Serial killing and celebrity: The importance of victim narrative in crime news reporting and its effect on the families of multiple homicide victims

HARRIET A TOLPUTT
March 2016

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Birmingham City University for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

The Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences Birmingham City University

Serial killing and celebrity: The importance of victim narrative in crime news reporting and its effect on the families of multiple homicide victims

Original contribution to knowledge

This research adds an original contribution to the knowledge base of the phenomenon of serial killing, and of the complex relationship between serial killing and 'newsworthiness' and the effect of media coverage on victims' families.

Abstract

Serial murder and celebrity go hand-in-hand. Newspapers, films, books - both fact and fiction - and television programmes all illustrate the public's fascination with crime. Academics are no exception. However, it is the killers themselves who are usually the stars, both in research and fiction. This thesis argues that it is the victims and their families that propel the narrative and are the real storytellers.

This research explores the complex nature of the relationship between the families and the media, and how the relatives coped with being under the media spotlight. It also details how the victims' narrative contributed to the increased media attention and what benefits this might bring.

Using thematic analysis, informed by grounded theory and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, the thesis concludes that, counter to public perception, the relationship between victim families and the media is not purely

extractive and is in fact mutually beneficial. Interviews with ten people who lost relatives to serial murder show that journalists provide a role as a quasi-therapist, and reveal how families manipulate the media in a way similar to seasoned public relations professionals. While themes involving negative interactions were expected, it was noted that there were also positives for families affected by serial murder engaging with the media.

Key words

Serial murder, media, victim, IPA, journalist, serial homicide, Harold Shipman, Robert Black, Peter Tobin, Jack the Stripper, Steve Wright, Suffolk Strangler

Acknowledgments

I would like to give special thanks to Professor David Wilson for convincing me to return to academia while we waited for police to catch the killer of five women in Suffolk. And to my family, friends and colleagues, who over the last six years have repeatedly asked – have you finished it yet?

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The media have long been fascinated with crime (Carrabine, 2008, Katz, 1987, Reiner, 2002, Masters et al., 1988). However, not all crimes gain equal attention. As has been long established, only a small fraction of reported crimes feature in the news media, and it is overwhelmingly violent acts and serial murder which grab the headlines time and time again (Carrabine, 2008, Katz, 1987, Reiner, 2002).

Despite this media attention, academic research and theorising about serial killing has been limited. Until relatively recently academic interest has largely focused on the definitions and typology of serial murder (Egger, 1990, Canter et al., 2004, Canter and Wentink, 2004, Giannangelo, 1996, Heide and Keeney, 1995, Holmes and Berger, 1988) rather than the phenomenon's broader social context. There is also an immediate tension within this media fascination with serial murder in that we are both 'simultaneously fascinated and repelled' by serial murderers (Miller, 2014) whose actions 'must be interpreted in the context of our own clinical and cultural environment,' (2014: 4).

In addressing this lacuna, Haggerty identified the mass media and the rise of celebrity culture as a 'modern' facet of serial murder, stating that 'serial killers were apparently ready-made for prime time' (2009:174). Building on his theory, this thesis investigates the impact of serial murder on victims' families and

explores how their role is vital in determining the impact serial killing has on public consciousness. The families, also known as co-victims (Connolly and Gordon, 2014), are becoming increasingly recognised as worthy of academic interest. However, until recently there had been no systematic literature review into the general effects of homicide on surviving family members, (Connolly and Gordon, 2014) let alone the more specific remit of this research. Here it should be noted that this research is concerned with serial homicide and traditional 'older' news media, which (Yardley et al., 2016) refer to as television news and newspapers, as opposed to social media and websites.

This research uses both primary and secondary data to explore the importance of victim narrative in media coverage (Chermak, 1995), and seeks to establish the effect of media attention on the victims' families. In doing so it aims to build on work by others (Leyton, 1995, Wilson et al., 2010, Schechter, 2003) in offering an alternative insight into the phenomenon of serial killing, based on the so-called "structural tradition" (Leyton, 1995). This tradition seeks to analyse serial murder by investigating the social structures which produce serial killers, rather than the "medical-psychological" tradition which considers the so-called motivation and psychological make-up of the individual serial killer.

The research aims to answer the research question: How do families experience their relationship with the media following the death of a loved one to serial murder?

But it also seeks to:

* Develop an understanding of how coping strategies are employed by families affected by serial murder and how they experience media contact following the death of a relative to serial murder.

* Investigate the importance of victim narrative in news reporting from previously published research.

* Broaden the knowledge base surrounding the growing phenomenon of serial killing, and of the complex relationship between serial killing and 'newsworthiness'.

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

This literature review focuses on the interwoven themes of the news media's interest in serial killers; the importance of victim narrative in media coverage (Chermak, 1995); and the effects of media attention and interaction with victims' families. It begins by examining what is meant by 'news media' in the broader context of traditional mass media. It then goes on to assess where serial murder is located within the wider homicide narrative and the experiences of secondary victims of single homicide.

The review of current literature aims to assist in answering the research question: How do families experience their relationship with the media following the death of a loved one to serial murder? In particular to assist in answering the three objectives outlined in the introduction namely:

* To investigate the importance of victim narrative in news reporting.

* To broaden the knowledge base surrounding the growing phenomenon of serial killing, and of the complex relationship between serial killing and 'newsworthiness'.

* To develop an understanding of coping strategies employed by families of multiple homicide victims and how they cope with media contact following the death of a relative to a serial killer. This third objective will be answered by the primary research and detailed in the results section as there is currently no research in this topic.

This literature review has an international focus, given the widespread interest in serial murder, even though the primary research is British-based. It seeks to examine and employ current criminological theories and apply them to the research questions at the heart of the thesis. In doing so it also seeks to redress criticism that media research is often undertaken from a distance by those outside the industry, given that it is being conducted with the reflexivity of a former media-practitioner (Davies, 2008b, Greer, 2010). My role as a journalist while conducting this research offered a number of advantages and disadvantages. The most important advantage was that I was able to gain access to the participants either directly through established contacts, or indirectly through the police media liaison teams. The disadvantage was that my connection to the media may have meant some potential participants were dissuaded from taking part. These issues are further explored in both the methodology section and the ethics section.

The five main themes addressed are: homicide, news media, serial murder; news values; and the victims of crime. These five sections are then divided into a total of eighteen sub-sections examining more specifically the positioning of serial murder in criminological literature and of crime reporting in the media.

In developing the literature review, it became quickly apparent that the inclusion of crime stories in the news media is not consistent and, as with other types of story, there is a hierarchy dependant on the stories' newsworthiness (Allan, 2004). Editors assess stories according to where they score on the scale of newsworthiness, which will in turn determine if and where they appear in the

news (Jewkes, 2004, Roshier, 1974). It follows that the most newsworthy crimes - which include serial killing - are those which are most reported in the news (Carrabine, 2008, Katz, 1987, Reiner, 2002). Most crimes, even single murders, are so commonplace in some areas that it would be impossible to report them all. Thus crimes – including serial murder – require a particular characteristic to make them stand out from the rest, which in turn increases their newsworthiness.

One defining aspect that can make the difference between whether a crime story is covered or not is the victim (Chermak, 1995). For example, a white, middle class woman murdered in a relatively crime free suburb would be more newsworthy than a gang member on a sink estate. However, if it is the third gang member in as many months then the situation may be different. This notion of newsworthiness is fully explored later in this section.

The family of the victim, or rather how the family interacts with the media, is also an indicator as to how newsworthy the crime will be. Chermak (1995) suggests that the families of victims of crime are used by journalists to increase a story's marketability – in other words to increase its newsworthiness.

When describing the reporting of a story of a child killed in the crossfire of a gun fight Chermak explains: *'The newsworthiness of this crime increases significantly if members of the family weep on camera, provide a descriptive photograph, or express their pain dramatically in words'* (Chermak, 1995). Photographs of the victim and interviews from family and friends allow the media to build up a

public profile of the victim. They are no longer just a victim, they become someone's daughter or mother. The storytelling allows readers to ask themselves, 'could this have been me?'

The importance of character should not be underestimated, as illustrated by research by David Canter (2005). During research of criminal trials Canter found that in cases which relied heavily on circumstantial evidence the character of the victim was debated in a way that suggested that *'personality is a fact that can be established as readily as a fingerprint'* (ibid:315).

The inevitable consequence of the importance of victim narrative in news media is the need for journalists to engage with families affected by the crime. This level of contact occurs at many levels from a gentle enquiry through a press or family liaison officer, to what journalists refer to as a 'death knock', where a member of the press knocks on the family's door in a bid to secure an interview or a photograph of the deceased. However there is little guidance for journalists as to how they interact with the families of victims when reporting such stories. Clause 5 of the Press Complaints Commission's code of practice entitled "Intrusion into grief of shock" states:

> *'In cases involving personal grief or shock, enquiries and approaches must be made with sympathy and discretion and publication handled sensitively. This should not restrict the right to report legal proceedings, such as inquests.'* (PPC, 2010)

This guidance remains unchanged by the newly formed IPSO (Independent Press Standards Organisation). IPSO was set up in September 2014. In the first nine months it ruled on 27 cases involving intrusion into grief – yet despite the governance body's new name and website there is still no specific information about the relationship between co-victims and the media. Referring to a complaint about the reporting of a death abroad, IPSO stated that whilst reporting the death is seen as matter of public record, it requires newspapers to contact families in a 'manner which is sensitive to those who are in a vulnerable position in the aftermath of such an event.' The complaint was not upheld. Another complaint was also dismissed involving the contacting of a woman in Scotland about her sister-in-law, who had been murdered in Santa Barbara, USA. The journalist had been accused of acting in a manner that was insensitive or unsympathetic. Another case outlined the distress caused to a family when the details of a fatal gunshot wound were described at an inquest and subsequently reported. The complaint was not upheld but the additional task of trying to reprimand the newspaper could have been avoided by having a greater understanding of what should be expected in media reporting of death, and the relationship between bereaved and journalist. Whilst these are merely illustrative examples, a greater understanding of what families perceive as intrusion into grief, and greater training for journalists could make the inevitable reporting of a loved one's death more palatable.

The journalists' union, the National Union of Journalists (NUJ), goes some way in guiding the media, but does not go far enough. There is even a 'catch all' opt out if the publication can prove public interest. The NUJ's Code of Conduct, which has

set out the main principals of journalism in England and Ireland since 1936, cites public interest as an acceptable reason for contacting grieving families. It states that a journalist: *'Does nothing to intrude into anybody's private life, grief or distress unless justified by overriding consideration of the public interest.'*
(The full code can be found at: www.nuj.org.uk/innerPagenuj.html?docid=174)

It is clear more can be done to improve the relationship between the media and the families they interact with following a crime. It is hoped that this thesis will provide a platform for such work.

However, before further investigating the complex relationship between serious crimes, more specifically multicide and the victims' families, it is first necessary to establish what is meant by news media.

News Media

This thesis is predominantly concerned with news media, and will hopefully go someway in addressing the 'blindspot' identified by Greer that 'cultural criminology doesn't do news media' (2010:5).

The term media refers to '*anything through which something else can be transmitted'* according to (Bainbridge et al., 2011:xviii) who argues that the term 'mass media' is becoming less relevant. Mass media was originally used to differentiate between communicating to a wide audience in contrast to the one-to-one option provided by telecommunications. However in today's fast growing

world of social media, the mass audience is becoming fragmented. Audiences are becoming more bespoke, as technology enables consumers of information to be targeted by factors such as age, gender, class and shopping habits. While this thesis will touch on media more generally, it is concerned specifically with news media. But what defines news media? According Branston (2010) 'news seems easy to define, though hard and fast definitions are surprisingly difficult to find' (2010:334). One simple explanation was coined in 1882 when the owner and editor of the New York Sun, Charles Anderson Dana declared: '*When a dog bites a man that is not news, but when a man bites a dog, that is news*,' (Allan, 2004). The news now is taken to mean the transmission of 'quite literally new information' (ibid).

News is often described as being either hard, or soft (Scott and Gobetz, 1992, Reinemann et al., 2011). Bainbridge et al. describe hard news, which this research is concerned with, as being 'closest to the ideal of the Fourth Estate,' and *'is associated with the notion of a free press and to the public's right to know. Hard news stories aim to inform the community about events and happenings, and provide citizens with the information they require to be able to participate in the democratic process as fully informed citizens.'* (2011:xxi). Hard news is the staple of newspapers and covers topics such as crime, politics, natural disaster and accident. Or as White (1997) puts it: *'eruptive violence, reversals of fortune and socially significant breaches of the order,'* (1997:101).

The British news industry has come a long way since the launch of the first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, which was published in March 1702. Now, new or

digital media is playing an increasingly important role in the public sphere and there are blurred lines between news from traditional outlets and new media due to the rise of citizen journalism.

Developments in technology, in particular social media applications, allow anyone with a smart phone to contribute to current affairs debates with what is known as user generated content, or UGC. Not only do these forums provide an alternative to traditional news sites, but online news outlets are now providing space on their own channels for UGC (Thurman, 2008). The majority of the crimes investigated in this thesis happened before the surge in popularity of new media, but the very fact that the crimes are still newsworthy means they are also relevant in today's digital news world.

We are also living in a media-scape where new and old forms of media co-exist. Yardley (2016) describes how the two are 'shaping and fashioning each other' in what is known as 'remediation' (Bolter and Grusin, 1999). Writing sixteen years ago, Bolter and Grusin describe how 'older electronic and print media are seeking to reaffirm their status within our culture as digital media challenge that status, (1999:5)'. The situation still applies to today. Whilst new social media platforms emerge on a near daily basis, the traditional media is continually reinventing itself. Broadcasters like *Sky News*, one of the younger television stations launched in 1989, compared with ITN and the BBC in 1955 and 1954 respectively, has just launched a 360 degree news app (Ponsford, 2015). Seasoned news providers CNN, NY *Times*, *The Guardian* and BBC all feature in the web analytics provider Alexa.com's top ten website rankings.

When discussing news media it is important to remember that broadcasts and newspapers do more than simply report the facts. There was a shift as long ago as the latter half of the 18th century (Habermas, 1974) when newspapers changed from merely reporting the facts to becoming 'bearers of public opinion' (1974:76). News consists of facts and values; a more detailed description of what makes news is found later in this chapter.

The line between news and fiction is also becoming increasingly blurred. Rowe (2013), when involved in the news coverage of a man hunt in North East England, found the boundaries were ill defined between the fictional and factual representation of crime. He identified a need for the boundaries to be 'considered not only in terms of the development of realism in popular cultural genres but also the extent to which dramatic narratives and content loop back into news reporting,'(2013:36). This is unsurprising given that crime fiction is one of the most popular genres (Horsley, 2005) and serial killers have become an 'eminently marketable form of contemporary folk legend,' (Simpson, 2000: 2). The lines between fiction and fact are becoming increasingly fluid. Fictional literature and films are often based on real life villains and it is argued that crime reports in media do not reflect reality. In a study of the reports of 2,685 homicides in England and Wales in *The Times*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Mirror* between 1993-97, Peelo et al. (2004) found considerable distortion of newspaper reports in particular with regard to age, gender, number of victims and method of killing. The importance of news media in the framing of homicide is addressed in the paper:

> *'The role of newspapers is not, of course, to educate or inform accurately, but to sell newspapers; and in this enterprise, illegal killing has long provided editors with exciting stories. Nor does exploring newspaper reporting provide the whole story of how a society frames a criminological problem, but newspapers are powerful and important contributors to public knowledge and consciousness of crime issues. They are a part of the construction of a public narrative about killing that is, as we have seen, different to its reality. By helping to validate who is included and who is excluded from public concern they contribute to a distancing of the public gaze from the actuality of crime,'* (Peelo et al., 2004:274).

Innes (1999) found the media have another use following a homicide. After his investigation into five murder investigations he argues that the media is an important investigative tool for the police forces in England and Wales. In fact the Association of Chief Police Officers' Murder Investigation Manual dedicates an entire chapter on managing communication (ACPO, 2006).

Police press officers utilise the media for a number of reasons. In more difficult to solve cases, where the relationship between victim and offender is distant or non-existent, the police often turn to the public for extra information. The media provide the conduit. This use of the media can take a number of forms. The first is a simple appeal for information about the offender or for witnesses to come forward. The police may have a description of the offender and circulating CCTV footage or an e-fit on the news may prompt unaware witnesses to contact

officers. Police also employ the media to broadcast reconstructions, usually a week, month or even year on from the time of the killing (Brookman 2015). In the UK the BBC TV show Crimewatch, first aired in 1984, is dedicated using the medium to gain information from the public to help solve crimes. During its 20th anniversary the show claimed to have secured 450 convictions and 879 arrests from the 2923 cases it had featured (Mawby, 2007a). Police reconstructions usually feature the last known movements of the victim. Actors, dressed in similar clothes, walk through the last known steps of the victim or witness the police are trying to trace. However, in more recent times the police have increasingly been able to use real footage of CCTV and traffic cameras (Edwards, 2009).

Press statements can be used to warn the public of dangerous individuals at large, but also to reassure people as to the real risks and limit the fear of crime. Police also use the media to demonstrate police professionalism. When seen as likely to have a significant effect the police may also host a press conference. Here the senior investigating officer, and sometimes a member of the victim's family, will read out a statement and answer questions from the media. At these events not all the information about the crime is released as the Murder Investigation Manual states:

> *'SIOs should consider withholding details of the MO used so that any later statements made by a suspect can be evaluated against what could only have been known by the offender,'* (ACPO:226).

These press conferences may also be used to put pressure on someone close to the victim, who the police view as a suspect. Brookman notes that there have been a number of examples where family members put in the media spotlight at a press conference are ultimately convicted of the killing. Brookman (2015:256) cites the example of Tracy Andrews, who in 1997 claimed her boyfriend died in a road rage incident. Andrew was later convicted of his murder. More recently in 2008 was the case of Shannon Matthews. Matthews was a schoolgirl who went missing in Dewsbury, UK. Her mother made repeated appeals through the media for her daughter's safe return, only for it later to emerge that Shannon was being hidden under her mother's boyfriend's bed (Martin, 2009).

Having looked at what is news media, and how it is used in the context of homicide this next section turns to the notion of homicide in more detail.

HOMICIDE

Homicide, like all other crimes, is socially constructed as '*crime cannot exist without the creation of laws by a given society to criminalise particular actions or behaviours,'* (Brookman 2015:3). Newspapers and the media also play their part in the social construction of homicide, which can at times be different from reality (Peelo et al. 2004:274). Media portrayal of homicide is one where strangers in dark alleys prey on innocent, unknown victims, when in fact in the majority of homicides in England and Wales the offender and victim are known to each other. As Young writes:

> *'What is murder really like? When you bolt your doors at night to keep yourself safe from strangers you are locking yourself up with all those people most likely to do you harm… What does your likely murderer look like? If you pick up a mirror and look into it, you will see the image of your most likely attacker. He will be of the same class as you, of the same ethnic group, probably the same age, a member of your own social circle – dressing like you with the same accent and habits. Despite all the talk of inter-racial attacks, he will be the same colour as you,' (Young, 1987: Found in Rock 1998:16).*

Brookman argues that homicide, like serial murder (which is explored in the next section), is hard to define and is not a 'concrete phenomenon' (2015:24). In her comprehensive research she describes a range of understandings of homicide, from the broadest taking of a life to the narrowest definition to include premeditated intent. Each homicide is unique, with the only common factor being the death of a human being, and according to Brookman cannot be fully explained with positivist research. In this way, she supports Wallace's (1986) theory around the complexity of homicide.

> *'Homicides can and should be qualitatively distinguished. Just as there is no unitary entity called crime, there is no unitary phenomenon of homicide. Analysis of qualitatively distinct homicide highlights the particular points of conflict between different people, in different situations at different points in time,* (Wallace 1986:13, *found in Brookman* 2015:307).

The call for qualitative research has turned full circle in the 30 years since Wallace was writing. Returning to the learning of the Chicago School of Sociology, Wright and Bouffard (2016) argue for a 'qualitative inspection of individual cases' as it 'will move criminology forward.' (2016:125).

These opening qualifications and boundaries having been set, for the purposes of the law in England and Wales, and this thesis, the following definition applies:

> *Murder and manslaughter are two of the offences that constitute homicide.*
>
> *Manslaughter can be committed in one of three ways:*
>
> ** Killing with the intent for murder but where a partial defence applies, namely loss of control, diminished responsibility or killing pursuant to a suicide pact.*
>
> ** Conduct that was grossly negligent given the risk of death, and did kill, is manslaughter ("gross negligence manslaughter"); and*
>
> ** Conduct taking the form of an unlawful act involving a danger of some harm, that resulted in death, is manslaughter ("unlawful and dangerous act manslaughter").*
>
> *The term "involuntary manslaughter" is commonly used to describe a manslaughter falling within (2) and (3) while (1) is referred to as "voluntary manslaughter".*
>
> *There are of course other specific homicide offences, for example, infanticide, and causing death by dangerous or careless driving.*
>
> *Murder is:*
>
> *Subject to three exceptions (see Voluntary Manslaughter below) the crime of murder is committed, where a person:*

** of sound mind and discretion (i.e. sane);*

** unlawfully kills (i.e. not self-defence or other justified killing);*

** any reasonable creature (human being); in being (born alive and breathing through its own lungs - Rance v Mid-Downs Health Authority (1991) 1 All ER 801 and AG Ref No 3 of 1994 (1997) 3 All ER 936;*

** under the Queen's Peace;*

** with intent to kill or cause grievous bodily harm (GBH).* [1]

Victims in England and Wales

The latest statistics from the Home Office Homicide Index (ONS, 2015) show that from data relating to 2013/14 there were 526 homicides in England and Wales. This was down 4% on the previous year (547 offences). This amounts to 9.2 offences of homicide per million of the population. Indeed there has been a general downward trend in homicide rates since they spiked in 2002/03 when 172 murders were attributed to serial killer Harold Shipman. In 2013-2014 the majority of victims were male (343 offences), down 9% on the 377 the previous year. The number of female victims increased by almost the same amount. As such 183 women and girls were murdered compared to 170 the year before. The relationship between victim and killer concurs with Brookman's analysis of patterns of murder ten years earlier (2015:50) and the notion that 'homicide is a social relationship' (Avison, 1973: 58). Women were far more likely to be killed by people they were or had been intimate with, (46% of female victims compared with 7% of male victims). However men were more likely than women

[1] http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/h_to_k/homicide_murder_and_manslaughter/#definition

to be killed by friends and acquaintances (40% of men compared to 8% female victims). Of the 526 homicides, 46 of the victims were children (under 16 years old) and half of these (23 offences) were killed by a parent or stepparent, with just 4, or 9% killed by a stranger. In England and Wales the most common means of killing another person was by using a knife or other sharp implement. Of the 526 homicides, 202 victims, or one in three, were killed this way. The second most common method of killing was kicking or hitting without a weapon, accounting for 103 homicides. Just 29 people were killed by shooting. More women (18 victims) than men (5 victims) were killed by strangulation. The method of killing also varied between the sexes. More than half the men killed by a partner or ex partner (60%) died as a result of a being hit with a sharp instrument, compared with 39 per cent of other male victims over age of sixteen. Murder of men without the use of a weapon occurred in 11% of intimate partner violence, compared with 26% of other male homicide victims.

For the case of female victims the difference in killing method in intimate violence instances was less marked (45% of partner/ex-partner homicide compared with 34% of other women killed). All but one of domestic violence murders against women were carried out by men. Where as among the men '*around a third of partner/ex-partner homicide were killed by a male suspect. The majority of these, 14 out of 21, were committed by the spouse of the victim's lover or "emotional rival". Among other adult homicides, 95% of male and 89% of female victims aged 16 or over were killed by a male suspect,*' (ONS 2015).

The data appears to show that the majority of women who kill their partners use a weapon. It also reinforces Brookman's (2005) analysis of a decade earlier, of the notion of 'masculine homicide', where a male homicide occurs when the killers honour is challenged or where a man kills for revenge. In 2013/14 a half (50% or 263 offences) were the result of quarrel, revenge attack or loss of temper. The number was even higher when the victim and attacker were known to each other (59%), compared to 34 % when the suspect was unknown to the victim. 35 homicides were committed during the course of a robbery or burglary.

Not surprisingly, given most victims know their attacker, more than half of the recorded homicides (59% or 309 offences) for 2013/14 took place in a house or dwelling, with around a fifth (19% or 102 offences) in the street, footpath or alleyway. The figures show a slightly different pattern when broken down by gender. Reflecting the theory that the majority of femicides are 'domestic' the statistics show that 84%, or 153 women were killed in a house, compared to 45% or 156 of men. Over a quarter, (92 offences) of male deaths took place in a street, path or alleyway, reflecting the nature of alcohol fuelled confrontational homicides, as described by Brookman (2015:136). This is in contrast to just 10 homicides, (5%) of women who were killed in the street or alley. Brookman describes a significant difference between men on men killings and those cases where men kill women.

> *'A significant proportion of male on male homicides take place amongst strangers or acquaintances and are the result of honour confrontations in*

response to arguments of relatively trivial origin. When men kill women, it is often those with whom they are (or have been) intimately connected (that is, a current or former spouse or lover). Such homicides often occur in response to the breakdown of the intimate relationship at a point where the man believes he is losing his partner,' (Brookman 2015:121).

When the 2013/14 statistics were broken down by age, they followed the consistent trend that children under the age of one have the highest rate of homicide per million of the population. Infants are disproportionally represented, accounting for 3% of the homicide victims, but only 1% of the population. Males aged between 20 and 24 years old also formed a high proportion of victims. This age group makes up 7% of the population, but 12% (133 offences) of the victims. For women the age distribution of victims is more evenly spread. This age group (20-44 years old) makes up 33% of the population, but 40% of the victims. Dispelling the moral panic around child murders, a disproportionately small number of victims were in the age groups 5 to 9 and 10 to 14 years old. The ONS (2015) gives the example that while '*6% of the population were aged 10 to 14 years old, this age group accounted for 1% of the homicide victims (14 victims).'*

Suspects in England and Wales

For the purposes of the Homicide Index, a suspect is deemed to be someone who has been arrested and charged with a homicide, or someone who the police know to have committed the crime and has since died before they could be

charged. It is possible that more than one suspect is responsible for a homicide hence the fact that there were a total of 649 suspects, as of 5 November 2014, for the 536 homicides committed in the 2013/14 time period. Of these 649, more than half, (55%) had been dealt with by the courts, for 268 suspects (41%) court proceedings were pending, and 23 had died. The remaining three suspects had proceedings against them dropped on the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions. One recent example of this was the case of Christopher Halliwell, a taxi driver sentenced for the murder of Sian O'Callaghan, 22, in 2012. Halliwell also admitted murdering another woman Becky Godden-Edwards, 28, in Oxfordshire, and even showed the police where her body was buried. However, charges for the second murder were dropped after it emerged that the officer in charge, Detective Superintendent Steve Fulcher, had breached the killer's human rights by ignoring arrest guidelines. The confession was made during a three-hour private interview and not in the formal setting of the police station. Det. Supt. Fulcher defended his actions as he believed at the time there was still time to save O'Callaghan. However it was too late and the evidence surrounding Godden-Edwards murder was ruled inadmissible and the charges dropped (Palmer, 2012).

Of the offenders where court proceedings had been concluded 90% were male and 10% were women. It is not possible to show from the data whether this statistic reflects the fact that the male offenders had more straightforward, and therefore less time consuming cases. Of the men whose cases had concluded, over half (57%) were convicted of murder and 32% of manslaughter. Of the women, 44% were convicted of murder, and 21% of manslaughter. During the

period from 2011 to 2014, 81% of suspects indicted for either murder, manslaughter or infanticide were found guilty. Just 13% were acquitted. This conviction ratio of 81% is comparatively high considering the rate for rape was hailed a new high of 63% in 2012/13 up from 58% in 2007/08 (CPS, 2013).

Surviving Homicide

Despite its initial awkwardness this thesis adopts the terms 'homicide survivor' and 'co-victims' to describe those who have lost a loved one to homicide. Although it attempts to illuminate the experiences of homicide survivors it does not attempt to fully comprehend what it is like to have lost a loved one to serial murder. As Rock (1998) describes the symbolic processes associated with mourning:

> *'Survivors themselves claim that one can never appreciate their significance unless one has been bereft as they have. The chemical furnace of grief is simply too powerful. At its core are not just commonplace reactions to disagreeable experiences, but a mass of turbulent emotional and physical sensations which are at once individual and collective, cognitive and somatic, thought and felt, expressible and inexpressible, clear and confused,'* (Rock 1998:xiii).

In his study into the emergence of homicide survivor support groups in the UK and North America, Rock found that people who had lost loved ones to murder or manslaughter saw themselves as a 'special minority' (1998:31). Bereavement, as a result of homicide, is distinct and different from loss say from a long term

illness or accident. This thesis will argue that the loss of the loved one to serial homicide is even more different. Rock attributes four reasons as to why homicide bereavement differs from others. Firstly, the death is unexpected and sudden. There is no time to prepare for grief, to say goodbye or to foster any needed reconciliation.

The second difference is that death by murder or manslaughter is '*never inevitable or natural, but intended and purposive or reckless and negligent*,' (ibid:43). Rock describes how survivors see the murder of their loved ones as a 'moral assault', unable to conceive that another human being had wished them to die. Thirdly is the 'sheer ugliness' of violent death (ibid:51). The methods of murder used can often disfigure the dead. Beatings, strangulation and stabbings, the common methods in the UK, leave the deceased's body damaged so that loved ones are unable to imagine them the way that they were when they were alive. This was particularly pertinent for a number of families in this research as their daughters' bodies were discovered some time after their deaths. So unlike those mourning a child who had died in hospital they were unable to say goodbye as their children lay in repose.

The final difference is that violent death is linked with powerlessness, both of the victim and of the survivors who were unable to do anything to stop their loved ones' murder. Rock found that feelings of guilt and self-blame were amplified by the loss of control and inability to intervene. Rock quotes David Renhard, whose daughter Susan, 22, was strangled and sexually assaulted while taking part in a

photographic project in Castleton, Derbyshire in 1983. Renhard talked of 'the feeling of helplessness, of not being there to defend them,' (ibid: 54).

These four differences between homicide bereavement and other types of bereavement impact on what Rock describes as 'normal grief', where a person passes through stages. The stages typically result in a person becoming 'restored', having disengaged from the deceased and returned to normal life (Silverman and Klass, 1997: 4). Imposing order on disorder, as Rock calls it, is all very well providing that is the process the survivor follows. However, this is not always the case, as Renhard describes:

> *'If you're not careful you can start talking about stages of development, which is alright in theory – it gives you a framework you can judge things against, I suppose. But if somebody isn't going through those stages on the same order or the same speed, they begin to think there's something wrong with them, which doesn't follow,'* (Rock 1998:58).

The fact that death by homicide disrupts the process of grief is even more pertinent when considering serial homicide survivors. Not only is the grieving process interrupted with the legal proceedings and media intrusion of the singular act of homicide, but also with each mention of the killer in relation to all his or her other victims.

Rock found that whilst the group allowed the survivors to 'feel liberated from alienation' giving them a 'language to speak the unspeakable', they were also

prevented from resigning from their roles as 'career grievers', which was again amplified when the deceased is associated with a serial murderer. Rock writes: '*It also tended to freeze them as survivors, for it was as survivors, and as survivors alone, that they had an identity, membership, and role in the group,'* (1998:331).

The fact that there are stages to the recovery from the homicide of a loved one also implies that at some point the grief is over, and that there is an end to the suffering. Rock explains families maintain their status as career grievers due to a number of factors, including the media. Media reports of murders and the subsequent trial give life to the memory of a homicide victim but also prolong the grieving process. The requests for families to be interviewed and give their views in the media on other criminal and judicial matters play to Rock's notion of bereavement as a 'career'.

