methods can be conceptualised as communicating beyond words, or beyond text (Back 2007; Mason and Davies 2009). Knowledge cannot be completely reduced to language and the visual may, at times, communicate what words cannot say. Indeed, experiences and ideas can be expressed visually in ways which may not be achieved by using only spoken or written words (Gauntlet 2007; O'Neill 2016b). The application of visual methods endeavours to develop rich understandings of people and the social world they inhabit with an emphasis placed on individuals' lived experiences as multisensory (Taylor and Coffey 2009; Pink 2012; Foster 2016).

Moreover, visual methods are regarded to be beneficial in their potential ability to allow access to varying levels of consciousness and via communicating holistically and through metaphors (Prosser and Loxley 2008).

Although traditionally the use of verbal methods have been favoured throughout the social sciences, visual methods are gaining increasing importance in social research (Banks 2001; Knowles and Sweetman 2004; Pink 2012; Rafter 2014) and interest has expanded in undertaking qualitative research which focuses on the visual in order to explore participants' lived experiences and meaning making (Frith *et al*. 2005; O'Neill 2016b). It has been suggested that historically there were two pivotal shifts during the 20th century concerning visual methods (Pink 2012). The first took place during the 1970s and 1980s when a drive for visual methods and visual representation occurred, however during this time such approaches were greatly contested, frequently marginalised and accused of being excessively subjective. The second took place during the late 1980s and through the 1990s in line with the postmodern and reflexive turns in methodology and theory (*ibid*). Set against this milieu, the use of visual methods came to become more accepted and established, although they remained relatively uncommon. By the turn of the century, visual methods had gathered significant momentum, aided by the expansion and affordability of digital technologies and further theoretical developments towards the sensual and visual (Guillemin and Drew 2010; Rose 2012). The discipline of criminology, particularly the field of cultural criminology, has not ignored such developments (Hayward 2010; Rafter 2014; O'Neill 2016a) with proponents of visual methods asserting that 'in increasingly mediatized cultures it is essential that criminologists develop more sophisticated understandings of the power of images' (Carrabine 2014: 134).

The use of visual methods is considered particularly popular in research with children and young people (Bagnoli 2012; Stirling *et al*. 2015). This is especially true of photographic methods (Luttrell 2010; Durrant *et al*. 2011) although film and video methods are becoming more commonly employed by researchers wishing to explore topics concerning young people (Robson 2011). The relatively recent sociological interest in viewing young people as social actors has contributed to an

increased usage of visual methods in researching young people's experiences (Thomson 2008). Young people have become to be seen as 'beings' in their own right and as such are increasingly acknowledged to be competent participants who possess the capacity to make informed decisions in social research (Prout and Hallett 2003). Visual methods have been favoured by youth researchers who feel such approaches can encourage young people to participate in the research process, empower them, resonate with young people's interest in images and styles of expression, and limit the recurring issue of adult-young people power relations (Bagnoli 2012). Furthermore, visual methods are considered helpful with young people who may have difficulties expressing themselves verbally and are regarded advantageous in helping sustain interest and attention (*ibid*).

There have been a number of criticisms levelled against the use of visual methods. Caution has been advised against employing visual methods in isolation as it may remove the image from the context it was produced within (Firth *et al*. 2005).The ambiguousness of images produced via visual methods have also been questioned (Luttrell 2010), although proponents have argued this may actually be seen as a strength as it may facilitate in eliciting participants' personal responses and highlight multiple perspectives (Bagnoli 2012). Moreover, the interpretation of visual data by researchers has been identified as potentially problematic owing to the 'mimetic quality' of such data that can act as 'traps' upon which a researcher may fall into and consequently tell singular truths (Frankham and Piper 2007: 385). Indeed, critics have called for a more critical and reflexive account concerning how the research process creates positions for research subjects to participate and how the resultant data is analysed and presented (Buckingham 2009).

There are significant ethical considerations concerning visual methods, especially with research regarding young people. The use of visual methods may actually render things less visible owing to ethical issues, such as increased difficulties surrounding anonymity and confidentiality and the impact upon data quality of editing and anonymising images (Robson 2011). Such issues can be considered to highlight the paradoxical nature of giving young people autonomy within social research. The specific ethical issues relating to the visual field work undertaken for

this doctorate will be outlined later in this chapter. The paradox of the visual will be further discussed in the reflections section of this chapter.

Draw and Write

The visual methods employed in the field research for this doctorate involved graphic elicitation methods, specifically the 'draw and write' method, and arts-based methods, specifically performative drama. These methods were undertaken with the B Town participants in a local Academy. Graphic elicitation methods invite research participants to provide visual data which represents their personal beliefs, experiences and understandings of concepts (Copeland and Agosto 2012). The methods can take the form of drawings, diagrams or maps and can be created by the researcher, the participants or collaboratively, often in response to basic instructions (Prosser and Loxley 2008). They are considered a creative task which may go beyond traditional ways of answering questions and assist in encouraging reflection (Gauntlett 2007). Moreover, they are considered grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly interpretivist (Mason 1996). Such methods are regarded especially useful and particularly common in research with young people (White *et al*. 2010; Bagnoli 2012; Sorin *et al*. 2012) and are considered valuable in eliciting data relating to emotions and emotional experiences (Copeland and Agosto 2012). The use of graphic elicitation methods alongside other qualitative methods are regarded to help establish internal consistency of data which consequently lends support to reliability and validity claims whilst increasing the credibility of the interpretation of the data (*ibid*).

The 'draw and write' method was originally devised in the late 1970s to elicit data from children regarding health care (Gauntlett and Horsley 2004). Since its conception, the method has been widely employed by researchers working with children and young people to explore a broad range of social issues (Angell *et al*. 2015). The fundamental premise of the method is that research participants are given a stimulus for ideas, usually in the form of a discussion, and are then invited to draw a picture that illustrates how they perceive the issue(s) of interest (Sewell 2011). When the drawings are finished they are asked to write words alongside the

picture to describe it. The instructions given by the researcher are considered crucial in shaping the participants' understanding of the task as certain instructions could intrinsically imply an interpretation (Bagnoli 2012). The method can be employed as an ice-breaking or warm-up exercise to help build rapport and focus attention on the subject at hand (Angell *et al*. 2015) and to act as a 'scaffold' for further research (Prosser and Loxley 2008).

It has been noted that participants may portray information which reflects the dominant discourse (Backett-Milbum and McKie 1999) and be considerably affected by cultural influences (Pridmore and Bendelow 1995), however, this could actually be regarded as an advantage where the focus of a study is on social perceptions (Gauntlett 2007). There have been criticisms surrounding the method concerning the lack of transparency regarding data analysis and the linkage of data to other methods which can result in the data becoming 'fractured' (Angell *et al*. 2015). Clarity of the context through which the data was collected and an emphasis on the research participants' own interpretations is considered crucial in limiting incorrect assumptions (*ibid*).

The draw and write method was employed in the first two research sessions with the B Town participants to act as an ice-breaker and a scaffold for subsequent research methods. The use of the method followed a brief discussion instructing the participants to draw what they perceived as a typical criminal and I stressed that it should be their personal interpretation. I additionally asked the participants to write the crime(s) that the criminal had committed and their background characteristics, such as education, family and health next to the drawing. The utilisation of the method was used to illustrate the participants' interpretation of a typical criminal and to act as a warm up exercise to build rapport and underpin further research. The first session consisted of six participants, all of whom drew a picture of a criminal and wrote about the criminals' background alongside it. The second session consisted of 13 participants who undertook the exercise collaboratively in groups of four, four and five. In this session one group member was elected to draw the image and one to write their background, on a separate sheet of paper, with all group members having an input on both elements. In both

sessions the participants were asked to display and explain their pictures once they were completed. The data analysis techniques employed upon this method will be discussed later in this chapter. The ethical considerations that arose before, during and after undertaking this method will be additionally discussed later in this chapter. The findings from this method will be outlined, discussed, interpreted and analysed in later chapters. The drawings and writings that were created within these sessions are attached as an appendix to this doctorate (Appendix IV).

Arts-Based Research

Arts-Based Research (ABR) can be conceptualised as an emerging set of methods which are diverse in their application whilst united in their aims to blur the boundaries between science and art (Leavy 2015). Such methods utilise the artistic process as their primary means of inquiry, employing broad forms of art as an approach to collect data, conduct analysis and represent social research (*ibid*). ABR emerged during the late 1970s and into the 1980s in the field of education, emerging from the qualitative paradigm and influenced by the practice of creative arts therapy within the fields of psychiatry and psychology which promoted such approaches as means of expressing what cannot be conveyed through the use of conventional language (McNiff 1998; Barone and Eisner 2012). As such, ABR is defined as the 'systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expression in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies' (McNiff 1998: 29). Within the wide paradigm of ABR, two dominant approaches exist. The first is the use of one or more of the arts to study an issue for the purpose of collecting data, analysing data, presenting findings, or for a mixture of these purposes. The second approach is through investigation into the arts themselves. In some instances research may require a combination of both approaches (Greenwood 2012). At a theoretical level, the emergence of ABR methods is regarded to necessitate not only a re-evaluation of truth and knowledge, but additionally that of beauty, whilst at a methodological level, arts based practices have been developed for all phases of research (Leavy 2015).

The arts are observed to invoke multi-dimensional and multi-sensory responses from both their audiences and their makers (Eisner 1998) and as such, ABR is regarded to have 'grown out of the desire for researchers to elicit, process and share understandings and experiences that are not readily or fully accessed through more traditional fieldwork approaches' (Greenwood 2012: 2). Indeed, it has been argued that there are multiple ways of knowing and knowledge is not simply discovered, rather it is made and thus research inquiry is more complete if researchers expand the means through which they describe, investigate and interpret the world (Eisner 1998). Within ABR there are inherent ambiguities, contradictions and diverging connections which necessitate the unclear and unintended discoveries and associations to be acknowledged and situated within the processes undertaken from which they arise to highlight the 'rich and complex web of human knowing' (Greenwood 2012: 18).

Since its emergence ABR has become increasingly recognised as a useful methodological approach, whilst advances in access to and the availability of technology have allowed more forms of ABR to be undertaken (Knowles and Cole 2008). ABR methods have been employed by a broad range of researchers and professionals across diverse fields to facilitate the expression of feelings, ideas and thoughts that may be difficult to articulate in words (Greenwood 2012; Leavy 2015). Indeed, ABR is regarded particularly helpful in research which aims to explore emotive and sensitive topics and elicit and express cultural ways of knowing (Barone and Eisner 2012). Moreover, ABR aims to re-address the researcher-participant power balance and 'reduce social distance by enlisting images produced by participants themselves' (Haaken and O'Neill 2013: 84). Furthermore, it has been claimed that social scientists are actually closer allied to artists and performers than to the physical scientists with whom they are traditionally associated (Smith 2009) and thus, such methods should be natural, instinctive and commonplace within the discipline of sociology and related fields. Further still, ABR is considered particularly useful in studies with young people as it is regarded to promote engagement and empowerment (Lyon and Carabelli 2015).

Performative Methods

Performative research has its roots in the work of Austin (1962) on 'performative utterances' which refers to the performing of a certain action which is not truth-evaluable and Goffman's (1969) work on 'dramaturgy' which suggests human interaction is dependent upon its audience, place and time. These works had particular influence over qualitative research methods and theory throughout the ensuing decades and are regarded to have formed the foundations for the 'performative turn' which the social sciences experienced during the late 20th century (Butler 1997; Alexander *et al.* 2006). It has been noted that the 'messy' forms of research associated with performative methods have reshaped the debate concerning appropriate scientific discourse, the conventions of scientific writing, and indeed the meaning of research itself (Denzin and Lincoln 2012). As such; 'the "performative turn" in qualitative social research focuses on the exercise of verbal, bodily and multi-modal performances of artistic or social practices, e.g., art, drama etc. and, therefore, on the exercise of singular and temporary events' (Dirksmeier and Helbrecht 2008: 1). Proponents of performative research have proposed that a distinction should be made and emphasised between 'performance' as forms of art, ethnography and social science and the 'performative' which refers to the processes and tools from all the arts and humanities and social sciences (Roberts 2008).

Performative methods have been frequently criticised for their emergent and subjective nature (Chenail 2008; O'Donoghue 2009). The procedures and methods which emerge in and throughout the research, as opposed to being prescribed in advance, are considered nebulous, unquantifiable and untestable and as such are regarded by critics to lack creditability owing to the impossibility of exact replication and lack of correspondence in findings between studies. However, such criticisms appear to miss the point of performative methods as these issues are essentially the originating force behind such approaches to social research (Bolt 2008).

It has been argued that 'performative research' can be conceptualised as a third research paradigm within the arts, media and design, which stands separate to the traditional dualism of quantitative and qualitative research (Haseman 2006; Bolt 2008). However, within the social sciences, performative research is widely considered a qualitative approach rooted within the ABR paradigm and disseminated within qualitative-based journals (Gergen and Gergen 2010; Douglas and Careless 2013). 'Performative Social Science' has been proposed as a more accurate terminology to conceptualise performance based research within the social sciences (Jones and Leavy 2014). More specifically, within the discipline of criminology, performance based methods, such as drama, are considered 'performative criminology' (Merrill and Frigon 2015). For the sake of clarity, this doctorate views performative research as a branch of ABR, which is inherently qualitative in nature owing to its interpretive qualities, and uses performance based methods to convey research participants' thoughts, ideas, emotions and experiences. Thus the performative method of drama utilised within the field research for this doctorate will be conceptualised as 'performative drama criminology' and firmly placed within a qualitative context.

Performative Drama

During the last few decades, drama has become to be seen as a meaningful method of inquiry within qualitative social research (Barone and Eisner 2012; Leavy 2015). The medium and processes of drama are regarded as a way of knowing which highlights embodied inquiry and communication (Bresler 2011) and explores how performance produces a co-evolving interaction between participants, the environment they inhabit and the themes from which learning and knowledge emerge (Fels 2004). Performative drama is inherently phenomenological (Garner 1994), striving to embody inter-subjective, experiential meanings situated within space and time. It has been argued that aesthetics lie at the heart of artistic experience and through performative processes, aspects of qualitative research can be significantly illuminated (Bresler 2011). Performative drama is considered to fashion different types of data than traditional methods (Leavy 2015). Such data may be embodied, dialogical and illustrative and is regarded particularly helpful in

representing the narratives of identity of marginalised groups and their experiences and perceptions of social positions and power relations (Kaptani and Yuval-Davis 2008; O'Neill 2008, 2016b). Moreover, performative drama is considered as a process that utilises energy and develops meaning emotionally, socially and viscerally (Greenwood 2012). Furthermore, performative drama is considered to invite and develop the agency of its participants which enable the development of learning and knowledge discourses (Greenwood 2010), which may then be deconstructed and realigned (Gee 2012).

Drama enables its audiences to connect to participants on a visceral and human level whilst encompassing the potential to 'further develop cultural criminology into a new realm of imaginative criminology' (Merrill and Frigon 2015: 297). Proponents of performative drama methods argue that through the medium of performance, cultural criminology can be conceptualised into a new 'performative criminology' whilst allowing for the discipline to remain culturally pertinent (Frigon 2014). Culture is regarded to be put in motion via performances which have the unique quality of opening up 'spaces for critical thought, challenging categories and structures by connecting actions and events' (Frigon and Shantz 2014: 90). As such, drama is considered to create a space where new understandings and connections can be forged via the blurring of fact and fiction and in doing so fashion an environment through which 'fictional narratives might illuminate lived experiences' (Nicholson 2006: 66). Furthermore, the merging of drama and criminology has the capacity to turn audiences into participants through challenging understandings of criminals and the criminal justice system (Frigon 2014)[22].

Performative drama methods were undertaken with the B Town participants. Following on from the focus group sessions and the draw and write exercise, the participants were instructed to conceptualise, design, produce and perform a short

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[22] Frigon (2014) has conducted performance based research with prisoners. BBC News recently reported that Tim Robbins, famous for his role as a wrongly convicted prisoner in the critically acclaimed film *The Shawshank Redemption*, has been running a drama workshop *The Actor's Gang* in male prisons in California for six years which is reported to have had very positive effects. Indeed, the workshops are reported to have had significant impacts upon recidivism rates, with those who have participated in the workshops recidivism rates halving. Moreover, the workshops have had a significant impact on safety within the prisons with reports stating that for those who took part in the workshop there was nearly a 90% reduction in fighting (BBC News 2016a).

performance which reflected either their crime concerns, the cultural representation of crime or a mixture of both. I placed a clear emphasis on the performances reflecting the participants' interpretation of the research issues. The performances took place directly after the exercises and in the subsequent research sessions. My gatekeeper was present in all research sessions. My gatekeeper and I had no direct input in any of the conceptualisation, design, production or performance stages.

The participants worked collaboratively in groups ranging from two to six members. All performances took place in the drama and performing arts classroom which contained props, lighting equipment and audio equipment, with the participants utilising at least one of these in each performance. In total 11 performances were undertaken by the participants, all of which were digitally recorded using a Dictaphone while eight were additionally visually recorded with a video camera. After each performance a discussion panel took place where the participants were asked to explain the rationale and meaning of their performance to my gatekeeper, the other students present and myself. The discussion panels lasted an average of approximately 2 minutes, within which my gatekeeper and I worked in a collaborative process with the participants to explore and analyse their performances. These discussion panels were unfortunately shorter than would have been desired owing to time constraints. Approximately half of the lesson time where performances took place was spent by the participants' planning their performances and then enough time had to be allowed for each group to set up, perform and discuss before the end of the lesson.

The data analysis techniques that were used upon the data unearthed throughout the performative methods will be discussed in the following section of the chapter. The specific ethical issues that arose before, during and after the performative methods were undertaken will be discussed in the ethics section of this chapter. The reflections that arose after the performative drama methods had been undertaken will be discussed in the final section of this chapter. The findings from the performative research will be outlined and discussed in later chapters.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis has been described as a 'dance' which involves as much 'art' as science (Miller and Crabtree 1999). Indeed, it has been suggested that interpretation in qualitative data analysis 'is a complex and dynamic craft, with as much creative artistry as technical exactitude, and it requires an abundance of patient plodding, fortitude and discipline' (*ibid*: 128). Such an approach allows and encourages the notion of emergent themes to arise from the data (Creswell 2013). From an interpretive phenomenological perspective, the researcher is constructing reality with their interpretations of data presented by the subjects of the research and as such, other researchers may arrive at distinctly different conclusions (Schutt 2014). Thus the data analysis techniques employed throughout the data analysis process encompassed an emergent design with a phenomenological attitude to data analysis which were situated within my interpretations of the research participants' own personal interpretations, termed the double hermeneutic (Giddens 1987).

Such qualitative data analysis is guided by an emic focus which seeks to describe data via means that capture the essence of the research methods and the setting of the research participants on their own terms, as opposed to an etic focus on the researchers' terms, characterised by predefined measures and hypotheses (Headland *et al*. 1990). It is considered as an iterative and reflexive process that begins to identify themes as soon as data is being collected rather than after data collection has concluded (Stake 1995). As such, thematic consideration was intuitively concomitant throughout the research process and data transcription began as soon as possible after leaving the field in an endeavour to aid my emersion in the data. The three streams of data analysed throughout the research process were approached analogously via the identification and interpretation of recurring themes, concepts and narratives. This process involved identifying and describing both implicit and explicit interpretations within the data which strived to unearth tacit knowledge through a contextual understanding (Altheide and Johnson 1994). Throughout the undertaking of the visual research methods there were elements of 'collaborative analysis' (Gallagher 2008) between my gatekeeper, the

research participants and me via discussions focusing on explanations and meanings of the data created, this helped to aid my interpretation during further subsequent analysis.

It is regarded as possible and potentially desirable, for themes, concepts and narratives to overlap as they may highlight connections between data streams (Guest *et al*. 2012). The re-reading / re-watching of data and refining of thematic categories was achieved through a process of non-linear, circular analysis which involved progressive focusing (Stake 1995; Silverman 2013). Thus the data analysis undertaken employed grounded analysis (Corbin and Strauss 2015), initially involving a process of thematic analysis through open coding which coded the data into general themes. Once a series of general themes were identified it was possible to group the themes into conceptual categories through a process of axial coding (Charmaz 2014).

Further discussion regarding the data analysis process will be outlined in the reflections and realities section of this chapter.

Ethics

Research with young people on issues of crime entails a broad range of ethical considerations (Alderson and Morrow 2011; Maxfield and Babbie 2015) and as such, this section of the chapter will outline the ethical issues that I considered prior, during and after undertaking the field research for this doctorate. Before commencing the research I undertook the research ethics approval process through the Durham University School of Applied Social Sciences Ethical Committee and after a series of amendments research permission was granted. The ethical considerations outlined within this process, along with the ethical considerations set out by the ESRC (ESRC 2015), underpinned the research during and after leaving the field. In addition to these ethical considerations, I consulted youth work and educational guidelines to ensure sufficient preparation concerning the management of child / youth safeguarding issues if they were to arise. I also had supervisory support where my supervision team could be contacted at any stage of the research process to consult upon ethical issues.

In all social research, particularly research which involves young people, and sensitive issues, necessary steps must be taken to ensure that the participants fully understand the research process and its potential consequences (Morrow and Richards 1996). The notion of informed consent is considered central in research involving young people and is commonly judged according to a young person's competence (Wiles *et al*. 2007). The principle of 'Gillick competence' resulted from a 1985 ruling by the House of Lords which stated that young people under the age of 16 could access contraception without parental consent if they are considered competent enough to understand the process and its consequences (Williams 2006). This principle is commonly used to guide social research ethical issues (Wiles *et al*. 2007) and was acknowledged throughout the research process undertaken for this doctorate. Moreover, gaining informed consent was considered as a continuous process, or 'provisional' (Flewitt 2005), during the field research and was negotiated with my gatekeepers and research participants throughout.

In research involving young people under the age of 16 it is generally expected that the researcher will obtain parental/guardian consent before undertaking the research (Shaw *et al*. 2011). This is primarily due to young people's perceived vulnerability and lack of independence. In this study I felt it was desirable for the young people to provide their own consent as I considered that the research participants should be granted the right to decide for themselves whether to take part in the research. This was underpinned by the principle that if parents were to give consent on their child's behalf it would contradict the notion of a young person fully consenting to the research and could potentially give a parent / guardian the power to consent to the research against their child's wishes. Moreover, the research process in general, and my research approach in particular, is considered empowering[23] for young people and acknowledges that young people are autonomous agents and active decision makers within their own lives (Heath *et al*. 2009), thus forgoing the need for parental consent could be considered analogous with such an approach to social research. Furthermore, it was considered parental /

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[23] The employment of visual arts-based methods that utilise a verbal follow-up have been argued as empowering for young people given that 'they retain control, share their experiences, and have their feelings and perspective taken seriously (which is a form of validation)' (Leavy 2015: 242).

guardian consent may be possibly used as a means to censor or suppress potential research findings as the study was dealing with sensitive issues around topics of crime.

Owing to the considerations outlined above I considered parental / guardian consent potentially detrimental to the research process. However, I was aware that my gatekeepers were ultimately more familiar with the specific research participants' competency and the possible safeguarding and vulnerability issues that might arise, and thus would make the decision regarding parental consent. I discussed my feelings with my gatekeepers and although they were understanding and sympathetic to my case, parental consent was indeed sought for the participants aged under 16. Parental consent was sought and provided through my gatekeepers.

Once the issue of parental consent had been negotiated it was possible to design and produce information sheets and consent sheets[24] for the young people taking part in the study to read and sign. The participant information sheets were written as concisely and accessibly as possible to make clear the research process, the research rationale, the purpose of the research and to outline how the research would be used. The consent sheets were used for the participants to acknowledge these factors and opt in or out of different stages of the research. Once the participants had read the information sheets I went over any issues they had and once these were understood they were asked to sign the consent sheets. It was stressed that these sheets governed their participation in the research and that by signing them they had given their informed consent. All participants gave their informed consent, opted in to all stages of the research, and no participants exercised their right to withdraw from any parts of the research process.