> *'Shadowing the survivors was the Greek chorus of the mass media. They worked on the career in numerous ways, clamouring for responses and emphasizing benchmarks and anniversaries at every turn; transforming private lives into public news; making the subjective visible and external; amplifying and articulating structure through their running narrative; translating and interpreting events; and continually conferring meaning,'* (Rock:1998:83).

As this thesis goes on to explore, the relationship between the media and homicide survivors is a complex one. One group of homicide survivors even went as far as launching a campaign against the depiction of homicide in the mass media. In 1993 the USA-based National Organization of Parents of Murdered

Children set up a campaign called MINE – or Murder is Not Entertainment. The pressure group aims to *'eliminate the playing and marketing of violence and murder as forms of entertainment for both children and adults'* and campaigns against the use of unauthorised photographs, graphic images, murder focused content and media portraying killers as heroes (MINE, 2016). Glass (2016), a columnist for the *Sunday Times,* also questions the ethics surrounding using real-life murders for light entertainment programmes. She writes: *'Journalistic investigations are important, as is questioning the judicial systems. But by tuning in to be entertained by people's murders, we risk abusing these victims again,'* (2016:5). In contrast a new show called *Monster in my Family* has been launched in the USA to bring together survivors and serial killers[2]. Again the need to meet the public fascination with serial murder is evident.

The next section turns to the topic of serial murder and attempts to convey how the serial murder of victims differs from single homicide, in particular in relation to the media, and the victims' families.

SERIAL MURDER

Multicide: The Concept of serial murder

The notion of serial murder has become such an integral part of social ideology that it is unthinkable to believe that it was ever absent (Jenkins, 2002). However, the concept of 'serial killing' is relatively recent, with interest spurred on by the

[2] (www.mylifetime.com/movies/monster-in-my-family).

media and the public's seemingly endless appetite for crime thrillers - both fictional and fact. Serial murder, as Jarvis (2007) writes, has *'become big business'* both by way of news coverage but also popular culture in general. Fleming too (2007) describes the media coverage of serial murder as both sensational and exhaustive. Serial murder - despite the fact that the definition is hard to pin down - is one of the most, if not the most newsworthy crimes, (Fleming, 2007, Hickey, 2012, Jenkins, 1994). This thesis is concerned specifically with serial murder. At times the term multicide is used to assist with the flow of text, although in this context it is being used to describe serial murder and not other forms of multicide, such as spree or mass killings.

But what is a serial murder or a serial killer? Even the phrase 'serial killer' appears to be the subject of some debate. Britain's Jack the Ripper is widely and retrospectively believed to be the most famous serial killer (Schmid, 2005) but the term was only created in the 1970s and has been popularly attributed to FBI agent Robert Ressler (Ressler et al., 1988b, Ressler and Shachtman, 1993). Yet now, more than 40 years later, the definition of serial murder is still being revisited and is the subject of its own mini academic sub-industry, (Adjorlolo and Chan, 2014).

Schechter (2003) believes Ressler actually adapted the term from 'serial murderer', a description he is thought to have picked up during a visit to Britain. Schechter, quoting Jesse Sheidlower, editor of the Oxford English Dictionary, believes the term can be traced as far back as 1961, when the German critic Siegfried Kracauer used it to discuss the character played by Peter Lorre in Fritz

Lang's classic film, M. Despite being commonplace among federal agents, the term did not come into general usage until twenty years later. Schechter's research from the Oxford English Dictionary states that the first published use of the phrase was not until 1981 in an article by M.A. Farber entitled: 'Leading the Hunt in Atlanta's Murders' which appeared in the May 3 issue of the *New York Times* Magazine. Then, on the 26th October 1983, the FBI brought the concept of serial killing to the American public at a news conference led by the Justice Department. This was important because it laid out the direction of policy on serial murder. The creation of this term was crucial as Schmid (2005.69) argues:

> *'Once the serial killer became a type of person, a new form of behaviour became visible, along with a typical perpetrator of that behaviour, in ways that had previously been impossible. Judges, prosecutors, defence attorneys, doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and the police could now "see" serial killers in a way they could not have been done before because the serial killer was now a recognisable, legible type. Although the process of typifying the serial killer was decisively accelerated and mobilised by the FBI, is was a process that had, in one way or another, been on going for some sixty or seventy years by the time the Bureau got involved,' (Schmid 2005:69).*

Once the definition of a serial killer had been created, analysis began to identify different typologies. The media took the role of reinforcing the mythology that serial killers are all sadistic sexual predators. This notion that sex crazed serial killers were widespread, played to the ideology of President Ronald Reagan's New Right. Jenkins (2002) describes 1980s America as a hedonistic society of

'wolves and lambs' (2002:6) where the move against serial killing developed on a parallel with the wars against drugs and child abuse. The politicians of the day blamed serial murder on the break down of traditional family values and everyone from children's groups to gay activists jumped on the serial killer bandwagon – claiming that their cause was the most at risk (Barrile, 1994). The FBI also capitalised on the fear of serial murder and took the opportunity to *'expand its bureaucratic, law enforcement operations and its influence on the public, the mass media and the higher reaches of government - the Congress and the executive branch* (ibid:87). As discussed later, this was at a time when the movement of victims' groups in the UK and the USA was beginning to take shape.

Definition of serial murder

Leaving these origins aside, it remains the case that 'defining serial killing is fraught with difficulties' (Wilson and Harrison, 2008:80). These difficulties have led to an abundance of research into defining the term, often to the detriment of research into the phenomenon of serial murder. Adjorlolo and Chan (2014) describe serial murder as one of the least understood terms in criminological literature and believe the absence of a definition has limited not only academic debate but also empirical evidence used to aid law enforcement.

> *'This cycle of interdependence means that a more uniform definition is warranted to obviate possible discrepancies in conceptualizing and understanding of serial murder. For instance, when researchers adopt a definition of serial murder that is contrary to law enforcement professionals'*

> *definition, there is a possibility of under-inclusion or over-inclusion of serial murder cases, resulting in serious consequences such as research and investigative flaws (*Adjorlolo and Chan *2014:488).*

One of the most consistent definitions is outlined by Holmes & Holmes (2001) who succinctly state: *'A serial killer is a person who deliberately and with malice, kills three or more people in more than 30 days with a notable period between the murder' (2001:16)'.* Wilson *(2007)* also uses this definition in his research of British serial killers who were active between 1960 and 2006. This is particularly useful as it allows us to differentiate between serial killers and mass or spree killers, who kill a large number of people in one incident.

However Philip Jenkins (1991:212) defines serial murder as: *'the killing of four or more victims over a period greater than 72 hours, where the primary motive does not appear to be connected with political ideology or professional crime.'* Steven Egger's (1990) definition goes further. He states:

> *'A serial murder occurs when one or more individuals (males, in most known cases) commits a second or subsequent murder; is relationshipless; is at a different time and has no apparent connection to the initial murder; and is usually committed in a different geographical location. Further, the motive is not for material gain and is believed to be for the murderer's desire to have power over the victims. Victims may have symbolic value and are perceived to be prestigeless and in most instances are unable to defend themselves or alert others to their plight, or are perceived as powerless*

given their situation in time, place or status within their immediate surroundings (such as vagrants, prostitutes, migrant workers, homosexuals, missing children, and single and often elderly women)' (Egger 1990:4).

Gresswell and Hollin (1994) note that while research into serial killing is largely based on studies in the USA, it is also perpetrator-focused. They highlight a danger in finding patterns where none exist and assuming a killer's actions followed his intention. A year later McKenzie (1995) defined serial murder as 'one-on-one murder, repetitive, involving a stranger, with a motive only known to the murderer' (1995:3). Fido (2003:193) suggests that the *'equation of three killings to make one serialist'* as over simple but fails to put forward an alternative.

The issue of what defines a serial killer is helpfully addressed by Heide & Keeney (1995). They sought to identify a more complete definition in order to understand and prevent future serial murder. After analysing the dimensions of serial homicide defined by nine authors, including Holmes and DeBurger (1988), Egger (1990) and Ressler, Burgess & Douglas (1988a) Heide and Keeny proposed a definition which included men and women; those killers who knew their victims; and those who killed for financial gain.

Hinch et al. (1998) argue that this drive to define and classify serial murder leads to questionable data collection and distorted analysis of serial murder and serial murderers. For example, he states that the exclusion by many scholars of

female serial killers fails to allow for the examination of sociological factors. Also as women are more likely to kill people known to them, Hinch describes Egger's theory that serial killers prey on strangers as 'unwarranted and misleading'. Hinch also attacks the notion that a 'true' serial killer is not motivated by material gain.

> *'It could be argued that the exclusion of extrinsically motivated killers, especially those who kill for profit, amounts to an ideological concept of serial murder. It is ideological because it excludes evidence on the basis of preconceived beliefs that serial killers are intrinsically motivated, while ruling out a priori that serial killing may be the product of socio-cultural and/or socio-structural variables' (Hinch 1998:5).*

Hinch concludes that it is these preconceived beliefs and narrow categorisations that inhibit the understanding of serial murder. However, in his call for expanded definitions he fails to offer an alternative, so for the purpose of this dissertation the definition of serial killer will be taken in its simplest form: *A person who kills three or more other people over a period of more than 30 days.* Thus, following Wilson (2006), there is an element of time and a numeric threshold in relation to the number of victims.

Typology of a serial killer

In a bid for a greater understanding of the phenomenon of serial killers, numerous theories have been posited as to why serial murder occurs and what drives the offenders. Theories devised by Holmes and DeBurger (1988), and later revised by Holmes and Holmes (2001), state that serial killers can be either

act or process focussed and then can fall in to four sub types - based primarily on motive. These are: the visionary type of killer who hears voices or has visions to kill; the mission killer who strives to rid society of a certain sector, for example to cleanse the streets of prostitutes as the so-called 'Yorkshire Ripper' Peter Sutcliffe did; the hedonistic type who kills purely for pleasure, be it lust or thrill; and fourthly there is the power or control killer.

Canter & Wentink (2004) raise five main concerns surrounding the 'reliability' and 'validity' of the research that these typologies are based upon. They also state that Holmes and Holmes (2001) failed to offer a precise definition of the 'act-focused' or 'process focused' method of killing. According to Holmes and Holmes act-led offenders kill quickly while process-led killers enjoy the slow tortuous death of their victims. Canter & Wentink's empirical tests of Holmes & Holmes' serial murder typology found that the *'higher frequency characteristics of the crime scenes could not be used to distinguish between offences or support the proposed types'* (2004:511). Whilst not entirely dismissive of these typologies they postulated that rather than placing emphasis on the *'motivations of the offender'*, as suggested by Fox and Levin (1998), more inference should be given to *'how the offender interacts with the victim' (2004:512).*

The crime scene is also important according to the FBI as it can determine whether the killer is 'organised' or 'disorganised'. The Agency's Crime Classification Manual (Douglas et al., 2011) describes the organised offender as being well prepared and methodical and the disorganised killer being more opportunistic and chaotic. In research designed to examine the validity of the FBI

model, David Canter and colleagues found that *'all serial killers are likely to exhibit some aspects that are organised and some that are disorganised, but the differences between them are, more than likely, differences in the particular subset of disorganised variables that they exhibit,'* (Canter et al., 2004:313).

Hinch (Hinch and Hepburn, 1998) is also critical of serial killer typologies which he says 'overlap and conflict'. Hinch concludes that there is 'no such thing as a typical serial killer' (1998:4). Instead, he says classification attempts are 'misleading' and tend to reinforce notions like the lust killer stereotypes which he would like to see eradicated. Cluff et al. (1997) believe that these psychological explanations of serial killing also 'fall short' because they 'mask responsibility for the killer behind a veil of psychopathology' (1997:300). Blaming the individual, they argue, shifts responsibility away from society and a culture which accepts violence against women (Caputi, 1987).

By 2005 there appeared to be consensus that there is no generic profile of a serial murderer (Morton, 2008). Although the 135 attendees of an FBI organised Serial Murder Symposium did conclude that there were certain traits similar to a psychopathy disorder (Hare, 1999), including 'sensation seeking, a lack of remorse or guilt, impulsivity, the need for control, and predatory behaviour,' (Morton 2008:14).

Socio-demographics dynamics of serial murder

What appears to be the most comprehensive break down of the demographics of serial murderers has been compiled by the University of Radford, USA (Aamodt,

2014). They report that between 1900 and 2010 there have been 3648 serial killers internationally. The largest number of killers was reported in the USA with 2625, followed by England with 142 and South Africa with 101. No explanation is provided for the inflated USA figures but it would be naïve to overlook the fact that serial murder as a definition was coined in the United States. In particular, that the detected cases swelled to 872 in 1980s and 841 in the 1990s following the classification, from 235 in the 1960s.

Concurring with the findings of DeLisi and Scherer (2006), the vast majority of these offenders are male and so, for example, the database shows that there were 3514 men and 356 women serial killers. Given these statistics, it is no surprise that all the serial killers featured in this study are male. However this does not imply that female serial killers do not exist, but rather reflects that they have been largely ignored by both main stream and feminist criminology (Cluff et al., 1997). Cluff et al. argue that female serial killers go unseen because their method of killing is less brutal than their male counterparts. Based on research by Hickey (2011/1991:117&149) females mostly used poison (52%), poison only (45%), some shooting (30%) and some bludgeoning (27%) whereas more than half, 55%, of men mutilated their victims in some way. Cluff et al. posit that female killers *'avoid detection in part because their killing methods are less obvious and in part because there is reluctance by the community, including the police, to believe that these women are killers. Typically the community feels pity on these women who have tragically lost someone close to them* (1997:296). One example of this within a British context would be Mary Ann Cotton who was eventually executed in Durham, UK, in 1873 after murdering as many as 21

people, including her own children and husband, (See Wilson (2013); and (Yardley and Wilson, 2015).

The Radford University database also breaks down the killers and victims by race and gender. In the USA 51.7 percent of the killers were white, compared to 40.6 percent black and 6.1 per cent Hispanic. The 2010 census shows the national demographic of the US to be 72.4 percent white, 12.6 African American and 16.4 Hispanic or Latino (CENSUS, 2010).

The database shows that in the USA slightly more women (5209 or 53.81%) than men (4472 or 46.19%) fall victim to serial murder. In terms of race, white victims make up 68.21% (5704) while non-white account for 2659 (1991 or 23.81% black, 546 or 6.53% Hispanic and 122 or 1.46% Asian). White women make up the largest group of victims being 39.40% (3272) compared with white male (2409 or 29.01%) black females (992 or 11.94%) and black males (964 or 11.61%). The average age of the victims in the USA was 33.5. The age of offenders was not listed.

Given these findings, it is consistent with the statistics that all the offenders in this study were white men, and that their victims were white women. However according to the FBI (2005) there is no generic template for a serial killer and cannot be conveniently grouped by sex, age, race or religion.

Serial killing and society

Whilst there has been an increase in literature related to serial murder (Bartels and Parsons, 2009), the majority of current research concentrates on the characters of the offenders as opposed to wider sociological construct of the phenomenon. In her phenomenological approach to serial murder Skrapec (2001) suggests that researchers need to go beyond 'mere description' of offenders and victims to understand serial killing. She concludes that *'if phenomenology we [researchers] formulate our questions differently – as empirically allows – we may find different answers and, in doing so, learn more about the potential of the human condition'* (ibid:61).

This type of theorising helps to introduce and frame a structural explanation of killing, and begins to move thinking about the phenomenon of serial murder away from the medico-psychological 'individual discourse' of the serial killer. As Jenkins (1992) notes:

> *'It has been argued elsewhere the act of homicide may arise from any number of circumstances peculiar to the offender, but serial murder also presupposes social conditions that permit the creation of a victim population. Such a population (Jenkins in press) is accessible to the offender, and several victims can disappear or be found dead before the authorities become seriously concerned. The nature of responses by police and other justice agencies plays an important role in shaping such opportunities for victimisation' (1992:14).*

Jenkins (2002) explores how the repeated lack of self-control makes serial killers less human and more monstrous. He goes some way towards explaining why serial murder is set apart from other crimes

> *'Fundamental to the new concept was the singular evil of seriality itself. If one commits the same act two or three times, we speak in terms of doubling or trebling the credit or blame that should accrue. In the case of serial murder, though, one plus one equals a great deal more than two' (Jenkins 2002:2).*

In earlier work, during his research into a spike in the number of serial murders in 1960s America, Jenkins (1992) concludes that the average number of victims claimed in a particular society is less about the perpetrators themselves and more about the 'social, moral and bureaucratic context' in which they operate (1992:17). Jenkins' calls for more research into the social construct of serial murder were echoed by Chris Grover and Keith Soothill, of Lancaster University, five years later. When addressing the British Criminological Conference in Belfast in 1997 they said that it was at '*our peril*' that *'the historical and cultural specificity of crime is ignored.'* They argued: *'We need to consider whether it is the very nature of society which 'creates' those people we have come to be known as "serial killers,"' (Grover and Soothill, 1997).*

Grover and Soothill analysed the work of Leyton (1986/1995), who laid out the beginnings of structural theory in his book *Hunting Humans: the rise of the modern multiple murderer*. Leyton developed a theory that he described as "homicidal protest" whereby, depending on the epoch being examined, one

group of people will murder members of a different social group. An example of this type of theorising is summarised by Haggerty (2009:170): '*During the pre-industrial era the multiple killer was an aristocrat who preyed on peasants, while in the industrial era he tended to be drawn from the new bourgeois and attack prostitutes, homeless boys and housemaids.'* Haggerty posits that Leyton '*advances a form of Mertonian strain theory* (Merton, 1938)' (2009:170) in that social groups 'fight' against the system and their standing in society.

Leyton's study of the industrial era is the most relevant to today's society, according to Grover & Soothhill (1997). However, they concluded that 'homicidal protest' could only be applied to modern day killers where *'those perceived not to be conforming to the economic and moral order of industrial capitalism were targeted'.* This line of argument has been advanced by Wilson (2007) who states that serial killers target five specific societal groups in the UK. These he argues are: the elderly, gay men, runaway children, babies and infants and young people. Wilson draws on the findings of Left Realist criminologist Jock Young (Young, 1991). Left Realists believe the root of crime lies in relative depravation and repression and that an increase in crime can be explained by changes in British society. Writing about the 1970s Young argues that British society includes:

> *'A great deal of material and ontological precariousness, and which responds to deviance by separation and exclusion. Such a process is driven by changes in the material basis of advanced industrial societies, from*

Fordism to post-Fordism and represents the movement into late modernity (Young, 1999:26 cited in Wilson (2007:29), Taylor, 2013).'

Wilson modifies and develops Leyton's notion of homicidal protest in that he notes that the victims of serial killers in Britain between 1960-2006 were *'overwhelmingly individuals within groups that lack power, voice and agency'.* Soothill & Wilson (2005) argue that in relation to Leyton's theory it is important to '*locate serial murder within power relations that go beyond class. Only then can homicidal protest remain understandable as a form of revenge, but a revenge that is wreaked upon relatively powerless groups in society, '* (2005:695). Therefore in the context of this thesis it is important note that serial murder is not simply about the relationship between a victim and an offender, but also about society and how society shapes and creates a world where serial killers can exist and how this type of killer will exploit weaknesses so as to be able to kill three or more victims in a period of greater than 30 days.

Whilst recognising that 'crime is central to the project of the mass media' Rock (1998:225) goes further is saying that the media reports act as lessons to our moral understanding of society.

'They [the media reports] have a pathos, immediacy, urgency, and horror that lend themselves to ready dramatization, and they are continually being translated into news, entertainment and human interest stories for public edification. They are moreover though to exemplify truths about the condition of society, and the exceptional homicide will be pored over

incessantly for the moral, personal and political lessons it is thought to impart about the way we live now,' (ibid:225).

Finally, as Gruenewald (2009) et al point out, *'examining how homicide victim and offender characteristics affect news media coverage decisions is a step toward understanding the construction of homicide as a social problem*, (2009:262). As such, the next section investigates what makes a crime newsworthy.

NEWS VALUES

'News is a representation of the world in language; because language is a semiotic code, it imposes a structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is represented; and so inevitably news, like every discourse, constructively patterns that of what it speaks.'

(Fowler 1991:4 cited in Mason 2008)

The notion of 'news values' was first posited fifty years ago by Galtung and Ruge (1965), before the age of 24-hour news channels and instant reporting on the Internet and social media. Despite the advancements in newsgathering and the way people consume news, the basics of news values have changed little over the last half century. Galtung and Ruge's theories of how the importance of a news story is influenced by novelty and violence still hold true today. So too does the timing of a news story and its sustainability and cultural relevance.

Jewkes explains that *'no story can be told without judgements being made about the viability of sending costly resources to film, photograph and report it, or without implicit suppositions being made about the beliefs and value of the people reading, viewing or listening to it,'* (Jewkes 2004:225).

She then expands on Galtung and Ruge's notion of 'newsworthiness' and goes further than others (Reiner, 2002, Chermak, 1995, Carrabine, 2008) in creating a 12-point criterion to gauge an incident's 'news value.' These values, argues Jewkes, are judgments made by journalists and editors about the level of public interest a story will generate.

Jewkes' news values for the 'new millennium' include: (i) Threshold: Asking whether a story is significant enough to be of interest to a national audience; (Nomokonov and Shulga) Predictability: Vital resources are often committed to pre-planned events ensuring their place on the running order; (iii) Simplification: A crime story must be "reducible to a minimum number of parts or themes"; (iv) Individualism: Stories must have a 'human interest' appeal and be easy to relate to; (v) Risk: We could all be victims with little attention given to crime avoidance; (vi) Sex: Sexual violence, 'stranger-danger' and female offenders being portrayed as sexual predators; (vii) Celebrity or high status persons: The media is attracted to all elements of celebrity and crime is no different; (viii) Proximity: Both spatially and culturally; (ix) Violence: As with sex, it fulfils the media's desire for drama; (x) Spectacle and graphic imagery: Particularly for television news; (xi) Children: Either as victims or offenders; (xii) Conservative ideology and political diversion: Protecting the 'British way of life'.

Stories about serial murder are therefore clearly highly newsworthy, but the relationship is not just one way. As such, Haggerty (2009) believes the relationship is 'symbiotic'. He suggests that multi-channel televisions and the Internet all allow serial killers to *'revel in their celebrity'* and that serial killing is a phenomenon of modernity facilitated by the mass media.

> *'A symbiotic relationship exists between the media and serial killers. In the quest for audience share the media have become addicted to portrayals of serial killers. Such killers offer rich opportunities to capture public attention by capitalizing on deeply resonate themes of innocent victims, dangerous strangers, unsolved murders, all coalescing around a narrative of evasion and given moral force through implied personal threats to audience members. Serial killers were apparently ready-made for prime time,' (Haggerty, 2009:174).*

Here it is important to acknowledge that not all serial killers achieve 'prime time'. Trevor Hardy, a serial killer operating in 1970s Manchester, has remained relatively unknown, in part because his status as a serial killer was not revealed until his trial (Wilson et al., 2010). Although by the time he died in 2010 he had become known as 'one of Manchester's most notorious killers, (Scheerhout, 2012).

One unlikely author who has seemingly developed this idea about serial killing and the notion of celebrity is 'Moors Murderer' Ian Brady. Brady and Myra Hindley were responsible for the murders of five children in Greater Manchester

in the 1960s. In his autobiography, when asking why some killers, like himself, become folk devils, or "icons of their era" creating "milestones of homicidal history" Brady (2001) states: *'The answer is gestalt. Atmosphere. The mystical and sometimes almost romantic evocation of a memorable era or ethos. Plus a theatrical, dramatic setting in keeping with murder or better still enhancing its spine-chilling qualities," (2001:261).* Brady's work offers an all too rare glimpse into the mind of a serial killer but it is often confusing and contradictory and doesn't, as Metvier (2009) suggests, warrant a place on the book shelf amongst academic experts.

The 'Moors Murders' are what Soothill et al (2002, 2004) describe as a 'mega case'. Fleming (2007) borrows this term for his research into serial murder in Canada where he posits that some *cases 'have a life in the public sphere which extends well beyond the factual recounting of the details of the murders, propelling and being propelled as moral cautionary tales about the nature of Canadian Society*' (2007:287).

Mason & Monckton-Smith (2008) examine one of the criteria outlined by Jewkes, that of sex and 'stranger danger' when they researched the sexualisation of the murder of women in the British press. They argue that crimes like serial killing which are committed in a public place by a 'psychotic stranger' form a 'definite event' for news media (2008:694) and that serial killing and sexual killing go hand in hand as far as the media is considered, despite that not always being the case. Interestingly the case they cite does not involve the media – but a lawyer. During the trial of the so-called trophy rapist, Antoni Imiela, the prosecution

barrister referred to the defendant as a 'serial killer' when there has never been any suggestion that he had murdered (Shaw, 2004). The serial rapist was also compared to the Yorkshire Ripper on the BBC's Crimewatch website (Mason and Monckton-Smith, 2008), highlighting again that connection to serial killing sells.

But what of other influencing factors? What elements propel a story up the news agenda, elevating it from a primary, as Chermak would describe, to a super primary or 'mega case'? One of those factors is the influence of extra information, or added value, from a source closest to the crime – the victim's family. There is no denying that the majority of serial murder is newsworthy (Wilson et al., 2010) and that the fact-hungry media target victims' families to assist them in 'telling the story'. Interviews and photographs from victims' families benefit the media, but at what cost? This research aims to address those issues and look at the impact on families and whether they become victims themselves.

THE VICTIMS OF CRIME

The question as to who can claim the status of victim is influenced by a number of perceived factors. These factors would, at the very least, include age, social status, criminal history and gender. However, just as the reporting of crime is 'selective and unrepresentative', news reporting of crime victims is equally so,' (Greer, 2007:21). But what of those left behind? The victims' families, the survivors of homicide? According to one survivor, Jane Zito, whose husband was stabbed to death by a man with paranoid schizophrenia on the London Underground in 1992, the feeling is like being untouchable. She said: ' *When I say*

untouchable it's because murder is an ugly thing. You feel it if you become one of society's leftovers that nobody wants to know about it all,' (Rock 1998:32). Another survivor goes on to describe the feeling of a void after the funeral is over and of friends disappearing once they have heard the 'gory details' (1998:34). Rock goes on: '*It's as if audiences cannot bear any longer to listen to the deeply harrowing narratives, especially when there is constant repetition and no sign of change in the survivor… They may not know what to say to each other, and what words to use (words such as murder and the very name of the victim, are often avoided as if they were improper and conversations will falter,'* (Rock 1998:34).

The ideal victim

Propelled by research in the United States, the interest in the effects of crime on victims' families in the UK gathered pace in the 1970s and 1980s (Shapland and Hall, 2007). According to Rock (1998), the first support group emerged in the UK in Coventry in 1969 after a priest brought together the families of two dying boys. Then by the mid 1990s there were more than 500 members of 138 bereavement support groups in the UK (1998:138). Specific support groups for survivors of homicide were also emerging across the Atlantic in the USA. One of the co-founders of the northern California group Citizens Against Homicide explains why it was important to have a group dedicated to homicide survivors:

> *'I went to Compassionate Friends right after my daughter was murdered. Her father and I both went and we only went for one meeting, and later I chatted with other people, to explain to them my feelings as to why I really couldn't stay and become part of their organisation, and that was because I*

had just gone through a murder and I could not relate to people that were discussing a child who had died from leukaemia, a child who had died from a horseback riding accident, or things of this nature, because they had all the answers. They knew everything that they needed to know, and in my case murder is so totally different from all of these other deaths, and they are not remotely related…I would have so much preferred that she had died riding a horse… as opposed to being brutally murdered by another human being that just acted out violently on her. So, I just couldn't comprehend, did not fit into the group at all,' (Rock 1998:147).

In the western world increasing power is being given to victims of crime. The introduction of victim impact statements being read out in court and the expansion of victim support programs are just two examples of the growing strength of victim movements in the latter part of the last century (Walklate, 2007, Mawby, 2007b, Christie, 2010).

According to Mythen (2007: 466; cited in Walklate (2011:181)), '*Being, or becoming a victim is not a neat or absolute journey. Acquiring the status of victim involves being party to a range of interactions and processes, including identification, labelling and recognition.'* This concept is illustrated and explored in Chapter Six when one participant describes the events following the death of his daughter. During the interview he repeatedly stated that he did not want pity, and that he was not a victim – although it is difficult to argue that since his daughter's disappearance he has not been vulnerable.

There is much debate as to the classification of a victim (Greer, 2007) and, above all, what makes a good or 'ideal' victim (Christie, 1986). But how ideal are 'ideal' victims. Studies by Marvin Wolfgang (1958) found a degree of 'victim-precipitation' in homicides in Philadelphia between 1948 and 1952.

> *'The role of the victim is characterised by his having been the first in the homicide drama to use physical force directed against his subsequent slayer. In short the first to commence the interplay of resort to physical violence,'* (1958:252).

The notion that victims are to blame for deaths is also easier to accept than the idea that society's moral order has been threatened. As Rock (1998) explains:

> *'Perhaps what is partly at issue is the sheer difficulty of conceding that innocent victims may indeed be struck down because such a concession would jolt any sustainable faith in a properly-ordered, just, or decent world. It is simpler by far to maintain that, in some fashion, the victims may actually have deserved what happened to them,'* (1998: 27).

This, in part, has recently been described as the 'hierarchy of victimisation' (Carrabine et al., 2004: 117). In other words, why do some victims generate more interest than others? Why does the murder of a black youth in South London generate fewer column inches and 'headlines' than the death of a young, white, professional female in Bristol (Morris, 2011) ? Why do many of the 50 murders which occur each day in South Africa remain unreported while in 2014

the murders of Anni Dewani (Smith, 2014) and Reeva Steenkamp (Karimi, 2015) dominated the news and public debate in South Africa and in the UK?

Young people are also unfairly represented. Most youths are portrayed as the offenders when they are more likely to be the victims (Walklate 2011:183). Christie concluded in his later work (2010) that the victims' movement is now at a crossroads. One road gives victims the 'power to punish' the other gives them the 'power to understand.' This research explores Christie's notion further as to how the media can give victim's families a voice allowing them to play a central role in their own story.

In his research with journalists examining the input of victims of crime Chermak (1995) posits that the demographic characteristics of the victim can contribute to the level of newsworthiness the crime achieves. One of his informants described to him how some victims are more important than others.

> *'We look for, if there was a shooting or murder, what kind of neighbourhood did it happen in, and how did it happen… From our long experience with our covering of shootings and muggings, we do mentally rate the quality of crimes that occur, based on who is involved, how innocent is the "victim." If you determine a crime involves two bad guys doing a drug deal and they are both what we would call scumbags, then you say, both were basically asking for it, both knew the risk involved, and so the quality of that story as far as the tone of that story, the amount of time that is given to it on the air, and the follow-up to it, probably would be less than, say, an innocent bystander*

shot, or a child shot on a stoop by a stray bullet: these send a story off on a whole other tangent,' (Chermak 1995:63).

Supporting this theory, Greer (2007) describes a 'hierarchy of victimization' where on one hand there is the ideal victim, for example a child, and on the other someone perceived as being less deserving of victim status, such as a gang member. Greer identifies Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman, who disappeared from Soham in the summer of 2010, as 'archetypal' ideal victims (see Wells (2005) and Gerrard (2004)). This is not disputed, although it is important to remember other factors that added news value to the Soham story. The disappearance occurred during August, the so-called 'silly season' where hard news stories are scarce due to the summer recess for parliamentary and judiciary systems. Also, the now iconic photograph of the girls in Manchester United football shirts in front of a clock just minutes before they were snatched was a gift for picture editors on a slow news day. Greer rightly states that class, or a 'middle-class notion of respectability' (2007:24) affects victim status along with race. He uses the examples of black murder victims Stephen Lawrence and Damilola Taylor to illustrate the lack of media interest in the crimes, which were at first believed to be gang related.

Victim narrative as newsworthy catalyst

A grieving relative caught on camera, an emotional plea to a daughter's killer to come forward all increase the newsworthiness of a crime. As Jenkins notes:

> *'Like great drama, a newsworthy story should evoke an emotional response such as fear, outrage, or pity which is why innocent victims like children or animals feature so regularly,'* (Jenkins 1994: 221).

So too Chermak (1995) believes the involvement of a crime victim, or their family, will elevate the story to a higher level of importance, increasing its 'marketability'. In particular, he draws attention to the increased newsworthiness of a story which features weeping relatives who can articulately describe the loss of their loved ones (ibid:107).

Fleming (2007) agrees when he describes how the media exploits 'human tragedy' by revisiting the 'suffering of the living victims' of serial murder (2007:287). In other words it is the family and friends of the victim which propel the story to greater prominence in the news. Peelo (2006) also concurs when she describes how newspaper readers are like 'witnesses to the drama' we are *'invited to focus our attention on and emotionally align ourselves with victims, co-victims and survivors of homicide'* (2006:163).

Jenkins (1994) suggests that television news operates with formulaic devices including interviews with victims' families. '*Such encounters serve to emphasize the ordinariness and decency of the bereaved parents as individuals and clearly invite identification. This is intended to attract sympathy and heighten and contrast with the wanton brutality of the offender*' (Jenkins 1994:221).

Greer (2007) also supports this argument when he outlines the importance of press conferences for both the police investigation and media coverage of murder cases. Greer says it is '*almost expected that victims' loved ones will express their emotions and share their pain and suffering with media audiences, at once horrified and fascinated by the spectacle unfolding before them'* (Greer, 2007:30). An example used by Greer is the murder of Damilola Taylor, whose death was initially ignored by the media until his family travelled from Nigeria to make a press statement. Another example is that of Joanna Yeates, who was murdered in her Bristol flat in 2010. Ms Yeates was just 'another' missing woman until her boyfriend and parents made an emotional public plea for her safe return. At the time Sky News's senior editor James Birtles said he elevated the story on the news agenda because after seeing the press conference he realised that the Yeates' family were 'just like his'[3]. In contrast Greer found that families '*less able or less willing to engage with the media, or those whom the police consider less suitable for media exposure for whatever reason, may find that, deprived of new and newsworthy material, media attention quickly dries up'* (2007:31).

Here we might suggest that the *Yeates'* case is what Innes (2004) describes as a 'signal case' or as previously mentioned Soothill's 'mega cases'.

> *'The manufacture of a signal crime via mass mediated communication involved a crime incident being constructed by journalists through their use of particular representational and rhetorical techniques, and interpreted by*

[3] Personal conversation

audiences, as an index of the state of society and social order.' (Innes 2004:16)

Whilst working extensively on the Yeates' investigation as a journalist it was clear that in addition to the above mentioned sense that the family were 'just like any other' the time of year was particularly poignant. As Peelo (2006) notes, newspapers 'invite readers to identify with victims' (2006:159) and in this case the victim's family. At the time of Yeates' disappearance, and during the subsequent trial of her neighbour Vincent Tabak, much was made of the fact the murder happened during the run up to Christmas. Television reports focussed on festive lights and Christmas prayers at the local church, in contrast to a lonely figure walking home alone filmed for a reconstruction. A seemingly motiveless murder of a young woman in the affluent area of Clifton, Bristol, struck at the hearts of not just those who knew Yeates but of the whole community. Katz, as quoted in Peelo (2006) describes how this sense of shared emotional experience emerged in his study of newsworthiness in 1970s and 80s in the USA.

'The reading of crime is a collective, ritual experience. Read daily by a large portion of the population, crime news generates emotional experiences in individual readers, experiences which each reader can assume are shared by many others. Although each may read in isolation, phenomenologically the experience may be a collective, emotional 'effervescence' of moral indignation,' (Katz, 1987:47).

This 'collective experience' appears similar to one of moral panic (Cohen, 2002) and can be seen in the serial murders featured in this investigation, and also in Peelo's research into the way newspapers reported 13 of the UK's so called

'mega cases'. But Peelo takes it further by arguing that newspapers guide their readers as to how to perceive the news event. She describes that to interact with their readers, newspapers are required to '*use shorthand symbols, making it easier for readers to know when to hiss and boo as the villain appears and when to identify with the good and worthy,'* (2006:163). This was very much apparent in the 2012 case of missing schoolgirl Tia Sharp. The 12-year-old had been staying with her grandmother in New Adlington, near Croydon, UK, when she disappeared. The last person to see her was her grandmother's partner Stuart Hazell. The media were quick to reveal Hazell's previous convictions and soon he was forced to publicly reveal his criminal past (Ward and Evans, 2012). Hazell was identified as the villain by the media and later charged with and convicted of Tia's murder.

The media however don't always point their readers in the right direction. During the *Yeates* case the media were quick to cast suspicion on landlord Christopher Jefferies - suspicion which was compounded by his arrest. Jefferies was however released without charge and the true killer later identified. Eight newspapers were forced to make public apologies and pay Jefferies substantial damages for libel (Greenslade, 2011).

Race and gender can also play an role in determining newsworthiness according to Gruenewald et al. (2009) and Lundman (2003).

Guenewald, Pizarro and Chermak (2009) evaluated news coverage in Newark, New Jersey, USA, between 1995 and 2005 after they found previous research in

this area to be 'non existent' (2009:262). They partially agreed with Lundman that 'cultural typification based on race and gender is an important criterion of newsworthiness.' However they also called for more research to determine the 'generalizability' of their findings given the sample size. Unfortunately this study was unable to assist in this area given both offenders and victims were white, and all the victims were women.

The notion of victim narrative increasing newsworthiness also concurs with Jewkes' theory on individuality. By gathering additional facts about the victim and personal testimony from his/her relatives, journalists increase the individual nature of the story and thus make it more newsworthy. If the killer remains at large the media interest will eventually subside. There may be peaks of interest around potential associated victims but there generally won't be a lot of publicity unless the killer is caught and there is a subsequent trial (Wilson et al., 2010).

The trial will bring with it a certain amount of closure but can evoke some of the most painful episodes of psychological pain (Masters et al., 1988:116). It is during this second stage of newsworthiness that Allen (1990) says victims cooperate with the press as they feel the criminal justice system is weighted against them. 'They [the victims] turn to the press as a useful ally to publicise their predicament,' (1990:5).

From what has been described, it is clear that victim testimony is important in propelling crime stories up the news agenda. The next section outlines how

journalists come by those stories and what methods they use to ensure they 'get the story'.

"Getting the story"

'With ratlike cunning and a plausible manner, I intruded into private grief' (Kenneth Roy, 2011).

The inevitable consequence of the importance of victim narrative in news media is the need for journalists to engage with the victim's family. This contact occurs at many levels - from a gentle enquiry through a press or police family liaison officer, to what journalists refer to as a 'death knock'. (See (Anonymous, 2014, Duncan, 2012, Duncan and Newton, 2010, Greenslade, 2010b, Greenslade, 2010a)). Newton (2011) argues that the most ethical way of covering the death is by speaking to those closely involved. But it's the local, often inexperienced journalists, who are normally the first to the door, leading to considerations surrounding death knocks being of particular concern (Frost, 1998). Although Frost makes it clear that when handled with compassion the death knock itself cannot be unethical as *'if someone's death is worth recording, then surely their life is worth recording… who better than their family to inform the public about the person who has died?'"* (Frost 1998:277).

Carrying out a 'death knock' is one of the jobs reporters hate most. Not just for the interaction with a grieving relative, but also the conflicting emotions of then being uplifted by the outcome. Anecdotally one national newspaper reporter described the dread of knocking on the door of a family whose son had been

killed, followed by the sense of achievement of leaving with the family photograph album. Another veteran journalist Ben Hecht described one experience:

> *'While maturer minds badgered the survivors of the morning's dead for news data, I hovered broodingly outside the ring of interviewers. I learned early not to ask for what I wanted, for such requests only alerted the beleaguered kin, weeping now as much for the scandal coming down on them as for the grief that had wakened them. Instead I scurried through bedrooms, poked noiselessly into closets, trunks and bureau drawers, and, the coveted photograph under my coat, bolted for the street.'* (Hecht, 1954:123: Found in Chermak 1995:178)

Newton and Duncan (2010) describe the death knock as being arguably one of the most challenging duties of a reporter – and yet one they are most likely to be ill prepared for. In the study of some 126 UK based journalists '74% said they were given no advice at all before they were sent to interview a bereaved family,' (2010:451). And whilst most agreed that death knocks should be taught, as a group they didn't know the best way to go about the training, with only a quarter saying it should be done at college.

To illustrate what they say is a typical description of a death from a journalist they quote former reporter Geraldine Hayward wring in the industry magazine Press Gazette:

> *'I'd invite myself into your grief. Trample around your tortured soul, grab a photograph and zip back to the office to bang out 300 words of tastefully titillating obituary.*
>
> *You'd think that after repeatedly barging into bereaved relatives' houses demanding photos of the deceased and staying until I got at least one killer quote, pardon the pun, out of the living people that most of the deaths would stick in my memory. But they don't. I worry I maybe a psychopath,'* (Hayward, 2005, In Duncan & Newton 2010:449).

During a death knock, as well as conducting an interview reporters are also required to get a photograph of the deceased. Roy (2011) quotes war reporter Nicholas Tomalin (1931-73) when describing qualities required for a journalist when it comes to the 'dark art' of collecting a family photograph, or 'collect' as it is known amongst reporters. *'The only qualities essential for real success in journalism are ratlike cunning, a plausible manner, and a little literary ability'* (Tomalin 1969, quoted in Roy 2011:1). Describing his own experience of his first 'death knock' Roy said he was surprised to be welcomed into the home of grieving parents. After identifying a picture of the deceased girl on the mantelpiece, he persuaded her parents to let him 'borrow' it. He went on:

'When I left the house, the mantelpiece of the living room was bare. The photograph of the dead girl had gone. Mission had been accomplished: I had come of age. With the mixture of ratlike cunning and a plausible manner I had intruded successfully into private grief and the sly nature of the intrusion had not even occurred to the grieving. They were too immersed in grief to notice' (Roy 2011:3).

Castle (1999) in his article on news media in Australia describes how trainees are often 'blooded' by being sent on death knocks, only for senior journalists to have to take over from them when they fail to deliver. He contrasts this scenario with that of the police, where there is considerable training on how to deal with bereaved relatives. However, Robert Davis of *USA Today* does not agree and wants to see greater training of victims' rights. He writes:

> *'When tragedy strikes, journalists are thrust into chaos and forced to make decisions on the fly. These decisions can impact the lives of everyone involved. Both journalists and criminal justice professionals must work as a team to meet the needs of the public while also protecting the rights of the victims. By understanding how the media works, criminal justice professionals can help reporters get the information the public needs to know. By understanding victims' rights, reporters can avoid the common errors of judgment that cause victims needless pain' (Davis, 1998:3).*

Veteran British journalist Roy Greenslade, writing in his blog for *The Guardian* newspaper, agrees that 'death knocks' should not be left to the young and inexperienced. He suggested that in his experience most people, albeit not all, wanted to talk to the media. *'They wanted to place on record the life story of the dead person and/or the circumstances of the death. They were happy to supply a picture,'* (Greenslade, 2010b).

However not all families are happy to work with the media after the death of a loved one. An example of this was put before the Leveson Enquiry on June 26

2012, when evidence was given by the lawyer of a family of a schoolboy who died in a coach crash earlier that year. An extract from my reflexive diary reads:

> *'Sobering stuff to dwell on before the next death knock... Inquiry has just heard from Giles Crown how when they visited the scene of the crash a photo was taken of their young daughter crying and carrying flowers. Photo taken on private property and after journalists told to remain 20 metres from bereaved families. It was published by the Mail Online and Daily Telegraph. Associated Newspapers later said they had no reason to believe those in the photo had no wish to be photographed - Crown says was clear this was a grieving child and contravened PCC regulations. Editor of Telegraph said legit to publish photo as in public domain. Also heard how Mail on Sunday journalist turned up with flowers. After father opened door in tears and said did not want to speak, journalist left note "telling the world about your loved one may offer a grain of support.*
>
> *The Sun asked not to publish a photo that appeared online. Next day it was on the front page. The PCC were sympathetic and quite helpful but asked family friend to draft letter to editors asking them to back off. By then ' a lot of damage had been done' to the family. Family only given evidence reluctantly, because the Inquiry asked and because felt it was the right thing to do. Asked for on going privacy to be respected.'*

Victims' life stories, along with their photographs, play such an important part in making their deaths newsworthy that it was deemed necessary to include this

section on how that information is gathered. It in no way attempts to explain how all information is gathered but aims to give the reader a brief insight.

The next section looks at how families deal with that very media interaction and their experiences of being thrust into the media limelight.

Media Victims

The study of crime has historically centred around the criminals themselves and more laterally with the advent of victimology, the immediate victim. However, Connolly and Gordon (2014) found that for every person murdered there was a ripple effect and a further six to ten family members were affected by the crime. These they described as 'co-victims of the homicide' or 'survivors of homicide' (2014:1). They also note that despite the growing literature examining the effects on homicide survivors, up until their research in 2014 there had not been a thorough review of the literature. Carried out to inform clinical practice, they found two out of forty articles studied reported negative media coverage affected the families' grieving process. One of the papers was on a study carried out by Riches and Dawson's (1998) into the factors affecting the 'normal' grieving process by families bereaved by murder or manslaughter. They found that while victims may have led very ordinary uneventful lives their deaths were extraordinary and brought them fame and in some cases notoriety.

Riches and Dawson even reported that in some cases the victims were '*portrayed as playing a part in their own death*' (1998:145), despite the fact that they were not necessarily involved in a victim precipitated murder. So too news coverage

linking the victim with deviant behaviour, as in the case of sex worker victims of the Suffolk Strangler, (Wilson and Harrison, 2008) detracted from the public's willingness to identify with the surviving families. Riches and Dawson also noted that an adverse effect of media presence is that in addition to intruding on privacy, the media reduces the chances of the family establishing a routine which can help in processing grief and interfered with the families' ability to create and share fond memories of the loved one. This 'interruption' in the grieving process, as described earlier, is more likely to happen if the death is associated with others, and has not occurred in isolation as a single homicide.

However it would be wrong to assume that all attention from the press at such a time is intrusive. Mulley (2001) postulates that talking to the media can be helpful to survivors of crime and their families for several reasons. It is argued, for example, that *'some individuals need to express their feelings and convey the hurt and anguish they have suffered,*' (2001:30). She also states that it is important for people to set the record straight and that it is *'particularly important for people who have been bereaved through violent crime, who may wish to exert some control over what is being reported about a loved one,' (2001:30).* Cooperating with the media can also be altruistic, argues Mulley, for people to *'help and give strength to others who may have suffered a similar experience.'* However Mulley, a former chief executive of the UK charity Victim Support, also found that for the victims of serious crimes – like serial killing – media interest is sometimes a '*life sentence*' where certain crimes '*enter the public consciousness almost becoming public property*.' This is particularly

relevant to several of the case studies featured in this research, for example the crimes of Peter Tobin (Harrison and Wilson, 2010).

Victim Support also describes on its website (www.victimsupport.org) ways in which talking to the media may have positive effect. Advice to victims' states that in addition to assisting the police investigation talking to the media makes some victims feel better about the crime. It states that *'it allows them to get their feelings off their chest.'* Adding: '*It also gives them an opportunity to warn other people of the risks or to draw attention to how they coped or to thank people who helped them.'* It goes on to warn: *'Remember that it can be hard to get your privacy back once you have talked to the media so things you've said in the past may be repeated again - even if your feelings have changed.'* Victim Support offers advice on how to deal with unwanted press attention by contacting the police, IPSO and the broadcast media regulator Ofcom.

In their study on the relationship between victim post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and media reports Maercker and Mehr (2006:137) partly concur with Mulley when they put forward two contradictory theories. The first is that media reports of crime have an adverse effect on victims by impeding their recovery and leading to re-traumatization, the other that social recognition leads to the victim feeling '*proud*' and '*supported*' that the crime is '*not only subjectively important and incisive but also of interest to the public at large.*' However, after conducting what they state is the first research of its kind, they found that the emotional reaction of the victims to the media reports were predominantly negative. Very few, just five per cent of the longitudinal sample group, were

'*pleased or felt support*' by the reports. The experience of those who viewed the media reports as inaccurate were significantly more negative than those who judged the reports to be correct. Maercker and Mehr concluded that media representatives should take more care when selecting individuals to interview to prevent further trauma and encouraged further research.

However research in America by Steven Chermak found that one victim's mother, although aware of negative issues involved, still chose to talk to the media and used it to her advantage and to keep her daughter's 'story' in the news.

> *'The mother said she knew the media were using her, but at the same time she realized what the media could do and felt she effectively used them. She hoped that her appearing in the news might help solve the case and that somebody, somewhere would notice her daughter and return her home safely. After the daughter was found murdered, the mother felt her continued participation, or what she called her 'continued exploitation' would keep the public interested enough to pressure the police to continue to investigate the case so the same thing would not happen to another mother,' (Chermak 1995:106).*

The pioneer of research into post-traumatic stress disorder, Dr Frank Ochberg, also addresses the issues surrounding the media's contact with crime victims. He believes that a journalist's understanding of PTSD is vital when dealing with victims and their families, because families often have feelings of rage and vengeance. Ochberg postulates that there is a role for the journalist to help

reduce that impulse towards vengeance as, despite the emotional appearance, survivors often want to tell their stories. Timing, however, is crucial. Ochberg believes after the initial 'bedlam' of a traumatic event, when reality sets in, families who were once annoyed by the press attention can feel abandoned and forgotten after the media leave.

Of course not all cases are the same, and how people cope with the murder of a loved one is complex. Soloman et al. (1989) concluded that previously positive life experiences act as a buffer to help individuals cope in times of crisis. Talking about the traumatic event can also aid in recovery according to Lepore et al. (1996). They found that the quality of a person's social network and relationships has important implications for processing and adjusting to traumatic experiences. The research into the coping ability of recently bereaved mothers found that '*unconstrained social relationships might facilitate the processing of traumatic events and emotional recovery*,' (ibid:279).

However, it is not as straight forward as just having someone to talk to. Often the mere fact that a traumatic life event has occurred can lead families to become isolated and encounter a negative reaction from their social networks (Herbert and Dunkel-Schetter, 1992, cited in Lepore 1996). Friends may find it difficult to approach a person whose loved-one has been murdered, not knowing what to say. On the other hand, bereaved families may avoid people for fear of hearing 'scripted or glib responses' (ibid:273). Survivors can find friends impatient (Masters et al., 1988). The need to talk can also be compelling, with a '*seemingly insatiable need to talk about what happened, to tell people about their experience.*

It is as if they feel coerced into talking,' (Janoff-Bulman, 1992:108). Whether people turn to the media as a means of sating this desire to share their experiences will be explored later in this research. However, those wishing to talk to the media, for whatever reason, often find a willing journalist to share their stories. Serial murder holds a specific interest to the media, which is explored further in the next section.

MULTICIDE AND THE MEDIA

Why serial killing is big news

Violent crime, like sex, sells newspapers (Peelo 2006) and was a subject of fascination long before the "rise of the mass media" (Reiner, 2002:308). In fact Gibson (2006) argues that serial murder and the media are intertwined. Haggerty (2009) goes further to say that a 'symbiotic relationship exists between the media and serial killers'. Haggerty quotes Egger's (2002) research in which he found that, of the seven high profile American killers he studied, 'the majority seemed to enjoy their celebrity status' (2002:235).

> *'Even slight figures responsible for dubious or inconsequential accomplishments are elevated to celebrity status. Fame has become a generalised standard of success, connecting billionaires, actors, sports figures, but also a plethora of lesser lights. In modernity celebrity promises to liberate people from a powerless anonymity and make them known beyond the*

limitations of class and family. In a largely secularised society, fame also offers citizens the prospect of surviving beyond deaths,' Haggerty (2009:174).

While it is widely acknowledged that deviance is a main feature of the news agenda it is harder to establish why. Firstly, it is questionable whether a study can be truly objective without subjectivity from the researcher influencing the findings. As Reiner notes: *'meticulously counting units of 'violence' is not a form of train-spotting for sadists,'* (2002:303). Another issue to be addressed is what constitutes a crime? Reiner found that the definition of deviance varied in different studies making them difficult to compare. According to Chadee & Ditton (2005) crime that appeared in newspapers is just a tiny selection of the criminal events that have taken place. Referring to research by Ditton and Duffy (1983) only 0.25 per cent of possible crimes made known to the police or heard by the courts in the area they studied appeared in newsprint. *'In addition, this selection is distorted, with crimes involving violence being reported with 22 times the frequency justified by officially recorded occurrence, and crimes involving sex being reported with 14 times the frequency justified by officially recorded occurrence,' (Ditton and Duffy, 1983:159).*

It is clear mass media does not merely record events but *"rather participate directly in processes by which events are constituted and exist in the world,"* (Erickson, 1991:219). This participation involves a process of selection. As outlined above, the media does not publish or broadcast every criminal act that has been recorded. The reason some stories will be chosen over others will depend on their 'newsworthiness' and it is widely accepted that the most

commonly reported crimes are those that happen less frequently (Katz, 1987, Reiner, 2002, Jewkes, 2004, Carrabine, 2008).

The enigma surrounding 'news values' is succinctly laid out by Hall (1973:127) in his work on the importance of imagery in news.

> *'"News values" are one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All 'true journalists' are supposed to possess it: few can or are willing to identify and define it. Journalists speak of 'the news' as if events select themselves. Further, they speak of which is the 'most significant' news story, and which 'news angles' are the most salient are divinely inspired. Yet of the millions of events which occur every day in the world, only a tiny proportion ever become visible as 'potential news stories': and of this proportion, only a small fraction are actually produced as the day's news in the news media. We appear to be dealing, then, with a 'deep structure' whose function as a selective device is un-transparent even to those who professionally must know how to operate it," (Hall 1973:127).*

Despite being written more than 40 years ago, Hall's observations around a lack of transparency in newsworthiness still rings true today. However advances in technology providing more accurate metrics and the financial drive for increased audience share is finally providing some insight to into why some stories are chosen over others.

Crime, and particularly murder, as previously outlined has always been a popular theme for news reports. A post World War Two study of British

newspapers found that 'homicide was by far the most common type of crime reported, accounting for about one-third of all crime news stories throughout the period' (Reiner, 2002:308).

Chermak's (1995) research complements this data. Following his investigation into crime reporting in the USA Chermak devised four classifications of crime stories. These classifications are: Tertiary for frequent, disposable, simple short stories; Secondary for stories covering more column inches, although still disposable; Primary for those crime stories which occur infrequently and cover 14 or more column inches; and finally Super Primary stories which rarely occur. These 'sensational stories' can frequently span several days or weeks, often have numerous stories appearing on the same day, and are 'burdensome' - they involve multiple reporters and often higher-level sources. Chermak uses the serial murderer Jeffrey Dahmer, who murdered seventeen males in Milwaukee, USA, between 1978-1991, as an example of a super primary story (Jaeger and Balousek, 1991). However, it is important to note, as discussed by Soothill (2004), that *'rather than just counting the quantity of words, one must understand the differences between cases in what triggers the type of coverage'* (2004:1).

Soothill et al. (2004) studied the trajectories of top murder cases in the media and postulated that all cases fall into a set of classifications similar to those devised by Chermak. However Soothhill chose just three categories. There were 'mega-cases', 'mezzo-cases' and 'routine cases' with 'mega-cases' being the most reported (2004:3). 'Mega-cases' often emerge due to their unusualness and

contribute to what Soothill (2002) describes as our 'general knowledge of murder' (2002:403). In a later article he explained:

> '*Rather than just counting the quantity of words, one must understand the differences between cases in what triggers the type of coverage. This has particular relevance when assessing whether the public outrage usually linked to 'mega' coverage can be construed as a 'moral panic' (Cohen 1972) or fits into the framework of 'public narrative'* (Peelo et al. 2004), Soothill (2004:1).

Jenkins (2002) turns to fiction to explain why serial killing is so 'endlessly interesting' and prevalent in popular culture including the media. Coinciding with the introduction of the term serial murder, more American films featured the phenomenon in 1980 and 1981 than in the previous two decades combined (Jenkins1994:55). Jenkins also believes that the FBI was responsible for the 'moral panic' (Cohen and Young, 1976) surrounding serial murder. The FBI over estimated the number of serial murder deaths in America and at one point it was reported there may be as many as 4000 to 5000 victims of serial murder per year (Jenkins 1995:22). Jenkins postulates that the popular fiction fuelled news interest and vice versa. Figures for the 1980s (Fox and Levin, 2011) revised the number of victims down to an average of 120-180 known victims in the United States each year.

Jenkin's (1994) also believes the problem was compounded by feminists presenting misleading sensationalist figures. Cluff et al. (1997) cite the work of Radford (1992) and Caputi (1987) as being the most notorious examples of

'sensationalistic' statistics of serial murder rates with both claiming two thirds of the 5000 unsolved murders in the United States can be attributed to serial killers.

Jenkins seeks to play down these figures, but two decades later Quinet (2007) revisits the theory that the number of victims may be underestimated. Quinet's study on American serial murder found that recent studies failed to include the thousands of missing people that are never reported. Quinet believes that populations known as the 'less-dead' (Egger, 2002) such as prostitutes, illegal immigrants, and runaways were overlooked in other studies and that the number of victims in the US should be revised upwards.

There is also a misconception, as Hinch and Hepburn (1998) note, that serial killers only prey on powerless victims. They argue that academics should look beyond the pathology of the individual killer and explore the connection between social structure and serial murder, as discussed earlier. They draw from Leyton's (1995) theory that modern serial killers target victims from a higher class structure, for example female university students. Whilst lacking extensive empirical evidence Leyton concluded:

> *'The major homicidal form of the modern era is the man who straddles the border between then upper-working class and the lower-middle class. Occasionally...they continue a metaphor from the earlier era and discipline unruly prostitutes and runaways. Much more commonly, however, they punish those above them in the system -- preying on unambiguously middle-class figures such as university women,'* (Leyton: 1986:297).

Finally, referencing the work of Winlow and Hall (2006), Wilson believes that given the lack of adequate policing it is obvious that killers will prey on the vulnerable young as they socialize in the growing *'night-time leisure scene*.' It is the transformation from 'production' to 'consumption' in inner city areas, which has lead to an increase in violent attacks on strangers.

This literature review has addressed the three interwoven themes of this research – serial murder, the media and how, when the two are brought together, it dominates public interest and debate. It investigates the relationship between victim narrative and newsworthiness as posed in the research question and also lays out theories surrounding how victims of serious crime deal with media contact. However it highlights the limited and often conflicting nature of this research and the need for further rigorous study. The next chapter explains how the research was conducted and its limitations.

CHAPTER 3

Introduction

This chapter outlines the four stages of research design and implementation, which were established to investigate the impact of the media on the families of serial murder. It also attempts to cut through what Crotty (1998) describes as a 'bewildering array of theoretical perspectives and methodologies' and what Gray has described as the fact that the 'terminology applied to them is often inconsistent (or even contradictory)' (Gray, 2009: 19).

This research takes a critical realist approach (Bhaskar, 1989, Bhaskar, 2014, Gorski, 2013, Lopez and Potter, 2001, Manicas, 1998, Rees and Gatenby, 2014) rejecting what Matthews (2009) refers to as 'cookbook criminology' where one favoured method is deemed better than all others. But it also nods towards cultural criminology (Ferrell et al., 2015) . As Taylor et al (2012) note:

> *'There is a certain serendipity to the synthesis between realism and cultural criminology because both fit together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle; one depicts the form of social interaction which we call crime, whilst the second breathes human life into it. If realism stresses that crime is a relationship between offender and victim and between actors and reactors, cultural criminology reminds us that such relationships are imbued with energy and meaning,*' (2012:xxxvi).

The research follows the 'building blocks of research' (Grix, 2004:66) and as such this chapter is divided in four sections: ontology, epistemology, methodology, and method.

Firstly, it will address issues of ontology and epistemology before moving on to consider the implications for method. The chapter goes on to explain the approaches adopted in this research and why they were chosen. It adopts the view that there is a social reality that exists outside of the mind, one which is influenced but is not solely driven by structure and language. It details the research design and implementation, including the use of reflexive diary notes and concludes by examining the limitations of the methodology.

Ontology

This first section is concerned with ontology, or the study of being. There are many ways to see the world and therefore it is important to define which theoretical perspective the research, and the researcher comes from. How the researcher perceives the world and reality will influence the foundations and parameters of the research, sometimes unknowingly. Does the researcher assume a given, structured world exists independent of people or do they believe that a social world is created through language and or the application of names, concepts and labels? As Matthews (2009) succinctly captures: '*If the social world were merely the product of our own constructions it would presumably have a high degree of transparency*' (2009:345).

According to Ponterotto (2005) many qualitative researchers have been socialised in postpositive thinking throughout their education and then unknowingly view other ontologies through this postpositive lens. This he says is 'akin to forcing a round peg into a square hole' (2005:127). So it is important from the onset to be clear of the ontological position and understand its boundaries.

As Gorski (2013: 658) states the *'shortcomings of positivism and empiricism are old news by now'* and I share his belief that *'strong forms of interpretivism and constructivism seem equally problematic'*. Braithwaite (2011:ix) also describes the confusion associated with the philosophical foundation of research claiming that the '*social sciences have dug themselves into a terrible set of holes*.'

In order to avoid these holes, this criminological research takes a post-postmodern realist approach (Brewer, 2000). It rejects the ambition of establishing one absolute truth and it accepts that there is a 'world out there'.
The position adopted rejects the stance that the social world is purely internal or that reality is constructed subjectively through meaning and interpretation.
The social ontology adopted is one of realism as '*realism seems like the only way forward if one wishes to call off the search for general laws without simply abandoning the goal of causal explanation'* (Gorski, 2013). According to Malcolm and May (2002) *'it is possible to be a realist at a number of levels.* As *'the most moderate of realists, who are all but indistinguishable from idealists, maintain that there has to be a 'reality' because if there was no 'reality', then its negation would in itself be a reality!'* (2002:81).

This research therefore makes the ontological assumption that there is an external world, which can be objectively measured, independent of human perception. It assumes that there is a social reality that is not created by people, although that pre-existing structures do not operate independently of human agency. Instead, that they are shaped and transformed by every day activities (Brewer 2000:51). It subscribes to the philosophy of science known as critical realism.

The critical realism movement originates with the first work of the late British philosopher Roy Bhaskar and the publication of *A Realist Theory of Science* (1975). Bhaskar put forward the idea that it was perfectly possible for the world to exist but that science could not prove it, let alone *'obtain absolute knowledge of everything in it'* (Graeber, 2014). He called this 'epistemic fallacy'. Instead he believed that the real world was made up of independent mechanisms and structures but that these were stratified and that reality consists at 'emergent' levels.

Bhaskar put forward three strata, or layers of reality: real, actual and the empirical. The real is not necessarily observable, but to our best estimations we know it is there like underlying structures, for example gravity. We can't see gravity but we can see what happens when an object is dropped in a vacuum. The second layer of reality – the actual, is the event. We cannot observe gravity but we can see its effects. The third layer is the experience of the observer – or the person conducting the experiment.

According to Gorkski, (2013) the critical realist movement is the answer to the 'yawning gap' between the philosophy of social science and the practice of social science.

> *'The ghost of logical positivism still haunts contemporary discussions of methodology …Interpretivists and constructionists have tried to exorcise it. In the process however they have pulled the rug out from under themselves, by denying the very raison d'être of the social sciences, namely, the possibility of causal explanations via social structures. Amidst all this confusion and tumult in the haunted house of philosophy, workaday researchers carry on calmly with their routines. Models are run, ethnographies are written and archives scanned. Some of the work is very good. Knowledge seems to grow. But no one really knows how or why except perhaps Roy Bhaskar.'*

According to Bhaskar '*if men ceased to exist, sound would continue to travel and heavy bodies fall to the earth in exactly the same way…The tides would still turn and metals conduct electricity in the way that they do, without a Newton or a Drude to produce knowledge of them* (Bhaskar 1997:21) .