The information sheets outlined issues of anonymity and confidentiality regarding the research. All research participants were granted the right to anonymity and were made aware that anything discussed within the research would remain

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[24] The information sheets and consent sheets that were used have slight variations as the research methods undertaken in B Town differed to those in C Town and D Town. These sheets can be located in Appendix I and Appendix II.

confidential within the limits stated below. The information sheets made it clear that when the research was written up the participants names would not be used to protect their identity and that the geographical locations used within the study would not be explicitly mentioned. In research with young people the researcher has a responsibility to protect people from harm (Banks 2010). This point was explained and it was stressed that the only caveat to confidentiality would be if something was disclosed which would be likely to result in serious harm to a young person or vulnerable adult. To ensure this was understood by all the participants in the study, I used an example where the right to confidentiality may be broken if a participant spoke about a serious incident involving violence which had occurred and had not been reported, or was likely to occur in the future. It was made clear that if this did happen I would have the responsibility to pass the information on to an appropriate adult. Throughout the field research there were no instances where I had to break confidentiality.

There were significant ethical considerations concerning the use of a video camera to film the performative drama undertaken by the B Town participants with issues concerning the breach of anonymity and confidentiality the most prominent among these (Thomson 2008; Robson 2011). I discussed and negotiated these concerns with my gatekeeper and it was agreed that alongside parental consent, the performances could be filmed permitting the young people gave their verbal consent and that only myself, my supervisors and my PhD examiners would be able to view the material. All research participants that were asked to be filmed gave their verbal consent. Data protection was considered pertinent in regards to video data and adhering to the *Data Protection Act 1998*, all video data, along with all visual data, verbal data and research materials used throughout the research process, were securely stored on a password protected computer and placed in a locked filing cabinet when not in use. Further considerations concerning the ethical process are discussed in the following section.

The next section of this chapter will outline my reflections after the field work had been completed.

Reflections and Realities

Introduction

Throughout my field research, I began to acknowledge that my research was 'messy' (Law 2004) and the subsequent data analysis and the writing of my findings would be challenging. The issues stemmed from my multi-nonconventional-methods approach, which although I felt were compatible and grounded in an appropriate framework, would entail much deeper consideration and substantiation than if I had employed a singular, traditional qualitative method, such as interviews. Upon completing the field research I began to realise this messiness was something to be embraced rather than feared and should ultimately be regarded as a strength. I never intended or wished for my PhD research to be ordinary or conventional. The whole point was to do something different and contribute to the growing body of cultural criminological research which acknowledges that if social researchers want to gain new insights and create new knowledge then they must do things differently. They must abandon notions of scientific objectivity, which are all too common throughout the discipline of criminology, and recognise that crime, just like life in general, is frequently unpredictable and often unquantifiable. Indeed, this is precisely the 'phenomenology of crime' and the response to the 'bogus of positivism' (Young 2004) that I wished to capture with my framework and interconnected research methods.

Of course, there are limits to my research which I accept and acknowledge. My research is contextually-bound and anchored in my own subjective interpretations, which are inexorably rooted in my own historicality. The research is ultimately a snapshot taken within a certain space and time. However, I like to consider it a high definition snapshot which portrays the nuances contained within. One which may have inherent contradictions and ambiguities represented throughout the image, nevertheless one which acknowledges the pictures we create of crime are never certain and encompass multiple interpretations.

Methodological Framework

The methodological framework that underpins my research stands as an enemy to the war on criminology. An approach that advocates a 'fruitful disorderliness' (Feyerabend 1975: 118) and intends to be deliberately polemic. I feel critical of conventional quantitative criminology and the relentless positivistic stream of impersonal statistics emanating from research which is ostensibly concerned with humanistic issues. Owing to this attitude, I strived to incorporate embodied elements within my research that would help to convey the emotion of crime which is completely removed from such lifeless numeric abstractions. Through my research methods I endeavoured to give the young people in my study a platform to portray their lived experiences of crime which could grasp the phenomenology of crime in all of its shame and glory.

Visual Methods

The visual methods I utilised within the field research, particularly the performative drama, are where the majority of the mess stemmed from. This was because they entailed seemingly considerable ethical, data analysis, data presentation, and data discussion dilemmas. Initially, the mess appeared worrying and confrontational, however, after taking a step back from the research I realised it was something to be accepted and, mostly, welcomed. In reality, research ought to reflect the messiness of the social world and the heterogeneous complexities and contradictions contained within it (Law 2004). Visual methods are pertinent to such mess because they can capture the essence of the indefinite and incoherent. These factors are reflected in my data analysis, data presentation and data discussion. The ethical dilemmas relating to the visual do however remain, which are outlined below. Moreover, the messiness of the visual can be considered to capture the sociological imagination (Mills 1959), which strives to see social reality as a broad milieu within which individuals navigate their own personal experiences and biographies. Indeed, it has been suggested that the 'sociological imagination works particularly well through visual strategies, which capture the particular, the local, the personal and the familiar while suggesting a bigger landscape beyond and

challenging us to draw connections between the two' (Knowles and Sweetman 2004: 8).

Data Analysis

Although the data analysis essentially started whilst in the field through intuitive, thematic recognition and reflection, the in-depth, detailed analysis began once I had finished collecting the data and left the field. The three streams of different types of data necessitated a non-liner analysis that sought to capture the emergent themes arising from the field research across all methods and research sites. I endeavoured to capture the internal consistencies between the data whilst noting any apparent contradictions. A foundational principle in the analysis of interpretive phenomenological data is to adopt an emergent approach which allows the analysis to follow the nature of the data itself (Smith *et al*. 2009).

As the data was messy, it followed that the analysis would be also. Through a process of reading through and viewing the data over and over, themes became exhausted and conceptual categories created. The analysis strived to phenomenologically describe whilst incorporating insightful interpretation, grounded in an acknowledgment of the inter-subjective nature of the research process. The elements of collaborative analysis that were undertaken during the research process helped to emphasise such inter-subjectivity. It is unfortunate that owing to time constraints, the collaborative analysis was not as extensive as would have been desirable. However, it still felt very valuable in highlighting the research participants' interpretations which were then used as a basis to build my own interpretations and seek connections between the data.

I considered the use of a computer-assisted data analysis programme(s), however, I was sceptical regarding how well such programmes could handle visual data and felt it could potentially result in a fracturing of the data. Moreover, I felt such an approach would distance me from the data and, in keeping with my research approach, I felt a strong reluctance to mechanicalise what I considered very humanistic data.

Prior to entering the field I considered my ethical standpoint rooted in virtue ethics which essentially regards ethics in an agent-centred approach rather than consequentialist and non-consequentialist ethical approaches which are essentially act-centred (Israel and Hay 2006). The fundamental assumption which underpins the practical application of virtue ethics 'is that morally upstanding individuals will, as a matter of course, act appropriately and in accordance with established rules and standards' (*ibid*: 17). However, I was aware that social research, especially around sensitive issues such as crime, often involves ambivalence within the ethical research process where subtleties and nuances may arise which question clear cut notions of right or wrong and good or bad (Seal 2012). Fortunately, the fieldwork was ethically uncomplicated and in no instances did I feel ambivalence and the need to question my standpoint. Although no ethical issues arose during the field I am conscious of the importance of being ethically reflexive to emphasise the importance of my cultural consciousness and ownership of perspective (Lumsden and Winter 2014) and this is what I aim to convey throughout this section which reflects upon the wider ethical process. The notion of reflexivity will be employed upon the whole research process in the final chapter of this thesis.

Before entering the field I had an up to date DBS certificate, however, neither of my gatekeepers requested to see it. I found this surprising as I was aware that this is common practice when conducting research with vulnerable groups and young people (ESRC 2015). I offered to present it to both gatekeepers during my initial meetings but they both politely told me it was not necessary and that they were exercising their judgement of character. Ultimately, the responsibility and decisions rests with the gatekeeper (*ibid*) and I welcomed their trust and show of faith.

The ethical approval process took longer than I had anticipated. I had to complete three sets of revisions over a period of roughly three months before having approval granted and being permitted to enter the field. On reflection, the process was prolonged and took a number of revisions in part down to my inexperience of conducting such a large, complicated and potentially hazardous piece of research

and thus I did not fully anticipate and appreciate the potential ethical tensions that could arise. However, in part I considered the research approval process to be convoluted and protracted. After each set of revisions, which I completed and returned within the space of a few days, I had to wait at least three weeks before receiving a response. The last set of revisions I was requested to complete I considered relatively trivial and on reflection I feel they inadvertently acted as a barrier to my research. Whilst I was securing ethical approval my gatekeeper at the Community Interest Company had been in contact with me on several occasions asking if I wanted to arrange a research session, to which I had to politely decline because I did not yet have ethical approval. After I had completed the third set of revisions, I arranged a date with my gatekeeper to undertake focus group research which I expected to be sufficiently in the future that I would have been granted ethical approval. However, unfortunately the length of time it took for the third set of revisions to be approved meant I did not have ethical clearance to collect data on that date.

As the session had been arranged, I felt a duty to my gatekeeper and the young people participating to attend the session rather than cancel it. I found it frustrating that I could not collect any data but the session was still helpful as I used it as a scoping session where I got to practice my research techniques and build an element of trust and rapport with a number of young people that I was to conduct research with later down the line once I had been granted ethical approval.

In reality, ethical issues arising from prolonged ethical processes are not uncommon and can be considered as an inexorable consequence of the risk society and the audit society that characterises late modernity (Ross *et al.* 2000; Hamm and Spaaij 2015).

The ethical paradox that I outlined earlier in this chapter concerning the use of visual data that features young people is a source of frustration and the one element of mess that I considered unwelcoming. Ethical regulations regarding the use of visual data that involves children and young people are in place for good reasons and it cannot be argued that the safeguarding of children and young people

is unnecessary. However, I feel this inescapable factor is limiting the scope of my research and is one which I must acknowledge. As I cannot exhibit the visually filmed performance data to anyone other than my PhD supervisors and PhD examiners this factor may, at times, make my research feel incomplete and a partial portrayal of the picture I have strived to represent through my methods. For instance, when I am to disseminate my research this data will not be able to be shown or made available to be seen. The data would help to further contextualise my interpretations of the research findings although unfortunately, and indeed for good reasons, this cannot be the case. Although I was aware this would almost certainly be the situation before I entered into the field I feel it is necessary to acknowledge this hindrance to the creation of a holistic picture of my research.

Me, Myself and I

In this section I will reflect upon the intersubjective[25] position of myself in relation to the research participants in order to explore the negotiated and situated nature of the field research (Finlay 2002).

Before undertaking the research, I was conscious that I may be seen as an outsider owing to the fact I was not a local. Moreover, as I was a postgraduate university student conducting research in socially deprived areas, I was conscious that I could potentially be viewed as privileged by some of the young people in my study and that such an apparent social distance may act as a barrier to connecting with them and drawing out open responses. In reality, this was not the case. I felt a very warm reception from the young people in the study and in no instances did I feel like an outsider or that I was unable to connect with them and draw out open responses.

I feel that owing to a number of factors I was able to build rapport and trust with the participants. When I was undertaking my field research, the football World Cup 2014 was just about to start, in progress, or had recently finished, and as an avid

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[25] In *Doing Qualitative Research Differently*, Hollway and Jefferson (2013: 43) utilise the concept of intersubjectivity on their research on fear of crime to 'illustrate the idea of data as a co-production' and highlight how unconscious intersubjective dynamics may influence data collection. By reflecting on the intersubjective elements of the research I intend to be reflexively aware of how the intersubjectivity between the research participants' and me may have influenced the field research.

football fan I was able to speak candidly with a large percentage of the participants about the tournament, which helped to forge a connection and reduce social distance. This felt the most pronounced with the males in the study, although it was also the case with a number of females interested in the tournament.

Another factor indentified upon reflection was that throughout the research process, cultural representations of crime in music were discussed and they primarily revolved around the genre of hip hop, of which I am an enthusiast. This factor additionally helped me to build rapport and form an association and again this was primarily true for the young males in the study but also for a number of females who were interested in this type of music. A further factor was the subject of video games, of which I am also an enthusiast, and this aided connection with a large number of the participants. Once more this was most prominent amongst the males in the study, nevertheless, a number of females were ardent video game players too.

I feel that an overarching factor concerning the building of trust and the forming of connections was my passion for the subjects we were discussing and my emphasis that the young people involved in the study were the driving force behind the research and it was fundamentally all about them. I endeavoured to make the participants feel as comfortable as possible throughout the study by minimising potential power imbalances through using accessible language and treating them as, at very least, equals. In actuality, I tried to convey an atmosphere that they were essentially more important than me. A factor which I feel helped to get this message across and add to the overarching sense of trust was my emphasis on there being no right or wrong answers. This was achieved through stressing that the study was concerned with their attitudes, opinions and experiences and that their true feelings around the matters discussed were essentially the correct responses.

On a final note, I initially wrote this chapter in the third person, in keeping with standard academic practice and with the majority of the chapters within this thesis. However, on reflection I realised the use of the first person would convey a much greater sense of reflexivity and articulate the research process more

phenomenologically, in keeping with my approach. As such, I changed the format which prompted me to include deeper reflections within this section. Indeed, it has been noted that writing as 'I' aids to force comparison between the personal and impersonal which can assist in deeper emotive, individual and subjective analysis (Davies 2012).

Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology utilised for the undertaking of the field research, in keeping with the philosophical and conceptual approach adopted within this thesis and following a reconceptualisation of fear of crime to *crime concern*. The first part of the chapter outlined the scope of the research, the research sites, the sampling procedures, access to the research sites, research participant information and the research duration. The following section discussed the methods that were used within the field research and outlined the rationale for why such methods were appropriate for this study. The next sections then discussed the data analysis techniques that were used before the ethical considerations and ethical processes connected to the study were discussed. The final section reflected on the methodological process and field research process in an endeavour to convey an atmosphere of reflexivity and an acknowledgement of intersubjectivity, in keeping with the framework utilised for this thesis.

The following chapters will discuss and interpretively analyse the findings from the field research.

PART IV

Introduction to PART IV

This part of the thesis will discuss the findings that were unearthed throughout the field research undertaken during the process of this doctorate. The findings will be juxtaposed against existing theory and research to highlight similarities and disparities and to build a basis to fashion interpretive analysis and formulate inferences. In keeping with the framework embraced within the thesis, this part will be contextualised within the parameters of late modernity and viewed through a cultural criminological lens infused with interpretive phenomenology to explore the situated and embodied meanings that intertwine with cultural understandings of crime. The discussion will be rooted in the research aims outlined within the thesis and respond to the research questions underpinning the research process.

Throughout the field research and subsequent data analysis it became apparent that the boundaries between the research questions blurred as they informed and interacted with one another. As such, the research questions will be answered during the first two chapters of this part with overlaps. The third chapter will then draw together the previous two chapters and provide an overall, integrated analysis of the main findings emerging from the research. Moreover, during the research and the subsequent analysis it became apparent that gender played a significant role in shaping crime concerns and influencing opinions on the cultural representation of crime. Thus, the gendered implications that emerged throughout the research will be explored and entwined within each chapter.

Thus, the composition of the discussion will be structured into three chapters. The first chapter *Crime Concern: Risks and Realitie*s will discuss and explore the research findings regarding the participants' crime concerns and the risks and realities entailed within. The second chapter *Media: Truth, Reality and Entertainment,* will discuss and explore the research findings relating to media engagement, mediated representations and the blurring of factional and fictional accounts of crime and how these interacted with the participants' overall lived experience of crime. These two chapters will be presented with the findings from the visual and verbal elements of the research discussed and analysed separately under the headings of

Visual Representations and *Verbal Interpretations*[26]. The third and final chapter within the discussion, *The Portrayal of Crime* will then draw the main themes that have emerged throughout the discussion to provide a holistic picture of both the visual and verbal research findings.

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[26] Dividing the research findings into the findings from the visual methods (the draw and write method and the performative drama method) and the verbal method (focus group method) felt the best approach to present the findings for the sake of clarity and structure. Although the *Visual Representations* do include verbal elements, this title was chosen to draw a distinction between the separate streams of data and because the visual aspects of these methods were the foremost elements. The last chapter of the discussion will draw the previous two chapters together holistically.

Crime Concern: Risks and Realities

Visual Representations

This section of the chapter will outline and discuss the main findings that emerged from the performative drama method undertaken in B Town.

The three main themes that were explored within the performative methods[27] depicted drugs, rape and violence and encompassed significant overlap and association between themes with portrayals of potential risks and possible realities palpably emerging across and within and expressed throughout a series of sub-themes. The potential consequences of crime were present in all performances, most commonly portrayed from a victim perspective, although at times additionally from an offender perspective, and on occasion, the nexus between the two was explored. The ambiguity of crime and the participants' sense of ontological insecurity regarding issues of crime and wider social forces was a prevalent and reoccurring theme throughout the performances. This ambiguity and sense of insecurity highlighted the 'phenomenology of crime' in its anger, desperation and humiliation juxtaposed against its attraction, excitement and pleasure (Young 2004). Such a phenomenology of crime was portrayed in situations that ranged from the routine to the rare. Indeed, the normalisation and mundane reality of certain crime types was depicted in contrast to more abstract and anomalous depictions.

The sub-themes of consequences, ambiguity and insecurity intersected and interacted throughout the performances. Gendered differences were present throughout all of the three main themes, with the performances concerning rape where the most prominent gendered implications emerged.

The consequences of crime were explicitly and implicitly explored throughout the performances and discussed during the collaborative analysis. All the performances

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[27] A detailed synopsis outlining the performances can be found in Appendix III. When referring to specific performances during the discussion, these will be referenced in line with the appendix (e.g. P1).

that focused on drugs as the central theme highlighted the desperation and despair that is associated with drug misuse and the potential negative consequences that drug misuse can result in. The consequential risks associated with drug misuse were clearly acknowledged by the young people in the study and whilst there were certainly elements of seduction[28] and glamorisation present in the performances, the potentially harmful dimensions of drug misuse were emphatically explored. The mixed messages conveyed throughout the performances regarding glamorous and unappealing aspects of drug (mis)use could be interpreted to echo the ambiguous meanings concerning drug use contained within popular culture (Boyd 2010; Manning 2014). Such mixed messages and ambiguous meanings regarding drug misuse were a recurring theme during the focus groups and will be further discussed later in this chapter.

Given that illegal drug use among young people declined dramatically during the first decade of the century and has remained relatively stable since (Aldridge *et al.* 2010; Home Office 2015b), the negative consequences associated with drug misuse depicted during the performances could be considered to potentially reflect the waning consumption among young people and a shift in young people's attitudes regarding drugs.

However, it should be noted that the use of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), or 'legal highs' are on the rise among young people in the UK (Home Office 2015c)[29]. Legal highs were not explicitly mentioned at any stage of the research (however they were obliquely and erroneously represented in one performance[30]). Research has shown that young people are generally supportive of regulated markets for NPS which would focus on reducing NPS-related harm and would not criminalise users (O'Brien *et al.* 2015). The young people in this study were widely supportive of rehabilitative help for substance users and a number were supportive of drug

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[28] Katz (1988) argues that the seduction of crime shapes the phenomenological foreground of the lived experience of crime.

[29] As of May 2016, a blanket ban came into force regarding NPS, effectively making them illegal highs (BBC 2016b).

[30] A synopsis of this performance can be found in Appendix III.

decriminalisation, such findings emerged during the focus groups and will be discussed later in the chapter.

Representation in the drug performances can be considered as more prevalent among the young men in the study. Although there was an equal number of young women and young men within the performances focusing on drugs, the only single-sex group that focused on drug use consisted of young men and the fact that the mixed groups had more young women in is likely to be the case because there were more young women participants in the performances in total. Although drug use among young women is rising (Coomber *et al*. 2013), the prevalence of young men within these performances could be seen to potentially reflect men's increased association with and consumption of drugs (Ettorre 2007; Mountain 2013; Bean 2014). Indeed, the young people in the study widely considered drug use as a predominantly male activity. Moreover, the all young men group's representation of drug use (P1) could potentially be viewed as the playing out of a gendered performance of masculinity as it also embodied elements of aggression and violence (Messerschmidt 1997).

In contrast to this, the representation of the young women was much more prevalent in the rape performances which could be interpreted to reflect women's increased association and victimisation concerning sexual offences (Stanko 1990; Walklate 2004; Davies 2011). Indeed, concern about sexual victimisation, in particular rape, was a palpable theme emerging throughout the performances. This concern may be interpreted as exclusively expressed by young women participants. Although one young man did appear in a performance that centred on rape (P5), the collaborative analysis after the performance implied that the young woman participant was the driving force behind the rationale for the performance.

Of the three performances to centre on issues of rape, two explicitly placed the setting of the rape in a private context occurring between a female victim(s)(P5; P6) and a male offender known to them. This majority reflects the reality of rape as rape within a private context by an offender known to the victim is the most

common form of rape according to police statistics and victimisation reports (Westmarland 2015).

The other performance (P4) was intentionally ambiguous and could be interpreted as a rape occurring by an offender previously known or unknown to the victim. The three performances that focused on rape as its central theme all implied potential consequences associated with being a victim which revolved around the sullied self (Stanko 1997) after experiencing rape. The sullied self was particularly present in the performance that centred on rape within a relationship by the use of the dialogue: '*I feel, I feel so violated. Like, I feel disgusting, horrible'* (YW).

Two performances incorporated elements of doubt and disbelief concerning victims of rape (P4; P6). Concerns around trust were prevalent throughout, both the trust of men and the levels of trust society places on victims. The use of the dialogue; '*is it what she wore?'* (YW) and, *'is it the way she acted?'* (YW) within the intentionally ambiguous performance highlights an embedded acknowledgement of expected codes of femininity (West and Zimmerman 1987). Indeed, the performance may be understood as gender performativity and a representation of true gender[31] (Butler 1990).

One of the two performances to focus on rape within a private context (P5) focused on the rape of a young woman within a domestic relationship and made mention of religion, although not a specific religion. The central premise of the performance was non-consensual sex before marriage with the young man performer stating that he did not perceive there to be anything wrong with his actions. This theme that emerged from the performance, along with the sullied female self, could be interpreted to delve into the terrain of masculine culture within disputed socio-political contexts where rape is used as a means to exercise and legitimise male power (Messina-Dysert 2015).

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[31] 'True gender' is a narrative maintained by a tactic collective agreement to produce, perform and maintain distinct and polar genders with the credibility of such narratives judged and punished if not maintained and performed within culturally accepted boundaries (Butler 1990).

The other performance to focus on rape within a private (P6) setting centred on a rape as an abuse of power by an offender known and trusted by a series of victims, with a factual story used as a basis for the rationale (see below for detailed discussion around this aspect of the performance). As the vast majority of rape victims are known to the offender (Bonnycastle 2012), an abuse of trust is acknowledged as a prominent occurrence in a significant number of rapes (Rich 2014). Concerns around the culture of victim shaming and blaming were evident within the performance which is a prominent concern commonly expressed by feminist researchers and rape victims alike (Mendes 2015). These concerns could be interpreted to reflect the participants' concerns regarding trust on two levels; firstly the perceived trust of victims within rape cases and secondly; the trust of men in general.

All three of the performances that dealt with rape as the central theme highlighted the victims' sense of isolation and despair. Each of the performances can be considered to embody elements regarding the hidden characteristics of rape through the use of lighting, location and dialogue.

Violence was a pervasive theme throughout the performances with all performances implicitly or explicitly representing violence. Of the five performances that used an act of violence as its central theme; three depicted violence where the victim(s) was / were known to the offender (P7; P8; P9), one depicted a violent act perpetrated by a stranger (P10), and one depicted an ambiguous violent act within which it was not apparent whether the offender was known to the victim (P11). Four of the performances which used violence as its central theme featured a murder.

The one performance that did not end in a murder (P7) focused on domestic violence within the family. The underlying rationale for the performance was expressed as, *'just like what most parents like to do to their children sometimes cus' that's how they were brought up'* (YM), thus this performance could potentially be understood as a representation of the normalisation of violence within a family setting. Abuse within families is regarded to often not be recognised as abuse and

may thus become normalised and accepted (Holt 2016). Such a normalisation of violence within families is considered more common within traditionally working class communities (Mannay 2013). However, it is not possible to interpret whether the participants lived localities was an influencing factor behind the rationale for this performance. Moreover, the participants were fully aware that their performance was exploring issues of crime so although the performance could potentially be understood as a representation of the normalisation of violence within the family setting, the young people taking part within it were conscious such violence is a criminal offence. Furthermore, it was the father committing the acts of violence against his son while the mother was a passive observer and the daughter was visibly distressed by the situation. As such, these tensions could possibly be seen to represent young people's changing understanding and views of abuse and violence within family setting (Holt *et al*. 2008; Stanley *et al*. 2010; Barnet *et al*. 2011), rather than the normalisation of violence. Furthermore, it is not clear whether the mothers' role as a passive observer was influenced by her also being a victim of violence.