Davies (2008a) also believes that critical realism is the philosophical foundation for good ethnography as it *'accepts the existence of a separate social reality whose transcendentally real nature makes it a possible object of knowledge for us.*'

She adds: *'In its recognition of the separation, yet interdependence, of the two levels of social structure and individual action, critical realism encourages a form*

of explanation that builds on the creative tensions between theoretical abstraction and descriptive detail (2008:25).

Rees and Gatenby (2004:6) go further in comparing Marx's dictum that '*men make their own history, but they do not make it … under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past,' (1852)* and Bhaskar's (1989) principle that people *'do not create society.. it always pre-exists them and is a necessary condition for their activity. Society does not exist independently of human activity (the error of reification). But … [neither is it] the product of it (the error of voluntarism) (1989: 36).* Rees and Gatenby conclude by stating that: '*Critical realism offers ethnography the promise of moving beyond a phenomenology of surface appearances, insofar as it offers a theory of hierarchical stratification and ontological emergence, where organizational reality is understood to comprise the concurrent operation of multiple mechanisms rooted in, and emergent from, lower ontological strata' (2013:14).*

This research is rooted in basic critical realism but it is important to note that there have been two subsequent chapters in the critical realist story. Following his first work in the 1970s Bhaskar revised his theory in the 1990s to Dialectical Critical Realism *which 'develops on the general logic and ontology of critical realism to encompass on one hand, negativity and the resources of critique, and on the other, the concept of totality including causation, space, temporality and ethics'* (Bhaskar, 2014). The third phase emerged in 2000 when Bhaskar took a

'spiritual turn' and developed the Philosophy of metaReality (2011, 2002b, 2002a).

Epistemology

Critical realism, according to Bhaskar (1997), combines a realist ontology with an interpretive epistemology, or the study of knowledge. Epistemology relates to how a researcher conducts the research. Whether it is at a micro level, assuming that understanding is only possible from the subjective perspective of the individuals involved or macro, 'bigger picture' explanations and predictions to build an accumulation of knowledge.

However according to Bhaskar, treating the questions 'does the world exist' and 'can we prove it exists' as the same is problematic. He suggested this was an 'epistemic fallacy' as he believed that it was possible for the world to exist even if we could not prove it existed, let alone know everything about it. It is also noted that '*a key strength of criminology, compared with most of the social sciences, is that epistemological pluralism is the dominant ethos*' (Braithwaite 2011:ix). Braithwaite, as described above, says that the social scientists have dug themselves into a hole but that *'pluralistic openness to diverse tools, and new tools, will be needed to dig towards the light'* (Braithwaite, 2011).

Therefore the epistemological assumptions for this research are not confined to one way of knowing, but instead are rooted in the belief that knowledge exists and is acquired at different levels. According to Lopez and Potter (2001) the critical realist model also resolves the long-standing sociological debate of

structure verses agency. In their introduction to critical realism they conclude that *'we do not create structure. We reproduce it and transform it. But it too causally affects us,'* (2001:15).

Hammersley's (1990) theory of subtle realism also accepts that no knowledge is certain and that the idea of truth is not abandoned. Instead knowledge is based on 'assumptions and human constructions,' and claims are 'judged "reasonably accurately" in terms of their "likely" truth' (Hammersley 1990:61, cited in Brewer 2000:48). See also Hammersley (1992).

It is also important to note that as this research is carried out within the 'interpretivist theory of knowledge' and will, as Caulfield and Hill (2014:85-86) state, '*explicitly reject the search for causal relationships in favour of providing detailed descriptions of a particular social phenomenon from the perspective of those who are the subjects of the research'* (2014).

In summary, this research seeks to establish the 'likely truth', and in doing so it accepts that there is a world outside our own, but that world is complex and multi-layered. That experimentation can peel away the layers only to reveal more complex structures and influences, and that whilst we can monitor and measure a myriad of factors, outcomes are difficult to predict.

Methodology

Drawing on the theoretical assumptions of critical realism, and viewed through a realist ontological and an interpretive epistemological lens the methodology and means of data collection were next addressed and are discussed below.

This research is framed by the belief that there is an external world independent of people's perception, but that that world is shaped and influenced by the people who inhabit it. It draws on ethnography, not as a method of data collection but as a sociological practice (Rees and Gatenby, 2014). However, the research went further than mere observation. As Manicas (1998) notes *'Social science needs to do more than give description of the social world as seen by its members (ethnography); it needs also to ask whether members have an adequate understanding of their world and, if not, explain why not'* (1998:315). Given this theoretical underpinning the research took a qualitative approach, rejecting the notion that a quantitative methodology could satisfactorily explore, let alone answer the research questions.

With this in mind the data, collected by means of semi-structured interviews, was thematically analysed (Boyatzis, 1998, Braun and Clarke, 2006). The analysis was informed by both Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al., 2009) and Grounded Theory Method (GTM) (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

This combined approach of data analysis allowed for descriptive narratives of the families of victims of serial murder to emerge, while also permitting a deeper

analysis of the subject. Researchers often have to act as bricoleurs, or a Jack of all trades, (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000) to deploy whatever 'strategies, methods, or empirical materials are at hand and inventing new ones if needs be (2000:4).'

This combined approach was particularly important to this research as the data revealed interesting information, not just in the experienced world of the participants but in the fact-based events that occurred. IPA and GTM were chosen to inform the research method as they share a number of key features. In particular they share a desire to allow key themes and categories to emerge which can then be used for the inductive generation of theory. Smith (1999), a founder of IPA, guides readers to GTM literature before embarking on IPA research due to the similarities in the two approaches. Both methods begin without preconceived theories and they are systematic, concentrating on the experience of the participants. Use of IPA in research of this type is endorsed by Walklate (2011). She refers to Willig's claim that GTM for the research of experience is 'questionable' because the method is reduced 'to a technique for systematic categorization,' (Willig 2008:47).

> *'IPA's hermeneutic approach not only lends itself to the subjective nature of this research, its modern technique is also free from some of the debates and controversies associated with GTM* (Willig, 2008). *Shinebourne* (2011) *concurs that IPA offers a 'middle way' between different methods to 'study subjective experiences and the meanings that people attribute to the experience' (Walklate 2011:45).*

Qualitative research, and ethnography in particular, has come under criticism in recent years. Brewer, (2000:38) describes a 'double crisis' in the field, outlining a war of paradigms between the scientific and humanistic actors. Whilst this research takes the middle ground, it accepts Mays and Pope (1995:111) point that it is an *'inescapable fact that purely objective observation is not possible in social science'*.

As Brewer (2000:42) also describes the limitations around objectivity and the fact the social world is not *'beyond the influence of theoretical presumptions or prejudice'*. He describes ethnographers as 'ignorant' and 'simplistic' who purport to capture 'only one objective description'. Hammersley (1990:65) is also critical of researchers who do not identify the 'values' and 'assumptions' they bring to their data collection and analysis. With this in mind effort was made within this research to present a transparent account of the process as many studies fail to do so (Hutchinson et al., 2009).

In presenting the study the thesis sought to achieve the goals set out by Mays and Pope (1995:110) and aimed to: '*create an account of method and data which can stand independently, so that another trained researcher could analyse the same data in the same way and come to essentially the same conclusions; and to produce a plausible and coherent explanation of the phenomenon under scrutiny.'*

Braun and Clarke (2006) also assert the need for transparency and reiterate that researchers *'cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological commitments' stating that 'data are not coded in an epistemological vacuum'*

(2006:12). They believe it is '*important that the theoretical position of a thematic analysis is made clear, as this is all too often left unspoken'* (2006:9). This transparency and setting out of the theoretic position allowed readers to trace the origins of themes, ensuring that they were representative and are not merely 'anecdotalism' (Bryman, 1988). Care was also taken that the study was not deemed "mere" journalism (Brewer 2000:7).

To avoid this potential pitfall data was collected in a 'systematic manner' without 'meaning' being imposed on it (ibid:6). While a researcher can never '*completely know another person's phenomenological world though they can perhaps get usefully close to accessing it'* (Howitt 2010:274). To ensure this research adhered to this position Braun and Clarke's 15 Point Checklist of Criteria for Good Thematic Analysis was followed.

As such,

1. The data has been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for accuracy.
2. Each data item has been given equal attention in the coding process.
3. Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive.
4. All relevant extracts for all each theme have been collated.
5. Themes have been checked against each other and back to the original data set.
6. Themes are internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive.

7 Data has been analysed – interpreted, made sense of - rather than just paraphrased or described.

8. Analysis and data match each other – the extracts illustrate the analytic claims.

9. Analysis tells a convincing and well-organised story about the data and topic.

10. A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided.

11. Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing a phase or giving it a once-over-lightly.

12. The assumptions about, and specific approach to, thematic analysis are clearly explicated.

13. There is a good fit between what you claim you do, and what you show you have done – i.e., described method and reported analysis are consistent.

14. The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis.

15. The researcher is positioned as active in the research process; themes do not just 'emerge'.

(Braun and Clarke, 2006)

Research Method

Once the themed analysis method, informed by IPA and GTM, was identified as the chosen approach for investigating the effects of the media on families of serial murder, a research schedule was drawn up to act as a guide and timetable for the study. As encouraged by Smith, et al. (2008, 2009, 2003, 1999) the research conducted was designed to be both creative and reflexive, drawing on

the key areas of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography, or the study of the particular.

The qualitative approach used data collected from semi-structured interviews with ten participants, who have all lost family members to serial murder. The interviewees were treated as experts in their own lives and each were allowed to explore areas they thought pertinent to the research, which fits with insights from research by Brocki and Weardon (2006).

The nature of IPA informed research allows researchers to explore how people make sense of life events or 'lived' experience (Smith and Osborn, 2007). Losing a family member to serial murder is unquestionably a traumatic, life-changing event and this research, through its inductive approach, allowed the complexities and richness of the lived experience to be captured. Each case was analysed individually as '*details of a single case also illuminate a dimension of a shared commonality*' (Shinebourne, 2011:47). Describing research with serial killers Skrapec (2001) gives a compelling insight into how phenomenology can assist in research of this type.

> *'The task is to examine systematically the serial murderer through the portrait he paints of himself and his world, being careful not to provide him with a palette but rather to allow him to choose his own. His choices—among colours, tonal greys, or in stark polarities of black and white—reveal much about who he is and how he constructs his world. Furthermore, if we can loosen ourselves from the grasp of focusing on the content of his*

words—be they true or mendacious—and instead strive to understand the process by which he arrives at those words and the emotional valence he attaches to them, we may be better situated to elucidate his motivations. It is not only important to observe how he talks about his killings but also to identify patterns that pervade his descriptions of the other aspects of his life and how these are linked to the murders,' (Skrapec 2001:50).

In order to fully explore why IPA was chosen to shape this research it is first necessary to look at where the approach sits within the research community. It is important to investigate what IPA offers that others do not when attempting to answer the research question: How do families experience their relationship with the media following the death of a loved one to serial murder?

Research exploring the emotions and subjective experiences of families affected by serial murder calls for an inductive, flexible approach, as outlined above. IPA originated in the field of health psychology, largely because its founders work in that area. But it is becoming increasing popular in other fields (Brocki and Wearden, 2006) and is particularly suitable for investigating emotionally charged issues of on going significance (Aresti et al., 2010). Although the majority of the debate surrounding IPA is based in health psychology, it can just as well be applied to this research question in a criminological setting. Unlike purist grounded theory, which gives greater weight to 'social structures and processes', IPA concentrates on 'individualized insider perspective accounts' (Eatough et al., 2008:1771).

Further:

> *'IPA acknowledges that it is not possible to access an individual's life world directly because there is no clear and unmediated window into that life. Investigating how events and objects are experienced and given meaning requires interpretative activity on the part of the participant and the researcher. This "double hermeneutic" is described as a dual process in which "the participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world"'.*
>
> *(Eatough et al., 2008:1771; citing Smith and Osborn, 2003:51)*

IPA was chosen to inform this research because of its distinctive approach and ability to explore how serial homicide survivors make sense of their circumstances and for its inductive 'bottom up' approach. According to Reid et al. IPA offers a chance for the researcher to *'engage with the research question at an idiographic (or particular) level* (2005)'. They also note that IPA is particularly suited to 'unexplored territory' – in this instance, the impact of the media on the families of multicide survivors – where '*a theoretical pretext may be lacking. Bypassing the closed systems of borrowed hypotheses and theories, it [IPA] can instead provide meaningful and unexpected analysis of psychosocial issues,'* (Reid et al., 2005:23).

In their study of IPA practice Brocki & Wearden (2006) found that semi-structured interviews, the method adopted by this research, were the favoured means of data collection. Of the 46 papers they reviewed the majority of interviews were conducted face-to-face, with one using the telephone due to geographical restraints. These findings are reflected in this study.

IPA was chosen to inform this research method as it is 'not about testing hypotheses but about understanding personal experiences of the world' (Howitt, 2010:273). These personal experiences, as outlined by Bhaskar, are a layer, or a structure of reality.

Participants and sampling

Smith & Osborn (2003:54) state there is no 'right' sample size for IPA studies. Smaller sample sizes are more commonly used as 'large data sets may result in the loss of "potentially subtle inflections"' (Collins and Nicolson, 2002:626 cited in Brocki & Wearden 2006). There were a number of advantages in choosing such a sample size for this study. Chief amongst these was that it was large enough to allow for on going triangulation. As themes emerged in each interview they were 'tested' in the next. The sample size was decided at the outset of the research following a review of the method literature and in practice this number proved to be suitable in terms of data saturation and time constraints.

The number of participants chosen was ten. This number is at the higher end of the recommended sample size as outlined by Smith (2009). The sample was made up of eight men and two women. Their ages ranged from 40 to 71 years,

and all bar one had an immediate familial link, for example parents or sibling, one was the son-in-law to a victim.

Participants	Relationship	Killer	Victims
John	Victims' Son	Jack the Stripper	8
Steve	Victims' Father (Max's Father)	Peter Tobin	11+
Simon	Victims' Father	Roger Black	16+
Roger	Victims' Father	Roger Black	16+
Patrick	Victims' Son-in-Law	Harold Shipman	250+
Jane	Victims Daughter	Harold Shipman	250+
Max	Victims' Brother (Steve's son)	Peter Tobin	11+
Jack	Victims' Father	Steve Wright	10+
Helen	Victims' Mother (Jack's ex wife)	Steve Wright	10+
Ben	Victims' Father	Peter Tobin	11+

Ethical considerations of using this sample are discussed more fully in Chapter 4. Initially the participants were purposively selected from existing contacts with serial homicide survivors in keeping with IPA guidelines (Smith and Osborn, 2003) to form a small homogenous sample. The classification 'serial homicide survivor' included cases not only where a conviction had been achieved, but also where the victim was believed by police to have been murdered by a serial killer. This was because as Jenkins (1994) points out, whilst a 'formal conviction is a valuable indicator' 'it is rare for any serial killer to be formally charged in all the cases in which he or she is a strong suspect' (1994:25). The research affirms this position adopted by Jenkins that whilst this is far from satisfactory it is '*perhaps*

the only means of proceeding in a such a contentious area' (1994:25). While offering sufficient contextualisation the sample group was chosen to offer particular insight into the lives of those affected by serial murder.

Due to the nature of the research the sample group was somewhat unique. Participants were chosen to reflect the different categories outlined above, but also to include different age groups, gender and period of time from victims' death. However, unlike GMT the theoretical sampling did not seek 'to establish claims for the broader population' (Brocki and Wearden, 2006) because the research group was so small and the participants' circumstances and experiences were deemed of more interest than their ability to predict links in wider society.

After the initial contacts were made further participants were found through 'snowballing' (Shinebourne, 2011:54) whereby participants were asked if they knew of others in the same position. This method was particularly useful as many of the families whose relatives were murdered by the same killer were already well acquainted. Further participants were then identified from media reports into serial murder and contacted through the relevant police force family liaison officer, or approached directly in person, or by letter to their home address. The addresses of participants were found on the electoral register or subscription Internet databases. Once contact had been made the research was explained to each participant. The explanation included the nature and reason for the work, the institution it was connected to and my former career as a journalist. It was made clear that any information gained during the course of the

research was for solely academic purposes. (See Chapter 4 – Ethics for more details).

Informed consent

The participants' informed consent was taken in accordance with the definition outlined by the British Society of Criminology as '*explaining as fully as possible, and in terms meaningful to participants, what the research is about, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken and how research and any findings are to be disseminated'* (British Society of Criminology, 2003 section 4iii). The research was also given ethical approval by Birmingham City University's Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences Ethics Committee.

Ahead of any sensitive questions each participant was warned: '*We are about to talk about sensitive issues – do you want to continue.*' It should be noted that at no stage did any participant withdraw their consent and despite the sometimes personal and upsetting nature of the interviews none of the participants declined to answer any of the questions. Participants were also asked to sign a consent form and a copy of this form can be found in the Appendix.

Data Collection

The iterative nature of thematic analysis informed by IPA and GTM calls for the researcher to move back and forth between the original data and any emerging themes. For this research, data collection continued until it was clear that the data was 'saturated' and that there was enough material to make a convincing case. Theoretic saturation is outlined by Glaser & Straus (1967) as:

> *'He [the researcher] goes out of his way to look for groups that stretch diversity of data as far as possible, just to make certain that saturation is based on the widest possible range of data on the category.'* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:112)

However this feature of GTM is not without its limits. For example if a researcher looks for groups which stretch data diversity as far as possible how do they know that the next participant of a similar group may not present new information which could lead to a new theory? After all everyone has a different perspective on a similar event. This is why Brocki & Wearden stress that research should perhaps conclude when the researcher feels that they have achieved understanding and been able to tell 'a suitably persuasive story,' (2006:95). Or in other words that the researcher feels she or he has sufficient evidence to support their theory and make a reasonable argument. The decision to cease data collection is therefore complicated and multi-dimensional, but reflects in this thesis the need to be able to answer those questions which have been set out above. And, of note, while formal data collection may have ended, this does not mean that contact with the research group has stopped.

Interviews

As Camespino (2007) found in her ethnographic study of the aftermath of two gang-related deaths, it quickly became apparent that the study of families thrown into such emotional chaos could not be conducted in a clinical fashion. Campesino prepared food for her participants to build a rapport with them. She describes how the '*expressions of nurturing and reciprocity facilitated a more*

egalitarian relationship' and 'encouraged them to feel comfortable in sharing their stories' (Campesino, 2007:545). She continued:

> *'I came to realize that data collection was not merely a research task; it was very much a relational process that required emotional risk, commitment, time, and energy from the participants and from myself,' (ibid:547).*

This was reflected in the way that the interviews were conducted in this research and, as such, by the time the interview took place a certain level of rapport had built up in exchanges to arrange times and dates. For example, just setting up the interviews and ensuring they happened was considerable work. Having secured the phone number of one participant and arranged a telephone call with him at first he denied who he was. He then asked me to call back. This later transpired to be a tactic he often used to screen callers and inevitably it involved a certain amount of time wasting.

In another example an interviewee became unwell between arranging the interview and the interview taking place. This led to text message exchanges, initially intended as purely logistical but they later proved to assist in the 'relationship' between interviewer and participant and facilitated a more relaxed environment.

It is exceptionally rare that one can begin an interview with no prior knowledge about what one is about to ask, thus all interviews are semi-structured in some way. This research was shaped by Kvale's (2007) explanation of a 'semi-structured life-world' interview in that it:

> '*Seeks to obtain descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the meaning of the described phenomenon; it will have a sequence of themes to be covered, as well as some suggested questions. Yet at the same time there is openness to changes of sequence and forms of questions in order to follow up the specific answers given and the stories told by the subjects,'* (Kvale 2002:51).

With this explanation in mind the research relied upon a very loose interview schedule (see Appendix) to ensure that the key themes under investigation were covered. The schedule included the logistical details of the interview but also any notable theory or facts needing specific exploration. However care was given to making sure the interviews flowed in a conversational manner, allowing the participants to expand and develop points they deemed important. Each interview started with simple descriptive questions about the deceased and the murder. This seemed to allow the participants to relax into the interview. As Smith et al (2009) said *'unexpected turns are often the most valuable aspects of interviewing: on the one hand they tell us something we did not even anticipate needing to know; on the other, because they arise unprompted, they may well be of particular importance to the participant,'* (Smith et al, 2009:58). Howitt (2010) agrees in letting the participant say what they want at the time they wish to say it, rather than sticking rigidly to the interview schedule.

The schedule itself consisted of six open questions that acted as prompts during the conversations. The schedule was devised by drawing on my own previous

experience of interviewing grieving relatives and from the extensive literature review on the subject. The schedule questions (see Appendix) were interspersed with follow up prompts such as: How did that make you feel? What happened next? The interviews lasted varying lengths from between one to two hours.

Clear boundaries were set from the outset, including personal boundaries related to my role as a working journalist, but also a doctoral student engaged in PhD research. It was made clear that the information discussed and all the data collected could only serve academic purposes.

However, participants may have been influenced by the fact that they were being interviewed at all – as occurs in all research. Stevens (2013) points out that that it is important to acknowledge that the *'observer is also observed'* (2013:37) and that all relationships can distort data collection, including the notion that the observed change their behaviour purely because they are being watched. This theory is known as the Hawthorn Effect, named after a factory where workers were studied under different lighting conditions (Jones, 1992). However, as Davis (2007) describes: *'The problem with the Hawthorne Effect is not that it happens per se, but that it happens when our audiences are not aware of it'* (Davis, 2007:63). With this in mind it was important to reassure the participants that all that was being sought from the interview was their lived experience. As such, it was made clear that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions being asked. During the course of the interviews the participants were also reminded that, whilst they had given informed consent, they could withdraw consent at any point up until the publishing of the PhD or related articles. They

were also reminded that in accordance with guidance from BCU ethics committee their identities would remain anonymous.

After each interview, notes were produced to reflect on the process. Importance was given to the way in which the interviews flowed, the choice of questions raised by the participants and whether there had been an interpretive facet to data collection as well as analysis. For example, whether I had intentionally or unintentionally steered the questioning in particular direction to or from a specific area.

The interviews took place in an environment comfortable to the participant and were digitally recorded ensuring data protection regulations were adhered to (Tarling, 2005). The recording of the interviews, which strays from grounded theory in its purist form, allowed for richer data collection than if only a short-hand note of the interviews were relied upon. After all, IPA is '*concerned with the micro analysis of individual experience, with the texture and nuance arising from the detailed exploration of presentation of actual slices of human life'* (Smith et al., 2009:202).

Transcription

As Kvale (2002) notes *'transcripts are decontexualized conversations; they are abstractions, as topographical maps are abstractions from the original landscape from which they are derived. Maps emphasize some areas of the countryside and omit others, the selection of features depending on the intended use'* (2002:98).

With this in mind a simplified form of transcription was used, which included key non-verbal responses such as laughter or tears.

The data was transcribed by hand to enable the researcher to get an initial feel for the interviews. It is accepted that the use of transcribing software may ultimately have been more time efficient, but would have limited the initial sense that could be made of the data. The transcriptions were then checked against the original recording to ensure passages had not been taken out of context and that the transcripts remained true to the tone of the interview.

Analysis

The analysis was also undertaken by hand despite it being accepted that software packages such as QSR-NVivo can be utilised (Hutchinson et al., 2009). Nonetheless it was felt to be beneficial to be as close to the research as possible and transcribing by hand enabled that closeness to develop.

Once transcribed, all the data was read and re-read to look for initial themes, which were then coded. The coding was guided by the IPA six-stage analysis (Smith et al., 2009:82).

The initial stage involved becoming immersed in the data. The transcripts were read and re-read and areas of particular interest were noted in the left-hand margin. The second step was to examine the 'semantic content and language use', and emerging themes were identified to *"capture and reflect an understanding" of participants'* world (Smith et al., 2009). This move between

'inductive and deductive' positions, as described by Eatough (2008) can bring to the fore areas not expected by the researcher. As it has been argued:

> *'The researcher taking a theoretically sensitive stance begins to think about how these issues can be conceptualised… At this stage of analysis, caution is essential so that the connection between the participant's own words and researcher's interpretation is not lost,'* (Eatough et al., 2008:1773) .

The right hand margin was then used to make notes of further themes to ensure both the participants' words and my interpretations of them were clearly visible. In the third stage the emerging preliminary themes, or subthemes, were connected to form 'superordinate' themes, with each being given a descriptive label. These were then laid out in a table to assist in tracking, or moving between the analytic stages to complete the fourth stage.

Once complete, the fifth-stage was to move on to the next study and repeat the process until it was possible to look for re-occurring themes, or super-ordinate themes across the research as a whole. Each case was considered on its own terms, keeping aside themes and concepts which arose in previous interviews as it is '*important to keep an open mind to allow new themes to emerge from each case'* (Shinebourne, 2011:59). This final stage of analysis, which was continued into the writing up stage, was conducted until it became clear that the data was saturated.

Transcripts were then read again for a final time to make sure the interpretations were consistent with the participants' accounts. Verbatim extracts are provided to allow readers of the research to make their own assessments. The writing up stage also included a reference to any of my preconceptions and reflexivity as according to Brocki and Wearden (2006:100) this *'might increase transparency and even enhance the account's rhetorical power.'*

Triangulation

Due to the small and similar nature of the sample group each interview provided internal triangulation for the previous interview. Each participant was used to test the theories provided by earlier participants. This was particularly pertinent with families affected by the same serial murderer, in one case, the brother and father of a victim. Some measure of external triangulation was also afforded by comparing comments made within these interviews with other interviews that participants had given within the traditional media and also their social media postings. A number of the participants were avid users of social media expressing their opinions in the public domain.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity played an important role in the research, not just in that the analysis took a 'reflexive stance' as suggested by Smith et al (1999) (cited in (Howitt, 2010:275) but in the reflection of practice in the dual role of researcher and journalist. In fact Kvale states that when 'enhancing the readability' of interview accounts researchers can take 'leads' from journalistic interviews (2002:133).

Limited notes were taken during the interviews, and more detailed field notes were written up afterwards, usually within 24 hours. These private journals not only provided a chronological record of the details of the interview but also "thick description", (Geertz, 1973). They included details such as the mood and atmosphere of the interview, the circumstances in which it was conducted and any overriding feelings or thoughts I had on concluding them.

Notes were not restricted to just the interviews and were made during the entire research. They recorded the sometimes frustrating moments of research but also served as a record of contact between myself and the families, and of the difficulties in maintaining the boundaries between researcher and researched.

Below are a few unedited extracts from the summer of 2011, which are provided by way of illustration:

February 2011 *[Steve] becoming increasing frustrated that the council have postponed memorial. Several late night text messages to me that he had sent to the council officer. He seemed most upset that the council official had misspelled his name.*

5 June 2011 *Just read about someone's reflective diary and it prompted my memory that I did not reply to [Steve]. He has been quite quiet of late and made me worry about him but he has the habit of intruding on my family time.*

13 June 2011 *Clear that [Steve] is now in fact using our phone calls as therapy. Now called about the fact that Operation Anagram has been toned down and a new database as now set up.*

15 June 2011 *2230 [Steve] leaves message saying this week his mum and daughter were born so not a good week a to keep in touch.*

17 June 2011 *Got this from [Steve]. Becoming increasing worried about how to deal with him*

'Hi Harriet, today [Victim] would have been 38 years old! It made my day to hear that scum murderer, dead before Sunday, FATHERS DAY. xx

19 June 2011 *Father's Day – [Steve] has started posting strange messages on his Facebook page.*

To press and media please make my fathers day and tell or publish that, scumbag, abductor ,drugger, thief, rapist, abuser, paedophile and murderer, peter paedo tobin has been found dead in a cell in saughton prison, edinburgh, scotland! what a day to celibrate fathers day, wow!!!!! from […] dad

25 June 2011 *[Phone messages] Hi Harriet – It' s [Steve]. I have had an idea. This Milly Dowler, the way the family has been treated. I would like to meet the family in order to set up some sort, of, you know [Ben] and I changed the law in Scotland that the scumbag who killed our daughters can no longer appeal, that's one of the things, all these things are going through my mind, I would like to meet other people to try to help other people and let other people help other people who have missing children who have never been found.*

Could you give me an idea of how to set that up please as at my age it's a wee bit, I haven't done enough, that's how I feel, I would like to meet these other people, people who have got results and put their children to rest and then from that to meet other people who have gone through what we have been through. Us people who have found our children and I think there will be a lot of good come out of that. Have you got any ideas on it? Give me a ring, or come and see me, I know it's in your interest – that's how we got in touch as you wanted to know more about this think that has happened to our families but you could take it a lot further if you think about it – and if you can help to give me advice as to how to do it, you take care my love, just let me know – I want to do something. I want to do something

26 June 2011 – 8.53pm *Hi it's only [Steve]. I am just upset about the Dowler thing this morning. I saw it on the news and is there any way. You know you are interested in knowing what people think, but is there anyway that we start up some sort of community between people who have found their children and also people who are still looking for their children – I think that is a great idea but I won't know where to start. I am too old. You have a think about it. It would be nice*

for other families who have not found closure – not found anything. There are a few people like me and [Ben] and the [other victim] in Poland who have experienced this thing and we have found and put to rest our children but there are so many other people out there. It's hard but at the same time it's ever so satisfactory that they have actually done it. What would you say to some one with a child missing and I would say keep going keep looking, never let it go because at the end of the day Harriet it never lets you go. I still grieve, [Ben] still grieves and we have been able to put our children to rest eventually and it's so sad that people are looking for their children. You know that Anagram has finished but it is upgraded now to national – it's national now and if they find any bodies – or anything like that. So Anagram may be finished so anyway my love I am on a wee bit of a downer because of Milly Dowler – they keep showing pictures of her doing the ironing like every little girl does. Bring back hanging, it's as simple as that. I would like to hear from you and give me your views. It would be nice to hear from you, I'm just about to smash the house up – no not really.

28 September 2011 *[Steve] left message saying it was from an Aries to an Aries, which made me feel uncomfortable. I am worried he is seeing me as some sort of daughter substitute. He was asking to see whether I had set up a meeting with [other survivor] . This prompted me to call him but he was at his daughter's graduation. Then called [survivor] and he was at his daughters graduation*

1 Oct 2011 *In the middle of the night [Steve] left me a rambling message about his venison in his slow cooker. But he said that he would rather have a scent of a woman and that he had "scent" me the message.*

Asked to contact him when I had spoken to [Max]. Said that [Max's] legs were bad and that he worried about him. But that I wasn't to tell him that. Now seems to think of me has his friend.

It is clear from the timeline that the relationship with the families extended to outside of the agreed interview period. These issues of boundaries, rapport building and reflexivity are all explored further in the next chapter on ethics.

Limitations

The overwhelming limitation of this research was the difficulty in accessing the sample group. As this research found, families affected by serial murder are adept in dealing with unwanted attention from media and researchers alike. At least ten other families were contacted, who all declined the offer of taking part in this research. This meant the sample group mainly featured participants who were confident in speaking about their experiences and it is impossible to ascertain how and by how much this influenced the findings. It also meant that the sample was chosen by and large by those who were willing to take part, meaning that a more diverse balance of gender and age were not reflected.

CHAPTER 4

'To be vulnerable is not the same as to be a victim'

(Das (2007) cited in Walklate 2011:179)

Introduction

This chapter will explore more fully the ethical issues associated with interview research involving people who have experienced trauma. Whilst the participants in this study do not describe themselves as vulnerable, they were categorized as such by university ethical guidelines. This section outlines ethical dilemmas faced by academics working with trauma victims generally, before examining specifically the issues of this research. These issues include: gaining ethical approval and the complex role of journalist as researcher.

Ethics of trauma research

In determining the importance of victim narrative following serial murder and its effects on the surviving family members, a number of ethical considerations were addressed. All qualitative research attracts moral dilemmas and interview research is 'saturated with moral and ethical issues' (Kvale 2007:23). This investigation was particularly challenging due to the sensitivity of the subject matter. Research into re-victimisation by the media is limited. However, people who participated in other trauma related research predominantly find the process was not a negative experience according to Newman and Kaloupek (2004). Their study found that whilst some participants reported strong emotions, the majority did not regret or '*negatively evaluate the overall experience'* (Newman and Kaloupek 2004:383).

Given the lack of previous research into this specific area of victimology, this research turned to the comparable area of interpersonal violence. One recent study of the impact of interviews involving survivors of rape also found that participating in research could be beneficial. Campbell et al. (2010:60) concluded that the 'overwhelming majority of survivors found the interview to be a helpful, supportive, and insightful experience.' Griffin et al (2003) also found that trauma survivors found assessments *'interesting and valuable experiences'* and were '*not too fragile to participate in trauma research even in the acute aftermath of a traumatic experience*' (2003:221). Supporting this theory that trauma research can be beneficial, Lipson (1984) also found women subjected to abuse found an interview with an interested listener to be 'immensely helpful,' (Lipson 1984:350).

Although Newman et al (1997) suggest there is no empirical evidence that discussing sensitive issues re-traumatizes victims, Fontes (2004) rightly argues that there is insufficient research to draw conclusions. Hlavka and Kruttschnitt (2007) shared this view and interviewed 142 incarcerated women to examine the differences in their abilities to complete interviews about their violent experiences. Participants who had experienced more trauma across their lifetimes were, not unsurprisingly, less likely to complete interviews about sensitive areas.

Research involving trauma survivors will always create unique challenges and the two key factors considered by social scientists were applied in this study. Firstly the proper way to process, collect and publish the data and, secondly, the behaviour of the researcher (Mertens and Ginsberg, 2008).

Henn et al. (2005) describes two opposing arguments in the ethics debate. Those like Bulmer (1982:217) and Warwick (1983:58), both cited in Henn (2005:70), believe '*the rights of individuals always override the rights of science.*' In other words no research should be carried out to the detriment of those involved as participants. Opposing this view is Douglas (1976) who states that the quest for scientific truth should prevail over the needs of the participant. The approach adopted here follows Neuman (2004:443) who argues that ethics begins with the researcher. As such, in the case of this research, academic judgment was applied to balance 'the commitment to ethical principles and the day-to-day practicalities of planning, conducting and promoting research' (Buckland and Wincup,

2004:41). During this research the wellbeing of the participants was paramount and placed above the 'quest for scientific truth' as outlined by Douglas above.

Research into victims of trauma should not only consider ethical issues but also moral ones. Fontes (1998) suggests that ethical principles:

> *'Do not adequately address the moral issues that arise in conducting inquiry into many sensitive areas, including cross-cultural and family violence research. Even with the best guidelines and human subjects review boards and consultants, researchers ultimately face ethical issues alone with their consciences. Many ethical decisions will be based on the amount of overnight tossing-and-turning that a researcher can tolerate,'* (1998:53).

It is also important to remember that '*being exposed to adversity does not necessarily imply an inability to cope with adversity: becoming a victim'* (Walklate 2011). Walklate emphasizes that, somewhat surprisingly, many criminologists have not sought to investigate further the notion of resilience in studies of criminal victimization. This study found tremendous resilience from the interviews, which will be explored in full in Chapter 6.

Reflexivity

As has been briefly alluded to earlier, reflexivity played an important role in the ethical issues of the research and, in particular, this study was shaped by the work of both Connelly (2007) and Campesino. In her study into the therapeutic relationships in trauma research, Campesino (2007) found that she became a

source of support for the two bereaved mothers whose experiences she was researching. She 'sought to be vigilantly self reflexive' of her dealings with the women to maintain the boundaries of their relationship. This desire is captured in the following observation:

> *'Researchers exploring phenomena of trauma need to be prepared for a potential commitment of time and emotional and/or psychic energy when working with participants. This may entail traversing foreign terrain with few professional road maps. Trauma researchers must rely on their own capacities for compassion, integrity, self-reflection and willing openness to the unknown, unexpected aspects inherent in an authentic human to human caring relationship,' (Campesino, 2007:552).*

Connolly too promotes a humanistic approach to trauma research and states that '*maintaining the stance as a member of the human community [as well as academic community] is an essential element of conducting trauma research,'* (2007:522). Connolly believes that a positivist approach to trauma research is inappropriate and instead, as adopted here, favours a more interpretative approach. She capsulated her stance by saying:

> *'When the natural order of the world gets so radically disturbed – such as when a 10-year-old girl on her way to school gets harassed by a man wanting sex, or when the well-respected man next door commits a mass murder-suicide act – it becomes quickly apparent that these research interests cannot be explored in a distant, remote, objective manner. They simply are too human – too real – too traumatic,' (Connolly 2007:525).*

It was this humanistic approach, which guided the subsequent research and the often intense interactions with the participants of this study.

Conflict of interest

I believe that my career as a journalist, whilst entirely separate to this research, assisted me in conducting these interviews and addressing these ethical challenges, as I was already experienced at conducting interviews with trauma survivors. However, as described above, my role in this research was as a doctoral student and not as a journalist. As such, for example, participants have been anonymised and no attempt has been made to publish the results within the media. In these, and in other different and on going ways, strenuous efforts were made to manage what might be seen as a conflict of interest.

The research adhered to the guidelines set out by Birmingham City University and was guided by the recommendations of the Social Research Association (www.the-sra.org.uk/guidelines.htm). Particular attention was given to clause 4.4 of the SRA guidelines, which states that the interests of subjects are paramount. In following this guidance all was done to protect the interests of the participants. Each ethical consideration that emerged during the research was dealt with on a case-by-case basis with the consultation of my supervisor Prof David Wilson, who has considerable experience with regard to criminological research generally and ethical issues in particular.

Gillham (2005) believes the difference between an expert and a novice interviewer is the 'clarity, focus and economy of questioning' in the former and

the 'lack of clear focus' in the latter (2005:18). In carrying out this research I deployed interviewing skills acquired as a journalist, but as Gillham goes on to say 'framing research questions, like the wording of interview questions is as much art as science,' (2005:20). Here it should be noted that given the widespread use of "cheque book journalism" no money was offered for any of the interviews that took place (Smith, 2011).

Building Rapport

The relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee is as important in academic research as it is in journalism. Building a rapport allowed participants to feel at ease and relaxed, and often allowed the conversation to flow more freely. However, whilst the rapport may aide the interview process it was important to mitigate possible negative effects on the participant.

Fontes (2004) postulates that from an ethical perspective this method may unwillingly coax information out of a participant that he or she was not previously willing to share. Fontes, citing Lipson (1984), believes it is possible to encourage participants to reveal too much. Fontes describes how Lipson's career as a psychotherapist made it 'almost too easy to probe into emotionally sensitive areas, to encourage a woman to work on a painful issue' (Lipson 1984:350). Duncombe and Jessop (2002) take this theory further and suggest that researchers create a 'fake friendship' with interviewees to gain their trust and gather data. They go on to say that interviewers make a conscious effort to present themselves in a certain way – both in how they dress and how they act. They further outline what they mean by this:

> *'That is, they must seat themselves not too far away but not too near; maintain a pleasant, encouraging half-smile and a lively (but not too lively) interest. They should keep eye contact, speak in a friendly tone, never challenge, and avoid inappropriate expressions of surprise or disapproval; and practice the art of the encouraging but 'non-directive "um"'. If this is 'friendship', then it is a very detached form of it,' (Dunscombe and Jessop 2002:113).*

As an experienced journalist the concerns raised by Dunscombe and Jessop of creating 'fake friendships' were all too apparent. Whilst the skill of so-called 'doing rapport' was employed to a certain degree, care was taken to maintain professional boundaries. A number of the interviewees were men who had lost their daughters to serial murder – and in several cases had their daughters survived would have been of a similar age to the researcher. In one particular case it became apparent that the participant was drawing parallels between us. Once the interview had concluded he asked me about my life, although this line of questioning was quickly (and hopefully sensitively) closed down. The fact that I reminded some of the men of their lost daughters was undeniably useful in the beginning of the research but lead to difficulties, which included a number of unsolicited phone calls and text messages. This issue will be explored further in the next section.

Difficulties within and after the interviews

Given the distressing nature of the subject being discussed, it was anticipated that the interviewees could become emotional. Consideration was given to this, not only in choosing the venue for the interviews to be conducted, but also in

how most appropriately to respond within the interview. It was also anticipated that much like a patient to a psychiatrist the interviewees may develop an attachment and use the interaction as a means of social contact. As discussed earlier, it was imperative for boundaries to be maintained. What was not anticipated was the level of this attachment. Two participants, for example, took to telephoning, emailing and texting at all hours (as depicted above within an earlier section) and often used their respective ailments to gain attention. One left a voicemail message declaring imminent threats to his health, only to reveal when his call was returned that he was happily shopping in Asda.

In addition to the personal contact, when conducting research into issues involving serious crime and trauma, it was important to not just look at ethical principles protecting the participant but also the researcher. During research into domestic violence in Nicaragua, Ellsberg et al. (2001) found that researchers often became distressed at the stories they heard and set up weekly sessions to prevent "burnout".

Leibling (2011) believes research should be conducted *'slowly, carefully, and in extended, intimate (that is open and honest) but boundaried contact with the researched; rigorously, with a 'from-a-distance' analysis built in throughout, and in a conceptual dialogue with others,'* (2011:525). Adding *'if we go in deep, as we should, it is sometimes hard to emerge unchanged, unmoved, intact,'* (2011:527). The level of contact quickly subsided once the research had been completed but its intensity at the height of the field research period had not been predicted. It is believed that the age and gender dynamic of those involved played a role in this

level of contact. As a consequence it is advised that those looking to repeat this dynamic take measures - such as dedicated research telephone and email addresses - to manage contact and to provide a convenient means of terminating contact if this should prove necessary.

In summary, this chapter highlights the precautions that need to be taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of both the researched and the researcher. The fact that someone is a victim does mean they are necessarily vulnerable and that when researching human behaviour it is paramount to remain human.

CHAPTER 5

Introduction

This chapter outlines the basic details of the serial killers featured in this research and gives a brief summary of their crimes. It also considers these cases from the perspective of applied criminological theory. As previously discussed, academic research into serial murder often focuses on the killer and their motivation to kill. However, this chapter not only looks at the killers but also their victims and their place in society. So as not to overshadow the victims' stories, as so often happens in the media, true crime and academic research, a conscious decision was made that the chapter would be kept deliberately short. As such, only those facts that are necessary to provide a context for the stories of the victims is provided. However, it should be acknowledged that a mini publishing industry related to these crimes is already in the public domain and therefore the deliberate shortness of the chapter should not detract from any subsequent academic scrutiny of the reader.

The chapter is provided not only to give the reader context and insight into the crimes of some of Britain's most notorious killers, but also to frame the interviews that were undertaken with the participants. Participants took part in the research anonymously, therefore care has also had to be taken not to identify victims' families in this overview. It is important to note that many of the crimes have similar characteristics. This is particularly true in relation to how the serial killers gained access to their victims and the opportunity to kill them. Robert

Black, Peter Tobin and Steve Wright, for example, all drove as a profession making them geographically mobile and providing them with a means to track down and apprehend their victims (Lynes and Wilson, 2015). On the other hand, Harold Shipman had the ultimate opportunity, given that all of his victims were not only accessible but were also trusting of their respected local doctor. The fifth case relates to an un-apprehended serial killer dubbed by the media "Jack the Stripper". Details related to these cases were gathered by reading newspaper articles, true crime accounts and academic work related to British serial murder in general and these cases in particular. The websites of *The Guardian* newspaper and the BBC, the Shipman Inquiry Report (2005) and Wilson (2007, 2008, 2008) were particularly useful.

Harold Shipman (1946 –2004)

Dr Harold Frederick Shipman, known as Fred to his family, is believed to have murdered 215 of his patients between March 1975 and June 1998 (Smith, 2005). His victims were typically, although not exclusively, elderly women living alone. The oldest victim was Ann Cooper, 93, who was killed on 15 February 1988. The youngest was 41-year-old Peter Lewis who was murdered on 2 January 1985.

Harold (Fred) Shipman	
Occupation	Doctor
Convictions	15
Suspected Victims	250+
Victim type	Elderly
Years Active	1975-1988

After studying medicine in Leeds, Shipman began his medical career in 1970 when he joined Pontefract General Infirmary as a house officer. Profiler Dr David Holmes (cited in Berry-Dee and Morris, 2008:169) believes Shipman may have started

his career as a serial killer by 1974 when he became a GP in Todmorden, Yorkshire. Shipman was caught prescribing pethidine for his own use and in 1975 he was convicted of dishonestly obtaining drugs, forging NHS prescriptions and unlawful possession of the drug at Halifax Magistrates' Court. Shipman was fined and underwent three months of therapy at a psychiatric centre in York. Shipman then briefly worked in an environment away from pharmaceuticals but in 1977 he returned to general practice. He initially worked for a group practice, then in 1992 he set up his own single-handed practice in Hyde, Cheshire. Suspicions were first aroused in March 1998, following an increasing number of deaths of Shipman's patients. A local undertaker raised the alarm after an unusually high number of cremation forms needed counter signing. A fellow GP alerted the coroner for South Manchester and in September that year Shipman was arrested by Greater Manchester Police. Three patients were killed during the initial police investigation including Kathleen Grundy, whose death ended Shipman's killing career (Panter and Sitford, 1999, Whittle and Ritchie, 2009).

Before her death, Shipman had inveigled Mrs Grundy, an 81-year-old widow, into taking part in a survey (Clarkson, 2002). This allowed him to gain a copy of her signature, which he later used to forge her will and to inject her with morphine under the guise of taking a blood sample. When Mrs Grundy died on 24 June 1998 shortly after the visit, Shipman recorded her death as 'old age'. A post mortem later showed she had died of morphine poisoning. The death of Mrs Grundy expanded the police investigation, which eventually lead to Shipman's conviction for 15 counts of murder and one of forgery at Preston Crown Court on 31 January 2000.

The following day the then Secretary of Health Alan Milburn MP announced an investigation into Shipman's practice - this ultimately became the Shipman Enquiry conducted by Dame Janet Smith.

According to the Chief Medical Officer Professor Liam Donaldson, Shipman was something of a 'one off'. In the foreword to *Harold Shipman's Clinical Practice 1974-1998* he wrote: *'Everything points to the fact that a doctor with the sinister and macabre motivation of Harold Shipman is a once in a lifetime occurrence,'* (Donaldson, 2000:iv). However Soothill notes there is 'nothing in the report that helps towards that conclusion,' (Soothill, 2001:261).

Kinnell (2000) postulates that Shipman was part of a profession which attracts 'people with a pathological interest in the power of life and death,' (2000:1594). As a profession, medicine, Kinnell argues, throws 'up more serial killers than all the other professions put together'. While listing other doctors engaged in murder through the ages, Kinnell goes on to say that Dr John Bodkin Adams provided a role model for Shipman (ibid). Although acquitted of murder at his trial in 1957, Adams was convicted of prescription fraud (for more information on Adams see Surtees (2000)).

Shipman's victims were predominantly elderly women, which gives credence to Wilson's (2007) theory that serial killers prey on one of five types of victim, of whom the elderly are one type. As outlined in the Literature Review, the victims of serial murder are typically 'modernity's cast offs' (Haggerty 2009:180; see

also Wilson 2007). However, a doctor killing his own patients deviates from the convention that serial killers target those previously unknown to him (Haggerty 2009:169). Shipman was familiar with his victims and many of them held him in the highest regard. Although his victims were elderly, many were not infirm, fuelling speculation about Shipman's motive. Small amounts of jewellery were taken from some, but not from all victims, and it was not until his final victim Kathleen Grundy, that Shipman attempted to substantially gain financially. According to Esmail (2005:1843), even a panel of forensic psychiatrists could not provide an insight into Shipman's character or motivation after studying his police interviews, leaving him to conclude: '*If one defines motive as the rational or conscious explanation for the decision to commit a crime, then Shipman's crimes were without motive,*' (ibid).

The British Medical Journal reported that when asked if Shipman's motives would ever become clear, Dame Janet Smith, who conducted a public inquiry into Shipman's practices, said: '*The short answer, I think, is no. Only he could answer that question and at the moment it seems very unlikely he will.'* Adding: *'I think it likely that whatever it was that caused Shipman to become addicted to pethidine also led to other forms of addictive behaviour,'* said Dame Janet. *'It is possible that he was addicted to killing'* (Dyer, 2002:181).

However, a key factor should not be overlooked – opportunity. Applying left realist Jock Young's theory of the "Square of Crime" (Young, 1994), Shipman had no formal social or state control. Letters which emerged after his death revealed Shipman gloating that no one was monitoring his behaviour. In one of the 65

letters he wrote from prison to his friends Mavis and David Stott, Shipman wrote: *'No one saw me do anything. As for stealing morphine off the terminally ill, again no–one saw me do it'* (Adams, 2010). He added in another letter: *'The police complain I'm boring. No mistresses, home abroad, money in Swiss banks, I'm normal. If that is boring I am.'* Interestingly Shipman does not deny the crime, merely stating that there were no witnesses. Having studied the letters criminologist David Holmes says they show how *Shipman 'relished in the attention of being Britain's most prolific serial killer,'* (Adams 2010).

Here we might just as easily conclude that in the case of Harold Shipman motive is unimportant. The inquiry into his actions found 'fundamental weaknesses in the existing systems that enabled Shipman to kill and not be discovered for many years,' (Esmail 2005:1844). Esmail goes on to say that Shipman was not a killer who happened to be a doctor but that his profession 'enabled him to kill and remain undiscovered' (ibid). This theory again brings us back to the notion that serial killing is a societal phenomenon reflecting that current academic thought which concentrates on the individual needs to be expanded (Haggerty, 2009, Skrapec, 2001).

Robert Black (1947 - 2016)

> *"It was a rush of blood. I've always liked young girls since I was a young kid." The officer asked him if he worked alone. "It's not the sort of thing you do with witnesses around, is it?" Black replied. "I just saw her and got her into the van. I tied her up cos I wanted to keep her until I delivered the*

parcels to Galashields," [Court Transcript: 7th October 2011 cited in (Lynes et al., 2012: 76)].

The case of Scottish serial killer Robert Black is categorized by Soothhill & Peelo (2004) as a 'mega case' following their analysis of 23 years of crime reporting in *The Times* between 1977 and 1999. There were 167 entries for stories about the killer, who was ultimately convicted of four murders, one kidnap and one attempted kidnap. Soothhill and Peelo's study shows that the greatest number of news items (80) appeared during the search stage, with 26 for his arrest, 27 for the court case and eight for the aftermath.

Robert Black	
Occupation	Driver
Convictions	4
Suspected Victims	16+
Victim type	Young Girls
Years Active	1969-1987

Soothhill and Peelo suggest the reason that Black's case lacked the same level of early impact as other top cases was the fact that all his crimes were not linked from the outset (2004:7). This supports the theory put forward that the label of serial murder fuels media coverage (Wilson et al., 2010). The first newspaper report of Black's crimes was in *The Times* newspaper on 3 August 1982, with the report of a missing child.

It wasn't until 1990 that Black was caught and charged with the kidnap and sexual assault of a six-year-old girl (Soothhill & Peelo 2004:10). The girl's father,

a policeman, pulled Black over in his van after he was seen by a member of the public. The girl was in the back of his van bound and gagged. Police then connected Black to the murders of Susan Maxwell (1982), Caroline Hogg (1983) and Sarah Harper (1986) through petrol receipts. In May 1994, Black was convicted of the three murders, and of the attempted kidnap of 15-year-old Theresa Thornhill. Then in 2009 Black was charged with a fourth murder, that of Jennifer Cardy, a nine year old girl who had gone missing in August 1981 while on her bicycle near her home in County Antrim, Northern Ireland. He was convicted in October 2011 and given another life sentence. Black died in 2016.

Following the conviction, Theresa Thornhill spoke to the media about her experience of Black and of how she escaped (Knight, 2011). Some of her comments reveal both Black's modus operandi and how lucky Theresa was to have escaped. She stated:

> *'He grabbed me from behind and clamped his hand over my mouth with my elbows pinned to my sides.*
>
> *'His foul stench was overwhelming and I could barely breathe. He lifted me off my feet and had nearly pulled me through the side door of his van, but I started fighting back. I managed to scream and bit his arm, then grabbed him by his trousers. He dropped me on the floor,'* (Knight 2011).

Black is also widely believed to have killed school girl Genette Tate in 1978 but police have been unable to gather sufficient evidence (Edwards, 2008). It was widely reported that Black collected child pornography and 'his pathological fascination with child sex may have stemmed from abuse' (Seltzer, 1997:7).

Peter Tobin (1946 -)

Peter Britton Tobin	
Occupation	Handyman
Convictions	3
Suspected Victims	11+
Victim type	Young Women
Years Active	1970-2006

Peter Tobin boasted to a prison psychologist that he had murdered some 48 women. Although unable to verify this claim, Wilson (2010), writing in the *Daily Mirror* (accessed online), argues that for the *'sheer length of time this monster has been able to do damage to young women the length and breadth of the country, I have no hesitation in describing him as the worst serial killer who has ever been active in this country,'.* Wilson also believes that Tobin is the infamous Glasgow serial killer "Bible John" (Wilson and Harrison, 2010).

In 1994 Tobin was convicted of raping two 14 year-old girls. He had assaulted them in front of his son and then left them for dead. The girls survived and Tobin pleaded guilty to the attack. He was released from prison in 2004 after serving ten years of his 14-year sentence, but only two years later he raped and murdered Polish student Angelika Kluck, 23. Tobin, who had hidden the student's body under the floorboards of a church in Scotland, was sentenced to life, and has to serve a minimum of 21 years before he can be considered for parole

The following year detectives discovered the bodies of two other victims, Vicky Hamilton and Dinah McNicol, buried in the garden of Tobin's former home in Margate, Kent. Both women were last seen alive in 1991.

Strathclyde Police launched Operation Anagram in 2006 to investigate the life and movements of Tobin to try to ascertain whether Tobin was responsible for further murders. Led by DSI David Swindle, it concentrated on tracing the origins of jewellery found at Tobin's former addresses and included excavations at a number of properties linked to the killer. The investigation used the national HOLMES2 (Home Office Large Major Enquiry System) which allowed police forces across the UK to cross check their missing persons reports (Williams-Thomas, 2008). The investigation remains open but was wound down in 2011 after no further prosecutions.

Tobin's modus operandi appears to be opportunistic. Hamilton was abducted on her way home, and it is believed McNicol was hitchhiking from a festival. The notion that a teenager could go missing and not immediately be reported is outlined by Jenkins (1992) as he talks of the 1960s, but is equally applicable today. He writes that the milieu '*greatly enhanced the opportunities for the potential offender to find himself or herself in intimate circumstances with a victim and the increased physical mobility of these years made it less likely that a young person's disappearance would be immediately noticed,'* (1992:15).

Despite the lack of new evidence or information surrounding Tobin's crimes the serial killer remains news worthy, as do those associated with him. In 2013 the

story of a petty theft between inmates made the news because the criminal involved had plotted to kill Tobin (Taylor, 2013). More recently there has been press coverage of an assault on him at HMP Saughton in Edinburgh (Linning, 2015). Celebrity and compulsion to share stories with the media extended to one of Tobin's ex-wives, who has, for example, written her autobiography (Wilson, 2011). Following his last conviction she concluded her book saying:

> *'I've gone great lengths to rebuild my life, but I've wasted too much time running from the truth. Until I face my past, my escape from evil will always be incomplete. If I don't share my story, it will always be there to haunt me. And I don't want that anymore.*' (Wilson, 2011).

Jack the Stripper

Jack the Stripper was the nickname given to the serial killer believed to be responsible for eight murders in South West London between 1964 and 1965. His victims are believed to be: Hannah Tailford, Irene Lockwood, Helen Barthelemy, Mary Flemming, Frances Brown, Bridget O'Hara, Elizabeth Figg and Gwyneth Rees. All of these women were sex workers and his soubriquet is taken from that of the infamous Jack the Ripper, who also targeted prostitutes.

'Jack the Stripper'	
Occupation	Unknown
Convictions	0
Suspected Victims	8
Victim type	Sex Workers
Years Active	1964 -65

At the time detectives believed their prime suspect was Mungo Ireland, who worked as a security guard at the Heron Trading Estate near where O'Hara's

body was found (Wier, 2011). Ireland killed himself before police could establish his involvement.

The case has not been without its conspiracy theorists. Reformed south-London gangster, Jimmy Tippet, believes the killer to be world champion boxer Freddie Mills (Thompson, 2001). In an interview with the *Observer* newspaper, Tippett said his contacts within London's close-knit boxing fraternity had told him that Mills committed suicide because he feared the police were closing in on him.
At the time Mills' family believed him to have been murdered in a gangland killing. Neither the true cause of his death, nor his involvement in the murders have ever been substantiated.

Another suspect has been identified by local historian Neil Milkins who suggests that Harold Jones, who raped and murdered two young girls in Abetillery, South Wales, in 1921 when he was just 15, is Jack the Stripper. Milkins believes Jones was living near Ireland at the time of the murders and could have been helped by the security guard. Jones had been working as a caretaker but died in Hammersmith in 1971 of bone cancer (Milkins, 2011). In his book Jack of Jumps (2006), David Seabrook dismisses Mungo Ireland as having involvement, believing him to be in Scotland at the time of some of the killings. Seabrook states that the killer was in fact a former policeman with a vendetta against Scotland Yard. He believes that it had to be someone with an intimate knowledge of the police force to dump each body in a different police subdivision.

The crimes have also recently attracted attention from the literary world and feature in the latest work by novelist Cathi Unsworth. In her book Bad Penny Blues (1998) the author recognised the media's lack of interest and the stigma of the victims stating: "*Because the woman were prostitutes, the newspaper reports were quite down on them, as though it wasn't enough for them to be killed so horribly*,' (Allfree, 2009).

Steve Wright (1958 -)

It can be argued that, in part, the substantial media interest which surrounded the murders of five women in Ipswich, Suffolk was initiated by the broadcaster Sky News. Working as a news editor for the 24-hour news channel in November 2006 it was clear that this story was pushed on to the news agenda and, having been so, other TV stations quickly followed. As with Jack the Stripper's victims, news interest had been limited due to the fact that the women were working as sex workers, although a number of journalists working on the case were keen to change this. Then, as the number of victims increased and it was clear it was the work of a serial killer, the media interest increased rapidly. The women - Anneli Alderton, Paula Clennell, Gemma Adams, Tania Nicol and Annette Nicholls - were all

Steven Gerald James Wright	
Occupation	Driver
Convictions	5
Suspected Victims	10+
Victim type	Sex Workers
Years Active	1986-2006

murdered while working in the Ipswich area between 30 October and 10 December 2006.

Wright displayed the characteristics of an 'organised killer'. As outlined by Wilson (2008), Wright thought through the selection of his victims, where to kill them, and how to dispose of their bodies. Three were left in water, which hampered forensic evidence gathering, even to the extent that cause of death could not be ascertained.

Wright pleaded not guilty to the murders and continues to maintain his innocence. These crimes have been the subject of various true crime accounts, a number of TV drama productions, a musical and a film of the musical – *London Road*. Wright is often compared in the media to serial killer Peter Sutcliffe, who murdered 13 women, many of whom also worked as sex workers. Both killers were assigned nicknames by the press, which served mainly to maintain their public profile. Sutcliffe became known as the 'Yorkshire Ripper', whilst Wright was dubbed the 'Suffolk Strangler'. There the similarity ends, with Wright refusing to admit guilt and therefore any motive, whereas Sutcliffe said: *'I were just cleaning up the streets'* (Steve Egger 2002:83).

CHAPTER 6

Introduction

This chapter outlines the findings of the research following the analysis of the ten interviews, as described in the method section in Chapter 3. It is divided into three sections to represent the three superordinate themes, and subsequent emerging findings.

These were:

* Media as therapy - the notion that interacting with and using the media can benefit families of multicide victims;

* Victim as publicist – how families quickly gain an understanding of, and develop strategies of how to use the media for their own gain;

* Media as pariah – the negative effects on families following their interaction with the media.

The chapter aims to draw together commonalities across all the interviews to assist in answering the research question: How do families experience their relationship with the media following the death of a loved one to serial murder?

Finally it seeks to answer the remaining objective outlined in the introduction, which was:

* To develop an understanding of the strategies developed by families of multiple homicide victims to cope with the media.

The three sections are further divided into sub sections, detailing the subsequent 18 subordinate themes, which emerged.

TABLE OF FINDINGS	
Superordinate Themes	*Subordinate Themes*
Media as Therapy	Media to help others
	Relationships
	Control
Victim as Publicist	Strategy development & implementation
	Fickle world of news
	Media for money
	Media to aid justice
	Media to help investigation
	Celebrity
Media as Pariah	Negative experiences
	False hope
	Factual errors
	Absence of interest
	Intrusion into grief and stigma
	Trauma
	Celebrity of Killer
	Hierarchy of victims

This chapter is deliberately 'quote rich' enabling the lived experience of the participants to dominate. As such it offers 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) and in so doing generates insight from the "ground". In this way it also serves to highlight that the victims' families are often the unheard voices in academic

research in relation to serial murder, which is more often concerned with the psychological profile and motivation of the serial killer (Skrapec, 2001).

This sentiment is shared with Rock (1998) who believes it is 'proper' to turn to thick description when 'confronted with such a special life world,' (1998:xv). Rock goes on to reference McCall and Wittner's observation that it is easy enough for some truths to get lost in criminology and sociology: *'The experiential knowledge of subordinate people is kept submerged by positivist methodologies which can assume that social scientists know enough to ask the questions that yield meaningful explanations of society and social life,'* (McCall and Wittner, 1990:47).

To assist the reader and the flow of narrative, each participant, rather than being defined by a number, was given a pseudonym. The name assigned to each participant reflects their gender. Thus:

Participant One - John

Participant Two - Steve

Participant Three - Simon

Participant Four - Roger

Participant Five - Patrick

Participant Six - Jane

Participant Seven - Max

Participant Eight - Jack

Participant Nine - Helen

Participant Ten – Ben

MEDIA AS THERAPY

'They are doing better than psychiatrists' – Steve

Perhaps counterintuitive to public and popular perception, the participants' interviews showed that they were not continuously at the mercy of the media; in fact the opposite was found. Each participant presented a very clear idea as to how the media operated and what could be gained and lost from seeking publicity. All of the participants used the media for their own gains in a number of ways. Some revelled in the media spotlight, others were reluctant players in a game they knew was vital in helping to find their loved one (if their body was still undiscovered) and in bringing their killer to justice. All quickly established strategies to use the media to their own advantage, or to stay out of the media spotlight. However, the most surprising and powerful theme to emerge was the participants' willingness to talk, and their acknowledgement that talking was beneficial to them.

'I have really opened up,' exclaimed Steve at the end of the interview before quickly changing the subject. Simon specifically mentioned the psychological support provided by the media with particular reference to therapy. When asked whether he thought the media had helped him he replied. *'I think it has to some extent. It's a therapeutic thing. I think writing a book helped as well.'*

Later in the interview he became more specific about the help he felt he got from talking to the media. Steve:

'I think like this afternoon for example, I've got some company, someone to talk to about the subject I could go on for hours about it. Of which you want to know, you want to listen to, how often does that happen in life? Not very often I can tell you. You have to drag it out of me usually or shut me up. I suppose that's what it's been like in a sense. You know some members of my family say to me you know, why don't you just let it go? But how can you, you know.'

Steve clearly wants to talk about the loss of his daughter, something his family were keen to stop him doing. The media, even decades after his daughter's disappearance, have been providing him with company and a listening ear. The widower treated the interview like a social engagement. He drank wine and appeared to make an occasion of it, at times revelling in the attention, playing up his experiences of how comfortable he was associating with the media. Despite some negative aspects of media coverage, Steve was adamant that talking to the media has therapeutic benefits, even likening journalists to psychiatrists.