Of the four performances that ended in murder(s) one was performed by an all young women group and this was the performance where the most tangible crime concerns arose. This performance (P8) dealt with domestic abuse within a relationship with a factual story used as a basis for the rationale (see below for detailed discussion around this aspect of the performance). The use of domestic violence could be interpreted to represent the widespread, generalised anxiety apparent throughout the field research surrounding the young women's concerns of victimisation at the hands of men. Indeed, such a widespread concern around the 'male other' has been consistently highlighted in numerous studies (Walklate 2004; Green and Singleton 2006). The young women in the study did not want to explicitly act out the male role in the performance, which could be seen to be influenced by normative gender roles and the prevailing consensus that the young women did not want to 'do masculinity' (Zimmerman and West 1987). Another interpretation of the performance could be that normative gender roles were not an influencing factor, instead the young women could be interpreted as not

wanting to act out the murder because the idea of killing a woman in a relationship may have been particularly distressing to them. During the collaborative analysis following the performance the rationale was given as rooted in women's rights and a lack of awareness around domestic violence[32]. This factor could be interpreted as a reflection of the changing attitudes surrounding young women and domestic violence concerning their personal agency to influence and shape normative assumptions (Radford and Tsutsumi 2008: Buzawa *et al*. 2012; Boudet *et al*. 2013).

The other three performances that ended in murder(s) (P9; P10; P11) are more difficult to interpret regarding crime concern. These performances ranged from acts of extreme violence to an ambiguous act of violence. The performance incorporating the ambiguous act of violence could be interpreted as young people's concern surrounding the potential ease with which individuals may become embroiled in violent confrontations. The performances incorporating acts of extreme violence, via the use of a firearm, may be interpreted to potentially represent concerns surrounding violent crime. Although the literature around young people's fears of crime is limited, it has revealed that young people report fearing becoming the victim of violent crime (Green *et al*. 2000; Cockburn 2008).

Verbal Interpretations

This section of the chapter will discuss the findings relating to crime concern from the data collected via the focus groups in B Town, C Town and D Town. The section will be split into series of subsections that encapsulate the foremost themes emerging from the research.

Victimisation

When asked about crime in the local area, the young people who participated in the study, across all three research sites, acknowledged that crime occurs in their local area but the general consensus was that it tends to be low level crimes which

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[32] Although the young women in this study displayed an awareness of domestic violence they felt that there is a generalised lack of awareness and understanding concerning domestic violence. This finding suggests that there may be a need for interventions to increase knowledge among teachers and youth workers which could then help to raise young women's awareness and understanding.

do not overly concern them. Serious crimes were said to occur infrequently but often became common knowledge:

'Little crimes that can just get overlooked happen a lot but then like a serious crime might happen and you'll remember it but it doesn't happen a lot' (YM, B Town).

On the whole, the young people in the study regarded there to be a fairly significant amount of crime in their locality but stressed that they are mainly petty crimes that they would not consider serious:

'I think there's a lot of like minor crimes, shoplifting, stuff like that but then there can be like big scale crimes, but not many, but you hear about them' (YM, B Town).

One young person emphasised the occurrence of petty crime and portrayed a particularly frank picture of her local area:

'I think it's just like petty crimes because like it's obviously classed as a deprived area so the petty crimes are usually like drugs or like, that doesn't mean drugs are petty it's just like they steal to sustain their habit cus' it's the area we live in. A lot of people haven't gone to uni or haven't done A levels, haven't got that good of a job' (YW, B Town).

Throughout the research there was a distinct division between the attitudes expressed towards personal safety by the young men and young women. The vast majority of the young men across the three research sites tended to feel safe in their local environments and crime concerns did not frequent their thoughts:

'You don't really think about it [crime]*'* (YM, D Town).

'I don't think about it [crime] *really. I just tend to think if I keep out the way I'll be safe and that'* (YM, B Town).

The young women in the study tended to display a significantly heightened awareness around issues regarding their personal safety, particularly those that had prior experiences of victimisation. Locality and time of day was often a key factor:

'Certain times of night I won't go out because I'm scared in case, cus' I know I've had a few incidents where I live and I'm just a bit like right after a certain time I don't go out by myself' (YW, B Town).

Such a divergence between the young males and young females concerns is consistent with the literature into gendered differences regarding fear of victimisation (Schafer *et al.* 2006; Fox *et al.* 2009; Cops and Pleysier 2011; van Eijk 2015; Fanghanel 2016). Previous victimisation and fear of crime is a contested area with some studies suggesting there is a limited correlation (Farrell *et al.* 2007; Jackson 2009) whilst others suggest there is a strong correlation (Skogan 1987; Fox *et al.* 2009; ONS 2015).

Staying Safe

The young women in the study additionally displayed and projected a generalised, heightened awareness and anxiety around issues of personal safety and discussed contrasting methods of 'safekeeping' (Stanko 1997; van Eijk 2015; Fanghanel 2016) compared to the young men who expressed a much more nonchalant attitude towards their perceptions of personal safety. At times during the study, there appeared to be an atmosphere of bravado among some of the young men which demonstrated a potential downplaying and masking of concerns. These findings are in accord with research which has demonstrated that young men may display an 'emotional vulnerability' and conceal concerns in order to defend and uphold their masculine identities (Goodey 1997; Trickett 2009, 2011; Sutton *et al.* 2011).

Whilst on the contrary, in keeping with the widely acknowledged 'doing gender' thesis (West and Zimmerman 1987), women are much more likely to be forthcoming with, and conscious of, concerns about victimisation owing to conventional feminine codes of conduct and socially approved, appropriate identity construction which are embedded in everyday lived experiences (Walklate 2004; Sutton *et al.* 2011; Fanghanel and Lim 2015).

Sexual Crime and Sexual Violence

The participants in the study were conscious of issues of sex offences and displayed varying degrees of concerns. The young men in the study tended to display an indifferent attitude towards sex crime whereas the young women exhibited much

higher levels of concern. Concern of sexual victimisation was particularly present among the young women in B Town:

> *'I think there's a lot of rise in crime like that* [sex crime] *and it's coming to a point where it's like can you walk down the street and know you're not going to get attacked or can you feel safe in your own community anymore?'* (YW, B Town).

The young women's concerns regarding sexual crime spanned across the potential of becoming a victim, the perceived prevalence of such offending within wider society, and the portrayal of mediated representations of sexual crime. Concern about sexual violence is a common theme within research on female fear of crime, perceived risk of victimisation, and related areas (Stanko 1995; Wykes and Welsh 2009). Female fear of sexual violence has been frequently considered to be symbolic of women's safekeeping and underpin a generalised fear of crime (Warr 1984; Kelly 1988; Stanko 1995; Ferraro 1996; Hannah-Moffat and O'Malley 2007).

Moreover, mediated representations of sexual violence are increasing (Custers and Van den Bulk 2013), and are considered to influence perceptions of victims of sex offences and the probable consequences of sexual violence (Boyle 2005; Kitzinger 2009), which is particularly pertinent regarding young victims (Kitzinger 2004). The term 'real rape' (Estrich 1987) refers to the dominant stereotype of rape involving a young, weak, white, female victim who is assaulted at night by a strong, male, stranger.

Such themes emerged throughout the research, stemming from the young women's actually lived experiences of perceived risk and dangerousness situated within localised spaces *and* from their wider virtually lived experiences of mediated representations of sex crime. Lived experiences of sexual violence are considered to occur within a socio-cultural context which is embedded in assumptions of normative heterosexuality (Walklate 2004).

As such, the young women's concerns may be considered to have been influenced and underpinned by both a perceived risk of sexual offending situated in localised spaces and of the dominant mediated socio-cultural representations of sex crime,

which widely depict dominant males and weak females (Greer 2003; Surette 2014). Indeed, the higher prevalence of a generalised anxiety concerning personal safety and the occupation of public spaces among the young women in the study could thus be interpreted to be influenced by both their localised perceptions and their wider perceptions of mediated representations of sexual violence.

The recent proliferation of high profile child sex scandals was a recurring theme associated with the young women's concerns about sexual violence and palpably fed into this generalised anxiety:

> *'It's a bit like in the media who can you trust now, like Rolf Harris has been done for paedophilia, Jimmy Saville, like massive icons, that guy from Coronation Street, I don't know who you can trust anymore'* (YW, B Town).

Such scandals have been regarded to serve to both dramatise and clarify normative boundaries (Greer and McLaughlin 2013) and this dichotomy was present in the participants' perceptions. Such cases were widely equated to a perceived increasing prevalence of sexual offending against women whilst concurrently acting to reinforce and reproduce a heightened awareness of feminine safekeeping.

<u>Public Space</u>

The young people in the study frequently expressed concerns about local public spaces, with such concerns being much more common among the young women in the study. This finding is consistent with research into gendered differences concerning spatial fears (Valentine 1989; Pain 1997; Whitzman 2007; Fanghanel 2014). Although a number of young men did express concerns about local public spaces they were generally framed in a contrasting way to the young women in the study.

There appeared to be unspoken rules governing the occupation of young people's spaces in their localities and an established code of the street. Such findings resonate with previous research which has demonstrated that young people's occupation of public space is often operated within territorial boundaries (MacDonald *et al*. 2005; Shildrick 2006; Shildrick and MacDonald 2007). Indeed, particular areas which were perceived as potentially risky and dangerous to

personal safety or where crimes were known to occur were avoided or cautiously navigated. Although such a code was acknowledged by both sexes, there were separate street etiquettes expressed by the young men and young women in the study.

The young women broadly spoke about their reluctance to occupy certain spaces during certain situations whereas the young men tended to emphasise that they would continue to occupy such spaces in these situations but modify their behaviour and be more cautious of their surroundings:

> *'Anywhere where there's a street and someone's in their car, you just don't go there'* (YW, B Town).

> *'I'd be cautious about the way I go past them'* (YM, B Town).

Within each research site the participants mentioned specific spaces which were deemed as areas of concern. Particular streets, estates and parks were considered as areas they would avoid or, at least, be wary of:

> *'You just stay out the park at certain times'* (YM, B Town).

The participants often spoke about avoiding areas where crimes are known to happen:

> *'You don't go down Avenue Three'* (YM, C Town).
> *'I avoid the Avenue Three like the plague'* (YW, C Town).
> *'I'd avoid the avenues in general'* (YW, C Town).

The perceived dangerousness of such spaces was greatly influenced by the time of day with night time darkness being perceived as adding significant levels of risk. The young people in the study frequently made the distinction between day and night, suggesting that they would be more concerned for their safety and be more conscious of their surroundings if it was night time, particularly if they were alone:

> *'During the day it* [becoming a victim of crime] *doesn't even cross your mind but during the night it does'* (YM, D Town).

> *'I think the time of day affects how you go about things'* (YM, B Town).

The time of day was an especially common factor in levels of crime concerns amongst the young women in the study, with night time being when they felt most vulnerable:

> *'I don't like being out in the dark'* (YW, C Town).
> *'What is it about the dark?'* (Researcher).
> *'You just don't know what's out there'* (YW, C Town).

> *'I don't like going to the shop at night'* (YW, B Town).
> *'I hate being out at night'* (YW, B Town).

Indeed, women have been consistently found to report higher levels of feeling unsafe after dark than in the day time and higher levels of feeling unsafe after dark than men (Ferraro 1995; Fox *et al.* 2009; Fanghanel 2014) and the findings unearthed throughout the focus group research are consistent with such previous research.

Amongst the young women participants, the day of the week was also considered to influence dangerousness, with Friday and Saturday nights being perceived as potentially more risky owing to the increased likelihood of alcohol consumption taking place within certain spaces on these days and negatively affecting people's behaviour:

> *'It* [alcohol] *twists people's minds. They might start fighting and then start on you'* (YW, C Town).

Research on the night time economy has highlighted 'undesired others' may influence levels of fear among women (Brands *et al.* 2015) and this was certainly the case for a number of young women in this study. Further research, conducted in the North East of England, has identified that young women and, to a lesser extent, young men document fears regarding the potential violence that can accompany a night out (Shildrick and MacDonald 2007).

Women's reluctance to occupy public spaces during the night is linked to fear of sexual victimisation manifested out of a generalised anxiety about the masculine other (Walklate 2004; Green and Singleton 2006), theorised as the shadow of sexual assault (Ferraro 1996). Although explicit fears of sexual victimisation were

only expressed on occasion by the young women in the study, a generalised anxiety concerning perceived vulnerability was evident throughout and appeared to offered support towards the shadow hypothesis.

Moreover, 'warning signals' (Innes 2004a), such as undesired others, may be more prevalent during the night and act to reinforce perceptions of potential risk and dangerousness. Such an occurrence of warning signals did indeed develop more prominently during the night for the young women. Strikingly, during the focus groups none of the young women in the study expressed concerns around victimisation in private spaces, although it is widely acknowledged it is within these spaces where most victimisation occurs (Madriz 1997; Pain 1997; Goodey 2005; Davies 2011; Westmarland 2015).

However, this finding is consistent with literature which highlights that women are more fearful of public spaces owing to the fear of sexual violence perpetrated by strangers (Stanko 1990; Scott 2003; Sorial and Poltera 2015), which is considered to be due, in part, to mediated constructions of sexual violence (Greer 2003; Jewkes 2015). Owing to the fact that these concerns are inconsistent with the reality of likely victimisation this theme could be linked to the fear of crime paradox which theorises that the people and the places that tend to induce the highest levels of fear are statistically less likely to result in victimisation than the people and places that are consistently reported as less fear inducing (Ferraro 1995)[33].

This finding is unlikely to be understood as the young women in the study having irrational concerns (Rader 2005). Instead, the emotive and destructive aspects associated with sexual violence may be interpreted to resonate with the young women participants' despite a lack of tangible experiences or their perceptions of relative risk. As outlined in the literature, 'many women appear to experience emotional turmoil surrounding rape, regardless of whether or not they have

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[33] The notion that men are more likely to experience violent victimisation has however, been recently questioned (Walby *et al*. 2016) in that our understandings of the fear of crime paradox have been largely informed by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (previously the British Crime Survey), which may misrepresent and minimise violence against women, particularly high-frequency domestic violence, through methodological shortcomings.

experienced the crime directly and regardless of their own perceived chances of experiencing such victimization' (Wilcox *et al*. 2006: 359). Moreover, the females actually lived experiences of unwanted male attention may shape an environment where such concerns manifest (Pain 1997; Gilchrist *et al*. 1998; Scott 2003) Indeed, unwanted male attention in public spaces (e.g. exposure, sexual comments or wolf whistling) has been revealed as very common amongst young British women in a recent poll (YouGov 2016)[34].

Landscapes of Concern

These spaces outlined can be considered as 'landscapes of fear' (Tuan 1979), or argued here as more appropriately 'landscapes of concern', for the young people in the study within which material or conceptual boundary control becomes of particular significance for perceptions of personal safety and is ritually enforced through various forms of behaviour modification. Such defined and obeyed boundaries through ritually enforced codes of conduct create a sense of security. The identified landscapes that the young people in the study negotiate owing to crime concerns influence their actually lived experiences through altering their activities and day to day conduct. These experiences appear to have marked variations between sexes and more nuanced variations between individuals, whilst still rooted in the same governing principles of spatial boundary control and ritual enforcement, underpinned by a locally contextualised code of the streets.

Such findings around the identified landscape of concern have similarities with the research into constrained behaviours within the field of fear of crime (Renfigo and Bolton 2012; Rader and Haynes 2014) which suggests that social and / or environmental factors may decrease perceptions of safety and result in behaviour modification through avoidance measures.

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[34] Nottinghamshire police have recently classified misogyny as a hate crime in an 'experiment' that has been branded successful, prompting police forces across England and Wales to consider expanding their definitions (The Guardian 2016a). Whilst reporting on the harassment of women, BBC East Midlands reporter Sarah Teale was subjected to sexually explicit comments directed at her by a male, which could be considered to highlight a pervasive and embedded sexism within society (BBC 2016c).

In contrast to the concerns of public victimisation, the young women participants' lack of concerns regarding victimisation in private spaces is possibly manifested out of a multitude of factors which have the potential to interact and overlap. In part, it may be due to their age in that they have not had significant time to build and form sustained, potentially abusive, relationships (Hellevik *et al*. 2015). In part, it may be due to a reluctance to divulge more personal concerns closer to home owing to perceived perceptions of others, which is likely to be influenced by the a high value society places on the institution of the family home (Holt 2016). Furthermore, it may in part, be due to violence within private spaces potentially becoming normalised and viewed in a different light to violence within public spaces (*ibid*).

The lack of young men's concerns regarding becoming a victim of crime could be interpreted to align with their views that crime is not a serious problem in their localities and although they acknowledged the occurrence of crime, it was not deemed sufficient to inspire overt concerns. However, the potential concealing of concerns among some participants, discussed above, may indeed be considered to reflect the reluctance of young men to appear less masculine in front of their peers (Trickett 2009, 2011). Although the young women in the study agreed with the young men and widely considered crime in the local area to be mainly petty and not of significant concern, resulting in a lack of explicit concerns expressed by the majority regarding becoming a victim, there was still a generalised anxiety projected among the young women regarding personal safety, this appears to be due in large part to the shadow hypothesis.

Management, Control of Crime and Self Justice

There were a variety of concerns expressed across all research sites regarding the management and control of crime. The concept of *self justice* has been identified throughout the focus group findings and was a prevalent theme expressed by a significant number of young men and women in the study. The concept revolves around a perceived lack of trust, effectiveness, and efficiency within the criminal justice system which made participants appear reluctant to involve criminal justice agencies in issues concerning crime and raised questions about their legitimacy. On

numerous occasions, the young people in the study spoke about attempting to address crime related matters themselves through the guidance of friends, family, or people they could trust.   When these themes arose, participants frequently stated that they would only consider going through criminal justice processes in very serious cases or as a last resort:

> *'I'd rather go to like someone in sixth from or school rather than the police'* (YW, B Town).

Such findings revealed an embedded sense of dissatisfaction with the criminal justice system resulting from a variety of multifaceted factors, discussed below.

<u>Policing</u>

Issues around policing were a substantial concern expressed across all three research sites. The concerns that surrounded policing encompassed themes of mistrust, respect, stereotyping, stop and search powers, and police efficiency. On the whole, the young men in the study tended to hold more negative attitudes towards the police and be more vocal in general concerning issues of policing. Young men's tendency to view the police more negatively than young women has been associated with the fact that young males are much more likely to have experienced adverse contact with the police than young females (McAra and McVie 2005; Jackson *et al*. 2013; Quinton 2013; Kappeler and Gaines 2015).

Unsurprisingly, the young men in the study reported having experienced more adverse contact with the police compared to the young women. Indeed, the young women in the study made less contribution to the discussions surrounding policing which is likely to be reflected in the fact that they had encountered a lesser number of tangible experiences. The generalised sentiment regarding police expressed by the young women was indifferent or positive, which is consistent with related findings (Omaji 2003; Jackson *et al*. 2013). The young women who had the most positive observations of the police did indeed speak about their actual experiences which, on the contrary to the majority of the young men's experiences, were characterised by a sense of trust and respect. Communication and approachability

were considered as key factors in policing relations by the young women in the study:

> *'I like our PC'* (YW, C Town).
> *'What is it about them that you like?'* (Researcher).
> *'They're just proper friendly'* (YW, C Town).
> *'So they engage with you on a personal level?'* (Researcher).
> *'Yeah, they come up and talk to us'* (YW, C Town).

Police, Mistrust and Lack of Respect

Respect was a key theme regarding policing. A significant number of young men considered themselves not to respect the police, which tended to be the case when it was perceived that they were not respected in return. Approximately a third of the young men within the study disclosed that they had been stopped and searched by the police, which they tended to perceive was the result of unjust targeting. This perception was often equated to being stereotyped and labelled as potentially deviant based on their age, appearance, locality, or family history and was a consistent theme across all three research sites:

> *'They're useless most of the time. They'll stop and search, search through your bags, aiming at us because they think we're teenagers so we'll have something on us we shouldn't have'* (YM, C Town).

> *'I think they're very stereotypical, like I've had a few problems with the police. They pulled us over and said where you going like, but what's that got to do with you like. It's probably just because I was wearing a hoodie or something'* (YM, D Town).

> *'I think the police go over to a group of young people and already assume they're doing something they shouldn't be'* (YM, B Town).

Research conducted on police stopping and searching of young men documents similar concerns surrounding perceived unjust targeting and has indicated that it is not uncommon for young men to be stopped due to their appearance or in relation to their family history (Norman 2009; Gau and Brunson 2010; Newburn 2011; Saarikkomaki 2015).

Such a perceived mistrust was expressed in some instances to influence incompliance with the police:

> '*It's stereotypical because my brother's been locked up like 5 times now. They think I'm going to go down the same road as him. It just makes you get pissed off* [getting stopped and searched] *and then I don't want to speak to them. And then that causes you to not want to report crimes and that*' (YM, D Town).

An expression of a lack of moralistic trust (Uslanger 2016) seemed to prevail in these instances, with the young men who perceived that they were the victims of unjust targeting, suggesting that policing efforts would be better spent elsewhere. Moreover, research has identified that there may be ingrained hostilities among young men within the locality owing to historical social factors (Cockburn 2008), which is potentially an influencing factor in such a lack of trust and respect.

Abuse of police power was a theme which was linked to a lack of trust and was considered particularly prevalent with young people:

> '*I think sometimes you get police officers that are power hungry that abuse their power but more so over kids so they have even more power over them than they would with an adult*' (YM, C Town).

On the contrary to these findings, the young men who expressed trust and respect in the police tended to be those who had no prior contact with the police but felt the police generally did a good job at keeping their localities safe, or those who considered their interactions with the police to have been fair and necessary:

> '*I reckon the police are good. If there's a crime or something in the estate there's only the police that make you safe*' (YM, D Town).

> '*I've had the police take us home before and they were canny with us to be honest*' (YM, C Town).

These findings are consistent with related research which has documented that perceived fair treatment is significant in shaping trust, constituting procedural legitimacy towards criminal justice systems, and encouraging compliance (Skogan 2006; Clayman and Skinns 2011; Jackson *et al*. 2013; Tyler *et al*. 2014).

There were occasions when the young men who did not disclose previous instances of perceived unfair treatment or targeting towards them expressed a dislike of the police. Negative views expressed by friends and associates are considered to influence socialisation processes and be instrumental in shaping policing perceptions (Romain and Hassell 2014), which could be regarded as a factor in shaping such seemingly unfounded perceptions. Indeed, it was argued as potentially cool and fashionable not to like the police by a number of males who stressed the police tend to be respectable and trustworthy and should be seen this way:

'I don't mind the police. If you respect them they'll respect you' (YM, D Town).

Although media representation may play a role in the socialisation process of people's attitudes regarding the police, the available research is limited and ambiguous (Dowler 2002; Miller and Davies 2008; Dirikx and Van den Bulck 2014; Colbran 2014), this void is particularly true concerning young people's attitudes (Dirikx and Van den Bulck 2014; Romain and Hassell 2014).

All of the young men in the study engaged with various forms of media and it is not possible to assert whether those who had negative opinions of the police but no prior negative contact with the police were influenced by media representations. From the findings it seems more likely that these young men were influenced by their friends and associates' negative perceptions. Furthermore, it is not possible to ascertain from the data whether the negative attitudes held regarding the police by those young people with prior negative contact were additionally bolstered by media representations. However, the findings from this study and related research (Norman 2009) indicate that their own negative opinions are likely to be predominately based on their personal experiences rather than external factors.

Grassing

A further factor governing the research participants' compliance with the police was influenced by their reluctance to report crime as it was seen as 'grassing'. Among the young people in the study there was a commonly accepted negative

image associated with a 'grass'. The subject of 'grassing' arose on a number of occasions across the research sites and was mentioned by both the young men and young women within the study in approximately equal instances. The influence of youth peer group attitudes is considered instrumental in police engagement and compliance (Clayman and Skinns 2011). Indeed, such attitudes amongst peers throughout the study demonstrated the notion of 'grassing' was embedded into the participants' code of the street within which there was a generalised consensus that 'grassing' was unacceptable, with 'grassing' on friends and family considered particularly abhorrent:

> '*Say like one of my close friends at school smashed a window, if they* [the police] *said has a window been smashed I'd say yeah but if they went do you know who's done it I'd just go no. I wouldn't grass up my friend, that's horrible*' (YW, C Town).