He said: *'I have been quoted wrong and that annoys me but I don't feel like they are intruding because they are helping. It's a very good thing that they do. They are doing better than psychiatrists.'*

Steve also felt that his use of the media spotlight had brought him to closer to other people with shared experiences. For example, he stated that:

'I have met, through the Missing Persons Bureau so many people who are in the same boat and that's helpful. To go into a [TV] studio and there are 50-60 people there all with people missing and you know you are not alone. I

could talk the hind legs off you, and you won't understand. But they do. You are trying to find out how it feels but I can't explain it. You have to experience it yourself and God, I hope you never have to experience it.'

Steve has clearly gained from talking to media, and, through that process, experienced a secondary benefit of the media bringing him together with other people who have shared similar experiences. The benefits of shared experience and peer support groups are well documented (Walter, 2007) and discussed when it comes specific medical conditions, or experiences, for example drug or alcohol rehabilitation or bereavement. However Ussher et al, (2006) found that being able to provide a sense of belonging was what made support groups useful, (2006:2565). While Riches and Dawson (1998) found that support groups were helpful to bereaved parents generally. One parent noted that they felt uncomfortable talking to people who had experienced loss from something other than murder. They describe how:

'Cultural beliefs central to mothering (nurturing, caring, making things better) and to fathering (protecting) while painful for all bereaved parents, may be especially agonizing for parents of murdered children. They are presented publicly, often over an extended period of time, with incontrovertible evidence that their attempts to equip their child to survive in life have failed' (Riches & Dawson 1998:149).

Walter (2007) supports this theory in his work looking at grief and grieving through modern and post-modern eras. He identifies how in traditional rural England extended families would often live and work in the same village, and

mourn together. Then with urbanisation and globalisation people increasingly experienced their grief in isolation, instead of grieving – albeit privately - with just immediate family members. The advent of the Internet has led to a new form of support, one shared not with fellow villagers but with strangers affected by a common tragedy. As Walter puts it:

> *'The entry ticket to the group is shared experience, an experience that fuses members to each other, even as it has cut them off from friends and neighbours who knew, but had a different relationship to, the deceased. In fact the more cut off from the rest of society, the more members feel the group to be the only place where they are understood,'* (2007:131).

In this case it was the media which led Steve to experience the group healing of being able to talk to people, who truly knew what it felt like to lose a child to serial murder. Steve has since expressed the desire to set up a help group for such people.

Ben's relationship with the media not only helped him in a practical sense but also in a therapeutic sense. He describes how a *News of the World* reporter facilitated his visit to another of his daughter's killer's trials, and put him up in a hotel. These were essentially practical benefits. However, he also said that he spent a good deal of time talking to the reporter. When Ben was asked: '*I know you said that you thought talking about what had happened may help other people but what about yourself?*' He replied:

> '*Talking you know is good, talking about it is a good thing, you know I think if you bottle it up it makes it worse, that's my opinion. Aye it's good to talk*

about it. I have got friends obviously and I used to go down the pub and they would say you know I'm sorry but I don't want you to bring it up, and I wouldn't dream of bringing it up. I don't mind them bringing it up, I don't mind them talking about it – but then I would feel, that they would feel that if you go down to the pub and you're sat talking about it all the time the guys would say I am sick of talking about this. I am really pissed off about hearing about this. But anyway I don't talk about it much. But if someone wants to talk about it I don't mind talking about it. I don't mind at all. But I do believe some people get peed off by it. It's like sitting watching something you see on the telly that you see night after night. You think for Pete's sake how long is this going on for.'

Ben's seeming flippancy that talking about his daughter's murder could be compared with a recurring TV programme, masks his feelings that he does actually benefit from talking. It was clear on the evening of the interview that, like Steve, he had settled into the interview with a drink, as if having a conversation with an old friend.

For Max, the contact with the media was therapeutic in two ways. Firstly, the attention of the media when his sister disappeared in 1991 - when he was 19 years old - provided a distraction. He explains: *'The media intrusion was actually quite good, it was interesting and relieved me from thinking about what could actually have happened',* adding*: 'At the time it was a welcome distraction.'*

Secondly, this interest from the media provided Max's father Steve with an outlet to talk about his feelings, taking pressure away from family members to talk about the murder all the time. As he explained: *'You know my dad was on the radio all the time and he did a lot of TV programmes and he went on a lot of daytime TV. He was using it as a crutch. It did us all a favour because it stopped him ringing us up all the time, because he, you know, you have met him, he likes a drink and umm, he has lived an alternative lifestyle being a musician and he used it as a crutch, he would ring up in the middle of the night and he would be talking to us.'*

Max continued with this theme:

> *'I mean he has my mobile number but he hasn't got my home number because I have kids and I can't have him ringing up in the middle of the night – but he transferred that on to reporters and I am sure you have had a few late night calls yourself, as others have. You know he likes to talk and waffles and he's not unintelligible, you can get a decent sound bite out of him, he's quite articulate about saying how he is feeling but you know, he was using it and we could see that it was good for him on the therapeutic side, the fact that he was talking about it and any publicity, like the old adage was good. It just kept things at the forefront and the fact that she was still missing…. For 15 odd years he did so many interviews, we knew it was good for him but it never really impacted on me as such.'*

Max twice described the media as an emotional crutch for his father, and was right in presuming that his father had transferred some of that attention on to myself during the research. In fact a full year after the interview was conducted

in 2012 I received numerous messages from his father asking for me to make contact, or requests for help contacting journalists to gain more publicity (this issue is addressed more fully in the ethics chapter).

In the months following the interview, texts from Steve varied from asking advice on how to deal with the council in relation to the creation of a memorial garden for his daughter, to checking that I was okay. On June 15 2011 Steve sent a text saying that his daughter's birthday would have been this week and then later texted.

> *'Hi Harriet, today [daughter] would have been 38 years old! It would make my day to hear that scum murderer was dead before Sunday, Fathers' Day.'*

It became apparent that the pattern of the texts, both in frequency and timing, coincided with moments of loneliness and important dates, for example Father's Day, birthdays and Christmas.

John's experience differs from the other participants in that the killer of his mother has yet to be found. The case also differs in the fact that the majority of the publicity surrounding his mother's killer was published in the news when he was a young boy, and now his experience of media is mainly as a result of books, rather than newspaper or television news. In his interviews he was particularly concerned with the fact that it would become widely known that his mother was a prostitute, and that he would be the centre of 'village gossip', but the benefits have outweighed his fears. He explained:

'Since the first book came out I have been on an incredible journey, finding things out about myself. And you can dismiss it [the book] as a horrible book but it has opened up so many avenues, it has opened the case right up. So I have a debt of gratitude. I couldn't have found my sisters if it wasn't for them [the authors] I owe them both a huge debt of gratitude, I really do.'

The therapeutic help John has received is in the form of answered questions and being able about to talk about his mother. But most importantly it has allowed him to learn the identity of his father and that he has siblings. This gave John a sense of heritage and community that had previously evaded him. He amplified these feelings in his interview:

'Something positive is coming out of that situation. That is the amazing thing. That through this book [the author] used information to find my father, who is sadly dead but I have got two sisters and nieces and nephews. Yes a lot has happened since I was contacted. A lot of good things have been happening because through another author I have also got in touch with relatives in Scotland and they gave me a photograph of me and my mother which I never had before. That was incredible. And I have three sisters and before you say anything he was my father. I look like him.

Question: *So it's been good for you?*

John: *Yes it has found me proper relatives, I did have foster parents but they were not proper relatives, I had no one, no one. Now I have sisters, nieces and nephews, second cousins, they are distant but I still have them. Great aunts, yeah, for most people it's a normal every day things but for me it's quite special because it's not something I have had before. It's incredible. But there*

is one piece of the jigsaw left, my brother. I am not too hopeful but possibly with the publicity he may come forward and if I can find him even if is just to say hello, to me that's the final jigsaw piece in my life. It is complete then.'

When asked what was the most difficult thing for him to come to terms with growing up, he replied that it was the "not knowing". He explained:

'Everything. Both. Not knowing my mother was the most painful thing. Since discovering about my father that has added a new dimension to it because I didn't know he was my father until I talked to [book's author]. And then it all started coming out so that has changed the dynamics about it. And meeting my sisters has changed it again.'

He went further and added *'Nothing good has come out of this case. By talking to you, talking to [the author] and contributing to his book I feel like I am doing some good. I want people to know that nothing positive came out of my situation, and now I can do something positive and that's helping - talking to [the author of the book) and yourself.'*

Roger also spoke of the benefits of speaking to the media. When asked if he thought if there was a cathartic element in talking to the press he replied *'Yes, I think you would be telling lies if there wasn't something in that.'*

Roger went on to describe how he would have been disappointed if the media had not covered the trial of his daughter's killer. *'In truth I would have been very disappointed not for my sake but for [daughter's] sake. I wanted the media to be*

there. I wanted them to print what was right to be printed.' He developed this point of view further:

> *'I felt that it was warranted, or justified that for 30 years no one had been caught and now this paedophile murderer was caught, and that the police had worked so hard, they had millions of hours on it really. I just think that when it had come to a conclusion, that it was justified to tell people that the police had done a good job, justified to say that the defence had done a good job and that we as a family had done a good job.'*

Although the talking itself was not therapy as such, Roger felt that he benefited from the coverage. A typical example of this view was his statement:

> '*You know I just felt that it should have been spoken, you know. So I felt that I would have been very disappointed if the press hadn't been interested and I would also tell you that there's an arrogance involved. There was an arrogance on my behalf, to want to tell the story, you know, I wanted the story to be told but I wanted it to be told right - And I wanted it to be told and over with.'*

Roger's exclusion in seeing talking as therapy specifically could be attributed to the fact that he is a very religious man and spoke often of his supportive relationship with God.

Media to help others

> *'If I can help someone else to cope then that would be a good legacy' - Steve*

As well as gaining direct benefit from talking about their experiences to the media, participants expressed how they were able to use the media as a vehicle to help others. For example, Steve said: '*The end product is that I invite them in for a reason. The media are only reporting what the serial killer has done and that's the painful thing. Everyone is different, they all have their own way of coping. If I can help someone else to cope then that would be a good legacy. It's about being able to use the publicity, not for your own ends but for others.'*

When asked*: 'Do you feel the media has given you a voice? A platform to help others?'* Steve replied: *'For the future yes, I think it's good if it is used properly.'*

So too, when asked the question: *'Do you find, do you feel any comfort in the fact that you can talk to [an other victims' father] that not only has he lost his daughter but also that he lost his daughter because of the actions of the same man?*'

Steve replied *'Yes, Yes, that's why we started this Facebook thing… He [other victim's father [Ben] died five times, all because of the stress of that scumbag. But when I saw [Ben] on television that was when I first saw him, at the trial and because he walked down the road in front of the police van and held all the traffic up and everyone was shouting "yeah good on you" and [the killer] was in the back of the police van and said "I want to meet that man, that's a strong man.'*

Despite acknowledging that media interviews upset him, Steve continues to court publicity. When asked why this should be the case, he stated:

'To be an example to other people, like what you are asking me now. Not to benefit me, I am too old for that. But for other people to understand, that someone, me, understands, what they are going through and been through it themselves. I want to speak to other people, speak to them through these interviews.'

Steve's urge to help others was also apparent in a string of telephone messages that he left in late June 2011 when Levi Bellfield was convicted of the murder of 13-year-old Milly Dowler. In short, he reached out to me as a journalist to put him in touch with the Dowler family to help set up a support group *to 'try help other people and let other people help other people who have missing children who have never been found.*' He added*: 'I would like to meet these other people, people who have got results and put their children to rest and then from that to meet other people who have gone through what we have been through.'*

Steve also collects the press cuttings from all of his interviews. This media archive acts as an aid to keep his daughter's memory alive for future generations of his family. As he explained:

'What I have done, I have collected not for me, but for my family in the future to remember [daughter]. So that like great, great, grandchildren down the line looking up the family tree asking who [daughter] is, who was abducted and murdered – if they don't know about her it's all there. I have bin bags in the loft, stuffed with newspaper cuttings. Everything. If anyone wants to go through it they are welcome to. It's no good to me but for my great, great grandchildren it would be good for them to find out how we felt, because

that's what all the publicity is about and how we got involved – just to find out what happened to her.'

Ben also described that whilst his wife is reluctant, that he would also like his experience to benefit others. Ben explained that his wife '*wanted to just put it behind us,'* but: *'I can't remember who said it, but they said that you might be on the news and that it could help other people. And you know with the documentary they asked if I could do it [speak on television] again. And I said well if it is going to help anyone then by all means.'*

This type of reasoning made Ben want to speak to the family of missing schoolgirl Madeleine McCann. As he put it:

'You know even to this day if you say, you know if you say can you speak to these people about their missing daughter I am only going to tell them what I went through. You know you live in hope and you know I knew on day three that we weren't going to see [daughter] again. But my wife said no we are going to see her again. But I knew we weren't because it wasn't like her to disappear like that, so I knew something bad had happened to her. It just annoys me that I let her go, it was the first time that she wanted to go out on her own and do that she did. I offered to take her though but aggh she wanted to go ride the bus she wanted to do this, she wanted to do that. So we just, you have to let them go sometimes.'

The question was about helping others but it felt as though Ben needed to air this part of his story. In other words, to speak about his pain that had been caused by giving his daughter the freedom which subsequently led to her death.

Relationships

'You have to like the person, like the look of them, I mean' - Ben

Much as a person would chose a friend, or indeed a therapist, the participants described the importance of a rapport with particular journalists. Steve, for example, described how relationships were key to choices he made about which publications to pursue, and in particular a £10,000 exclusive with the *News of the World*. He explained his reasoning:

> *'I think it was the reporter, who was really a charmer, beautiful young woman of 36. She was 36 during the trial. I never thought, I just called all News of the World hacks, but ohh what a charmer. And I met her boyfriend, he's a freelance photographer, who travels all over the world. He is a Scotsman and she is English. She's working in Edinburgh and he's working in London. They only see each other every two months at the weekend so I don't disturb them.*

This answer prompted questions about the relationship and rapport that he had established with the journalist. His answers reveal how this rapport was first created:

> *'You meet wee [name of NoW reporter] and he said 'she's going to come and see you and you will fall in love the minute you look at her. She's got legs right up to her armpits, and I'm looking up at her and she has flaming red hair, natural red hair and she's a Sagittarius and boom! We clicked just like that. Nothing to do with the paper, just personality wise. [Ben] clicked with her as well. That's how it all evolved if you want to say evolved. It was all a*

jumble, she was a real charmer and you don't expect that from the News of the World, and you can write that down – allegedly.'

Steve went to describe the difficulty in trying to make sound judgements and about which reporters to develop a relationship with. He explained:

'There is one point that, when it actually happens and they find your missing member of family, and you get a complete mental blank, a mental block and you don't know what you are doing or what you are saying.'

He added:

'You don't have time to think of what you are saying. It's a shock blank, a protection thing, you are protecting yourself, your mind is protecting you.'

Steve was then asked about how he dealt with the media at such an emotionally charged time. He explained*: 'You don't know, the thing is Harriet, you don't know. I don't know how I reacted to the media. You need to ask them that. It must have been favourable.'*

Not only did Steve manage to build a rapport with the media, the relationship was such that he negotiated money for his time. As he put it*:*

'I have had to haggle for money for articles and I never take the money myself. It all goes to Great Ormond Street Hospital, I always get a nice letter when someone donates their fee'.

Steve also learnt to distinguish the difference between staff reporters and freelance agency writers. He explained: *'The pitfalls are the freelance guys, they are always trying to put words in your mouth that are not there just to make a story for them, to make money for them, they are a bunch of …'*

When asked if there was a difference between the styles of the staff reporters and the freelance writers Steve explained*: 'Yes definitely, yeah, most of them have been ok but there's always one bad egg and that bad egg can go right through the whole media business and it does. That's why they get so much bad press, from each other, all the back-biting and in-fighting.'* Steve has learnt a great deal over the years in dealing with the media to get the best out of the relationship and not be taken advantage of. The key, according to Steve is that 'you *have to be honest, and don't let them [the journalists] push you, because they will try and push you and you lean back. That's the aggression, and then the aggression comes out and then you start shouting at people.'*

Simon also built up relationships with members of the media. He described how one relationship was initially negative, but he was later able to use it to his advantage. Personality and empathy were crucial to the relationship between Ben and the *News of the World* reporter he chose to tell his story.

Ben had been given advice from the police '*to stick to a certain person in the media'* and he did. The reporter he chose was from the *News of the World*. *'She was good. You know for someone in media, who did some crying for what we went through. I say she was a good actor, if she was acting. One of the police detectives said to watch who you speak to and deal with one person. Said it would make it*

easier for us. Because one will phone and another will phone and it happens you know.'

Ben then used his relationship with the *News of the World* to 'protect' him from approaches from other media.

> '*We got money from the News of the World but at the end of the day they came up to us and said that they would give us money if we didn't speak to anyone. And I said right, fair enough.'*

When asked about how he picked whom to speak to, Ben joked it was the person with the 'biggest chequebook' then added: *'You obviously can't pick a person and say I'll have you. You have to like the person, like the look of them, I mean [NoW reporter] was a nice girl and she was very friendly and all the rest of it.'*

Jack trusted his instincts when deciding which reporters to talk to and which not to talk to. He explained:

> *'I just talked to people that I felt I could talk to. If I didn't, I am a terrible person because if I meet someone and I don't like them, it doesn't matter what ever I do after that I will always have that barrier there and that is what I did with the press – if I didn't like the person or the way they were putting the questions then I just won't talk to them, unless we needed to get something out and we needed to get something into the media then yes, I would tolerate it and just use them as a tool to get something out there.'*

Later in the interview Jack returned to the theme of relationships. He went on:

'I think the people you know in the press, they treat you differently than when you don't know them. It comes like a respect between the two of you. Where as in the first place you feel like you are not treated with respect, you are just another number basically and if they can get a little bit of information out of you they are quite happy to go off and print it somewhere.'

Jack also explained how journalists behaved differently depending on whether they were working on the day's story, or longer-term features.

He explained:

There's a guy, I am not going to mention any names or any papers but I have dealt with him from very early on in the investigation. And even now once or sometimes twice a year he will ring me up and ask how things are going, and that to me is more of a friend, I have become friends with him more than him just being that somebody who is just after a story. But the other end is that if he hears of something that is going off, that I haven't heard of then he will still ring me up and tell me what's happened. And the same guy would ring me up and tell me what was happening with the Ipswich murders.'

Jack acknowledged that as he began to understand the way the media worked the balance of power shifted. As his experience grew he became more adept at using the media for his own means. He explained:

'*Because I had never worked in the media I didn't understand it. I couldn't get me head around how it, it actually worked but it's not as*

clear cut as when you watch them on the television. And after a period of time there is this, there is this as you call it status quo.'

Adding:

'*They could help me put behind bars the person who killed [daughter] whereas when I first started dealing with them I saw them completely as the enemy and as vultures that they were there to get a story and didn't care what had happened to anybody. But there are certain people in the media and no they are not like that. They are actually, they, they have a vested interest and believe in what they are doing and you can tell the difference when you're talking to them. Which guys are really interested in [daughter] and which are just there to get anything down for the paper and fill a corner this week.'*

Jack continued:

'I just wish people would remember we are all human beings, we are not just pawns moving around the chess table as and when required. The way we are approached and the way people talk to us makes it easier and a heck of a lot of difference. If they are a bit more compassionate about things then they would probably find out more people would talk to them.'

Jack makes it clear that the relationship between the participant and the reporter is crucial to whether the contact with the media is either therapeutic or negative.

Control

'No one will ever print everything we tell them to' – Helen

Helen's comment above reveals a sense of control, or lack of it, which was another key issue, which emerged during analysis of the participants' experiences. Not only did this apply to control over information and presentation in the media about the victims but also when stories were omitted. Simon, for example, felt particularly strongly about the local paper, which his daughter had been delivering when she was abducted. When asked if he wanted media attention he replied:

> *'If they [the newspaper] don't do anything I am really angry about it because I think they have a responsibility to do an article. Do some publicity on it. But there has been only two times that they have not done something which is surprising given all the years that have gone by.'*

Simon then used his own power to control and manipulate the media for his own gain. *'I got something and they got something'* and when the media revealed he was being unfaithful to his daughter's mother he was phlegmatic adding*: 'Mind you, I probably asked for it a bit, you know.'*

Simon also described how the Daily Express discovered that he had left his wife and was living with another woman. So he decided that the *'only way to handle this was to give them the story that they want so, that's what we did*'. Simon and his then girlfriend contacted the *News of the World* to give them an interview. They agreed an exclusive deal and were put up in a hotel overnight. This is a common tactic used by tabloid newspapers so that rival reporters are unable to contact the interviews. As he explained:

'We waited for the paper to come out and they told us there would be a bit on page two but it finished up right there on the front page, and pages two, three and five. You wouldn't believe it… it was a shattering experience, life wasn't the same afterwards.

This seemed in one sense an odd reaction, given that Simon had agreed to the interview. However, he explained:

'*They called her the scarlet woman [his girlfriend] and that there was precious little in there about [daughter]. Everything we did at that time was to get her [daughter] picture in the paper. I was okay in those days but now-a-days when ever [daughter's] picture is in the paper [the suspected killer] is on the same page. Or it works the other way around and her picture is there when they are writing about him.*

Simon explained how seeing his daughter's face on the same newspaper page as her killer was 'horrible'. He added:

'I don't like that. We don't see why he should be put on the same page. He has changed his appearance so much he doesn't look like him anyway.'

In an attempt to exert control over the use of his daughter's imagine Simon now charges newspapers to use it.

'*One time we discovered that because it was a school photo we had copyright and we used to bill them to try and stop it… financially in other words. Maybe thirty quid or something… why should they [media] be allowed to reproduce it – it's not on come to think of it. They should tell you*

what they are doing. On some of the anniversaries it has been quite a problem. It's been lucrative to be honest.'

Helen also explained her frustration at not having control over what and how details about her daughter appears in the news media:

'No one will ever print everything we tell them to – they do what they want to do. On the radio and in the papers they write what they want to. I mean what's the point of having an interview if they won't let us talk – and they won't let you talk. They said you know, you mustn't mention this and you mustn't mention that. It's a total waste of time.'

John's concern was his lack of control over the level of news interest in the case. He expressed anxiety about the level of celebrity of his mother's killer: *'One of my fears is that this case, The Jack the Stripper murders, has got the potential of being turned into a Jack the Ripper style farce.*' John said that he was not '*going to be generating any conspiracy theories'* as *'there are enough theories online,'* and that he dislikes seeing the case discussed. He explained: *'I think it's disgraceful. I understand it but most people don't see it from my point of view. You have the murders and the women in all its gory and seedy detail. The Ripper has been turned into cheap entertainment but people can't understand that they were women, they had children. They were human beings. They have been turned into a joke.'*

When Steve was asked how he felt consuming news before his daughter's body was found he replied: *'Any teenager would be found and my heart would go in to my mouth. I would read it. I would watch it and people would ring me up about it*

and people would want to do stories on it.' Steve described his most negative media experience as being when he risked losing control of information being attributed to him.

> *'Basically someone tried to put words into my mouth. They walked through my door and they were here at my invitation – so don't take the piss out of me. I would advise that to anyone. Don't let them in if you think they are going to be aggressive, but you don't know they are going to be aggressive until you let them in. And then they turn it on. It's like inviting a burglar into your house.'*

Steve's account can be interpreted that because the journalist was invited in, he somehow should abide by the house rules, giving Steve control over the situation.

Patrick also wanted to control the media and used journalists as a vehicle to convey the families' dismay that the deaths of all of the killers' suspected victims would not be scrutinised in court. He describes how he was disappointed that he was unable to exert that control over one interview with the North West's independent television station Granada Reports. Patrick explained: *'We were filming for about 20 minutes, quarter of an hour, and they just used sound bites of me basically saying x,y,z rather than the whole alphabet.'*

VICTIM AS PUBLICIST

'Using the press to an advantage. I don't mean that in a bad way. Just rather that than them use you.' – Roger.

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact year in which contemporary methods of public relations were first deployed (Cutlip, 1994). The skills of spin-doctors, agents and image consultants are commonplace in many aspects of commerce, politics, charity and public sector (Francis, 2008), and this research would suggest that the families of multicide are no exception. Before engaging with the media the participants, either guided by the police or of their own volition, had a clear idea as to how the media could be used. They were also quick to devise and adopt strategies in maximising potential and minimising negative effects from the interaction. The strategies and experiences of the participants are grouped into six themes.

Strategy development and implementation

One of the more sophisticated methods of media strategy was illustrated by Roger, who by the time his daughter's killer came to trial had three decades of experience of dealing with the media. For example, he stated:

> *'I have had thirty years of it. So you could say I know them fairly well and what to expect from the press. I learned that thirty years ago. Learned not to say too much and to say it at certain times, to not be interviewed without organising yourself to be interviewed. Thinking about what you want to say and using the press to an advantage. I don't mean that in a bad way. Just rather that than them use you.'*

Roger went on to explain how he had a deliberate strategy to manage the media at the trial of his daughter's killer. *'During the trial I set out to get a relationship*

with the press. I made sure that almost every day I went and spoke to them and greeted them.' Roger became 'friends' with the press pack. He explained:

> *'I wanted them on my side so I did, I know that sounds very conceited but I didn't want them printing things. I wanted them to know who I was and what I was about. I didn't want them writing stories about someone who was remote. During that time [the trial] there was nothing in the press that annoyed me. I think one of the reasons was that I and [his wife] struck up a relationship with them, and we never once avoided them in the court. I knew that everything I said they wouldn't repeat. I would say to them when I was talking off the cuff that it wasn't for them to repeat and they respected that.'*

Roger and his wife deliberately set out to befriend the press in order to build a relationship with the intention of influencing media coverage. Roger established a personal relationship with the members of a close-knit press pack to reduce the likelihood they would to work against him.

Roger describes how he adapted his strategy to meet his changing needs. Press coverage was desirable during the search for his daughter but, when his daughter's body was found, Roger's need for coverage in the media subsided. Although in his interview Roger says it would be 'wrong' to say he managed the press at the beginning it was clear that that was what he was doing. Roger added:

> *'You see, when [daughter] went missing it was such a paralysing experience you can't really think straight and to say I managed the press then would be*

wrong. All I can tell you is that eventually I avoided the press because it just became sensationalised. At the beginning we would have used the press obviously to see if we could find her but when she was found and she was found dead the press had no further, no further profit for me.'

Roger built on his strategy that if he befriended the media and kept them 'onside' that they would not react negatively towards him, or 'turn him over' as is often used in media discourse.

Roger went on*: 'We knew that we didn't want to be in the public domain, that was the first thing. The second thing was we didn't want to comment in case we jeopardise the case.'*

As a result, cautious of jeopardising the case by talking to the media, he made a pact with local newspaper reporters that he would pose for photograph to keep the journalists 'at bay'.

Roger told how he was approached by one journalist who *said 'you know we are writing all these stories and we don't have a photograph.'* Roger then negotiated a deal telling him '*alright what we will do is as long as you don't ask me any questions we will go out at dinner [from the court] and we will pose for pictures*'. 'And we did,' he said. '*To give them a wee bit, to keep them at bay*'. After years of not engaging with the media and at the end of the trial Roger then decided to do one final interview to 'draw a line.' In his own words:

'*We did the interview to put a full stop to it, you know what I mean, we had a full stop and we haven't been bothered with much after.'*

Steve also described how experience enabled him to cope better with the media, and how he employed media strategies he had learned as a result of his time as a musician. Steve drew on his previous career in a band to help him respond to the media interest. He also quickly differentiated between the types of media, from TV and print but also from staff reporters and freelancers.

Describing his first contact with the media Steve said: *'The police put me in touch with the missing persons bureau and it just started up. I did TV appeals all over the country and they were great.'* The case generated a lot of publicity. *'not only from TV companies and newspapers but from press agencies.'* He added*:*

'They try and put words in your mouth but I am not daft, I don't want words put in my mouth… They summarise things and because they are on a deadline and they have to get it in the paper, and selling it to other papers. The thing is when I was in the band the press were always on me.

Steve's previous experience with the media as a band member helped him deal with some of the publicity. He explained: '*Because I had good idea how they worked. How to use them to my advantage. Basically I knew how to do a broadcast. A lot of people don't know. Everyone who has been here and seen me say 'oh you're so relaxed' but I am not relaxed. I am screwed up, my stomach is screwed up like I am doing a show but it doesn't come out.'*

Steve was the ultimate performer when it came to his ability to hide his nerves, a skill which served him well when he needed to use the media. When asked about how he dealt with the cameras filming him to go into court each day of his daughter's killer's trial he responded: *'I am not conscious of it. If I thought about it I would be conscious of it but I have grown up with cameras. I have always been taught to look away from a camera not into it. The cameramen think I am great because I don't look into it unless I want to make a strong point.'*

Here Steve describes his knowledge of the subtlety of television production. Shots of people looking directly into the camera are often deemed more powerful and are often used to denote innocence or guilt. When filming a photograph the camera will normally pan out from a face of a victim and pan into a close up of the eyes of villains. He also down plays the fact that he didn't notice the cameras on arrival at court – and appears to relish in the fact he was once famous in his own right as a musician.

Control, or the loss of it, is outlined earlier as a negative experience of media attention. However, the notion of being in control was one of the factors Simon drew upon when creating and understanding media strategies. His first words, before even the first question were *'I have had a few months in a relaxing environment and I am not used to getting out of control.'* This opening gambit was clearly designed to lay out from the onset that he was in control, and was used to being in that position from previous interviews.

Simon developed the ultimate media strategy in that he wrote an entire book to ensure he took control over what was in the public domain about the disappearance of his daughter. Simon explained*:*

> *'Very often it [coverage of disappearance] is badly reported and it annoys me. It wouldn't take anyone very much time to report it properly but they don't. It should be fact – spot on. That's why I wrote my first book. I was fed up with the newspapers writing not quite right stories so I said I was going to put it down in black and white so that they [journalists] could look it up. And that's what I did. It was like a diary of first experiences.'*

Simon described how errors in the reports were one of the most negative aspects of the coverage. He explained: *'It is disappointing. You expect them to be professional and they are not. Some of them [reporters] come and see you but oh gosh you spend half an hour sorting out the bits that are wrong.'* In writing a book not only did Simon take full control of the situation, he also sought to address previous inaccuracies and thus control future information. This finding is consistent with the work of Newton (2011) who found that the smallest error in reporting is perceived by a grieving family as a lack of respect to the person who had been killed. This is consistent with the work of Scott Maier (2007) who found that whilst most newspapers contain errors, complainants rarely corrected them for fear of being ignored.

Simon then described another scenario where a radio reporter had been camped outside his home for a number of days. Simon explained:

'He had a tent outside and he was camping there. I used to take the dog out for a walk and I felt sorry for the guy. He had been there several nights so we invited him in and gave him a cup of tea and a bacon-butty and made a fuss of him. Then we made use of him, you know, and got him to do an interview.'

Simon described how he 'made use' of the journalist and deliberately engaged the media.

'We did ring the newspapers and so on. And I did think up things to talk about. To get her picture in the paper basically. You know and we succeeded. We kept it going for a long time. Anything you could think of was written.'

Simon now has a press agent to manage the media interest in his daughter's murder. He said: *'Recently he [the agent] said to me 'What on earth can we write about? We have written about everything possible.' That is about right but then something will come up again and off we go for a little while again. I don't know why we got so much [press coverage] last August [for the anniversary of disappearance] but we did. It took a bit of keeping up with.'*

Simon was single-minded in his pursuit of media coverage. In his own words*:*

'We just knew it had to happen basically, our sole intention all the time was to get her picture in the paper. We didn't care how it got there. Sometimes it was hard to handle because what they wanted to talk about we didn't want to talk about basically.'

Unprompted by a question, Jack described the moment he realised he could use the media for his own gains: Jack said: *'Now originally I saw the press as the enemy. Um it was only later that I learned to use them as tool, so that I could get what I wanted, to get the message out.'* Jack also explained that he had originally viewed journalists in a negative light because of how he had seen them portrayed on television. He added: *'There are reporters out there who act like that, they will do anything to get the story, I know that.'*

But over the years Jack developed a clear strategy to get the most out of the media for his means, including the complex strategy of using the local media to generate national media interest. Jack was very clear in his approach*:*

> *'I knew the message I wanted to get out there, also over the time I learnt how to word things to get what I wanted. And I tend to talk quite blunt and straight and I have learnt that's not the easiest way to be. You have to go a little bit around the houses. But I did find, and I can't compliment them enough, the local news around Norwich, they were absolutely fantastic. Not only did they do the first interview they also made contact with two or three other reporters, radio stations and that really helped get the ball rolling. We were using the media, within the media.'*

Jack knew that if the local media picked up the story the national press was likely to follow. He described additional techniques he employed:

> '*What I learned was not to give out all the information out in one go. To drip-feed it in, in little bits. And I think up to that point it was a good*

campaign. And it did lead to…we instigated some lines of inquiry that were probably missed at the time.'

Jack added:

'If I ever give up the campaign it will be to just completely stop. I will never give up. I will always come back to kick a door. I am not a surgeon so I can't go and have dinner with the prime minister, that's not going to work but as much as I possibly can, I will, I will continue to find out what I can where I can – and if I have to use the media again I will use them.'

Helen, Jack's ex-wife, developed a strategy to cope with interviews. Helen:

'*I do interviews and at the end of the interview I couldn't tell you what I've said. I concentrate on one question and one point at a time. The one thing I have learned is when people are interviewing you or talking to you is to find something to focus on, otherwise the emotions start to take over. It's just a way of blanking it, it could be a mark on the wall or something, anything but I am focussed on something.'*

While some participants avoided consuming media, as described below, some wanted to gain as much information as possible.

Patrick's strategy was to learn as much as he could about the crimes in order to help him live with what had happened to his mother-in-law. He was one of hundreds of people affected by the crimes of Harold Shipman, and told me he 'wanted to read as much as possible'. His quest for information even extended to

watching a dramatization of Shipman's crimes. Patrick: *'We wanted to know as much as possible to deal with it, that sort of thing.'*

Guided by the police, Simon also employed the tactic of holding back information to keep the story in the headlines. At the press conferences the police would sit between family members because '*they [police] didn't want us to let everything go at once. For some reason they thought it would go on a while and they tried to get us to get into that habit – which we did*.' Simon held back selected information for 'several months'.

Whether participants chose to engage with the media or not was a strategy in itself. Roger owns a family business and used his employees to shield him from the media. However, knowing that the media still wanted a reaction on a number of occasions he asked the pastor at his church to comment on his behalf because he 'didn't want to talk to the media until the trial was over.'

Jane quickly developed her own strategy for dealing with the media, to both encourage and to dissuade them. After her mother's killer Harold Shipman committed suicide she was 'bombarded with calls.' Jane couldn't recall exactly when the number of calls began to reduce:

> '*Well if I would just say a little bit, you give them [the media] something they wanted then I thought they would just go away. I think in the end it was a tactic that I took. I realised then that if I gave them a little bit that they would keep coming back – so in the end I just said no.'*

Jane added:

'At the beginning we needed the media and we had to get them on board. You would invite them into your home but then it was hard to get rid of them. I got the feeling that people would be saying 'well you invited them in now you have to deal with them.'

It was put to Jane whether people actually said she needed to deal with the consequence of engaging the media or whether it was in her imagination. Jane explained: *'Just what they are thinking… you know like with celebrities. It's a similar sort of thing.'*

Jane admitted that she used the media, adding '*we used them in the same way that they used us but it's difficult to say stop when you invite them into your life. Then it becomes old news.'*

Ben was not naïve as to how the media operated. He described how journalists were only interested in his daughter's disappearance after a couple of days. Ben said:

'When someone goes missing the media are not interested in the start, when she's gone missing. So I think it [when he first engaged with the media] was the second or third day I think it was.'

Adding: *'I had not had any problems with the media, they were okay, they always were. You know, obviously it was their job.'*

Ben was also aware that the media were just 'doing their job' despite having his photograph taken every day of his daughter's killer's trial.

He added:

> *'I knew it was going to happen like that. Each day when we arrived at court I just took it in my stride and I kept saying, and I think it was the third day when we were coming out of the hotel, I said for Christ's sake boys have you not got enough of this yesterday – but they were doing their job you know. I didn't worry. I didn't worry.'*

Ben also seemed unperturbed by the media on his doorstep.

> '*It didn't bother me, I mean a couple of times when I was coming out the door I would just say no comment, no comment – but there wasn't actually a lot we could say because that was leading up to the court case and we couldn't say much because the police weren't telling us anything.'*

Fickle world of news

'The news came through that the first bombs had been dropped in Iraq, and they were gone' - Simon

In order to implement the strategies described above, the participants needed to be able to understand the media, in particular the order of news, and what would displace their stories from the front page of national newspapers. One family member (Simon) developed a clear notion as to the reciprocal relationship with the media and the fickle nature of national news. The 25th anniversary of his daughter's disappearance coincided with the start of the Iraq war. As he explained: *'There were big aerials on the back of lorries [satellite trucks] and part way through the interviews the news came through that the first bombs had been*

dropped in Iraq, and they were gone…[laughs] in about five minutes the place was empty.. I got something and they got something out of it.'

Max had a similar experience when the pop star Michael Jackson died during the time of his sister's killer's trial. As he explained, *'I remember saying something like thank God for that, really callous, but it's taken… we're off the front page'.* Jack also shared this experience of, on the one hand needing coverage of his daughter's disappearance, and on the other being victim themselves to the news agenda. In Jack's case this became apparent as a result of a death in the Royal Family. *'Basically they [the police] were using as much protocol as they could to keep the story in the headlines at the time because the problem was it was the same weekend as the Queen Mum died and obviously that overrode everything else in the country.'*

Whilst the families' stories dominated the news agenda in the local media they found that the national media could one day carry several pages of news items about the murders and the next day nothing. The local media was more consistent with the coverage due to the fact that the families had become of interest to the local media in their own right and the reach of the newspaper was smaller. National media on the other hand carry stories from around the world and therefore the bar as to what is covered by them is higher.

Media for money

'To me that was blood money, to me that was selling my soul.'- Steve

The media can be a lucrative source of money, especially if families have lost work following their bereavement. Others, such as the McCann family, need and use funds to continue with private searches or influencing media in other ways (Allen, 2009). Some fees were also donated to charity. Steve provides a basic example of these diverse ways in which money is used:

> *I did a lot of travelling and they paid my fares. I never asked for any money, which was a good thing because once you ask for money they don't put you on [the TV news] and you lose the publicity and it was the publicity I wanted to try and find anyone who knew what had happened to [daughter]. I did get compensation.'*

When he was asked about the specific deal he had made with the *News of the World*, he maintained that '*they suggested it, they made me an offer and I took it and I gave that money, which was a lot of money to me, away.'* He was also prepared to discuss the sum involved.

> *'Ten, ten thousand, I gave all that to my kids and my grandkids and my son. I said you work it all out. They all got five hundred quid each. To me that was blood money, to me that was selling my soul. The criminal compensation, which came strangely enough from Glasgow, I kept that, but all the blood money I gave that away. But I kept the compensation because that was for my loss. I didn't realise that was quite a new thing. I was quite lucky in that respect. It would have been much better had she not died in the first place.'*

Other fees for stories featuring Steve were donated to Great Ormond Street Hospital. He explains: *'It's blood money. I am not a do gooder but at the same time I'm not a conman.'*

Steve explained that the process of being paid for an interview is not always the same:

> *'Sometimes they offer, sometimes I will ask. [He hands me a magazine] I didn't like that guy. He's a freelancer. The last time, the first time I went to visit Ben and he just walked up to me and said: 'I'm doing an article and it will be three hundred quid each – I had to chase him for the blumming money.'*

Using the media to aid justice

'We wanted our day in court, we wanted to ask questions.. that was why I did the interviews' - Patrick

Not all the killers featured in this research have been brought to justice in the conventional sense of being tried and sentenced to prison for their crimes. One of the themes which emerged was that the media can be used as a vehicle for justice. In the case of Jack the Stripper the killer has never been found but in the absence of a judge and jury the participant used the media as a way of having their stories heard. John, for example, stated:

> *'There won't be a trial or conviction. The way I see it is the only form of justice I will get is going to be the book. That to me is the only form of justice I will ever get. The only way that I feel that I can get justice from this case is by*

the way that if the book gets published…. When the book comes out for me that will be justice. It will be the only justice that I will get. There's no point in reopening the case as the characters are dead, there won't be any arrests.'

Patrick used the interest from the media as a means to establish information and answers about the death of his mother-in-law. He explained:

'I did a few interviews because we were disturbed to find that we weren't going to get our day in court, and we weren't going to get individual reports [into the deaths of all suspected victims]. It was just dissatisfactory. We wanted a day in court, we wanted to ask questions about why she was murdered by this guy and that never happened and because of that that was why I did the interviews.'

Jane, who like Patrick was affected by the crimes of Harold Shipman, also made a conscious decision to talk to the media to find answers about what had happened. She also used them to push for a public enquiry. Jane told how she used the media for her own gain: '*I was willing to talk to the press at first as we wanted to get a public enquiry.*' But then she changed her approach.

'Well it just went on and on for a very long time, at first my sister and I were willing to talk. We were open and did a lot of things, we did a lot interviews and even went on Panorama. We were happy to talk up to a point, we had done what we wanted to do and got the result we needed by getting the public enquiry so we wanted to put a close to it but it didn't stop.'

John, whose mother's killer has never been caught, came into contact with the media when an author discovered new information about his mother's death. John agreed to work with the author because he said he wants to '*see publicity that the crimes haven't been solved yet*.' But was unwilling to ask the police to reinvestigate.

John was apprehensive about what talking to the media would reveal. He said: *'You have to be mindful that this is a cold case and technically it's still open and you are treading on dangerous ground here. When it comes out there will be ramifications for the Met (Metropolitan Police)'.*

When asked what he was worried about he goes on: *'I don't trust them. I don't trust them one inch. I have lived with this all my life and all that I have is a brick wall. So I can be a bit paranoid but I have had a life of this.'* He is asked why he will not take the new findings to the police he replies*: 'I am not going to put it to them, no, hopefully with this publicity someone will look at the case and start asking questions. I am not going to take on the Met. The media can but they are a different story.'*

Jack was unhappy with the way the police were investigating the case of his daughter's disappearance. He learned that the media could help him. He explained:

> *'It was a good two years after the murder when I realised that you know, well we could use the press, it was a tool there that if we fed it the right*

questions, the right information at the time then we could get some of the answers that we would require.'

However the use of the media had its limitations and frustrations, as Jack found out.

'I still can't work out to this day that no one will publish a story that criticises the police investigation. I mean the police ran around and they have done now for nearly ten years like headless chickens. You know who to talk to, who not to talk to, erm I argued to do the interviews with [television presenter] because the case had gone very dormant, very quiet.'

Jack and Helen actively used the media to attract publicity to help find information about their daughter's killer. Helen described how she and her ex-husband created a 'media moment' around the anniversary of their daughter's death:

'Well we were the ones on the 10th anniversary, we were the ones who were putting it in the press at this time. If it weren't for us we wouldn't have got anything done this anniversary and I mean nothing would have happened. But we approached the press this time and they worked for us which was good.' She adds: *'Again this was using the press as a tool.'*

Jack*: 'We really did push it, the press did help this time, I mean they really did, they were like 'we're doing this. We're doing that' and they really did help us. They published it front page news. And it was more for us than just a story.'*

Helen*: 'Yeah, where as before they were nasty about her all the time.'*

In explaining what drove him to go to the media Jack said:

> *'We saw it [10th anniversary] as really one of the last opportunities we would get the media coverage unless something happened like the Suffolk murders again. I took the decision, and [victim's mother] supported me on it that I would go flat out for about a month and finally I would spend about ten days in Norfolk literally just kicking and pushing every door that I had contacted over the years and pulling in as much media as I possibility could.'*

Jack explained*:*

> *'It was five nights altogether. It couldn't have been better planned in a way. I think that sometimes what the media should do is when a story like that is coming up to its 10th anniversary, it would have been nice if someone had actually approached us even and said look it's the 10th anniversary – can we get together and try and do something or put something together. Where as it was totally left up to us – and as I say to the police, I just have no time what so ever for them.'*

Helen was left frustrated by the response of the police:

> *'Even the newspaper approached the police and they didn't want to comment. Well they weren't going to comment were they? Because the press contacted them and they didn't want any of it.'*

However, she was confident that the media could still help. *'One day the truth will come out, it really will. We are going to make it come out.'*

Jack explained how his feelings towards the media have changed over the years:

'I think about it [media interest] differently now than I did originally – originally I would have found it very intrusive because they were in part of my private world. How I would see it now, I would look at it and I would think well how can I use them, because anything that keeps this story going now I will support it.'

Ben was clear from the very beginning as to the importance of the media. Although he describes how the police mainly dealt with the media when his daughter disappeared, when asked if he wanted to take part in a press conference he said: *'At the end of the day we all need the media in one way or another, we need the media. And I know that in one way or another they are a shower but at the end of the day as I say we needed them.'*

After Ben was told he would not receive any money from the Criminal Injuries Board he decided to sign a contract with the *News of the World*, which in addition to providing him money provided him protection from unwanted approaches by other media.

Ben explained*:*

'I would be coming into court and they would swarm around about us and I would just walk away because I didn't want to muck up me chances of what they were going to get me. You know, and there were more offers coming about right, left and centre and they were offering more than I got from the NoW but it was never about the money. I could have gone, you know give

me six, give me nine [thousand pounds] or whatever. But it was not working that way. I was just about the court case and for it to finish.'

Media to help investigation

'We thought that it [the appeal phone line] would go on for about three days but it turned out we got calls for three months. We got 26 leads from that.' – Simon

Over the years Simon developed such an understanding of the media that he could manipulate it for his own good. Simon stated that: *'The police came to see us, to tell us that they had no more leads to investigate and my reaction was that if they ain't got no more leads then we are going to have to get them some. We launched a phone appeal that very night.'*

Simon was adept at attracting and maintaining press interest. He explained how he set up the appeal.

'We would get in touch with the press and hold a press conference and do it like that. We contacted every single national newspaper, television and radio station to say we were holding a press conference. I think at that time we held it in the village hall and when the appeal phone number went out we would just have to cope with it. We thought that it [the appeal phone line] would go on for about three days but it turned out we got calls for three months. We got 26 leads from that. Nothing ever came of them but you know. The people who phoned us up were sometimes people who had phoned the police already but had heard nothing back. The other thing we had was people coming forward who had previously been kept quiet by a

partner for example. You know their wife might have said "you don't want to be getting involved in that" and now the wife might have died and they feel they can talk about it. There were quite a few like that.'

Roger was also clear that he used the media from the onset as a vehicle to aid the investigation by appealing to the public for help. *'I think you will find some footage of us saying that whoever took our daughter if you could bring her back, or at least say where she was. And we used it to that end – and the media was very helpful in that. Particularly the television.'*

Ben also worked with the media to try and raise the profile of the case. He said: '*I never held anything back but when it was getting quiet before they found her I would say, you know can we not do this? Can we not do that? And they [reporters] would say if you want to do that then fair enough.'*

Ben actively tried to get stories in to the media. He explained how: '*I actually said to [reporter] at one stage, I said what are the chances of me phoning up and saying I have seen a man digging in the field and she could be there? To make the police go and do things and search for her.'*

In this instance Ben wanted to use the media to engage with the police, as he felt frustrated by their lack of action. He explained*: 'For years I never heard from the police. You know after she had been missing for a year and I was sitting here and going off my head and out of my head saying what the fuck happened here. How can someone just disappear out of thin air.'* In his frustration he phoned CID and

was put through to an officer who didn't know who he was. He later told a senior officer: *'I never said everyone should be looking for her but everyone should know about her.'*

Ben was clearly frustrated by both the lack of police action in the search for his daughter and the fact that his daughter was no longer in the public or police's consciousness.

Celebrity

'You feel like Princess Di' – Helen

Given the newsworthiness of serial killing and the importance of victim narrative as described earlier, the families of the victims seem to have had a 'celebrity' experience. They found that they became 'celebrities' in their own right, by association, or they could use their 'fame' for their own gain. Both Jane and Helen described how the attention from the media made them feel like 'other people', and not their true selves. When the inquiry into Jane's mother's death was moved from Manchester to London she and the other families travelled down for the opening day. She takes up the story:

> *'When we opened the door all the flashbulbs started going off and none of us were expecting that. In one-way it was like 'hey I am on the red carpet – and then you realise no that's not what I want. It can be quite a shock to find that everyone is interested. I felt like a different person – like it wasn't happening to me. I think grief is like that.'*

Jane repeatedly referred to the feeling of having a dual life and how this could make her uneasy.

> *'It's quite bizarre because there's so much going on. It's like you have stepped out of your life, you are going along a different route, you are functioning on a different level and it's very, very bizarre. You find yourself doing things that you never thought you would do – like going on TV and giving interviews. I think now how did I do that? You take on a different persona and then you have to try and get your life back when reality kicks in again. You do it because you have to. The adrenaline kicks in and it's not like yourself.'*

When asked about her experience of being photographed at court Jane replied:

> *'Yeah, you know what I mean. You feel like Princess Di, with all them people, yeah you do feel like that. You do feel like that. You think to yourself, no I don't want to do that, but at the end of the day you got to get out there, it's got to get out there.'*

Simon described how his relationship with the media had not only brought him celebrity status – but also introduced him to famous people, which he viewed positively. *'A good side of it, is all the people I have met. All the famous people I have met. I would never have met them if [daughter] hadn't gone. I would be just plodding along you know.'* He takes this further to allude to the fact he actually sees himself as famous and the disappearance of his daughter has raised him to the status of celebrity. *'That's been good that has. I say to [current girlfriend]*

sometimes when there is a publicity coming up "you've got to realise that I am bloody famous.'

Although Simon is not shy of the publicity himself, he goes on:

> *'Some of the people I have met are still famous on television and so on. It's incredible. There's one woman I can't think of her name but she had just interviewed Tony Blair…. I was interviewed by her years ago. I would like to be interviewed by her again. There are people I would like to talk to her about now, to talk to her about what it is like all these years later in comparison to what it was like when she first interviewed me.'*

Simon went on to describe other positive relationships brought about by the tragedy he has faced. For example, '*Polly Toynbee, she took me to her house and interviewed me and that was good. That was nice.'* He also talks of meeting former CNN correspondent Brent Sadler, who seemed to make an impact:

> *'He was the one who really got to me because he was so busy in Iraq you know… eventually I got him on the phone and said that I was worried about him and for him to take great care. Then later I bumped into him at the studios of breakfast TV and he was great. He was really nice and he was just about to go off to do the programme and I said hang on a minute and he said what, and I said I just want to shake your hand so I can tell people I have shaken your hand and he said bugger that I want to tell people that I have shaken your hand.'*

In this way, the loss of his daughter seems to have created for Simon interest from television personalities. It allowed him a platform to talk on television programmes; a status; credibility. Simon appeared to revel in all of this.

Patrick also describes a notion of celebrity by association: *'At one stage one of them [another victim's daughter] even went and had lunch with Princess Anne. It was that kind of notoriety of the case.*' Patrick likened his experience to one of a celebrity. He explains:

> *'There is certainly an element of that and I think that's why she [other victim's daughter] bailed out because she had family commitments... It was massive, it was just, well, the first thing I found was when I went into the paper shop and they said oh I saw you on TV last night. That kind of thing. And that was a bit weird and you just get a faint hint of what it might be like to be notorious for whatever reason.'*

When the media had served its purpose in relation to generating publicity to find his daughter, Roger turned his attention to using his celebrity to 'glorify God'. He said*:*

> *'You know, we don't like being in the limelight – but saying that one of our ambitions was that we would be able to glorify God through the whole thing. And that's what we are about now. We hoped that one-day when Black was convicted that we could use it. And now two or three times a month we do a talk in a church'.*

Roger again demonstrated his knowledge and understanding of the media, as he was well aware that a news programme would not broadcast the full interview but he explained that he was happy that he was able to promote his religion.

Max also acknowledges the notion of celebrity but said he left that element to his father. He explained*:*

> *'It could have gone that way easily, I am actually quite an extrovert and if you ask my friends I am always the one at the front, and my wife can tell you, but for me I was quite happy to sit out in the background. I can see for some people that would and again it's part of the grieving process and I guess they would grab it with both hands, and I would understand that. But my sisters and I, we just didn't feel like that at all in that way. I think perhaps my dad did feel that way because he really did use it as a crutch, as something to lean on.'*

Adding*:*

> *'I think that perhaps had I been younger when they found her, perhaps in my 20s then it would have been a similar sort of case, jumped on the band wagon, used it, not used it to your advantage but you could see how some people could be attracted to that. You get all of that, you do get all the cameras coming out and you can put yourself in the public eye.'*

Max had seen for himself, in his father's behaviour, how people could be seduced by the media and to have their moment of fame. He explained:

'You're like in a whole era now where people want to be famous to have their piece on the telly. Yeah you can see why it would attract some people, you know the difference for me and my personal situation was the distance between her going missing and being found, it was by and large that I have dealt with it now. I have gone through it, all the bad bits and the good bits and the in between bits. So that was all done and you know you don't move on, you never move on, you know every day I think about her and you just deal with it I think.'

It is also important to note that Max, while not in relation to his own celebrity felt that the coverage was important to the memory of his sister. When talking about how he would type her name in to an Internet search engine and see it linked to her killer. He said*: 'In a bizarre kind of way it's quite nice that she is still there and her name is remembered in some way even though that is attached to it.'* When talking about the publicity surrounding the end of the case he added: *'You get a chance to say, and you know um for her to be remembered in the public perception if you like.'*

MEDIA AS PARIAH

Negative experiences of the dealing with the media

'*You can't have your cake and eat it.*' – Roger

Despite the benefits outlined above, the families all experienced negative effects of liaising with the media. However, many were aware of the consequences that

engaging with the media would bring. Negative experiences ranged from fleeting moments of discomfort to intrusion tantamount to stalking.

Roger summed up this notion when he described his relationship with the media as '*You can't have your cake and eat it.*' Roger explained that he understood that strong headlines and sensationalism sold newspapers and that this understanding led to what he described as a near 'perfect' relationship.
Roger seemed pleased with how he had dealt with the media*: 'I think that we almost got it perfect and I mean that. I am not saying that is a plus to us – as it is a plus to them as well – because they were very sensitive to our, our problems.'*

Helen's experience on the other hand was not so positive*:*

> *'I think the press will always be after the number one story that no one else has got. And while they are going for their glory they will tread and walk over anyone else who gets in their way. And at times I think everyone wants to remember that it is human beings they are involved with and not a fictional character that comes out on the screen like Homer Simpson, and next week it's a new series. People like me, and [mother] we live this day in and day out and it never ever goes away.'*

The negative experiences of the participants in relation to their contact with the media were diverse and far-reaching but could be grouped into seven themes. These themes were:

False hopes

'Immediately I think it could be [daughter]. Friends often have to calm me down' – Simon

Steve, Simon and Jack all shared their experience of the media giving them 'false hope' in relation to their daughters' deaths. This was either when a body was found which could have been their loved one, or that the police were close to an arrest. When Steve was asked how he felt about the press getting in touch because a body has been found he replied*: 'There was relief that it wasn't [daughter]. You don't want to accept that she is dead. No one wants to accept that their child is dead.'*

Simon shared this anxiety at seeing reports of other bodies being found and of people talking about his daughter being dead. Particularly painful was the discovery of human remains found at the Queen's Sandringham Estate in Norfolk (Quinn, 2012). Simon explained:

> *'It was a bit hard to handle that one because we didn't' even know it was a boy or a girl because they just said human remains, they said that it had been there a while, when it came down to it, it hadn't really. Not years and years and I thought – why do they give this stupid information out really.' 'Immediately I think it could be [daughter]. Friends often have to calm me down. I don't mean I get angry but I sometimes have to come back to reality over it. It is hard there's no doubt about it. I have been waiting 30 years for*

something to crop up and I wonder nowadays if I will live long enough for that to happen.'

Jack also had his hopes falsely raised by the media.

He described how news reports of serial murders were disturbing, and one in particular:

'One of the worst incidents of all was when the Steve Wright murders were going ahead in Ipswich. I wasn't reading the papers; it was a reporter from the Mirror who rang me up and told me that Steve Wright was about to be charged with the murder of [daughter]. Um and afterwards I found out there was no truth it in it at all. Fortunately I knew another reporter who was down there at the time and I rang him straight away and I said what is happening down there. And his reply was to just ignore it. It was someone who is trying to get a story before the event. He said it was in case they do charge him; she would have the story already. There was no truth in it what so ever and that to me was devastating to think that someone in that situation could try and take advantage of you and er from then onwards I was being very selective and very cautious as to who I talked to and who I didn't talk to.'

At time of writing Steve Wright remains uncharged with the girl's murder. However, the question from the reporter clearly raised hopes and caused anxiety. It is impossible to establish whether at the time the reporter falsely

believed a charge was imminent – or whether she was just trying to get ahead of a potential scoop.

Errors

'They make things up, they report things, they made things up about [daughter] that were utter rubbish.' – Helen

The data showed that both factual errors in reporting and words being taken out of context during interviews had negative effects on the participants. Roger had considerable experience of this before he adapted his strategy for dealing with the media.

The media were quick to contact Roger after news broke that his daughter was missing. He explained:

> *'When [daughter] went missing the media were quickly there. There's a lot of old footage of that. We were very quickly thrust into the media and we quickly learned that they never write down what you said. They would write it down but maybe in a different way, swap sentences, put a sentence you actually say but put it in a different area so that it looks different, you could never deny saying it, so we quickly learned that wasn't all that easy.*
>
> *'Being interviewed on the television wasn't as bad because you are speaking but they would cut a lot of what you say out but saying that some of the papers didn't really say what you had said.'*

Not having the interview used in full and being taken out of context was particularly difficult for Roger.

He explained:

> *'It firstly made me quite upset. I remember one comment was made when a member of the press said to me, you know it could be one of your neighbours and I said something like "yeah suppose it could be" and then in the press that night was "family suspect" you know it wasn't as graphic as that but it was like "family suspect it could be a neighbour" and it was very upsetting, because it wasn't what I meant, but I couldn't deny having said that it could be a neighbour.*
>
> *'And then when the trial was over I made a comment on the news that if Black doesn't know, or come to an understanding of forgiveness with Jesus Christ, he could actually burn in hell and the suns headline was "Father says Black will burn in hell" with a picture of me as I was coming out of court, as I had been pointing for the rest of the family to go over to the press – but they took the rest of the family out of the photograph. It just had me standing pointing and it looked like me saying "burn in hell" you know. That's how they constructed and made the thing, it was devious, it was horrible and someone actually said to me you know that they complained to the Sun for that, and that I hadn't said it that was. The press want headlines and that's what sells papers, headlines, and I came to that understanding very quickly.'*

Despite being clearly upset by the report, Roger was appeased by a more positive headline. He appeared to have a tally, or score sheet, of positive and negative coverage.

He went on:

> '*The Sun upset me this time but they did score some points at a later date when they put a really good headline in it. About [daughter] it was really good. And I have kept that Sun actually because of it.'*

Again Roger's religious beliefs were apparent when he told how he was then pleased with coverage in the *Sun*. He explained: *'Well they spoke very nicely about [daughter] and the family and they actually said that she had been saved when she was seven years of age – and coming from a paper like the Sun that was something else.'*

John's experience of the media was made more complex by the fact that he too was searching via the media for the truth of what happened to his mother.

When asked whether the problem was not so much that there was coverage, but that the coverage was not correct he replied: *'Yes, myths had been created about this case, which were rubbish. What I have discovered is the truth, there maybe things that are not accurate but they are more accurate than what I knew before.'*

Whilst Jane told how the media did not take anything she said out of context she did feel that she was denied an opportunity to come back to comments she had made surrounding the level of compensation. The misunderstanding was played out in the media and Jane '*never had the opportunity to come back on it'* and *'felt*

that was a bit naughty.' Simon felt so strongly about errors written about his daughter that he wrote a book to set the record straight, as discussed above.

Helen's primary negative experience was about errors she had read about her daughter in the media, and she accused the media of fabricating stories. In her own words: *'They make things up, they reported things, they made things up about [daughter] that were utter rubbish, where they got those things I do not know, when she died she was living with me, it was just made up stories.'* Helen was referring to stories about her daughter being a prostitute at the time of her murder. She described the effect on the rest of her family.

She explained:

> *'Well really bad because my grand kids will be reading it as well and it is going to be like that for all time now. And I mean that's it. That made me feel as if well, it made me feel really bad, they just wanted a sense of what do you call it. They just wanted a sense of… well they made it ten times worse.'*

Jack felt aggrieved by what he felt was the misrepresentation of the story and of his perceived manipulation of news reports. In his handling of the situation Jack shows great insight into how the media works. During a live interview he said he took a dislike to the interviewer.

Jack explains:

> *'Instead of it being about the girls and what happened, it became more of a focus on him. And part way through the programme he turned around and*

said to me 'you see I worked on your daughter's case and I feel I was impressed as to how things went.' And I told him that he couldn't have been that good because no one was ever arrested… and his face turned to blue thunder and there was a lot of hoo-harring because it went out live, so they couldn't edit it out. It was just me, I just suddenly dropped this lot in the middle of it and just thought no I'm not going to sit here. This is not a glory trail for this person or for any single reporter. This is actually real life and it affects lots of people. What I am saying is they [the media] pick up what they want, not what we want, what they want.'

Patrick also felt that a television news interview was edited so as to not represent his true feelings and that he was therefore misrepresented. As such, his plan to use the media to get his message out was not realised.

He explains:

'The whole point of me going on at that time was we wanted to get over this point, that all of us there on that day were very, very dissatisfied that we hadn't had our day in court. We wanted to give a message and it never came out. We never had a… in retrospect we could have gone seeking interviews and saying look this is what we want to say but it never happened like that. It was, bear in mind that you come to a situation where you bury a loved one and you are still coming to terms with the enormity of what you are involved in. I mean it's the equivalent, it's like a mini holocaust, isn't it? I mean it's incredible.'

However, he still believes he has some command over the media coverage.

Adding: *'I think we have been very wary as to what we have said to people. My wife was concerned about me talking to you but you told me this was for an academic paper and you gave me this [consent form outlining no news access] but we can understand how they can just pluck a sentence out and use that as a headline and I think you know you only have to look at the red tops and see how things get twisted.'*

Absence of interest

' I felt defeated. Well I did anyway because how I see it there was nobody carrying on trying to find out who killed [daughter].' – Jack

Through the experiences of Simon, Patrick and Jack it became clear that whilst the participants responded negatively to some media coverage, they also felt disappointment when the media interest waned. In addition, Simon was personally let down by a journalist he had agreed to meet. He described one occasion when he travelled to London to meet a journalist who wasn't then available. However, the main issue Simon has with the media is when he is promised media coverage and the story doesn't appear:

> *'I can think of many times when we have desperately wanted publicity and it ain't been there. Or even when they have said that they were going to do it and they don't do it. That can be pretty shattering when you have something really great and they don't put it in the paper.'*

This notion of 'really great' is interesting because it is as if Simon is now so comfortable with the grammar of news that he feels he has the ability to spot a good news story. Simon goes on:

> *'That's happened on quite a few occasions and I don't think it's us getting excited about it, probably it's people speaking out of turn when they don't have the authority to say that. I think it has possibly got more people than it used to be. It used to be terrible.'*

Simon goes on to explain what he means by terrible:

> *'There were a couple of um and they would grip hold of something and they would pester you about it and then when you looked in the paper there weren't anything there that you told them about. You can't exactly go round all the shops and collect all the papers and burn them can you? Although I felt like it a few times.'*

The case of Dr Harold Shipman attracted media coverage from across the world but Patrick felt that had the crimes had happened in the home counties there would have been even more coverage.