Incompliance with the police was regarded as the most moral option if put in a position that would potentially require them to 'grass' on friends or family, unless it was absolutely necessary to comply. Such instances which were deemed absolutely necessary revolved around welfare rather than justice principles:

> '*But say if there was a really serious crime and something needed to be done, like she's had a fight with someone and they are seriously hurt you'd have to tell them* [the police]. *That's not because you're being horrible to your friend it's because they need help*' (YW, C Town).

The code of the street, which encompasses an embedded reluctance to grass, could be rooted in the localities within which the research was undertaken and a prevailing 'neighbourhood dogma' (Walklate and Evans 1999). The actually lived experiences of the young people who participated in the study are influenced by a relatively high level of poverty, deprivation and social exclusion which may have fashioned an internalised attitude to incompliance and play a significant role in the young people's reluctance to engage with authority (Evans *et al*. 1996; Yates 2006). Moreover, potential ingrained hostilities due to historical social factors within the local area may have been influential in shaping an attitude towards incompliance (Cockburn 2008).

The sentiment surrounding grassing can be seen to link with the concept of self justice as it was asserted that guidance would be sought from people who could be trusted around issues of crime before involving the police and where possible, matters would be 'sorted out' without involvement from the authorities. Police involvement was regarded to potentially complicate and protract matters. Indeed, this sentiment was highlighted by a male from D Town:

'I think it's better to try and sort it out for yourselves but then if it doesn't work [involve the police]' (YM, D Town).

Police Efficiency

Police efficiency was a concern expressed by both the young men and young women across all three research sites. This revolved around the perception of either police expending efforts on insignificant issues or, at the other end of the spectrum, police not expending enough effort on issues that were deemed more significant. For example, petty youth crime was often perceived to invoke a quick response whilst burglary was considered by a number of participants to be not dealt with by the police quickly enough. This finding links into the concept of self justice in that the perceived lack of police efficiency was a factor in the young people's reluctance to involve the police in criminal justice matters. Such a finding has parallels with related research (Norman 2009). This finding also links into the theme of revenge (discussed below):

'Some people think the only way you're going to get anywhere is do revenge, say you phone the police on a night because something is happening to your house and they take ages to get there and by the time they have with their blaring lights and noise and allsorts they've already gone' (YW, C Town).

Revenge

Throughout the focus group research, across all three sites, the topic of revenge and committing crime in response to victimisation was expressed. This was primarily expressed by the young men, although not exclusively. The notion of committing crime as an act of revenge, rather than going though formal legal processes, additionally links to the concept of self justice:

'Crime could happen to you and then you might want revenge' (YM, C Town).

'Say something happens to your family you might go after the person that's done it for like revenge' (YM, B Town).

This finding has parallels with seminal research which suggests that crime may be committed as a means of social control (Black 1983). Moreover, the notion of revenge in the commission of crime and the victim / offender overlap has been well documented (Jennings *et al*. 2012).

Routes in to Crime and Offending

Concerns were expressed by a number of participants, primarily young men, about the perceived ease of becoming involved in crime and variety of pathways into offending behaviour were discussed.

Peer Pressure and Social Deprivation

The most prominent pathway discussed by the participants was through peers. Associating with peers involved in criminal behaviour is regarded as a risk factor (Farrington 1996) and such a potential influence was acknowledged. Indeed, this was highlighted by a young woman in the study who considered the peer pressure associated with 'fitting in' may result in drug use:

'I know people who take drugs and stuff. When you get older you realise you want to try and fit in with all your friends because you don't want to look stupid' (YW, C Town).

It was generally regarded by the participants that it is not difficult to get involved in crime in their localities. This sentiment was particularly common among the young men in the study:

'It is easy to get in with people that do crimes, it's not like something that doesn't happen, you can easily get in with people that do it' (YM, B Town).

'Certain crimes are really easy [to get involved in]' (YM, D Town).

Boredom and a lack of things to do were considered as further potential pathways into criminal behaviour. A significant number of participants spoke about an

absence of opportunities for young people in their local area and suggested that this is a major factor in why young people commit crime:

'There needs to be more things that people can go and do' (YW, C Town). *'There's nothing on the streets for them to do apart from do crime and that'* (YW, C Town).

Some of the young people within the study felt that having increased opportunities and having positive things to get involved in is a key factor in keeping young people away from offending behaviour and stressed the importance of having things to keep young people busy:

'Like the Olympics, there was crime but I imagine there wasn't as much compared to when the Olympics wasn't here because people had something they could involve themselves with and be a part of' (YM, B Town).

Such findings resonate with literature which highlights that young people's experiences of social deprivation are highly influential in shaping potential criminality (McAra and McVie 2005; MacDonald *et al*. 2005; Shildrick 2006; Shildrick and MacDonald 2007; McVie 2009). Owing to the fact that the participants' lived localities are marked by a significant degree of social deprivation (Home Office 2015a), their local environment could be interpreted as an influence upon shaping crime concerns surrounding the potential ease of offending.

The Buzz of 'Doing Wrong'

Youth offending was linked to the seduction of crime (Katz 1988) in that offending behaviour might be influenced by a perception of desirability, fashion and for the 'buzz' and adrenaline (Presdee 2000; Hayward 2002). Criminal peer groups may indeed perpetuate these perceptions whilst the immediate social and physical environment may serve to legitimise offending behaviour (Young 1999; Hayward 2004).

A number of young men directly expressed that their transgressive behaviour was influenced by the thrill of the chase and that the adrenaline associated with running from the police enhanced the experience:

'It makes it better when they [the police] *come'* (YM, C Town).

However, it was indicated that if they were to be caught the experience would have been viewed in a very different light:

'It was the police, that's why we did it. We wanted to do it to get a chase, to get caught. Well, not caught' (YM, D Town).

Such findings suggest that 'the feeling of 'getting away with it' that comes as part of doing wrong, the buzz and excitement of the act of doing wrong itself, of living on the 'edge' of law and order' (Presdee: 2000: 5) was the main driving force behind their actions. Moreover, such findings resonate with cultural criminological literature which questions the validity of administrative criminology's fixation on rational choice theory which ignores the pleasures and exhilaration associated with certain crimes, particularly low level youth offending (Hayward 2002; Hayward and Young 2004).

Punitive Laws and Overzealous Policing

In contrast to the recognised risk factors of criminal peers and social deprivation (Farrington 1996), a number of the young men in the study suggested that overly punitive laws and overzealous policing were a concern regarding the potential ease of becoming involved in crime and the criminal justice system. Overly punitive laws and outlook concerning young people have been widely considered as a feature of late modernity (Garland 2001; Giroux 2003, 2009; France 2007; Muncie 2008; Goldson 2015) and indeed they were acknowledged to potentially negatively impact upon young people's lives by a number of young men within the study.

Stigma

The potential stigma attached to young offenders was also a concern that arose across the research sites and was expressed by both young men and young women within the study. This was linked to the ease of offending and a punitive outlook towards youth in that young people could commit crimes from a momentary lapse of judgement or fleeting recklessness which may then affect their lives through a societal intolerance towards young offenders and result in restricted opportunities:

> '*They might do it* [crime] *and realise they've done wrong and regret what they've done but they try and go get a good job but that's on their record and they're going to end up being a failure in life*' (YW, C Town).

> '*Once you've offended it's always going to be with you, like what you've done, like the offence is always going to stay with you and people are going to look at it when looking at you*' (YM, B Town).

> '*I think in certain things you get looked down on from the system for really silly things. And just those silly things can ruin your life because if you have a criminal record you can't go to certain countries, you can't live your life. You're always on the system so you're always going to be watched*' (YM, D Town).

Indeed, research has shown that young people are acutely aware of the stigma attached to criminal records and the impact that they can have on life opportunities (Worrall 2012).

Rehabilitation

Concerns were also expressed regarding the rehabilitative methods that the criminal justice system uses with offenders. These concerns were primarily articulated on the subject of drugs and alcohol. The research participants were generally supportive of rehabilitative methods, suggesting that most people possess the capacity to change. However, it was suggested that there is not enough current support regarding abstinence from drink and drugs within the criminal justice system and the cycle of addiction and substance abuse will continue unless it is more thoroughly addressed:

> '*When they're inside they're off everything but when they're out they just do it again*' (YM, D Town).

During the course of the study, a number of young people acknowledged that crime in some instances, primarily crimes relating to drugs and alcohol, would perhaps be better dealt with as a health issue rather than a criminal issue[35] and that if this was the case it would be likely to result in more support and rehabilitative help.

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[35] A number of participants' in D Town supported the decriminalisation of drugs as they argued that it could help to manage crime and would result in less young people becoming criminalised. They referred to the recent news reporting of local senior police officers who had publicly backed drug

Moreover, a number of young men in B Town expressed concerns around drug legislation and suggested that the current legal stance on drugs may actually be detrimental to society through the unnecessary criminalisation of young people who use drugs. As such, they suggested that decriminalisation may be a way to address this, particularly around 'soft' drugs, such as cannabis. Research into young people's perceptions of drug decriminalisation appears limited although there is evidence available to suggest that young people broadly consider cannabis to not be particularly harmful and support the notion of decriminalisation (Jenkins 2006).

<u>Mediated Representation of Crime and Young People</u>

In general, throughout the study, the participants tended to be weary of the veracity of the news media and expressed widespread concerns regarding the representation of young people. Newspapers were frequently cited as a source of mistrust, although it was acknowledged that broadsheet newspapers tend to be more trustworthy. The young people in the study frequently spoke about the overwhelmingly negative approach that the news media adopts:

> *'As soon as you turn it on they're just showing bad things, they don't show anything good, it's always someone dying or something bad happening, they never say the good side of things'* (YM, C Town).

The participants regarded the majority of young people as 'normal' and not involved in crime, highlighting the mundane reality that most young people are not criminals, whilst stressing that such normality is not as exciting to hear about. Although the participants were in agreement that young people are generally 'normal' and not trouble makers, it was acknowledged that if stories of a positive nature were reported on in the media more frequently it would be boring:

> '*I think it would just bore the hell out of people if somebody just went in and recorded some kids working in a care home, that's not entertaining'* (M, C Town).

Thus the participants agreed that bad news is more entertaining than good news, which was deemed boring and was seldom seen, but it was acknowledged that this

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decriminalisation as support for their arguments. Due to confidentiality issues these news reports cannot be cited.

overemphasis on bad news in turn can give young people a negative image and add to the stereotyping and stigma faced by young people. The media taking a stereotypical view of young people was a reoccurring theme:

> *'I think in the media like a lot of people our age are just they're all bad and they're all doing this, that and the other but they're not, so sometimes I think it's just a bit of a stereotypical way to look at it'* (YM, B Town).

> *'Well I think it's just like the minority. Young people are just used as a stereotype so people think all young people are bad, or assume it's always going to be young people that have done stuff'* (YW, B Town).

> *'If a young person has done something then they* [the media] *are more likely to show it whereas if an adult has done something they might not be as serious about it, if a young person's done it they blow it out of proportion'* (YW, C Town).

> Indeed, negative media representations of young people have indeed been well documented within the literature (Jewkes 2015; Reiner 2016) and have been acknowledged by young people within criminological studies (Clark *et al*. 2008).

Summary

This chapter has discussed the foremost findings related to crime concern that were identified during the data analysis. The first section of the chapter, *Visual Representations,* sought to discuss the findings regarding the performative method undertaken in B Town, the second section of the chapter, *Verbal Interpretations,* sought to discuss the findings regarding the focus group method that was undertaken in B Town, C Town and D Town, through a series of interconnected sub themes.

The next chapter of the thesis, *Media: Truth, Reality and Entertainment*, will discuss the research findings relating to media engagement, mediated representations and the blurring of factional and fictional accounts of crime and analyse how these interrelated spheres interacted within participants' overall lived experiences of crime.

Media: Truth, Reality and Entertainment

Visual Representations

This section of the chapter will discuss the findings from the performative drama and draw and write methods[36] undertaken in B Town relating to media engagement, mediated representations and the blurring of factional and fictional accounts of crime[37].

Performative Drama

Throughout the performances, there were numerous instances where the blurring of boundaries between fact and fiction was evident. Most palpably, a number of performances used a factual incident for the basis of their performances, all of which also incorporated fictionalised elements. Alongside such apparent blurring, a series of themes that further illustrate the blurring of virtually lived experiences of crime influenced by mediated representations and actually lived experiences of crime influenced by localised day to day life, have also been identified. As such, this chapter of the discussion will now explore and interpret the most prominent occurrences and themes regarding the blurring of these boundaries, contextualised within the participants' media engagement and their opinions on the cultural representation of crime.

Within the three performances based on drugs, one (P3) was based on a factual incident which had been recently reported in a newspaper[38] whilst the other two

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[36] The findings from the draw and write method have been included in this section as the analysis identified that the main themes encompassed within the drawings and writings related to the blurring of actually and virtually lived experiences of crime. Hence, this is the section where they most appropriately sit within the context of the wider research.

[37] Reiner (2016: 134) has asserted that the 'dividing line between overtly fictional crime stories and the presentation of crime news has become increasingly blurred, as both are governed by intensifying commercial pressures'. The interplay between these commercial pressures was explicitly and implicitly explored by the participants in the study and will be discussed during this chapter.

[38] There were newspapers in the Drama and Performing arts class which two groups used as inspiration for their performances. The discussion panels indicated that the young people's use of

(P1; P2) were fictional portrayals, albeit potentially rooted in some factuality. All of the performances addressed the potential joy and sorrow of drug use by portraying aspects of comedy, glamour and seduction, alongside despair and a lack of appeal. Such a recurring ambiguity regarding the portrayal of drug use could be interpreted to reflect the participants' virtually lived experiences of the mixed messages throughout mediated representations of drugs (Boyd 2010; Manning 2014) and potentially the actually lived experiences of drug use experienced by the young people in the study.

The rationale given for the performance based on the factual incident reported in a recent newspaper was, '*a lot of young people do cocaine*' (YM), which could be interpreted as based on actually lived experiences or virtually lived experiences, or a convergence of the two. On numerous occasions throughout the research process, actually lived experiences of drug use were implicitly or explicitly mentioned, most often in the form of witnessing drug use or encountering drug paraphernalia within their localised spaces.

The participants lived localities are characterised by a significant degree of social deprivation which may potentially result in an higher prevalence of drug misuse than areas not deemed socially deprived (Bean 2014) as such, this factor may have contributed to a heightened awareness around drug use and an increase in actually lived experiences. However, in particular regards to cocaine, this drug is regarded to be a substance that transcends social classes and its usage is common across varying localities (ACDM 2015). It is not possible to interpret whether actually or virtually lived experiences were the most significant factor in influencing the group to centre their performance on a factual incident, or indeed which types of experiences were the main driving forces behind the other performances.

Within the three performances to specifically focus on rape as the central topic, one performance (P6) was based on a factual incident from a recent newspaper article whilst the other two (P4; P5) were fictional portrayals. The performance based on a factual incident and one of the fictional portrayals (P5), focused on a

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papers in these performances were used as inspiration for their performances and were based on the crime related incidents reported within that they found the most concerning.

rape(s) committed by an offender known to the victim(s) and took place within a private space. The fact these performances focused on a rape within private contexts are noteworthy in that representations of rape, within both the entertainment media and the news media, disproportionately portray rapes committed by strangers within public places, when the reality of rape is that it is much more likely to occur by an offender known to the victim within a private place (Gill 2007; Marhia 2008; Moore 2014; Westmarland 2015).

In these performances, the participants consciously chose to set their performance within a private context which could be interpreted to demonstrate an awareness of the reality of rape and a rejection of dominant socio-cultural representations. The performance that was based on a factual incident used a newspaper article as a prop and played on the wording of the article to draw out themes of truth, trust, victim blaming and shaming, and explore the dynamics between an alleged offender and his alleged victims. These factors could be interpreted to represent the increased sense of agency women feel surrounding reporting and drawing awareness to rape (Boudet *et al*. 2013) whilst concurrently being constrained to normative assumptions of feminine behaviour (West and Zimmerman 1987; Speer 2005).

The other fictional representation of rape (P4) was intentionally ambiguous and as such, it was not clear whether the victims were known to the offender(s) or whether the offence(s) took place within a private or public context. This particular performance employed the popular song *Blurred Lines*[39] to highlight the ambiguity that often surrounds rape cases and also invoked the notion of victim blaming and shaming[40]. This again draws upon the themes of appropriate femininity, however,

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[39] *Blurred Lines* is a song by Robin Thicke, T.I., and Pharrell Williams released in March 2013. The song received global success selling over 14 million copies (The Guardian 2014).

[40] Katie Russell, a spokeswoman for the UK based Rape Crisis charity, has been quoted as stating that 'the lyrics seem to glamorise violence against women and to reinforce rape myths, which we strive to dispel... and appear to reinforce victim-blaming rape myths, for example about women giving 'mixed signals' through their dress or behaviour, saying 'no' when they really mean 'yes' and so on'.

the use of the song could be interpreted to challenge women's sense of agency in this instance, as outlined by one of the participants within the collaborative analysis after the performance had taken place: *'it's* [the song] *like based on rape but it's made into a fun song so people start to think oh' it's ok and stuff like that'*. Indeed, the song has been heavily criticised for its ambiguous themes regarding consensual sex and appropriate femininity (Horeck 2014)[41].

Violence was an omnipresent theme throughout the performances with five performances focusing on violence as its central theme and all others making implicit or explicit references to violence. All of the performances that focused on violence as its central theme could be interpreted to have explored the ambiguity of violence and the mixed messages concerning its usage which are prevalent throughout mediated representations of crime within Western culture (Surette 2014; Ferrell *et al.* 2015). All performances focused on a male offender which could be interpreted as an understanding that males make up the vast majority of violent offenders (Wykes and Welsh 2009).

The performance that focused on a murder of a domestically abused female (P8) was based on the BBC3 programme *Murdered by my Boyfriend*[42], with the collaborative analysis after the performance revealing that the programme was the inspiration for the piece. The programme, which is a dramatisation of a real case, has proved immensely popular (BBC News 2015c). The performance was performed

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Moreover, she criticised the music video for objectifying and degrading women (Independent 2013b).

[41] The song and the video have been the subject of a number of parodies. The most famous of which is arguably 'Defined Lines' performed by three feminist students from Auckland University. Ironically, *YouTube* removed the video due to inappropriate content but have since restored it. One of the videos creators, Olivia Lubbock, has been quoted as saying 'It's just funny that the response has been so negative when you flip it around and objectify males...It's been flagged by users as inappropriate because of sexual content and stuff like that, but the fact it's been taken down is a massive double standard' (Independent 2013c).

[42] *Murdered by my Boyfriend* is a BAFTA award winning BBC fact-based drama, first aired in June 2014 (The Guardian 2015). It was the third most watched programme on BBC *iplayer* in 2014 (BBC News 2015).

to the song *Blurred Lines*[43]*,* which has also proved immensely popular (Horeck 2014). The performance could be interpreted as an intention to blur the boundaries between fact and fiction around issues of rape by the participants via the use of a factual case and fictional piece of music. Alternatively, as the participants' took the very serious and sombre subject matter of the programme and juxtaposed it against a 'fun song' (YW), it could potentially be understood as their interpretation that the lyrics within the song are potentially damaging and essentially asserting power and control over women.

The performance that centred on multiple murders committed by a stranger (P10), who subsequently committed suicide, was revealed during the collaborative analysis to have been based on the murders committed by Roaul Moat and Derrick Bird, with the rationale given for the performance as: *'even in your everyday life, sort of situations like Roaul Moat or Derrick Bird can just come out of nowhere'* (YM). The fact these incidents happened relatively close to the participants lived localities' was potentially an influencing factor in using them as the basis for their performance. Although the majority of the performance was based on these cases, more so the Derrick Bird case, there was artistic license involved within and fictionalised elements included. This performance could be interpreted to represent the unpredictability of crime and to have potentially been influenced by factional and fictional accounts of crime. Indeed, the news coverage of the Roaul Moat case has been criticised for blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction via applying frameworks and formats from fictional media and heavily borrowing from fictional representations of crime (Rowe 2013). As outlined in the literature, the media presented 'Moat as a lone outsider on the run from authorities in ways that refashioned narratives found in many popular cultural forms from early Westerns to murder ballads to contemporary digital gaming genres' (*ibid*: 29)[44].

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[43] Two performances used this song; one which focused on rape (P4), and one which focused on domestic violence (P8).

[44] Such media depictions which blur the boundaries between fact and fiction are a prominent feature of cultural criminological analysis (Penfold-Mounce 2009). A more recent example of fictional frameworks being applied to factional accounts can be observed in a BBC article which

The omnipresent theme of violence explored throughout the performances could be considered to reflect the violence that the participants' encountered throughout their everyday engagement with mediated representations of crime[45]. Indeed, violence is a widespread theme within both factual and fictional representations of crime (Carrabine 2008; Jewkes 2015) and the blurring of boundaries between such representations is pervasive in late modernity where media spirals inform and reproduce one another to fashion an ambiguous image (Hayward 2010). In this sense, violence is never only physical; it is inherently symbolic and interpretive, involving dimensions of drama, performance and presentation, and whilst physical violence may actually begin and end, its meaning continues to circulate throughout everyday life (Ferrell *et al*. 2015). Such dimensions are regarded especially true in the gendered performance of violence (Butler 1990) and these were indeed the dimensions where violence was the most symbolic and interpretive throughout the participants' performances.

Draw and Write

The draw and write methods undertaken with the participants, which sought to explore their perceptions and interpretations of typical criminals, could be considered to reflect the more proximate and actually lived experiences of crime and criminality whilst still infused with more remote elements of virtually lived experiences. Moreover, a large portion of the themes emerging throughout the drawings and writings reflected commonly accepted realities of crime. Indeed, all of the pictures depicted a male which can be interpreted as recognition of the fact that males make up the significant majority of offenders (Walklate 2004; Wykes and Welsh 2009).

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reports that the police likened a drug dealer's lifestyle to a character from the critically acclaimed US crime drama *The Wire* (BBCd 2016).

[45] The overall findings across all research methods indicated the young people in the study were not particularly concerned about the mediated representation of violence. Although the participants' acknowledged violence is pervasive in the media they primarily saw it as a form of entertainment.

Furthermore, there was a strong acknowledgement expressed within the drawings and writings of the influence that wider external factors such as education, family and health frequently play in offending behaviour. The crimes that were committed by the persons depicted throughout the drawings and writings tended to be the less sensational and more mundane. Indeed, drug dealing and theft were the most common offences whereas violence and sexual offences were in the minority. Drugs were a near omnipresent theme with eight out of the nine drawings and writings referring to drugs. This could be interpreted to reflect the participants' understanding that drugs and crime are very frequently related (Bean 2014). The reoccurring theme of travellers could be interpreted as indication of proximate experiences as the locality within which this part of the field research was undertaken has a large traveller community[46].

The ages that were specified varied, although the vast majority were adult offenders. This is intriguing as media representations place a disproportionate focus on young offenders (Jewkes 2015; Muncie 2015), as such, the participant's could be interpreted to have rejected the dominant discourse and consider adults to be the most typical offenders. The singular depiction of murder as the result of gun crime and the single depiction of rape is at odds with the majority of the drawings which depicted more routine crimes. The instances of an offender wearing a balaclava may be interpreted as a reflection of the cultural influence upon the image of a criminal. Indeed, stereotypical mediated images are regarded to have significant influence on the way the public perceive 'typical' criminals (Greer 2009; Ferrell *et al*. 2015).

<u>Verbal Interpretations</u>

Throughout the focus group research undertaken across all three sites, the young people in the study engaged with various forms of media which portrayed or contained elements of crime. These forms of media can be broadly separated into the news media and the entertainment media. The news media refers to news

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[46] Due to confidentially this statement cannot be cited.

reporting via the internet, newspapers and television. The entertainment media refers to media engaged within for recreational purposes, these took the forms of films, television programmes, video games and music mediums.

This section of the chapter will address the main themes and findings which emerged from the young people's engagement with these various forms of media. The findings relating to the news media will be discussed first, throughout a series of interrelated subheadings, the findings relating to the entertainment media will then be discussed, also throughout a series of interrelated subheadings.

The News Media

Throughout the focus group research a significant number of young people discussed their engagement with the news media. The means through which the young people engaged with news media was predominately via newspapers and television reporting. The news media was overwhelmingly viewed negatively across all three research sites. However, the young men in the study displayed a heightened aversion and were more forthcoming with the reasons behind their dislike for the news media. The young men's greater dislike for the news media could be reflected in the fact that men, particularly young men, are 'othered' more by the media (Macnamara 2006; Marsh and Melville 2014) and as such, feel themselves more harshly represented.

The participants' news media engagement was approximately equal between the young men and the young women in the study. Although the participants' engagement with news media was much less prominent than their engagement with entertainment media, discussed at length below, a number of recurring themes have been identified throughout the research process. The recurring themes associated with news media have been identified to centre on issues of entertainment, trust, bias, unjust reporting, and disproportionate reporting, with overlaps occurring between the themes[47]. These themes were apparent throughout

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[47] The participants concerns regarding the news representation of young people were discussed in-depth in the previous chapter. There will however, be inevitable overlaps within this section of the chapter.

the participants' overall perceptions of news reporting, however, they were particularly prevalent when concerning the news reporting of young people. News reporting on issues of crime was the most prominent topic discussed although a number of young men made mention of wider socio-political representations within news reporting.

News as Entertainment

The theme of entertainment was prominent within the focus group discussions on news reporting. A number of participants considered crime to be a source of entertainment for the public and a means through which news reporting is designed to captivate the public. It was widely regarded that the more dramatic and entertaining the story was considered the greater coverage it would receive, which echoes seminal literature (Chibnall 1977). The participants deemed stories around youth offending to be particularly captivating for the general public because they resonated with the general public's negative perception of young people.

Sensationalise

On numerous occasions, entertaining news reporting was associated with profit, in that the more entertaining a story was considered the more profitable it would likely to be. News stories were often considered to be prolonged for the sake of profit:

> *'They just use them* [stories about crime] *and carry them on for money'* (YM, D Town).

These findings are in consensus with literature which highlights sensationalist news reporting on issues of crime, indeed particularly youth crime, is driven, at least partially, by a desire for profit and as a reflection of the apparent public desire for entertaining news reporting (Greer 2009; Jewkes 2015).

Trust

The theme of trust recurred within the discussions on news media reporting. Although on occasion distinctions were made between the integrity of varying news

outlets, the overall perception portrayed by the participants was that news reporting could not be objectively trusted. This was considered particularly true around issues concerning young people but was also explicitly considered the case concerning wider socio-political issues by a number of young men in the study (outlined in more detail below). This finding is consistent with literature which highlights that contemporary youth have little faith in the veracity of news media reporting (Larsen 2013).

Stereotyping and Unjust, Disproportionate Reporting

News reporting around issues of youth crime was deemed untrustworthy as the participants regarded the prevailing attitude towards youth crime to be primarily cynical and stereotypical. Such a stereotypical attitude was argued as not a reflection of the true reality of young people as the participants considered the vast majority of young people to be law-abiding. This view had overlaps with the related themes of unjust and disproportionate reporting. Indeed, unjust and disproportionate news reporting was widely considered by the participants to be a characteristic of contemporary news reporting and was linked into the theme of entertainment. It was acknowledged that the news media tend to focus on the rarer and more sensational crimes primarily to entertain, in the interests of profit, which portrayed a disproportionate representation of young people as deviant. These findings are consistent with literature which has highlighted atypical crime as the staple fodder of popular news reporting (Marsh and Melville 2014; Jewkes 2015). Indeed, contemporary news is widely considered to portray the routine rarely and the rare routinely (Reiner 2007, 2016)[48].

Realistic Awareness of Crime at a Local Level

It was however acknowledged by a number of participants that local news reporting tends to represent more typical and mundane crime related issues, which they considered symbolic of the limited occurrence of serious crimes in their locality.

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[48] It has been argued that 'when it comes to news coverage there is little doubt that the old adage of 'if it bleeds it leads' remains largely accurate (Lee 2007: 187). Moreover, these findings echo Chibnall's (1977) rules of relevancy which suggest that the more visual and spectacular an offence is the more likely it will receive press coverage.

Research on mediated representations of crime in the news has highlighted that local news tends to be less sensationalist and portrays more typical crime (Rowbotham *et al.* 2013; Moore 2014). When asked whether they perceived crime to be getting worse in their localities, the general perception was that it was relatively stable, whereas when asked about national crime levels the overall consensus was that it was getting worse. Indeed, research has shown that the public have a tendency to hold more accurate perceptions of local crime rates than national crime rates (ONS 2015), which is regarded to generally be the case owing to the public's reliance on national media to give an overall picture of crime whilst perceptions of localised crime remain rooted in more proximate and tangible, or as is argued within this thesis actually lived, experiences (Lee 2007; Home Office 2011; Gray *et al.* 2012).

News as Socio-Political Agenda Setting

A number of young men within the study discussed wider socio-political issues and linked them to their perception of the news media being a tool of the powerful and a means to promote political agendas[49]. These findings are related to the themes of trust and disproportionate reporting and have an overlap with the theme of biasness that emerged throughout the research into news reporting. As such, a number of the young men stressed the questionable morality and legality surrounding international affairs, primarily the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and the immorality and illegality surrounding national affairs, primarily the expenses and sex scandals, which have emerged in recent years. This sentiment was articulated starkly by one young man from D Town:

> *'I think it's dishonest. What they say like, it's just not true. I think a lot of things that they say like, how they portray certain things, like they're portraying the Iraq war and the war in Afghanistan as being this fight to stop terrorism but really they're just there for oil so they can make profits for international companies. They're a front for the system aren't they. The media, they tell people what the system wants you to know to keep people down'* (YM, D Town).

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[49] Reiner (2016: 133) has argued that the 'pattern of media representation of crime is partly a direct reflection of the ideologies of media owners, producers or reporters. Most media organizations are large corporations, and their owners predominately conservative'.

These themes are consistent with UK based research which has highlighted young people's lack of trust in their government and has revealed a deep antipathy and distrust towards politicians (Henn *et al.* 2005; Norris 2011; Henn and Foard 2012; Judge 2014). The participants who expressed these views implicitly or explicitly emphasised the paradoxical nature of legitimised violence and concealed criminality committed by the powerful and dominant members of society whilst such members concomitantly condemn violence and criminality committed by less powerful and subordinated groups. Such sentiments expressed could be considered to highlight the mediated permeation of valorised violence throughout both privileged and marginalised social groups (Densley and Stevens 2015).

<u>Disproportionate Reporting of Blue Collar Crime</u>

On a number of occasions these arguments were extended to the disproportionate news media representation of blue collar crime compared to white collar crime, commonly expressed as street crime contrasted against political and corporate crime. A prevailing sense of injustice was expressed in these instances and appeared to endorse the participants' lack of trust and respect for news media, and indeed the government in general. Such a disproportionate representation of blue collar crime and the concealed nature of white collar crime have been widely acknowledged within critical criminological literature (Nelken 1994; Croall 2001; Tombs and Whyte 2003; van Erp *et al*. 2015).

This theme was highlighted by a participant in D Town:

> *'Blue collar you get a sentence, white collar it's not condemned it's like because it's for the money, it's for the rich. That's what the interests of the police are because they're bodyguards of the rich really'* (YM, D Town).
> *'Why would you say that's the case? What are the reasons behind it?'* (Researcher).
> *'Because everything's for the capitalist system'* (YM, D Town).

The Entertainment Media

As outlined earlier, young people's engagement with media is pervasive within late modernity throughout the Western world and unsurprisingly, the young people in the study widely spoke about their daily engagement and interaction with a variety of entertainment mediums. The overarching sentiment expressed among the participants was that they engaged with entertainment media because it was essentially entertaining. Moreover, they acknowledged that crime is a staple part of the entertainment media because crime can be profitable. These themes were highlighted in D Town:

> '*Why do you think there's a lot of crime on TV and in Films*?' (Researcher).
> '*Makes it more interesting*' (YM, D Town).
> '*Because that's what the film industry wants people to see because they know that's what people want to pay for*' (YM, D Town).
> '*It makes money*' (YM, D Town)
> '*It's entertaining. Crime sells*' (YM, D Town).

The media discussed; television, film, music and videogames, were all generally seen a means of release and recreation with the prevailing consensus that they were viewed and understood as forms of fiction which were not necessarily a reflection of reality. However, there were inherent ambiguities at times concerning the young people's engagement with popular media and numerous occasions where their virtually lived experiences influenced their day-to-day actually lived experiences on cognitive and spatial levels.

Videogames were widely discussed across the three research sites. The young men in the study were the most frequent players of videogames and discussed their engagement with videogames in much more depth than the young women in the study. It is however possible that participation in videogame playing was higher among the young women than disclosed, but owing to perceived gender roles the young women in the study were potentially less forthcoming with divulging their use of videogames (Harvey 2015).

Across all three research sites, *Grand Theft Auto 5* (GTA5)[50] was the most widely played and discussed videogame. The *Grand Theft Auto* series of games has received global popularity, with number five being the biggest seller to date (Independent 2014), whilst concurrently receiving widespread criticism for its depictions and apparent glamorisation of violent crime, murder, drug use, racism, sexism and prostitution (Garrelts 2006; Polasek 2014; Karlsen 2015). Indeed, the former Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, described videogames to have a 'corrosive effect', with specific mention to GTA5 (Independent 2013a). Moreover, studies have explicitly linked the game to violent behavioural effects associated with videogame playing (Anderson and Warburton 2012).

GTA was explicitly mentioned by a participant in C Town as an easy scapegoat and was viewed as an unjust explanation for violent offending. He suggested that through linking GTA to violent crime the social condemnation becomes more pronounced:

> *'If someone punched someone and assaulted someone it's a bit like oh' they assaulted someone but if they* [the media] *say they played on Grand Theft Auto it's a massive thing – everyone attack Rockstar and arrrgh – but really that person was just getting on their nerves so they just punched them'* (YM, C Town).

On the contrary to the socio-political criticism the game has received, the content has been described by social critics as witty satire on modern Westernised life and obvious hyperbole (Karlsen 2015). Furthermore, numerous studies have failed to find a link between violent video games and aggressive behaviour in general (Cunningham *et al*. 2011; Ferguson *et al*. 2014) and specifically in regards to GTA (Tear and Nielsen 2013).

<u>Understanding Fact from Fiction</u>

The participants in the study who discussed their engagement with GTA5 repeatedly stressed their understanding of the game as a work of fiction and greatly

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[50] *Grand Theft Auto* is an action-adventure video game series developed by British game developer RockStar. The series has achieved huge global success and has become one of the best-selling video game franchises of all time, with *Grand Theft Auto 5* being reported as the fastest selling entertainment-product of all time (The Telegraph 2013).

removed from the reality of everyday experience. The lack of consequences entailed within playing the game were palpably expressed by the participants, indeed this appeared to be a major factor in the games' popularity. Although the acting out of crimes in the game was regarded as fun and pleasurable, intuitive recognition of the negative consequences associated with acting out such behaviour in 'real life' was manifestly apparent in their responses.

When asked why video games revolving around crime, such as GTA, are so popular the young people that played the game separated it from reality, stressing it as a work of fiction and regarding it as a form of release:

> *'It's like because you know the consequences of doing crime obviously because you're not going to do it in real life, it's just entertaining'* (YM, D Town).

The participants spoke about video games not having consequences, with specific mention to GTA:

> *'In GTA you're controlling someone and you can do any crime you want but it's like if you get killed you re-spawn but in real life you don't'* (YM, D Town).

> *'You can do things that you can't do in real life, like in GTA you can go and kill as many people as you want and if you die or get game over it's not the end of the world. It's not like if I killed somebody in here'* (YM, C Town).

These findings suggest that the participants' regard the game as a zone of cultural exception (Atkinson and Rodgers 2015) which is disconnected from day-to-day normative assumptions of social conduct and devoid of consequences. Moreover, the game seemed to operate as a release mechanism for the young people who engaged with it and act as an outlet to express aggression. As such, for the participants, the game appeared to manage and direct potential aggressive behaviour within a controlled and fictional environment. These findings are comparable with the 'catharsis hypothesis' (Sherry 2007) which asserts violent video games may actually provide a platform to express violence and relieve stress.

<u>Ambiguity and Glamorisation of Crime</u>

Television programmes and film were particularly popular entertainment mediums across all three research sites. Engagement with these mediums was approximately

equal across all three research sites and between the participants. Crime was a considered as a recurring theme throughout these mediums and was widely regarded to add entertainment value. The young men and young women in the study acknowledged that these mediums often portray the most extreme and rare occurrences of crime and as such, the rarity and extremity of the crimes made them entertaining. Generally, the more serious the crime, when fictionalised, the more entertaining it was regarded:

> *'They* [serious crimes] *are more entertaining than lesser crimes. Like say if you saw someone doing credit card fraud, a two hour long movie on credit card fraud everyone is going to be thinking this is boring'* (YW, C Town).

The young people in the study frequently alluded to the lure and seduction of crime, suggesting that fictionalised crime can be appealing. Crimes within entertainment were ultimately said to be a source of enticement and fascination, particularly murder. Such findings are consistent with literature which highlights people's tendency to hold morbid fascinations with crime fiction which depicts the severe side of human nature (Scaggs 2005) and to display a greater interest in more atypical crimes (Greer 2009; Turnbull 2014). Such findings reflect a 'culture of spite' (Presdee 2000) within which victimisation and bloodthirsty brutality have emerged to become central sources of entertainment.

Soap operas were engaged with by a number of, primarily young women, participants and although it was acknowledged that they contained themes around a range of crime types, it was expressed that a high profile murder within *EastEnders* was the crime that had people interested:

> *'Eastenders for example, the question on everybody's mind is who killed Lucy Beale?'* (YW, D Town).

Indeed, soap operas are regarded to incorporate more mundane and typical crime compared to the majority of fictionalised representations of crime, however, they are still regarded to vastly over-represent the occurrence of more atypical crime, particularly murder (Crayford *et al*. 1997). Moreover, the participants acknowledged the ambiguous representations of crimes throughout film and

television and although it was commonly expressed that crime *per se* was glamorised, divergences between the glamour portrayed around certain types of crimes was apparent.

As such, violence was widely seen as glamorised, which is consistent with research into cultural representations of violence (Greer 2009). Whereas drugs were understood to embody mixed messages concerning the use of drugs and the potential consequence of drugs[51], which is also consistent with research into cultural representations of drug use (Boyd 2010; Manning 2014). Sex crimes were uniformly seen as unglamorous and sex offenders tended to be considered demonised within entertainment media. These themes were expressed by a number of participants:

> *'Are there any crimes that aren't glamorised?'* (Researcher).
> *'Paedophiles'* (YM, C Town).
> *'Yeah. Paedos'* (YW, C Town).
> *'What crimes are glamorised?'* (Researcher)
> *'Anything to do with murders'* (YW, C town).
>
> *'What crimes aren't glamorised?'* (Researcher)
> '*Like rape. Things like that. Paedophilia. I think murder is quite glamorised...Like someone who's hard*' (YM, D Town).
> *'Yeah, hard'* (YM, D Town).

Research into cultural representations of sexual offending has generally revealed mediated reproduction of gender stereotypes and ambiguous constructions of victims (Greer 2003; Carrabine 2008; Brayford and Deering 2012).

The Seduction and Consequences of Crime

Related to the themes of glamorisation, the participants recognised a blurring of boundaries between crime in general being portrayed as being cool and crime being portrayed as harmful. Entertainment media, whilst often glamorising certain aspects, of crime was acknowledged to often portray the potential associated consequences. Although such consequences were represented, they were

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[51] As outlined earlier, mixed messages around drug use was a very prominent theme within the performances. Within the focus groups, mixed messages around drugs were alluded to. The divergence in cultural representations between the glamour of violent crime and the demonisation of sex crime was a common theme in the focus groups.

considered to be blurred with the allure of criminal behaviour and to send mixed messages, which were regarded particularly pertinent to impressionable youth.

This tension was highlighted in dialogue between two participants' in C Town:

'I think in most TV programmes and in most films, any programme that features crime, whoever does the crime usually gets caught. Like I watch Criminal Minds and every time they get caught and even if it takes a couple of series they'll get caught. Even in Coronation Street when people commit crimes they'll get caught' (YM, C Town).

'But at the same time, if someone's going to end up committing a crime then they're going to need the adrenaline rush and they're going to get it from doing that crime. I don't think TV or anything is going to affect the fact that they get their adrenaline from doing that and they're going to do it again' (YF, C Town).

Mediated representations of crime are indeed considered to blur the boundaries between the seduction of crime and its lasting consequences (Yar 2010; Young 2010), which can potentially result in an ambiguous landscape concerning criminal behaviour where criminality is portrayed as both glamorous and unappealing.

The Role of Music

Music was a further entertainment medium that the participants engaged with across all three sites. Although music was discussed in less length that videogames, television and film, it still appeared to play an important recreational role in a significant number of the participants' lives. The genres of hip hop and grime were the most common genres that the young people in the study spoke about their engagement with. This was most often the case for the young men, although a number of young women were fans of the genres too. Such popularity is likely to be a direct reflection of the fact that hip hop is acknowledged to be the most popular genre of music among late modern youth, which is particularly the case for young men (Williams 2015) and grime is very popular among UK youth (Independent 2015).

The participants' views on hip hop and grime demonstrated an implicit understanding of how factional and fictional representations of crime can overlap and blur within entertainment media. Hip hop and grime music were primarily

understood as narratives that were based on direct experiences whilst undoubtedly embellished for the sake of sensationalisation and entertainment. Such an understanding is consistent with the body of research into hip hop which commonly highlights that the genre has a tendency to romanticise and exaggerate the themes and topics expressed within (Bogazianos 2012; Ilan 2015).

This theme was expressed by a young man in B Town:

> *'So you wouldn't necessarily believe what you listen to?'* (Researcher).

> *'Yeah. It does happen among those groups of people but not on such a large scale, it only happens to a couple. Like rappers occasionally get shot but it doesn't happen to everyone. They're not like all murderers even though they say they are'* (YM, B Town).

Moreover, the way crime is used in music was considered comical by some of the participants, which was considered to add to its entertainment value:

> *'They* [rappers] *talk about it in a funny way and kind of describe doing things. It's just like the kind of thing you'd see on a comedy film about crime'* (YM, C Town).

Grime music has been identified as increasingly pro-social (Ilan 2012) and indeed, the genre was regarded as '*inspirational*' (YW, C Town) by a young woman within the study.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the foremost findings emerging from the research regarding media engagement, mediated representations and the blurring of factional and fictional accounts of crime. The first section of the chapter, *Visual Representations*, discussed the findings from the performative drama method and the draw and write method that were undertaken in B Town. The second section of the chapter, *Verbal Interpretations*, discussed the findings from the focus groups undertaken in B Town, C Town and D Town through a series of interrelated subheadings.

The subsequent, and final, chapter of the discussion will draw the main themes from the previous two chapters together to provide a platform to portray the overall picture painted by the participants within the study.

The Portrayal of Crime

This chapter will draw the findings discussed in the previous two chapters together to analyse the foremost crime concerns and recurring themes regarding the cultural representation of crime. The chapter aims to provide a holistic picture of how the research participants' crime concerns and their opinions on the cultural representation of crime interacted to shape an overall lived experience of crime.

The chapter will start by outlining the tensions that arose between the participants' sense of agency and their conceptions of structural constraints before analysing how these notions influenced their overall lived experience of crime.

<u>Rational Actors or Passive Observers</u>

Contemporary social research recognises that young people are not merely passive actors who should be viewed as objects of study, rather they ought to be seen as active social agents who play a significant role in the consumption and construction of contemporary culture and who possess the capacity to make significant contributions to public and political discourse (Thomson 2008; Allan 2012). The social sciences have witnessed a growing acknowledgment that young people's lives need to be explored on their own terms and through their own perspectives and this should be reflected throughout the research methods adopted when conducting research with young people (Stirling *et al*. 2015; Mannay 2016). Indeed, young people are considered to actively contribute to the constitution of contemporary society as represented by the increasingly common practice of creating images, both moving and static, and sharing them via various forms of social media (Brooks 2013).

Research methods which acknowledge and complement the widespread phenomenon of a progressively visual society can be regarded to reflect the recognition that young people are, at least in some way, rational actors who consciously contribute to the construction of the social world, which has consequential implications throughout public and political discourse (Allan 2012).

Employing visual methods that endeavour to explore the nuanced lived experiences of contemporary young people's complicated lives on their own terms can be considered complementary to this increased awareness and rooted in the recognition that young people can, and do, play an active role in modern society. Thus, the visual methods employed throughout the field research in B Town were purposefully chosen to recognise, reflect and contribute to this growing acknowledgment.

Visual methods are regarded to provide young people a platform to represent their lived experiences which are embedded in their own interpretations and actions (Heat *et al*. 2009; Stirling *et al*. 2015). The use of visual methods in such a way is regarded to aid the shifting of power and in so help to democratise the research process and in doing so authenticate the findings unearthed throughout (Mannay 2016). This is considered particularly true of performative methods as they are considered as an inclusive and empowering means of expression (Foster 2016). Such a process was evident within the performative research undertaken in B Town. The young people in the study were provided with a broad research area relating to issues of crime[52] within which they were instructed to interpret and act out how they deemed appropriate. As such, along with the verbal follow up via the subsequent discussion panels, the young people retained control throughout the research and their personal agency was emphasised (Leavy 2015).

The reoccurring themes represented throughout the performative elements of the research can be considered to reflect both their tangible lived experiences encountered in their day-to-day lives and their more abstract lived experiences encountered throughout various forms of culture. This distinction between lived experiences has been contextualised within this thesis as actually lived experiences and virtually lived experiences.

The situated narratives expressed throughout the performative elements explored the relationships between the global and the local which were embedded within the participants own sense of structure and agency and bound to their own

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[52] The broad area was informed by the earlier focus groups which explored crime concern and the cultural representation of crime.

'micropolitics' of personalised exchange (Tulloch 1999). The elements of collaborative analysis undertaken with the participants demonstrated that their performances were indeed rooted in an understanding and awareness of issues that affect themselves on a micro level whilst influenced by their engagement with culture on a macro level, underpinned by the micropolitics of localised identity and influenced by the macropolitics of globalised representation. Such a relationship between micro and macro influences emerged in a variety of ways and will be discussed at various points throughout this chapter.

It has been argued that although visual methods may be considered more authentic than other modes of representation, due to the reasons outlined above, in some instances young people have a tendency to replicate mainstream depictions and thus such representations should not necessarily be regarded to reflect higher levels of realness (Blum-Ross 2013). However, it could be argued that the opposite is true because 'realness' is rooted within young people's lived experiences which are inherently culturally bound within late modernity. As such, the performative methods were employed as a means to explore how their reading of culture informs their lived experiences and how their reading of their lived experiences informs their reading of culture[53].

The performances produced by the young people in the study demonstrate that the participants virtually lived experiences of crime, through various forms of media, impact and influence their actually lived experiences of crime in a variety of ways. Indeed, the merging of actual lived experiences and virtual lived experiences throughout the performative elements of the research process highlights that 'realness' is inexorably influenced by factional *and* fictional experiences of crime. This merging of experiences was also evident during the draw and write methods undertaken in B Town which were discussed during the previous chapter.

Across all three research sites, the young people consistently alluded to their sense of agency within the focus groups and on occasion the participants within the focus groups explicitly communicated that they are rational actors and understand their

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[53] This is the overlap and interaction between actually and virtually lived experiences which I argue form an overall lived experience.

rights and responsibilities more than the general perception of young people would indicate:

'People are age and below are committing petty crime, I know it's still crime, but we're quite forward thinking like we know the rights and wrongs and like we know the laws, we're quite educated to know that we shouldn't commit crimes because we know the consequences' (YM, B Town).

Generally, the research participants considered themselves as rational social actors with the potential capacity to create and control their individual pathways through life. However, somewhat contradictorily, there was considerable acknowledgement, both implicit and explicit, that such pathways are constrained by, and bounded to, wider social forces which are often beyond their remit of control. These findings highlight the precarious nature of young people's ontological security within late modernity, which is regarded particularly pronounced within areas of high social deprivation (Chan and Rigakos 2002). This tension was outlined by a young woman in B Town:

'It's hard to get a good job round here. Like most people don't have much education. I mean, I try hard [at school] *and want to get a good job but like because the area I live in I might not be able to get one'* (YW, B Town).

Crime was widely seen as an expected reality of lived experience and an inevitable consequence of late modern life. Although the young people in the study generally acknowledged there are various ways of avoiding becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime, they felt crime was an unavoidable characteristic of contemporary life. Unavoidable on an actually lived experienced level through proximate crime, primarily articulated as low-level and petty crime, and unavoidable on a virtually lived experienced level through mediated representations of crime, primarily articulated as high-level and serious crime. Actually lived experiences of common, petty crime became normalised and expected as did virtual lived experiences of uncommon, serious crime. These lived-experiences coalesced to form an ambiguous sense of agency wherein the participants acknowledged they had the

ability to influence their lived experiences whilst concurrently recognising such experiences were underpinned by wider forces frequently beyond their remit of control.

A common theme that emerged from the focus groups, across all three research sites, was the participants' engagement with various forms of media that featured elements of crime and criminality, either as its central aspect or as peripheral inclusions. Young people's engagement with media is extensive throughout the Western world and is on the rise owing to increased affordability and availability (Rideout *et al*. 2010; Coleman 2012), and media that depicts crime is acknowledged as widespread and pervasive throughout both news media and entertainment media (Carrabine 2008; Greer and Reiner 2012; Jewkes 2015). The young people in the study expressed that they consciously chose which types of media they engaged with whilst concomitantly conveying the inescapability of mediated representations of crime, paradoxically implying an absence, or at least a limitation, of choice. This was highlighted in dialogue from B Town:

> '*I like crime dramas but I don't watch things like Crimewatch*' (YF, B Town).
> '*Yeah but crime is everywhere* [in the media]. *You can't avoid it*' (YM, B Town).

This theme from the research demonstrates the young people's agency in choosing which media they engaged within whilst concurrently being structurally constrained via pervasive mediated representations.

Sense of Agency

The portrayal of crime produced by the participants, throughout all methods and across each research site, painted a picture of astute awareness. Although there were ambiguities and inconsistencies within, the overall understanding and given meanings expressed by the participants embodied a collective sense of competency. The research undertaken revealed that the participants possess the capacity and the ability to exercise personal agency through making informed decisions and performing actions based on their understandings and given meanings of both their actually and virtually lived experiences. However, such a

sense of agency was palpably constrained and anchored within their understanding of wider structural factors which were reinforced and reproduced throughout socio-political discourse and practice. Nonetheless, the research demonstrated that this sense of agency, although seemingly constrained within such wider structural processes, has the potential to be reinterpreted through an ongoing process of individual and collective meaning making and a resistance towards the dominant discourse. In this context, the meanings underpinning their overall lived experiences were guided by both their individual sense of situated subjective agency and their actual and intuitive acknowledgement of the ostensibly objective broader social forces which shape them.

Resistance and Reproduction

The participants' crime concerns and their opinions on the cultural representation of crime were varied and at times contradictory. Both the young women and young men in the study expressed widespread concerns about the representation of crime in the news media, particularly youth crime, and rejected the dominant discourse. In contrast to this, although the cultural representation of crime in the entertainment media was viewed as potentially concerning, it was primarily viewed as an enjoyable means of recreation and widely consumed. As such, the young people's engagement with the mediated representation of crime embodied elements of both resistance and reproduction. Indeed, it has been argued that, 'young people's reading of the media often involves both 'resistance' *and* 'reproduction'; and its ideological significance needs to be interpreted within the social contexts and interpersonal relationships in which it is situated' (Buckingham and Sefton-Green 1994, emphasis in original).

Resistance was apparent in the way the participants widely rejected the dominant news media representation that they viewed as reinforcing the stereotype of all young people as potentially deviant. In this sense, their resistance could be interpreted through a cultural criminological lens as a transgressive act which sought to transcend culturally prescribed notions of normative youth behaviour (O'Neill and Seal 2012). Whereas reproduction was present in the ways in which

the young people in the study were involved in both the individualised consumption of contemporary culture and the concomitant collective construction of it through engaging with late modern capitalist processes. This process was evident through the ways in which they individually consumed and engaged with varying entertainment mediums which have played a part in shaping notions of risky and problematic youth. As such, the participants' resisted the dominant news media representation of young people but played an unintentional and unavoidable role in reproducing the notions of the problematic and risky youth though their engagement with entertainment media.

This reproduction was played out within wider structural factors which were indeed beyond their remit of control. Although they felt that crime was entertaining, they acknowledged its pervasive commodification was inescapable and part of everyday existence. In this context, their virtually lived experiences of crime highlighted the embedded mediated meanings of crime in the participants' everyday lives (Ferrell 2013) whilst being rooted in elements of both resistance and reproduction. Such embedded mediated meanings, embodied within cultural representations of crime, and experienced in their day-to-day lives was a recurring theme throughout. Awareness of the seduction of crime (Katz 1988) was certainly present within their engagement with violent entertainment media which embodied the phenomenology of crime in its shame and glory, its pleasure and panic, its excitement and desperation (Young 2004). Indeed, the participants widely engaged with the 'culture of spite' (Presdee 2000) where violent crime was viewed as exciting and enticing whilst they acknowledged that the consequences of violent crime are ultimately harmful and not entertaining in 'real life'.

Moreover, there were elements of resistance and reproduction of the cultural representation of crime evident in the divergence between the attitudes expressed within the focus groups which considered white collar crime as common whilst in contrast the pictures portrayed within the drawings and writings and the performances produced during the performative drama focused solely on blue collar crimes. Such findings highlight the participants' sense of agency and resistance towards the dominant discourse which minimises crimes by the powerful

whilst the dominant cultural representations contained within the media were however clearly influential in their visual portrayals of crime and criminality.

The research findings highlight that there were significant gendered variations surrounding the potential of becoming a victim of crime. The young women in the study displayed heightened concerns which were primarily rooted in their perceptions of personal safety and risk. The findings revealed that the young women possess the agency to self-regulate through methods of safekeeping which were situated in localised spaces. However, such behaviour and views on risk were influenced by wider structural processes of gender socialisation and dominant hegemonic masculine cultural representations reproduced throughout mediated socio-political patriarchy.

The mediated representation of sex offending influenced the young women's perceptions and concerns regarding the risks and management of sexual victimisation. High profile child sex scandals were frequently mentioned by the young women in the study and appeared to be embedded into their collective consciousness. Such cases served to both dramatise and clarify normative boundaries concerning sex offending which functioned to increase notions of risk and strengthen the need for safekeeping, whilst concurrently concerns were raised regarding the management of such cases and about the wider management of sex offending. In this context, media representation acted to reproduce notions of the need for safekeeping, situated within perceived risks, whilst simultaneously serving as a source of resistance for the young women who questioned how these cases could happen in contemporary society alongside their questioning of the wider representation of sex offending. Such a resistance displayed by the young women could be considered ideological in this respect. Indeed, child sex abuse scandals have been argued to possess the potential to 'redefine reality, transforming public perceptions of individuals and organisations and reshaping cultural attitudes towards 'official' power' (Greer and McLaughlin 2013: 260). Moreover, the young women in the study exercised a form of ideological resistance through rejecting mediated representations of victim blaming whilst concurrently reproducing aspects of appropriate femininity though their methods of safekeeping.

The divergence between the young women's concerns around private and public spaces appeared to additionally embody elements of ideological resistance and reproduction. The recurring theme expressed throughout the performances portraying concerns around personal safety, involving someone known to them and occurring within private spaces, resisted the dominant media representation which disproportionately focuses on victimisation perpetrated by strangers within public places. In contrast to this, the wide spread generalised concern around personal safety expressed throughout the focus groups appeared to be at least partially influenced by such dominant media representations of disproportionate risk and consequently reproduced notions of appropriate femininity and safekeeping. These tensions highlighted the sense of agency and understanding that the young women possessed regarding the reality of risk of sexual offending whilst still being influenced by wider structural forces.

In contrast to the young women's heightened sense of safekeeping, the young men's lack of safekeeping was evidently situated within their personal agency concerning their perceived lack of potential risk of criminal victimisation owing to their apparent lesser concerns, whilst simultaneously situated within wider structural constructions and mediated representations of appropriate masculinity. As such, a generalised 'emotional vulnerability' (Goodey 1997) was projected by the young men in the study and a potential masking or minimising of concerns in line with dominant conceptions of gender socialisation was evident. Indeed, as outlined in the literature, 'the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity are seen to prevent, inhibit or discourage men from disclosing their fears and consequently boys learn from an early age to hide their feelings' (Sutton and Farrall 2009: 112).

The habitual, instinctive code of the streets that governed the participants' occupation and exercise of localised spaces was acted out in keeping with these gendered differences around conceptions of safekeeping and appropriate gendered behaviour, resulting in contrasting means to navigate the 'landscapes of concern' that were identified. The landscapes of concern encompassed localised spaces such as parks, certain roads and estates. As such, the young women's heightened sense of vulnerability and risk made them more likely to avoid these landscapes whilst the

young men's 'emotional vulnerability' and reduced sense of risk made them more likely to occupy such landscapes.

The majority of the young men in the study did not trust or respect the police because essentially they perceived that they were not trusted or respected in return. As such, they portrayed that an embedded sense of 'institutionalised mistrust' (Kelly 2003) was directed towards them. Indeed, a significant number of the young men felt that they were the 'usual suspects' (McAra and McVie 2005) and were routinely stopped and searched based on their appearance, locality or family history. An atmosphere of marginalised masculinity (Connell 1995) was apparent throughout the young men's accounts of their adverse police contact and their resistance to dominant hegemonic practices embodied an element of ideological significance.

Moreover, although both the young men and the young women in the study conveyed widespread concerns around the mediated representation of young people in the media, the young men were the most resistant towards such representations. These findings suggest that the young men in the study felt that they bore the brunt of the negative mediated representations of young people and thus projected a heightened sense of resistance. Furthermore, the overall findings suggest that the young men, and indeed the participants in general, rejected the dominant discourse of problematic and risky youth as essentially they did not consider themselves or young people in general to embody significant risks or problems to each other or to wider society. Conversely, the findings reveal that the participants in the study ultimately viewed adults to embody the most problems and risk to young people and to wider society.

Summary

This chapter has drawn the main themes discussed in the previous two chapters together to provide an integrated, interpretative analysis of the complete picture portrayed throughout the research. The first section of the chapter discussed the tensions between young people as passive observers and rational actors before the subsequent section argued that the young people in the study possessed a strong

sense of agency, albeit constrained within wider social structures. The final section of this chapter then used this framework to discuss the participants' resistance and reproduction of the conceptions of problematic and risky youth, much of which could be considered to embody ideological significance.

The overall discussion, outlined within the previous three chapters, has revealed that the research questions overlapped and interacted with one another. The participants' crime concerns were embedded in both their actually lived experiences of crime prevalence, crime management and their virtually lived experiences of the cultural representation of crime. Such concerns around the cultural representation of crime were primarily rooted in the news media representation of young people, which the participants' actively resisted.

The findings have revealed that the generalised consensus among young people in the study was that the dominant media depiction of risky and problematic youth is unjustly founded and serves to reinforce a sense of institutionalised mistrust. Whilst the participants resisted the news media they actively engaged with entertainment media, which in part acts to reinforce notions of problematic and risky youth. Moreover, the findings have revealed that young people's overall lived experiences of crime were affected by both their crime concerns and the cultural representations of crime through the overlapping and interacting of these themes. Indeed, the participant's crime concerns were informed by both their actually and virtually lived experiences whilst the cultural representation of crime was virtually lived through various mediums which had consequences for their day to day actually lived experiences. Furthermore, the discussion has revealed that there are significant gendered variations in how the young people in the study experience crime concerns and significant gendered variations regarding their opinions on the cultural representation of crime. Such variations have highlighted that for the young people in the study gender was a significant factor in their overall lived experience of crime.

The next chapter will conclude the thesis by reflecting upon the research process, summarising how the aims of the thesis have been met, outlining the contributions of the thesis, and discussing potential future directions for criminological research.

PART V

Conclusion

This chapter will draw the thesis to a conclusion by reflecting upon the research process, outlining the contributions of the thesis, and discussing potential future directions. The chapter will be divided into three sections. The first section; *The Research Process*, will reflexively consider the research process and will be divided into a series of subsections. The second section; *Contributions*, will outline the contributions that this thesis has made. The third and final section; The *Future Image of Crime*, will discuss what the implications of this thesis suggest for future research within the discipline of criminology.

The Research Process

This section of the chapter will be divided into four subsections and utilise the notion of reflexivity to present a history of the research and portray a transparent account of the overall research process (Finlay 2002). The first subsection, *Rationale for Research Topics, Framework and Methodology* will reflect upon why I chose the topics explored within this thesis and why I employed the chosen framework and methodology. In the second subsection, *Literature Review,* I will reflect upon the critical literature review and how it informed the research process. The third subsection, *Research Aims and Research Objective,* will reflect upon how I have met the main aims and the research objective underpinning the thesis. The fourth and final subsection, *Challenges and Limitations*, will reflect upon the challenges I faced during the research process and the limitations of my study.

Rationale for Research Topics, Framework and Methodology

During my MsC research into fear of crime I identified that young people's voices were seriously lacking from the vast debate on fear of crime. Moreover, the research revealed that the field was plagued with conceptual and methodological issues and that criticism within the field had prompted the acknowledgement of the necessity to encompass a wider reading of the concept through the use of more humanistic methods. These factors influenced me to develop the concept of *crime concern* which I employed to explore young people's concerns around crime

prevalence, crime management, and crime representation to allow for an exploration into the overlapping concerns related to crime which interact and inform young people's overall lived experiences of crime.

Upon developing the concept I recognised that cultural criminology would be an appropriate framework to employ owing to its emphasis on exploring the ways in which the representation of crime intertwines with the management of crime and how consequential understandings and attributed meanings arise and are experienced in everyday life. Moreover, I decided to infuse this approach with an interpretive phenomenological attitude as it felt attuned to the humanistic aspects of crime I endeavoured to explore and it had many overlaps with aspects of cultural criminology.

The importance of the visual and the emphasis upon the situated nature of experience within this approach led me to employ methods that could capture the nuances of crime concern. As such, I utilised an emerging methodology that would explore the topics of interest to my research through performative drama methods. Alongside this method I employed a further visual method, the draw and write method, and focus groups to aid further depth to my investigation and foster increased perspective.

On reflection, I certainly feel the use of multiple methods strengthened my research through providing a greater breadth of understanding than a singular method would have been likely to foster. However, the use of multiple methods did entail challenges, which will be outlined later in the chapter.

Literature Review

I purposively employed the critical literature review (part II of the thesis) to inform the aims of the thesis and shape the research questions. Moreover, I carefully designed the structure of the literature review to set the context for the study in a logical order.

Within the first chapter of the literature review, *Young People in Late Modernity,* I sought to explore the literature pertaining to young people's position within the

landscape of late modernity. As young people and crime were the central focus of this study, the aim of this chapter was to situate young people's lived experiences within the contemporary context of crime and control.

The late modern attitude towards young people was initially explored through the notion of the 'problem of youth' (France 2007). Once this scene had been set, I reviewed the literature regarding the control and management of young offenders, and indeed young people in general, through notions of risk. Throughout the literature the notion of the 'risk society' (Beck 1992) was a recurring theme and was regarded to embody much of the late modern day-to-day lived experience of young people. Once these areas had been covered, I succinctly reviewed and outlined the literature relating to the youth justice system to provide a snapshot of the foremost features that have shaped the contemporary youth justice terrain. Such features were identified as primarily shaped by notions of problematic and risky youth. Within the final section of the chapter I then explored the gendered implications of late modern youth set within the context of the previous sections.

Set against this backdrop of problematic and risky late modern youth, within the second chapter of the literature review, *Young People, Mediated Representation, and Media Engagement,* I sought to explore how young people are represented within the media and how young people engage with late modern media. As young people and crime were the central focus of the study, this chapter explicitly focused on media that was connected to young people and that revolved around or embodied elements of crime and transgression. Gendered implications of media representation and mediated engagement were addressed within each section.

Throughout the first section of the chapter I addressed the representation of young people in the news media, alongside the representation of young people's engagement with entertainment media, by charting historical and contemporary news reporting on problematic and risky youth. The notion of moral panic (Cohen 1972) was employed throughout this section in a broad sense to symbolise the recurring societal unease that has been historically projected on to young people and continues to be in late modernity. Within this chapter, I documented that such

societal unease has resulted from both the media reporting on them *and* young people's engagement with media which serves to interact and (mis)inform one another. Indeed, it appeared that young people unintentionally reproduced notions of problem and risk through engaging with late modern media which inescapably encompasses crime and violence.

This section of the literature review highlighted that although a wealth of research has been conducted on the representation of young people in the news media there is a gap regarding how young people perceive the news representation of young offenders, and indeed the wider news representation of young people.

Once this context was set, the second section of the chapter charted young people's changing media engagement within late modernity through looking at the specific mediums of video games, television, film and music which feature elements of crime and transgression. Owing to the cultural criminological approach I employed within the thesis, the commodification of crime within these mediums was as recurring theme within this section. As such, the first subsection documented the notion of young people as consumers and charted the historical significances which have shaped the late modern youth consumer, laying the foundation for the rest of the section.

Much of the literature addressed within the following subsections revolved around the 'effects' of violent media as this type of research dominates these topics within academia. The literature review highlighted that 'media effects' research is primarily located within the disciplines of psychology and media studies and is not particularly associated with criminology. Moreover, the literature review demonstrated that the 'effects' literature is almost exclusively dominated by positivistic quantitative methods. Furthermore, the literature review demonstrated that 'effects' research is a highly divisive area with essentially two schools of thought; those who support the notion of negative effects and those who discredit it.

I made the distinction at the end of each section that criminology (almost exclusively cultural criminology) has explored these topics in a more nuanced

approach and that the general consensus among cultural criminological researchers is that 'effects' research completely removes violence from its context and as a result renders much of the research meaningless (Rafter and Brown 2011; Atkinson and Rogers 2015; Ferrell *et al.* 2015)[54]. As such, the review highlighted the need for more humanistic readings of these areas framed within a criminological approach. To my surprise, there was a serious lack of research from a criminological perspective around young people's engagement with media that embodies elements of crime and transgression

In the final chapter of the literature review, *Fear of Crime, Young People, and Crime Concern*, I addressed the concept of fear of crime. Although this was my starting point there were a number of reasons why it felt appropriate to position this as the final chapter within the literature review. First, I wanted to set the context of late modernity as essentially the concept of fear of crime grew out of late modern conditions. Once this context was set, it seemed appropriate to review the literature relating to young people's engagement with the media as I was aware that the concept of fear of crime and media representation has overlaps. Moreover, I was already conscious that the fear of crime literature had minimised young people's voices and I hoped that more research would have emerged. However, to my continued dismay an absence of criminological literature on young people and fear of crime was still apparent.

This chapter of the literature review essentially set out to do what I had already planned to address; I critically reviewed fear of crime through outlining the methodological and conceptual issues surrounding the field, highlighted the lack of literature around young people's fears, and then based on this context, reconceptualise the notion in accordance with my framework and set the scene for my methods.

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[54] The wider discipline of criminology has never particularly engaged with 'effects' research and numerous criminologists have questioned its value. This viewpoint is eruditely articulated by Reiner (2016: 131) who argues that 'the bulk of research on media effects has been conducted within a positivist paradigm. The typical approach has used social psychology laboratory research: an experimental and a control group are exposed to some media content and are measured before and after to ascertain the 'effects'. This vast body of research has yielded little in return for the enormous expenditure and effort involved'.

Research Aims and Research Objective

Within this subsection of the chapter I will outline how I met the aims that underpinned the study and shaped the research questions addressed within the field research. The section will then reflect upon the research objective.

The aims were:

1) Explore young people's crime concerns.

2) Investigate young people's engagement with various forms of media in order to explore their opinions on the cultural representation of crime.

The first research aim was met through exploring the participants' concerns regarding the prevalence of crime, their concerns about its management, and their concerns about its cultural representation. The findings demonstrated that these spheres overlapped and interacted with one another and that there were significant gendered variations. The young men in the study were much less concerned about crime victimisation than the young women in the study. Moreover, the young males in the study were much more concerned about the management of crime than the young women in the study. Both the young women and young men were concerned around the cultural representation of crime in the news media. However, such concerns were expressed differently by the young men and young women participants. Whilst both sexes expressed generalised concerns about the cultural representation of young people in the news media a number of young men were additionally concerned about disproportionate reporting of blue collar crime whereas the young women expressed widespread concerns around the cultural representation of sex offending.

All of the methods employed highlighted these concerns in one form of another. The performative methods primarily illuminated the females concerns around sexual victimisation and the cultural representation of sex offending. The focus groups primarily revealed that young men in the study had widespread concerns around the management of crime and that there was a widespread concern

amongst both sexes regarding the cultural representation of young people in the news media.

The second aim was met through exploring what forms of media that the participants engaged with, which was then used as a platform to explore the understandings and meanings they ascribe to various mediums. The media that the participants primarily engaged with were entertainment mediums and these were generally viewed as a form of recreation and release. The young people in the study demonstrated an acute awareness of their readings of the entertainment media and frequently acknowledged it as often removed from the realities of everyday life. Although the young people in the study engaged with the news media less frequently, they demonstrated a generalised awareness of the processes which shape and influence news media reporting.

The approach encompassed within the thesis was beneficial to explore these aims by placing an emphasis upon the situated and embodied nature of the participants' crime concerns via the utilisation of an interpretive phenomenological attitude. Moreover, through the use of a cultural criminological approach the participants' engagement with late modern media was situated within the intertwining of the management and mediated representation of crime.

The objective of the thesis was to explore how cultural representations of crime and crime concern intersect to inform young people's overall lived experience of crime. This was achieved through exploring the two research questions underpinning the field research. The exploration of these questions through the field research and the subsequent analysis demonstrated that the research questions overlapped by highlighting that young people's crime concerns were influenced by their opinions on the cultural representation of crime. The research revealed that the research participants' crime concerns were informed by both their actually lived experiences of crime situated within localised spaces and their virtually lived experiences of crime shaped through mediated engagement. These experiences thus intersected to inform an overall lived experience of crime which was influenced by both tangible and more abstract experiences.

<u>Challenges and Limitations</u>

This subsection of the chapter will firstly reflect upon the challenges that I encountered regarding the presentation and discussion of my data[55]. The chapter will then reflect upon the limitations of my study.

Owning to the 'mess' (Law 2004) I created through the use of unconventional methods, I faced significant challenges presenting and discussing my data. After much deliberation, I chose to initially discuss the visual methods findings separately from the focus group methods. This decision was taken because I felt it would convey a greater sense of clarity rather than if I presented the findings as a whole. Once this was undertaken in sufficient depth, I felt that the main themes would be able to be drawn together to provide an overall picture of the research through a holistic analysis. Drawing the separate streams of data together was indeed a challenge owing to the messiness and diverging nature of some of the findings but there were many overlaps between the streams and these are what I focused on drawing together.

A further factor which made discussing and analysing my findings a challenge was that throughout the field research it became apparent that the research questions blurred into one another and this made answering them individually practically impossible (i.e. their opinions on the cultural representation of crime encompassed concerns about the portrayal of youth crime). As such, I acknowledged that during the discussion I would have to respond to the research questions in an overlapping manner. On reflection, this challenge can essentially be seen as a strength of the research as my objective was to explore whether the topics addressed in the research questions overlapped and informed one another and the findings clearly demonstrated that they did in many respects.

An additional challenge, which I should acknowledge regards the discussion of the draw and write findings as I was initially uncertain as to where these findings should

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[55] The methodological challenges I faced are addressed in the *Reflections and Realities* section in the *Methodology* chapter earlier in the thesis. As such, this subsection will address the challenges I faced once I had collected and analysed my data.

be integrated into the discussion. Once I began to discuss the findings from the other methods the draw and write method emerged as appropriate to sit within the context of the second chapter of the discussion. I decided against explicitly incorporating the drawing and writings into my discussion chapter(s) as they were not the primary visual element of the study. Moreover, as the drawings and writings are attached as an appendix to the thesis this data essentially speaks for itself and I felt it unnecessary to describe each one in depth.

I acknowledge that there a number of limitations with my study. Owing to the qualitative and situated methodology employed, my findings may not be representative of, or generalisable to, young people *per se*. As such, the research is unlikely to be able to influence policy directions. Moreover, the findings unearthed throughout the methods employed may have been different if the research was conducted in an alternative locality. Furthermore, owing to my interpretative approach the double hermeneutic is present where my interpretations are essentially based on the interpretations of others and as such, other researchers may have arrived at distinctly different conclusions (Schutt 2014). Although I have endeavoured to counteract this by situating my interpretations within an atmosphere of reflexivity, in an attempt create a sense of transparency and highlight how such interpretations were shaped, they still remain my subjective interpretations. The paradox of the visual, outlined earlier in my methodology chapter, which has rendered my performative data less visual (albeit grounded in sound ethical reasons) is indeed a limitation. Without such a paradox my subjective interpretations would have been further contextualised and more transparent. As such, this paradox has resulted in an incomplete picture portrayed.

I am conscious that my thesis could be considered polemic and anti-positivistic, and indeed it is to a large extent. This stance is rooted in my dismay over the issues outlined regarding the gap in the literature on young people and fear of crime and the conceptual and methodological issues surrounding the field of study. Moreover, such an attitude has been reinforced by my cultural criminological approach which

stands as an enemy to the war on criminology[56] I identified within my framework and to 'the bogus of positivism' (Young 2004) which is widely criticised within the literature (Ferrell 2009, 2014). However, it would be misguided to outright dismiss quantitative research within the discipline of criminology, which cultural criminology does indeed recognise (Hayward 2015), and instead acknowledge that quantitative methods will always be necessary. Interpretive, qualitative, research should indeed constitute more 'flesh on the bones' of quantitative criminology and push 'the perspectives of conventional criminology beyond its horizon' (Presdee 2000: 15/16) whilst understanding that the positivist criminological skeleton will long remain and naive notions otherwise will cause further polarity.

Contributions

I consider this thesis to be firmly rooted within cultural criminology and as such, criminology is this is the discipline where I consider the contributions to lie.

I have made a conceptual contribution to the discipline of criminology through employing the notion of *crime concern*, this contribution has shifted the emphasis away from fear within the field of fear of crime research to encompass a more nuanced and expansive reading of young people's lived experiences and concerns of crime. Moreover, this conceptual contribution has been rooted in the alternative approach of combining a cultural criminological framework employing an interpretive phenomenological attitude.

I have made an original and innovative methodological contribution to the field of criminology through the use of visual methods and performative methods with a cultural criminological approach infused with aspects of interpretive phenomenology. This contribution has primarily been through the use of performative drama as this was the main focus of the visual element of the research. The methodological contribution has sought to add to the growing body

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[56] 'The War on Criminology' was used in my framework to denote the influence that administrative criminology and the bureaucratisation, managerialisation and professionalisation of universities have had upon the discipline of criminology. I argued that such processes have created an environment where the emotive subject of crime had become dehumanised. I then used this context to create a 'Case for Culture' which sought to employ a more humanistic approach to the study of crime.

of research which recognises that visual and performative methods have the potential to shape new understandings of crime and in doing so produce new knowledge.

I have made an overall contribution to the field of cultural criminology as this is the approach the thesis is framed within. I have made a conceptual contribution to the field by employing the notion of *crime concern* to explore young people's understandings and given meanings of the cultural representation of crime. This conceptual contribution has been augmented by combining elements of interpretive phenomenology with a cultural criminological approach. Moreover, I have made a theoretical contribution through employing the notions of actually lived and virtually lived experiences to explore the concept of crime concern. Furthermore, I have made a methodological contribution to the field by utilising a visual and performative methodology, informed by aspects of interpretive phenomenology, to explore this notion and build upon the body of visual work within the discipline.

Further still, I have made a contribution to the gap in criminological research around young people's engagement with media that depicts crime and I have contributed to the gap in the literature around young people's readings of the representation of crime in the news and entertainment media.

The Future Image of Crime

Personally, I would like to continue my research into cultural representations of crime and crime concern, as experienced from young people's perspectives. Such research would be rooted within a qualitative methodology with an emphasis upon the use of visual and arts based methods in order to continue to contribute towards methodological innovation. It would be fruitful to conduct a similar study to the one undertaken within this thesis, in an alternative locality and with a different sample of young people, in order to explore whether comparable findings are produced. Moreover, it would be valuable to continue to contribute to the areas of criminology which I have identified as lacking in sufficient depth and understanding.

These contributions would be both theoretical and methodological and in doing so help to build on the growing body of cultural criminological research.

Academically, I feel future research within criminology should further acknowledge the 'poetics of crime' which places the study of crime within critical, creative and cultural dimensions (Jacobsen 2014). Within these dimensions a greater understanding could be shaped around the mediated meanings of crime and how they are experienced in everyday life. Moreover, such an approach would seek to further understand the consequences of crime becoming a desired entertainment commodity (Presdee 2000; Hayward 2004; Ferrell *et al*. 2015) and how the consumption of crime overlaps with everyday lived experience. A particular emphasis should be placed on young people in this respect as they are often both the target of crime consumption and crime control.

I feel there should be more importance placed on the situated and embodied nature of crime within the discipline of criminology. This could be achieved through interpretive, qualitative methods which emphasise creativity and foster a greater contextual understanding of the phenomenology of crime. Indeed, a stronger sense of the criminological imagination rooted in creative methodologies (Barton *et al*. 2007) would help to foster a more *verstehen* oriented approach and seek to explore human meaning making whilst supplementing the positivistic stance within criminology (Ferrell 1997; Jacobsen 2014).

Through an increased emphasis on the use of culturally and critically informed visual and arts based methods with young people, a facilitation of a greater depth of knowledge and understanding would be available through the humanistic insights they foster. Such methods create a socially reflective space which is intrinsically political (O'Neill 2008). In this sense, visual and arts based methods should be employed in policy orientated research and the greater depth of understanding they develop could then be used to inform policy directions. Indeed, as opposed to the typically exclusive traditional methods of criminology, the use of critical and cultural visual and arts based methods have the potential to reach wider

audiences and in doing so shape the creation of a new public criminology (O'Neill and Seal 2012).

PART VI

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Appendices

<u>Consent Form</u>

In signing this form I consent to (please tick boxes)

- Participate in the research, which is explained in full on the 'Participant Information' sheet ☐

- The focus group being digitally recorded ☐

- Only giving information that I feel comfortable with and that any information given will be confidential unless it is likely to cause serious harm to another person ☐

- Anonymised extracts from the research being incorporated into my PhD thesis and any subsequent publications ☐

- I can withdraw from the research, and withdraw any information given, at any time during the research ☐

Signed: ....

Name (please print): ....

Date: ....

Thomas Dodsley PhD Project; **Young People and Crime Concern**

Participant Information

Hello, my name is Tom and I am a researcher studying for a doctorate at Durham University.

Would you like to take part in a research project on crime?

I would really like to hear your thoughts and concerns about crime and your opinions on the representation of crime in the media – television, film, music and video games.

If you would like to take part I need your agreement or 'informed consent'.

What does 'informed consent' mean?

Informed consent means that you fully understand what the research involves and you understand what will happen to the information given by you during the course of the research project.

What is the purpose of the research?

The purpose of the research is to investigate the concerns that young people may have about crime and to explore young people's opinions on the representation of crime and young people in the media.

Why have I been asked to take part?

You have been asked to take part because you are a young person.

What will the research involve?

The research will involve a focus-group. This will be an informal session and will involve a group discussion around crime.

Why should I take part in the research?

It is a chance for you to speak about issues that may be of interest to you and to speak about issues that may be affecting you.

<u>Will what I say be confidential?</u>

Any information that you choose to discuss during the research project will be confidential and if anything that you say is used in my written work it will be anonymous. This means that any information given during the research project will not be able to be traced back to you personally. All the information given and collected will be securely stored and managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The only time that information given may not be confidential is if means that the researcher, another young person or a vulnerable adult is at risk of serious harm.

<u>What will happen with the information I choose to give during the research?</u>

The research findings will be analysed and written up to make a PhD thesis (long essay) for the completion of a Doctorate at Durham University. A copy of this will be kept at Durham University Library and a copy can be provided to you if requested. Alternatively a summary report of the research can be provided to you if required.

<u>Questions and contact</u>

If you have any further questions or concerns about the research project please feel free to speak to – at – and he will relay these on to the researcher. My research is being supervised by Professor Maggie O'Neill and Professor Roger Smith at Durham University.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Tom Dodsley – April 2014

Consent Form

In signing this form I consent to (please tick boxes)

- Participate in the research, which is explained in full on the 'Participant Information' sheet ☐

- The research sessions being digitally recorded ☐

- Only giving information that I feel comfortable with and that any information given will be confidential unless it is likely to cause serious harm to another young person or adult in which case the information may have to be shared with an appropriate adult ☐

- Anonymised extracts from the research being incorporated into my PhD thesis and any subsequent publications ☐

- Any work [anonymised] that is made as part of the project may be used in the researchers PhD thesis and any subsequent publications ☐

- I can withdraw from the research, and withdraw any information given, at any time during the research ☐

  Signed: ....

  Name (please print): ....

  Date:..

Participant Information: PhD Project 'Young People and Crime Concern'

Hello, my name is Tom and I am a researcher studying for a doctorate at Durham University.

Would you like to take part in a research project on crime?

I would really like to hear your thoughts and concerns about crime and your opinions on the representation of crime in the media – television, film, music and video games.

If you would like to take part I need your agreement or 'informed consent'.

What does 'informed consent' mean?

Informed consent means that you understand what the research involves and you understand what will happen to the information given by you during the course of the research project.

What is the purpose of the research?

The purpose of the research is to investigate the concerns that young people may have about crime and to explore young people's opinions on the representation of crime and young people in the media.

Why have I been asked to take part?

You have been asked to take part because you are a young person.

What will the research involve?

The research will involve a series of workshop sessions. These workshops will be varied and will involve creating artwork, focus groups (group discussions), and performing pieces of drama around the topics connected to the research.

Why should I take part in the research?

It is a chance for you to speak about issues that may be of interest to you and to speak about issues that may be affecting you.

<u>Will what I say be confidential?</u>

Any information that you choose to discuss during the research project will be confidential and if anything that you say is used in my written work it will be anonymous. This means that any information given during the research project will not be able to be traced back to you personally. All the information given and collected will be securely stored and managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The only time that information given may not be confidential is if means that the researcher, another young person or a vulnerable adult is at risk of serious harm.

<u>What will happen with the information I choose to give during the research?</u>

The research findings will be analysed and written up to make a PhD thesis (long essay) for the completion of a Doctorate at Durham University. A copy of this will be kept at Durham University Library and a copy can be provided to you if requested. Alternatively a summary report of the research can be provided to you if required.

<u>Questions and contact</u>

If you have any further questions or concerns about the research project please feel free to speak to – and she will relay these on to the researcher. My research is being supervised by Professor Maggie O'Neill and Professor Roger Smith at Durham University.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Tom Dodsley – June 2014

Appendix III: B Town Performance Synopsis

Performance Number*	Category	Visual Recording Status
1	Drugs	Not filmed
2	Drugs	Filmed
3	Drugs	Filmed
4	Rape	Not filmed
5	Rape	Filmed
6	Rape	Filmed
7	Violence	Not filmed
8	Violence (Murder)	Filmed
9	Violence (Murder)	Filmed
10	Violence (Murder)	Filmed
11	Violence (Murder)	Filmed

*The performance number does not correlate to the sequence the performances were performed.

P1) The first performance to focus on drug use was performed by an all young men group. It depicted two drug users and their interaction with a drug dealer and his henchmen. The performance ended with one of the users running away and the other apparently about to experience extreme physical violence at the hands of the henchmen. The performance was performed in a light-hearted manner and involved comic elements. In the subsequent discussion panel, the young men described their rationale for the piece as wanting to create a representation of what they perceived as a visual aspect of crime and to highlight the ambiguity of the victim offender nexus. This was articulated by one of the members of the group:

> *'I think like some crimes can be like a chain, say there's people at the top who like, say if it's drugs right and people can just get took into their business with one little mistake and then they get addicted and that but then the people that are giving them are like, you know what I mean? Like they are the offenders and the people that are taking it are the victims'* (YM).

P2) The second performance to depict drug use was performed by a mixed group, consisting of one young man and four young women and portrayed a drug deal that ended in violence. There was minimal lighting during the performance and no

dialogue. A jazz instrumental[57] was playing throughout the performance and helped to create a cinematic feel to the piece. The central character was a woman in charge of a drug operation who directed her two henchwomen to undertake a drug deal that subsequently turned violent. During the discussion at the end of the performance the participants said that wanting to do something fun was their underlying rationale for the piece. They felt that omitting dialogue would make the performance more powerful and less '*cheesy*' (YW). The entertainment and glamour of crime was outlined in the subsequent discussion panel as an influencing factor when deciding on the format of the piece.

P3) The third performance to focus on drug use was performed by a mixed group of one young man and four young women and depicted a group of young people playing music on a beach under the influence of drugs. The performance was based on a factual story that had recently been reported in the news[58]. The performers were oblivious when one member of the group decided they wanted to go for a swim, got into trouble and drowned. The performers considered the rationale for their performance to be rooted in the fact that: *'a lot of young people do cocaine'* (YM)[59] and the ambiguous elements of culpability and responsibility surrounding drug use that the performance highlighted. Indeed, when asked who he thought was to blame for the incident a performer replied:

> *'The dealer. Partly, I mean like personal responsibility, I'm not saying he deserved to drown but he shouldn't have partaken in drugs'* (YM).

P4) The first performance to depict rape was performed under dim lighting by an all young woman group consisting of four members. Three members of the group were sat in a trance like state singing the lyrics to *Blurred Lines* while the fourth member of the group sat behind them running her hands through their hair alternatively and said in a compassionate manner: '*I wonder how she feels. Is it what she wore? Is it the way she acted? How does she feel? Or her? Do they know it's wrong?*' (YW). The rationale that was given for this particular performance by the group was regarded to be the apparent embedded uncertainty and elements of doubt in rape cases.

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[57] The instrumental was Sam "The Man" Taylor's 1955 version of the jazz standard 'Harlem Nocturne'.

[58] News papers were in the Drama and Performing Arts classroom and this group used one as inspiration for their piece.

[59] This performance was based on a newspaper article from the Sun (online version available here: http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/5755354/Brit-drowns-after-taking-hippy-crack.html). Within this performance, the performers referred to both 'crack' and 'hippy crack' and acted out the snorting of a substance. 'Hippy crack' is slang for the New Psychoactive Substance (or 'legal high') Nitrous Oxide, which is commonly inhaled through a balloon (Home Office 2015). 'Crack' is the freebase form of cocaine which is commonly smoked. The discussion panel after the performance revealed that the young people in this performance misconstrued what 'hippy crack' referred to in the article and understood 'crack' as the powder form of cocaine.

P5) The second performance to portray rape was performed by a mixed group consisting of one young woman and one young man and depicted a scene of domestic violence. The location of the performance was in a small cluttered side room, the performers asked the audiences not to face forward and instead turn their back to the performances. The young woman participant spoke of her disgust about previously being forced into sex before marriage, her partner then arrived, switched the lights off and it was implied that it happened again. At the end of the performance, the performers stated that they aimed to produce a piece dealing with issues of domestic violence, specifically rape before marriage, but they felt that it would be too hard to represent this through conventional means. They chose to use the side room as they felt it would make the performance more hidden which reflected the concealed nature of rape:

> *'We thought about rape at first and thought trying to show it is quite hard so we wanted to do it where it couldn't be seen and we wanted to do it in here as well because there's not much room, like not much place to perform so we were hidden, we wanted you to hear it instead of see it'* (YW).

P6) The third performance was performed by an all young woman group, consisting of five members. The performance depicted a series of sexual assaults on different women that had been committed by a male and arisen from breaches of trust. This performance was based on a recent case that had been reported in the media and a print out of the article was used as a prop. Four of the performers (the victims) sat in different places and read through the article, tore it up and threw it into the centre of the room, all with visually distressed body language. The offender also read the article and threw it into the centre of the room, this time whilst protesting her/his innocence. The group regarded the rationale for their piece to be rooted in the dynamics of trust and influence that they considered often surrounded rape cases and felt that such an abuse of power gave the piece a more dramatic edge.

P7) The first performance to focus on an act of violence was performed by a mixed group consisting of two young women and two young men, playing the roles of a mum, dad, and two siblings and depicting violence within a family setting. The performance implied that the dad had severely beaten his son for stealing money. His sister was palpably distressed by the incident whereas his mother was unmoved and unresponsive. The performers used a large screen as a prop so that the audience could hear but not see what was transpiring.

P8) The first performance that was centred on a murder was performed by an all young woman group consisting of six members and depicted a domestically abused female who was ultimately murdered. The performance was performed with the song *Blurred Lines* playing in the background. The abused female played the central character with the other five members of the group acting out her male partners

thoughts towards her. Her male partners' thoughts alternated between remorse and resentment. In the subsequent discussion panel, the participants revealed that the inspiration for the piece had come from a television programme *Murdered by my Boyfriend*, which was regarded as a programme that aimed to raise awareness about domestic violence. The members of the group stressed that they wished to do a performance portraying issues of domestic violence between a man and a woman but they did not want to explicitly act as men so instead the man's thoughts were represented rather than his actions acted. The rationale that was given for the performance was rooted in women's rights and the hidden aspect of domestic violence:

> *'It was almost like the women's rights side of it. You always hear about drug crime and knife crime and gun crime and domestic violence does play some form, it's mentioned quite a bit but there's not so much awareness against it'* (YW).

P9) The second performance to focus upon a murder was performed by a mixed group made up of four young women and one young man and dealt with an ambiguous incident where an apparent member of their friendship group was murdered. The performance appeared to depict an interrogation in a police station from the suspect(s) point of view. The premise that was given for the performance was outlined by a member of the group at the end of the performance:
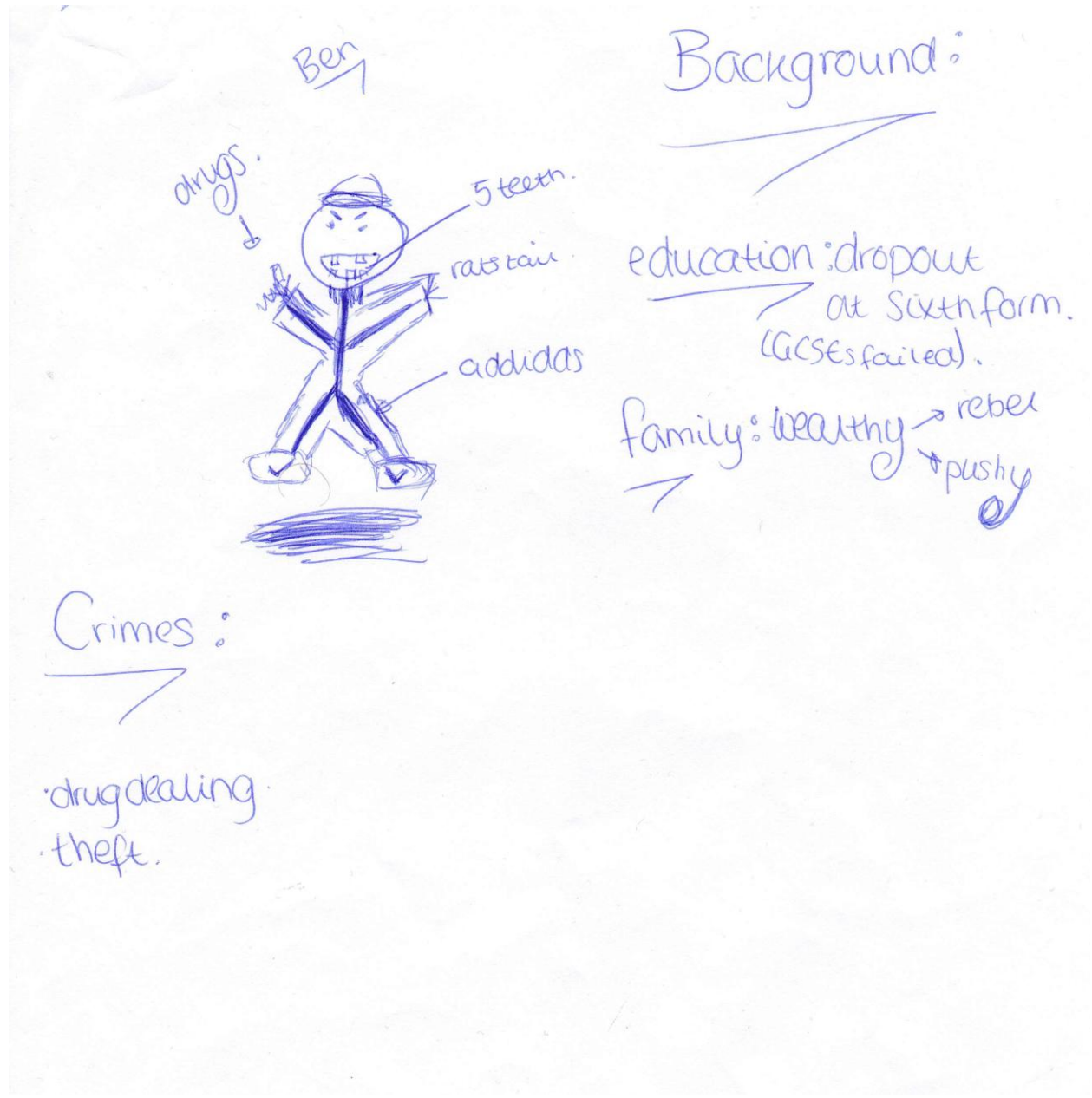
> *'We all knew the guy like, there was this guy who had been murdered and we all witnessed it. It was one of those continuous monologue things and each of us were a different feeling. It could have been interpreted as one suspect feeling different things or it could have been interpreted as we were all suspects'* (YW).

P10) The third performance to use a murder as the central plot was performed by a mixed group consisting of two young women and three young men. The young women and two of the young men were walking along in a cheerful mood when the third young man abruptly jumped out from behind a screen-prop, looking visually nervous, and shot all but one before committing suicide. A performer cited the unpredictable nature of crime as the underlying rationale for the performance.

P11) The fourth performance to portray a murder was acted out by a group consisting of two young men and dealt with issues of mental health. The performers split up the audience so they were sitting separately from each other and switched the lights off before acting out the performance. One of the young men acted the part of a mentally disturbed offender whilst the other acted the character of a vulnerable victim who ultimately got murdered. They acted out the performance in between the audience members and frequently made light contact with them. The rationale for the performance was given as:
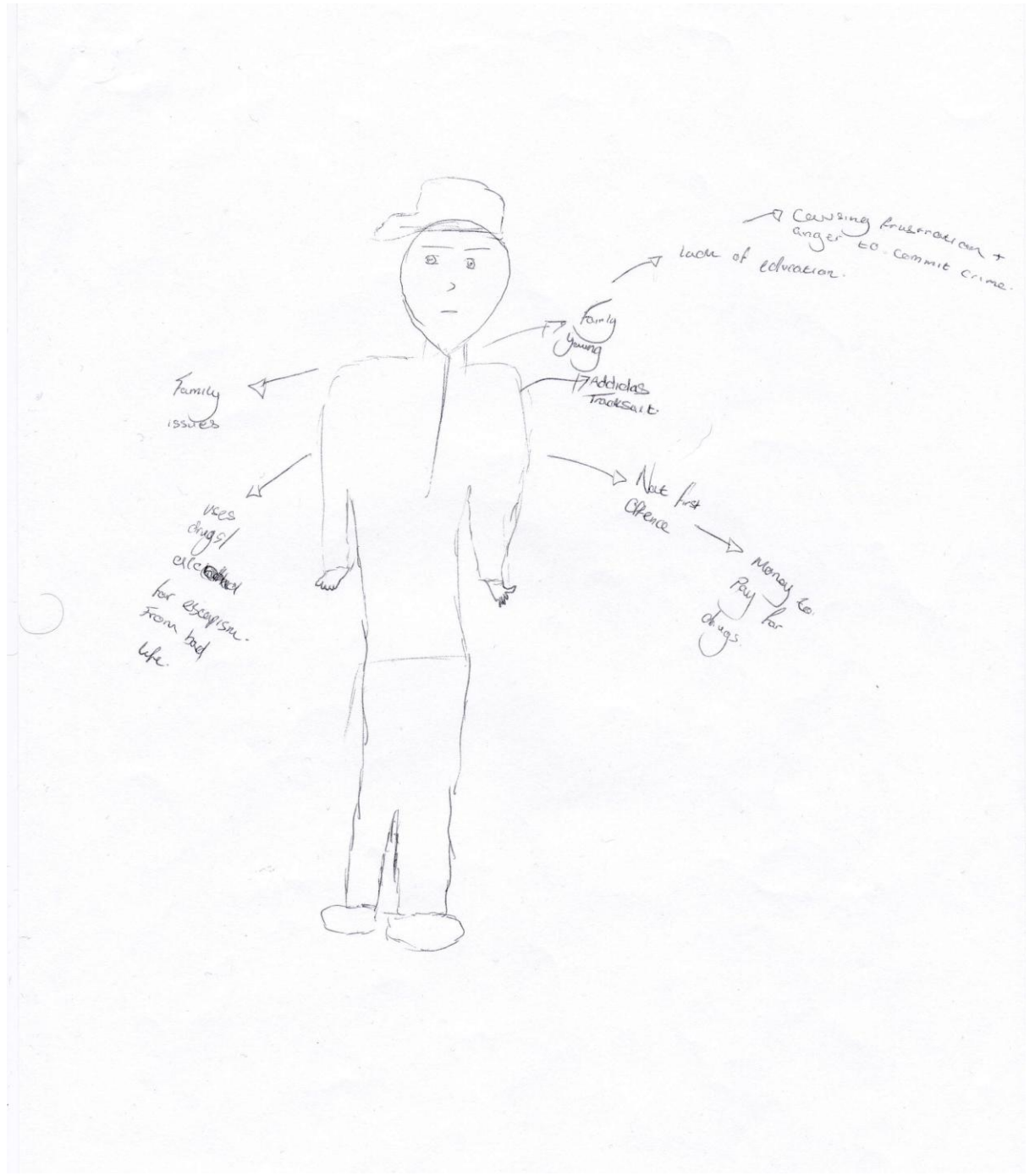
'We wanted you to feel like victims, it was hard to like make it into a victim, it was like I was the victim and he was the offender but we wanted you to feel like victims as well like, that's why you were all separated from each other' (YM).

B Town drawing and writing 1

Causing frustration + anger to commit crime.

lack of education.

Family young

Addiclas Tracksait

Family issues

Uses drugs/ alcohol for escapism from bad life.

Note first Offence

Money to pay for drugs

B Town drawing and writing 2

Harry

Killing of a minor when on drugs

No education (however by parents)

Mafia Drugs

Thug

Life in jail

Gun Crime

Odd Teeth

Mixed kabor Italian family

26-35

Rebel

Fraud wealthy

Murder

No visitors
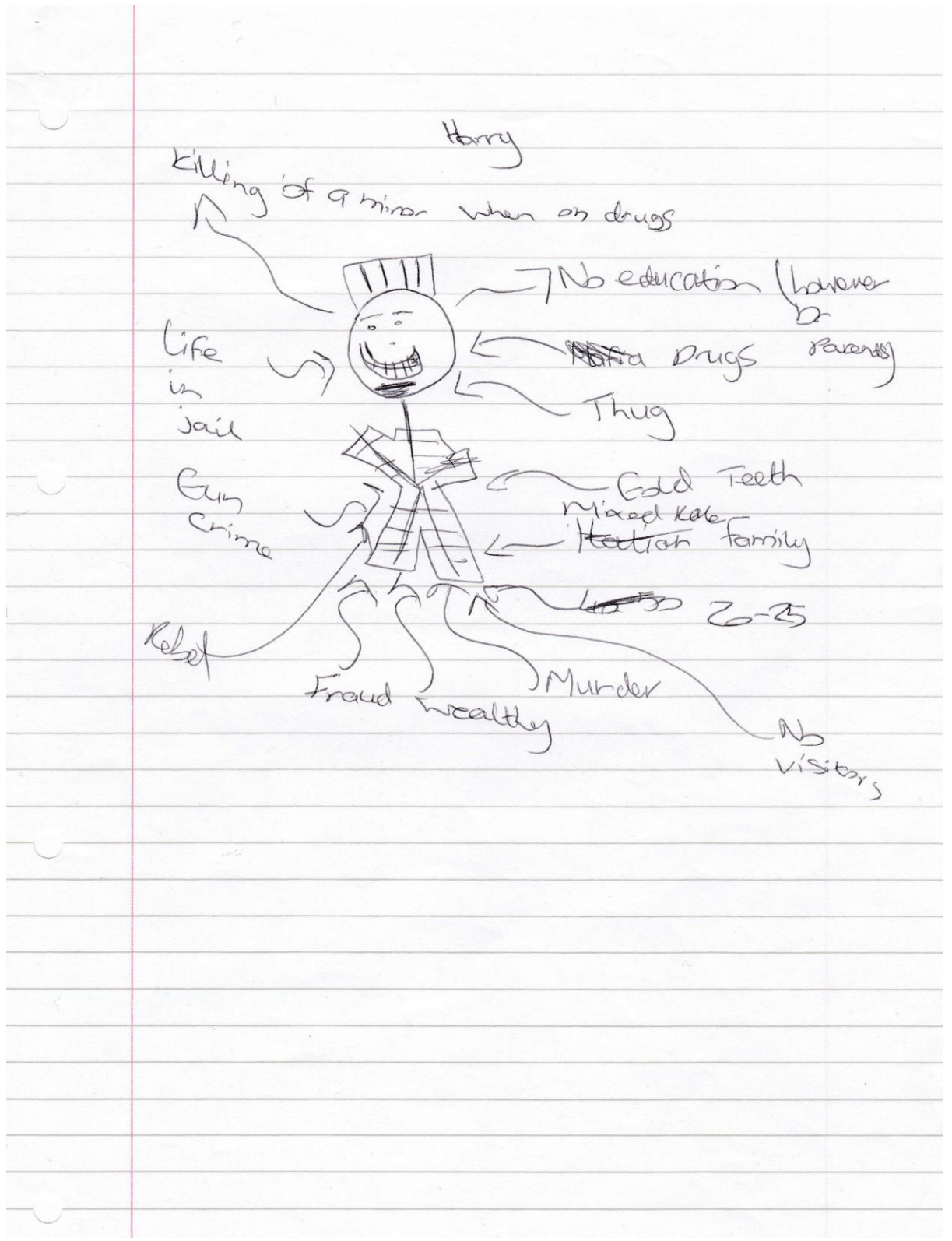
B Town drawing and writing 3

Drugs.
Robbery // Drug Dealing / fraud.
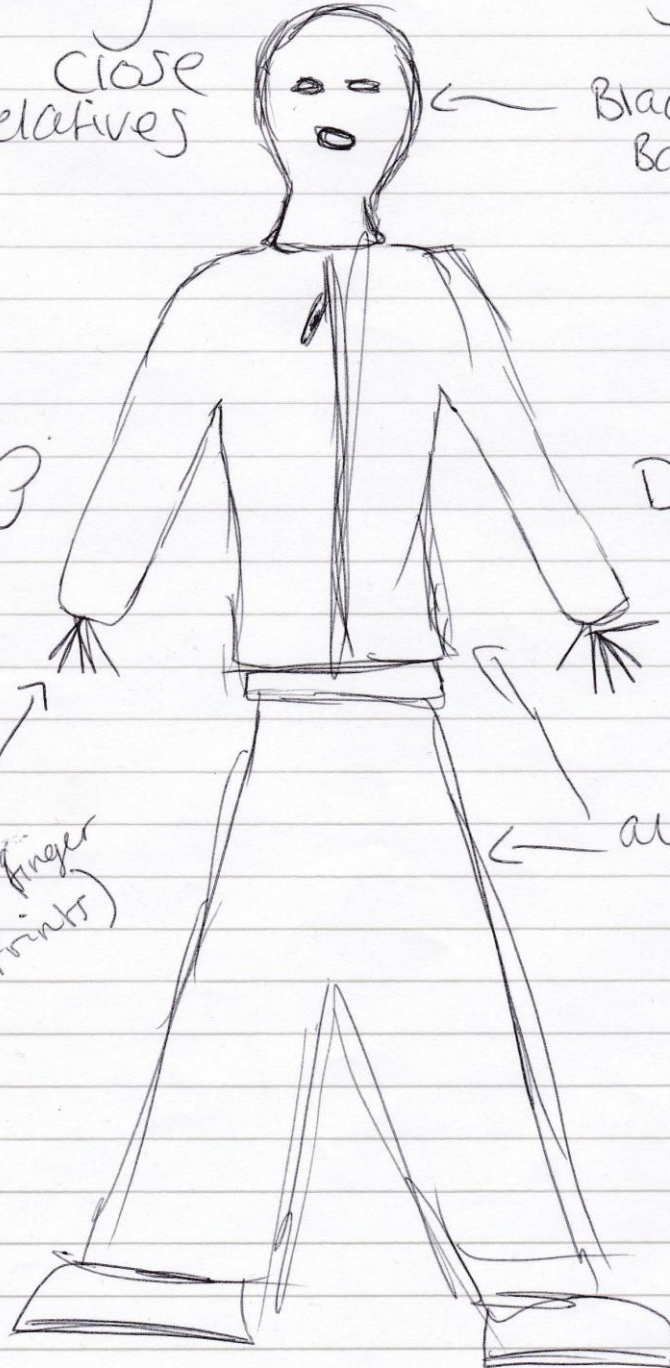
No close
Relatives

Black
Balaclava.

few
friends

DOESN'T WORK
↓
BENEFITS.
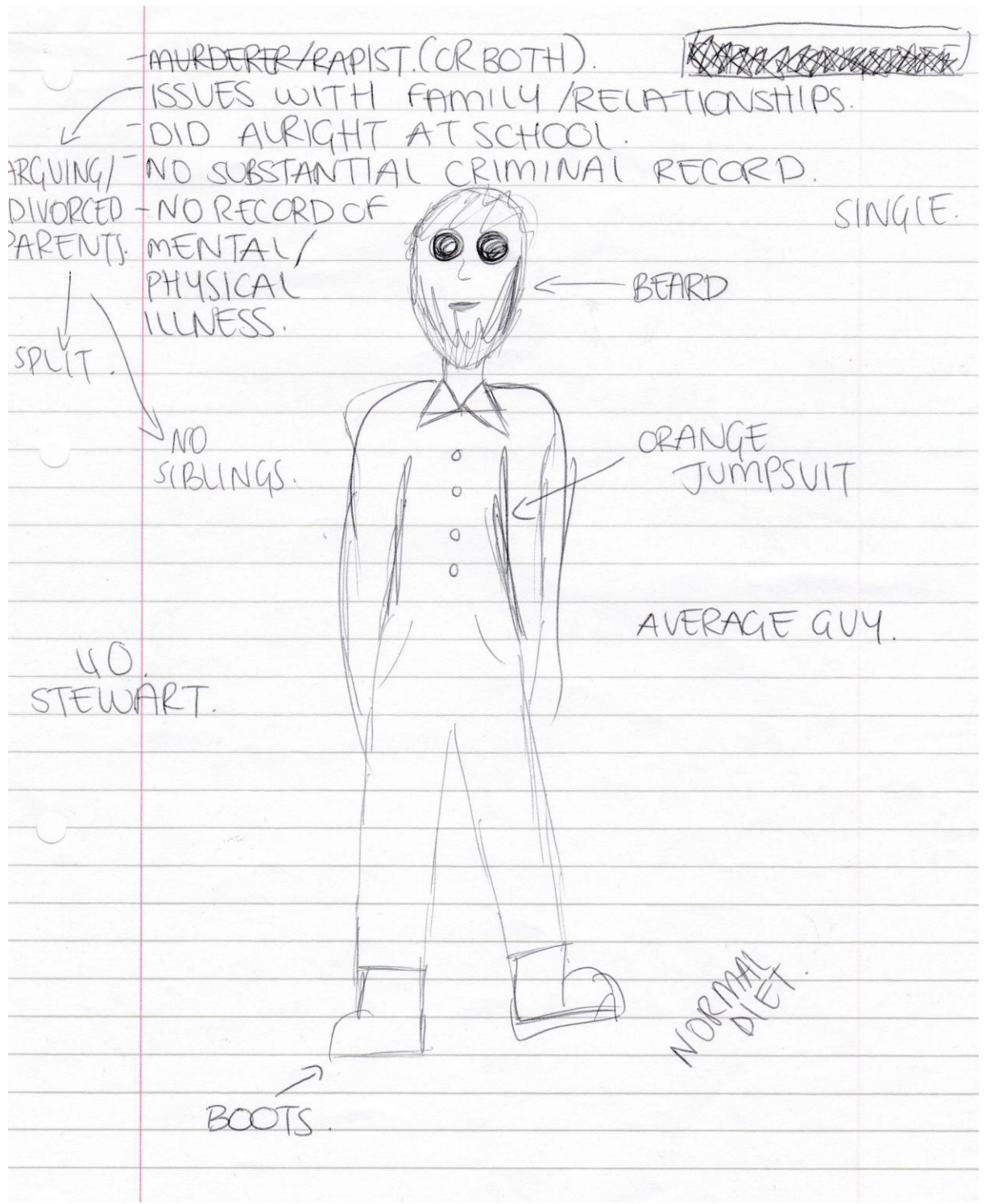
gloves
(no finger
Prints)

all dark
clothes
(scruffy)

Unhealthy
Diet.

B Town drawing and writing 4

MURDERER/RAPIST.(OR BOTH).
ISSUES WITH FAMILY/RELATIONSHIPS.
DID ALRIGHT AT SCHOOL.
ARGUING/ NO SUBSTANTIAL CRIMINAL RECORD.
DIVORCED NO RECORD OF   SINGLE.
PARENTS. MENTAL/
          PHYSICAL   ← BEARD
          ILLNESS.
SPLIT.
          NO   ORANGE
          SIBLINGS.   JUMPSUIT

                                AVERAGE GUY.
40.
STEWART.

                                NORMAL DIET

        BOOTS.

B Town drawing and writing 5

273

Mike, 28. Drug dealer, brought up on a ruff estate, where he suffered domestic violence from his mother+father. Dropped out of school when 12, knocked about with the wrong people. Got a young girl pregnant, didnt have a job so became a drug dealer. Also robs houses. Steals things like jewierry so he can make money. Also robs shops. Lives in an unhygonic house, with girlfriend and child. Social services want to take away child. Life

Baraclava

Scrutty clothes

B Town drawing and writing 6

B Town drawing 7

Enriqué 'John-boy' Hernandez

His Story:

Was a member of the Mexican Mafia who immagrated to England, James turner St, birmingham. because he ~~owned~~ owed the mafia 12 million dollars for Smoking all the mafia's crack cocaine instead of selling it for them. He fathered 7 bastard children who are physically abused on a daily basis due to his Severe mental illness.
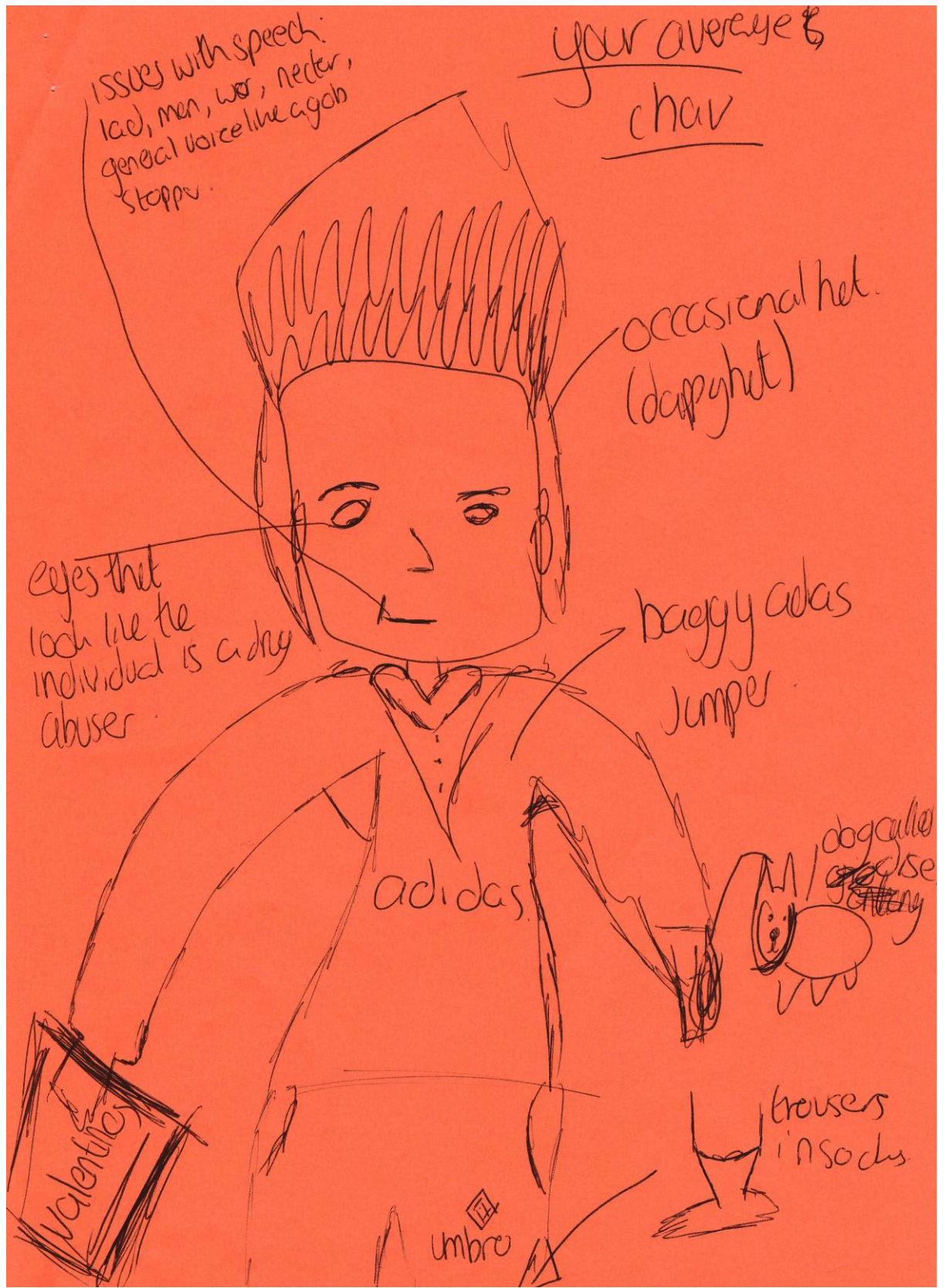
B Town writing 7
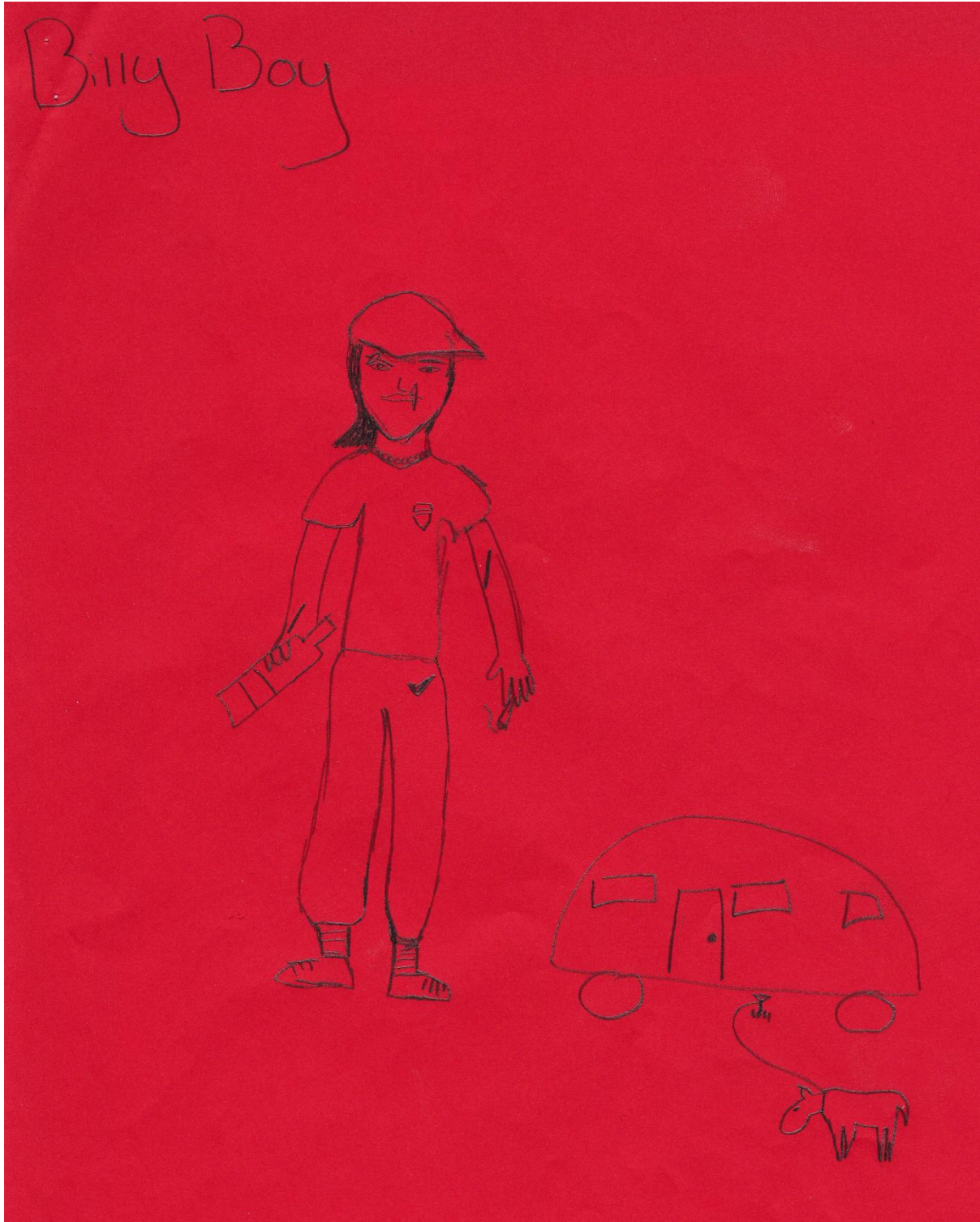
B Town drawing 8

Name: Billy Boy, 18
Health: smoke 40 a day, odd times does some weed,
       binge drinker
Homelife: Lives next to white dee on benifits street, deals
       with fungi every week. (also on benifit street),
       has 4 kids, all to diffent women,
Money: Benifits because of his 4 kids however
       goes out every so often on the scrap
       van to gain extra money.
Medical: Not the most healthiest, everything he eats is
       asda smart price, addicted to chinu + alcohol.
reason: Mum passed away as he was a kid +
       gypsie dad brought him up.
Crimes commited: Assault + robbery.
Appearance: Scars, bruises, rat tail, tracksuit tucked in
       socks, gypsy cap, yellow teeth + nails,
       holes in trainers + clothes.
Grammer: slightly irish, uses words such as
       'ey' 'ew' 'lyk' 'how'... etc.
education: Kicked out of of 2 schools + left
       at age 14 with no gcse's or
       degrees in life. Also suffered from
       bullying in primary school)

B Town writing 8

Issues with speech: lad, men, wor, nectar, general voice like a gob stopper.

your average chav

occasional hat. (dappy hat)

eyes that look like the individual is a drug abuser

baggy adas jumper.

adidas.

dog called precise anything

Valentins

umbro

trousers in socks

B Town drawing 9

Name = John ▓▓▓▓▓

Appearance = - Spiked Hair
              - tall
              - Baggy Clothing
              - Beanie Hat
              - Occasionally seen with Dog (disel)

Background/ = - drug abuse
    Info   - Speech issues
              - Strict parents
              - Rebels against School

Health = - Drug abuse
         - Previously hospitalised

B Town writing 9