Patrick expands*: 'All you got was people, particularly southern based news organisations who thought, ohh well it's up north.'*

Patrick believes that this attitude was reflected in the media coverage, a view shared by his father who dismissed the case as '*well it's a northern doctor and it's just euthanasia and that's it.*' Patrick believed that had Shipman killed in southern England the level of media coverage would have been very different.

> *'It would have been absolutely astronomical. You would have feature films with you know Curtis directing them. You know it's just gone now, no one down there cares a monkeys about it now. I mean even when Shipman killed himself. There was the initial, but I didn't see… they were more concerned about the fact that he had killed himself and whether his family would get a pension.'*

In addition to the level of coverage, Patrick thought that the type of media outlet interested would also have been different. He explained:

> *'I would have liked to have seen more coverage in the sort of serious newspapers. It was like I mean the Sun and Mirror and Star, they are obviously going to focus on the more lurid aspects of it but I certainly never read any serious discussion about it. There were two or three books on it but again they never really came to terms with it. It's all just been shovelled away now. It was almost as if the James Bolan thing [TV drama], it was almost as if someone wanted to draw a line under it. It certainly wasn't a considered view. We were asked to a meeting, where we were told there was a film in the offing and they casted it. Someone must have thought – we are going to strike while the iron is hot and get it going.'*

Patrick described how he felt "relatively lucky" because they didn't have children to see the coverage and frustrated that he thought the public moved on too quickly. He explained:

> '*They [the public] think that it was a little, or local incident. Even now there is some sort of sloppy journalism, well it might not be sloppy, they only have so much footage of him but every time his name comes up they show the same clip of him walking towards the camera with a waistcoat on. We see people in the street that look like that and have to double take.'*

The case of Harold Shipman received world-wide media attention, both during his arrest and trial and the subsequent public enquiry. Although not necessarily true in this instance, Patrick's perception of regionally biased media coverage corresponds with previous research about interest in serial murder that news media in the UK is often London-centric (Wilson et al., 2010).

Despite feeling angry with the media camped outside his house, Jack expressed negative feelings when the media were no longer interested in his daughter's disappearance. When asked how he felt when the media interest died away his response was '*defeated.'* He thought that because the media had lost interest there was no one carrying on the hunt for who killed his daughter.

Intrusion into Grief and Stigma

'BBC were climbing over the wall with cameras.' - Simon

All of the participants experienced intrusion into their grief, either physically or mentally. Perhaps the most direct and extreme experience of physical intrusion was felt by Simon, when reporters attempted to enter his property without his permission in the hope of securing an interview.

Simon explained how he was conducting an interview in his back garden when he was interrupted by a rival news team.

> *'Our garden had a wall around it, probably eight feet high at least, and the BBC were climbing over the wall with cameras. That was getting a bit hmmm… If they had waited we would have done an interview with them but they thought we had given the interview to ITV – so that's why they behaved so disgustingly.'*

When describing how that made him feel, he added: *'Dreadful, dreadful, we had to abandon the interview.'* Interestingly, Simon described the negative impact being the disruption to the interview as opposed to his private space being invaded. But the level of intrusion was ever present. He added: *'At one stage they [the media] wouldn't leave us alone. You couldn't even pee without them wanting to write about it.'*

For Roger, it is not only the physical intrusion of the media representatives but also the intrusion of opening the newspaper, or turning on the television and seeing something about his daughter or her killer that he was not expecting.

A simple phone call could have alleviated this. Roger explained: *'Would you believe that it's the most annoying thing that no one would have the courtesy to ring me from the media. It would be just lovely if someone lifted the phone and said "look I am ringing to warn you that something is on today'.*

Roger described how he felt the media would print stories about the development of the case and use his daughter's picture without his consent. He and his family would often have to rely on friends and neighbours notifying them to avoid the newsagents. With the advent of new technology the family now has a more sophisticated method of detection.

Roger explains:

> *'Now [son] has a very good system on his phone so that every time Black's name comes up in the press it brings an alarm up… so any time it comes up [Black's name] in the press we buy the paper and see what it says.'*

John's concern is that details about his mother's past and subsequent murder will interfere with the privacy of his life now. John explained:

> *'If I have my picture in the paper people are going to know about it. They are going to know about me, they are going to know that my mother was a prostitute.'*

Jack and Helen also felt this stigma about their daughter. Jack felt particularly strongly about the references to his daughter's sex work: *'The thing that gets me about the press is that if [daughter] had been a solicitor they won't have called her*

a solicitor they would have called her by her name – so why is that when someone is a prostitute they have to call her a prostitute.' Helen agreed: '*Why bring that up when there's no need to?'*

Jack, referencing a local paper campaign slogan (Star, 2009) added: *'Yeah, because at the end of the day every one of those girls is somebody's daughter.'*
Helen was concerned about the impact the publicity would have on her and her family. She declined any interviews until almost ten years after her daughter's disappearance. Helen explained*:*

> *'Well because I was living there, in Norwich, literally near enough to where it took place and my job was in retail so I was there like a little goldfish bowl and everyone finding out that would be it. That would be like, that would be like the paparazzi rushing in, that would be like everyone coming in. I didn't want that. I didn't want everyone to know. I mean that would be the worst thing and it wouldn't be fair on my employers neither. People coming in and that, that's what I was worried about going back to work. That we would get the press in, like I said it was only around the corner.'* Instead Jack took the press conferences and as a result the media turned up at his door.

Jack added: *'I had two or three of them knocking at my door!'* When asked how he felt about the intrusion into his privacy Jack's first reaction was anger. He went on:

> *'At first I was angry and annoyed about it, particularly with one who had been waiting there all day. He frightened the life out of the old lady across*

the road because she thought he was hanging around to break into her house. But it felt intrusive. I mean they could have easily just have popped a card through the door and said contact us or whatever like, but to actually find someone physically sat on your doorstep waiting, I mean it happened three or four times.'

Intrusion from the media did not confine itself solely to the physical presence of reporters but also the unexpected intrusion of news stories about loved ones. Helen described how she stumbled across an interview her former partner had given about their daughter's death without her knowledge. She said: '*I walked around the square and there was this front page with my daughter's picture on. I didn't know nothing was going on… I just walked straight in to it.'*

Jack, her former partner gave his version of events*: 'I didn't know it was going out that quickly, I had only done the interview a matter of hours before and had been lead to believe it was going out the next day, and it didn't, they put it out the same day so I didn't have time to warn anyone.'*

Helen replied: *'That nearly killed me that did.'*

Whilst Patrick was not personally affected so much by the media attention he described how his wife felt 'intimidated' by the media intrusion.

He explained that the journalists and the number of cameras were the most intimidating. *'That was kind of weird for a lot of people. My wife found it very*

intimidating I have to admit for me it was like being in a court room again, and having studied law I was interested in the mechanics of it all.'

After using the media to get the public enquiry she wanted into the death of her mother, Jane was then unable to remove herself from the media spotlight.

Jane explained:

> *'There were endless phone calls when anything else came up. Things like new medical guidelines would come up and people would call me up as if I know anything about them. It wasn't everyday, but we get these phone calls and it got difficult. And that was it for my sister. She asked for her name to be taken off the list [of families willing to talk to the media]. My sister couldn't deal with the phone calls and then I didn't want them.'*

Jane wasn't prepared for the story to hit the news again, when Shipman took his own life, and declined any more media. Jane explained: *'We didn't do any interviews then. It was a really horrible time. It wasn't the outcome that we wanted. I know some people wanted it.'*

Although the press did not give up and contacted Jane and her family repeatedly: '*Yes that was quite hard to deal with. It was hard to be bombarded with people phoning – we wanted to be on our own. Every time it rakes it back up and it is difficult to deal with. We had to be firm and say we didn't want to give interviews.'*

The case of Max differed from the others in the fact that his father engaged with the media and took the pressure off other family members. However although Max found the contact with journalists to be 'very, very respectful' he informed

his children's school that there may be press interest. Max described his father's role:

> *'My dad was the media whore, he wanted to do all of that [media interviews] and they were totally respectful of that from day one. Obviously we went down to the Margate house after they [the police] had identified the body and again they [the media] were great. There was a lot of print reporters there, a lot of news reporters and they just, you know, we got out of the car and there was a really respectful silence and you just hear the shutters on the cameras going sch, sch, sch, sch, and that was it.'*

The impact of the relationship with the media following serial murder is profound according to Ben. He explained that after his daughter's killer was sentenced to life imprisonment he thought the relationship was '*over and done with'.*

However he was told by the investigating officer:

> *'It doesn't matter if you go home, speak to your wife, and put it out of your minds but the media will be outside the door when the least little thing comes up. They will be right at your door. So he says at that time, he says we [the police] think that Peter Tobin has got many more skeletons in his cupboard. He said that there are some, and it's been proved cos they have been digging down there and digging up here, you know and the media was coming to me about what do you think about this you know. That's what he was saying – until the day you die, it will be with you all that time. It's a rotten situation to be in he says but it's the way it is.'*

This, however, has created some resilience in Ben, so he is not affected by unexpected items about his daughter, or her killer in the news. Ben added:

> *'The newspapers have been good that way, they have actually phoned up to tell me there's going to be a bit in the paper – but that never worried me because I am prepared for it now. I have lived through it all and I have done it all. There's nothing nobody could tell me now that would worry me. I have said to the police I want to know everything about Tobin. Especially the day that he dies.'*

Trauma

> *'I mean it was like she was murdered all over again*.' – Helen

Four of the participants spoke of physical and mental distress as a direct result of either their interaction with the media, or the reporting around their daughters' deaths.

Despite Steve embracing the media, his family do not share his enthusiasm.
When asked what his family think about his willingness to engage in news interviews Steve replied:

> *'They have told me to get out of it. My son says "it's going to fucking kill you." And he's right. I did get out to a certain extent, he said "dad you're not getting any younger. You're 71, you're getting old." I said don't you dare say I'm getting old.'*

When asked why he thought it would kill him, he went further: '

> *'Because he knows it upsets me. It might not show but he knows how I am feeling. Since his mother was killed…… he knows when I am upset.'* [Steve lost his wife to a car crash before his daughter's murder]

Roger also shared his experience of when he was first thrust into the media spotlight. Roger:

> *'Life was just stunned. You know honestly even remembering a lot of it. I can't remember a lot of it because I was just stunned, absolutely stunned. If you came home one day and your daughter was missing it is a stunning occasion. I certainly remember talking to the TV and talking to reporters but when I'd seen some of the comments I very quickly stopped talking to them. I gave the odd television interview but I became very shy after that. Many people had asked me to appear on radio shows and things I just totally refused and said no I can't.'*

For Helen, the link between her daughter's murder and the more recent case of the Suffolk Strangler murders in Ipswich in the media was particularly distressing.

Helen: *'I mean it was like she was murdered all over again.'*

Helen, along with her ex husband Jack, contacted the police but received no support. Helen added*:*

'I think that makes it harder to deal with, the fact that you get that feeling that well they [the police] don't really care. But as you say every time something like this happens it does bring it all back. I don't know. I feel it for the parents, that someone else is going through all the hurt that we went through.'

Jack continued:

'It is something that never goes away. It doesn't actually get easier over time, it just gets deeper. I think the Ipswich murders were the worst. It was so hard to cope with and then with the links going on that were in the press and whether there were really links there or there wasn't links there you don't know because the only information we got was from media.'

Celebrity of killer

'I would say he is now more famous than his victims.' – Roger

Three of the participants spoke of their particular discomfort at how the media associated their daughters with the killer and serial killers in general. This corresponds with the notion that the media is fascinated by serial killers – often to the detriment of the voices of the victims' families being heard.

Roger explained: *'I don't want the media to be talking about me or about my daughter but I would prefer that they wouldn't sensationalise Black, because Black is evil.'* Roger goes on to describe his daughter's killer as 'hugely famous' adding: *'I would say he is now more famous than his victims.'* Roger described what Black had done.

'The thoughts of what that man had done would come out of his mouth and he thought there was no harm in it. And he is going to be sensationalised like Adolf Hitler. Probably more people have heard of Adolf Hitler than people who have done good.'

Simon shares this experience: *'When ever [daughter's] picture is in the paper Black is on the same page. Or it works the other way around and her picture is there when they are writing about him.'* Describing how that made him feel, Simon added: *'Horrible, I don't like that. We don't see why he should be put on the same page. He has changed his appearance so much he doesn't look like him anyway.'*

When asked about what it is like seeing her mother's killer in the news because of his notoriety Jane replied:

'It is horrible to this day when very occasionally they'll show a picture of him and it will be like argghh – that short intake of breath and you are flooded back with it all. They can't tell you they are going to use it. It's like now when I talk to people, because people don't know us down here [Jane moved from the area where her mother was killed to a remote village because of all the publicity] and it will be brought up in conversation. It will always be there.'

Hierarchy of victims

'It was almost as if the fact that our loved ones had been killed didn't carry as much weight.' - Patrick

One finding is unique to the case of Harold Shipman, and the large number of victims that he killed. However, whilst unique to Shipman it is worth nothing that there is for one participant a perceived hierarchy of victims.

Patrick felt that the first victims to be identified, whose cases where tried at Manchester Crown Court, were seen as more significant than those identified in the later enquiry. He and his wife were invited to the opening of a memorial garden at three o'clock in the afternoon but when they got there it was finished. He described how there had been a photocall for one or two of the original families (those whose case was heard at court) and local dignitaries.

Patrick explained:

> *'They had their pictures taken and opened the gardens and then buggered off. I mean we were invited but it was kind of like being invited to a cup final and being told by the way you can get there at quarter to five, and then it will be over. I mean it still rankles. I mean there was an element of, I don't know perhaps I am doing them a disservice but there was an original five that were tried that those families were almost like, they were more bereaved so to speak.'*

Although Patrick was unsure whose view this was when he was asked who might have considered the original 15 as the most bereaved. Patrick replied*:*

> *'Good point, humm, I don't know. It used to wind me up. Sometimes when I saw them. There used to be invariably a top table and they used to be on the top table, or one or two of them [families of victim's whose cases were tried]*

would be. There was one guy, I can't remember his name and would be very chummy with them all, he would be the one talking to the MPs and all this kind of business. And the rest of us were the rank and file and the riff raff and it was almost as if the fact that our loved ones had been killed didn't carry as much weight.'

He conceded that this was not evident in the reporting of the case by the media. Jane also referenced the fact that her mother wasn't part of the original prosecution. She said that 'luckily she wasn't' and so the media did not use her photograph.

A town in mourning

It is also important to note that – unlike the other relatives interviewed - the families of the victims of Harold Shipman's crimes did not seek out the media as therapy. Perhaps this was because they were able to seek support so easily from each other. Throughout Patrick's interviews there was a feeling of group support. He talks of *'stepping up to talk to the media'* as there was *'one old woman and another old chap who couldn't articulate how they felt.*' He went on to describe a group meeting: '*There was one chap whose wife had died and he stood up to say something and he just broke down and we never saw him again. I imagine he wouldn't have lasted long after. He was absolutely distraught. It was so difficult because it was a whole town. Either you had lost a family member or you knew someone who had and in some cases you knew several people who had been murdered by him.'*

CHAPTER 7

Introduction

This chapter distils the themes which emerged in the research and explores their implications and relevance for practice. As existing literature into the experiences of secondary victims of serial homicide is extremely limited it looks at the distinctions and similarities with single homicide survivors. It also discusses the implications of the digital revolution and considers how the experiences of victims' families may be different in the future. Most importantly, it reveals just how unique this subset of grievers are, and that whilst it is possible to draw on knowledge relating to single homicide, this research offers a rare glimpse into the experiences of serial homicide survivors. After all, the majority of academic studies have centred on the serial killer, and while more recently work on the victim and society is emerging, the stories of co-victims are rarely heard.

This chapter begins by discussing what can be learnt from single homicide survivors and goes on to re-examine the research question: How do families experience their relationship with the media following the death of a loved one to serial murder? It then refines the theories which arose during the analysis of the ten interviews. It also draws on information from a reflexive diary, which was maintained throughout the research, and on other personal reflections.

The chapter is spilt into subsections, each outlining the findings and examining how the research question and the aims of the research have been answered. These aims, as laid out in Chapter 1, were to:

* Show an understanding of the strategies families of serial murder victims adopt and how they cope with media contact following the death of a relative to serial murder.

* Investigate the importance of victim narrative in news reporting.

Single v serial

The experiences of people who have lost their loved ones to serial or single homicide have similarities. All murder is sudden, ugly and unnatural. The perpetrator is also most likely to be male, regardless of whether the killing is a single act of homicide or a pattern. If the killer is found, both serial and single murderers will embark upon the same legal system, be tried by their peers and may very well be held in the same prison.

Another similarity is that at the moment of murder, the lives of the victims, the people who love them, and the killer all become intrinsically linked as Rock notes:

> *'Victims and murderers are set against one another in constant juxtaposition, Survivors observed that the victim and survivor had no choice, but that the killer could choose; the victim is dead, but the killer lives; the victim has no future, but the killer does, there are numerous charities and organisations devoted to the offender, but almost none to the victim and the survivors; offenders are protected whilst victims are not; and*

the offender may serve a life sentence but so does the survivor in his or her life-long grief,' (Rock:1998:104).

A single and serial homicide both leave a victim and, in most cases, a surviving relative who will grieve for their loss. But is that where the similarities end?

Personal grief cannot be compared. The level of one person's pain is their individual experience. But just as single homicide survivors felt inadequately supported in a bereavement group of parents who had lost their children to illness, do those affected by serial murder feel they are different? There are no distinct groups for serial homicide survivors to attend, so it is not possible to investigate further at this stage.

Also, most singular homicides occur between people who have known each other for some time. In the case of male victims, as Brookman (2015) observes, for example, the killer is often a male friend or acquaintance who kills them in the street, following alcohol consumption and most likely with a knife. Women are most likely to die at the hands of a current or former lover, in a house.

In the case of serial murder, the victims are marginally more likely to be women, but are often not intimately known to their killers. The notion of 'victim precipitated' murder (Brookman 2015) is also more difficult to apply. When the victim throws the first punch then ends up dead in a pub brawl it is easy to see how he could have contributed to his demise. But an accident of birth leading

someone to fall into one of the categories identified by Wilson (2008) is less easy to accept.

The other difference is the fact that research into single homicide perpetrators tends to concentrate on explanations for the death, as opposed to the intent and psychological make up of the killer. Male-on-male violence is described as a consequence of protecting honour or pride. Domestic violence deaths explained by the fact that the man was afraid his partner would leave him, or that she had disrespected him in some way (Brookman 2015). Contract killers usually do it for the money (Nomokonov and Shulga, 1998).

These explanations offer a reason and protect the balance of an ordered world. As such, they provide a form of comfort. Research into serial murder on the other hand has been dominated by the killers' psychopathy. Serial killers have become demonised in both the media and in academic research (Seltzer, 1998). It makes serial murder senseless. The other major difference is the longevity of grief due to the fact the victim is one of many. Rock (1998) describes how families become career grievers. In single homicide cases the police investigation, court case and ultimate closure are linear and relatively simple barring any miscarriages of justice. With serial murder, as illustrated in this thesis that is rarely the case. A number of participants spoke of the anguish of fresh emotional turmoil when their daughters were featured in the media in relation to another killing. In the case of Steve, his grief was prolonged because his daughter's trial was stalled because her killer was being tried for another murder.

The fact that serial killing is rare also means that serial murder survivors are asked to comment on other cases or pieces of legislation, extending their 'griever career'. Perhaps the most distressing difference is when a survivor's loved one has been linked to a serial case but their body has yet to be found. In this instance, as this thesis has revealed, there is often therefore media speculation surrounding the death each time a body is discovered linking the find to the survivor's loved one. In the latter stages of this research it emerged that serial killer Levi Bellfield (For more details see Wansell 2011) may have killed further victims. The widespread press coverage sparked new interest in the crimes and the family of one victim, Milly Dowler, were forced to issue a statement to the media, as they wanted the public to know what Bellfield had done. The statement ended: '*Now we know the final hours of Milly's life, perhaps her soul, at long last, can finally rest in peace. The general public have always played a huge part in supporting us, for which we are eternally grateful and thankful,'* (BBC 2016). Had Bellfield committed the single case of homicide it is unlikely the murder, or the family, would have re-emerged as of interest to the media. This recent media coverage, as with the media attention paid to participants in this study, has prevented the families from ending their careers as grievers. This research builds on Rock's (1998:) findings by suggesting that talking about their experiences, in therapy as in the case of Rock's research, or in the media as in the case of this research 'freezes them as survivors,' (1998:331).

These differences show just how unique the experience is for survivors of serial homicide, and the importance of research which seeks to explore these

differences. They expand on Rock's (1998) theory that bereavement is experienced differently by homicide survivors, and differently again by serial homicide survivors. The findings also support Rock's findings that the fear and self-blame were amplified by the loss of control of losing a family member to homicide. Ben described how he felt helpless because his daughter wanted to travel home on the bus alone on the night of her murder – and after the deaths all the participants described wanting to help in some way, perhaps compensating for not being able to prevent the murders of their own children.

The next section returns to the research question and asks how families experienced the media.

How do families experience their relationship with the media?

'I knew the message I wanted to get out there, also over the time I learnt how to word things to get what I wanted.' – Jack

The ethics surrounding journalism practice have been making headlines of their own over the last decade. The Leveson Enquiry and the trial of former *Sun* newspaper editor Rebekah Brookes (Keeble and Mair, 2012) have in particular cast a shadow over the industry (Petley, 2012, Cohen-Almagor, 2014). With the public perception of journalism being one of the least trustworthy professions[4] - and the importance of newsworthiness of victim narrative in crime reporting - it would be easy to assume that the media's interaction with families would be purely extractive.

[4] http://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Polls/Veracity2011.pdf

However, this research challenges the assumption that the media has only a detrimental effect on families of victims of serial murder and shows that the participants all experienced a positive element to their relationship with the media. Participants described how the media helped them in a number of ways. This positive interaction ranged from the practical assistance of attending a court hearing and having accommodation paid for as described by Steve, Simon and Ben, to the therapeutic benefits of having someone to talk to as outlined by Steve, Max and Ben. The media also helped to create leads for the police to follow -as described by Jack - and the ability to keep the story in the public eye until a killer was found, as in Ben's case.

The research also showed the negative impact of dealing with the media. This was most graphically expressed when Simon described the physical intrusion of a BBC television crew who jumped over the wall into his back garden in an attempt to secure an interview. So too Jane discussed the intrusions of the media constantly telephoning her. There were also what might be called 'emotional intrusions', such as when Helen unexpectedly stumbled across a photograph of her daughter in the paper. This emotional intrusion could last for a very long time, and it was Ben's realisation that he will be forever in the media spotlight until the day he, or his daughter's killer, Peter Tobin, dies.

The fact that relatives experienced some positive benefits of having a relationship with the press is counter intuitive to popular understanding of the media, but not surprising in itself. The media has long been used to assist the

police in tracking down missing persons and hunting for those suspected of criminal activity. The police also invest a huge amount of resources into media relations (Mawby, 2012) . London's Metropolitan Police Service, the largest force in the country, for example, has a £10m communications budget, and in total all UK police forces spend more than £34m on media and public relations (Turvill, 2015). However, what is noteworthy from what has been discussed above is the emergence of the idea of media as therapy and the negative experience associated with the withdrawal of media interest. This is explored in more detail below.

Media as therapy explored

'It's a therapeutic thing' - Simon

The emergence of the finding of 'media as therapy' was both explicit in the text of the interviews and in the interpretation and experience of the interviews from the perspective of the interviewer. The data showed participants were explicit in the way the media has helped them through their grief. As Steve said of his relationships with journalists: '*I think it is to some extent. It's a therapeutic thing,* and added: *'They are better than psychiatrists'*. He outlined that media interviews, and even the research interview, provided him with 'company' and someone to 'talk to about the subject'. Not only were the media providing company to a lonely widower but they also showed an interest in the subject matter. *'You want to listen, how often does that happen in life?'* Steve explained.

This finding, which emerged from the conversation with Steve, was triangulated by the interview with his son Max. Max was very clear that his father 'used'

journalists as 'an emotional crutch'. This was consistent with notes taken during the field research. In February 2011 he sent increasingly frequent text messages about his frustrations with the local authority over the creation of a memorial garden for his daughter. The messages often included copies he sent to the council; he did not ask for my help, but merely to share his frustration, with the inference being that he was 'off-loading' to a 'friend'.

Simon also clearly wanted to talk about the loss of his daughter, something his family have been reluctant to encourage. The media, even decades after her disappearance, has seemingly been providing him with company and someone to listen to him. The widower treated the interview like a night out. He drank wine and appeared to make an occasion of it. At times revelling in the attention, playing up his experiences of how comfortable he was associating with the media. Like Steve he also behaved as if his meeting with me was a social engagement, something to be savoured.

On June 9 2012 Simon texted me saying that he had been in hospital to have three teeth extracted. I noted in my reflexive diary that he had become "very needy" in terms of the level of contact he was seeking. Ben was also explicit in his desire to talk. As he explained: *'Talking you know is good, talking about it is a good thing, you know I think if you bottle it up it makes it worse, that's my opinion.'*

Ben's comments about not wanting to talk to his friends are also consistent with research that suggests that following trauma people often become isolated from their community (Herbert and Dunkel-Schetter, 1992). Ben didn't want to speak

to his friends about his daughter's death. He compared the scenario to watching the same soap opera every night, and said he didn't want them to become 'sick of it.' His relationship with the media was different however. The reporters were actively trying to seek out conversations about his daughter, actively probing for Ben's views and opinions. They were giving Ben a voice, allowing his story and his daughter's story to be told, in an environment where all too often the discourse is about the killers rather than the victims and their families. This theme is reflected in all the participants' experiences at some point in their 'story'. Each participant sought out the environment where they could talk about what they had experienced and have their voices heard.

All the participants who described how the media had helped them therapeutically were men – and as a result there needs to be further research as to the gender dynamic of talking. Do the women affected have their needs to talk satisfied by their female communities – are men bound by the stereotypes of masculinity and need to talk but find an outlet more difficult to come by, especially if there is a macho aversion to therapy? (Meth and Pasick, 1991).

Fullerton et al. (2000: 259) found that more females attended debriefing sessions following traumatic events than males. The notion that women may seek professional help, or have natural debriefing sessions by talking to family and friends, and thus not talking the media, may offer some explanation. However, it was clear that several of the participants saw the interviews as something more than an exercise in helping academic research. Three of the participants behaved like it was a social engagement, as explained earlier. One

note in my reflexive diary from my interview with Ben on 2 December 2012 explained: ' *His wife was ushered into the back room so that he could take centre stage at the end of the living room. Pouring himself a drink and talking about Christmas plans, he clearly enjoyed the small talk and the attention.'*

Ben was not shy about asking personal questions. Both he, Roger, Steve and Simon all asked if I was married and also my age. The British reserve of not delving into areas of private life seemed to have been abandoned given how intrusive the interviews must have been. Following my interview with Roger my reflexive diary noted: '*At the end of the interview he asked many questions. First if I am married, then my age, then if I am religious and then about my watch. It appears he is a collector.'*

Negative impact on families as a result of media contact

' *[the media] pick up what they want, not what we want, what they want*' – Jack

The findings that the media also had a negative impact on the participants were not a surprise. The sense of intrusion into personal grief, in both an emotional and physical sense, was consistent with previous research (Maercker and Mehr, 2006). What was of greater importance was the emergence of the notion, described by many participants, that the absence of media interest was felt to be negative. However, once it is accepted that the participants benefitted from talking to the media, then their sense of disappointment when the media ceased to be interested in the case is more easily understood. The families wanted their stories in the media for the practical reasons associated with finding their

daughters' bodies or bringing the killers to justice, but also to have their experiences validated by the media. The relationship with the media gave the participants power and control at a time when they had none. Media interest gave the families a sense of worth, and when the media withdrew its interest the families returned to their seemingly powerless state. This finding supports the work of Newton (2011), who when working with SAMM (Support After Murder and Manslaughter Merseyside) found that families often felt 'neglected or insulted' by a lack of media interest. One interviewee told her: *'It's as if they're not as worthy of attention as the next murder victim, who may get pages of coverage,'* (2011:9). Another family had been 'braced' for substantial media intrusion and then struggled to get the local news to cover the story of their son's death, (ibid).

Coping strategies developed and employed by families of serial homicide in relation to media interaction

'Originally I saw the press as the enemy. It was only later that I learned to use them as a tool' – Jack

The interviews which were conducted and which have been presented here show that the families quickly developed strategies to not only utilise the media and associated coverage, but also to deal with the media itself. Steve used the media as a 'crutch', while Jane and Patrick used the media to pressure the government into having a public enquiry into the deaths of their loved ones.

With the exception of Jane and Patrick, all the participants at some point used the media coverage to obtain information.

It was evident that strategies were developed to cope with the media attention. Simon began to ask for payment for the use of the photograph of his daughter to monitor and restrict publication. Roger shielded himself from media calls by asking his pastor to act as a spokesperson. He also began denying who he was when he answered telephone calls until he knew who the caller was. Roger also exhibited the most sophisticated of media strategies by deliberately 'befriending' members of the press to develop loyalty. Roger, as outlined in the previous chapter, spoke to reporters daily during the court case and complied with their requests for posed pictures in return that they respected his wishes as to when he would speak to them and that they did not take his words out of context. This agreement between the media and families is not uncommon, but until now it has not been academically researched or documented in this way.

The newsworthiness of victim narrative and its relationship with serial murder

'The newsworthiness of this crime increases significantly if members of the family weep on camera' – Chermak *(1995:1)*

The importance of victim narrative in news reporting is explored in the literature review and supported by the primary data gathered from participant interviews. All the participants describe their experience of being the subject of media interest. This is illustrated throughout the testimonies: from Simon having

a camera crew climb over his garden fence, to Ben having the realisation that the media will continue to have an interest in him for the rest of his life. Whilst the families became celebrities in their own right, the type of crime they were affected by acted as a multiplier. It is suggested here that whilst the newsworthiness of crime increases with a strong family interview, that the newsworthiness of a serial murder with family media interviews increases exponentially so. This increase is explained by the fact that the families' stories contributed to media coverage, which in turn generated more interest from the public and therefore more media coverage. This theory of self-propelling media coverage is explored by Wilson et al. (2010:11) in their investigation into the little known Manchester serial killer Trevor Hardy. A former journalist who took part in the study illustrated the phenomenon with an analogy of a long-jumper – *'Look how far you go with a run-up as opposed to a standing start.'* Here he was trying to explain why Hardy had not achieved infamy because his status as a serial killer was only revealed during his trial. The media therefore did not have a "run up" only a "standing start". The former journalist termed all of this the 'serial killer syndrome'.

> *'This syndrome would seem to be self-propelling. As soon as the public is informed, interest gathers and the story picks up pace. The more demand from the public, the more the story is reported, and so on. This is particularly apparent in an age where public interest can be easily monitored by viewing figures and website analysis. This propulsion is also fuelled by the allocation of media resources,' (ibid).*

The future of serial killing and the media

Given the advancement in technology and new media, in particular social media, in the relatively short time of conducting this research it would be amiss not to briefly mention what this might imply for the future. Over the last five years both the consumption and production of news media has changed dramatically. The so-called Arab spring of 2011 brought citizen journalism into the mainstream (Howard and Hussain, 2013). Everyone with a smart phone can now take pictures and record events from car chases to crime scenes, and serial murder cases will be no exception. One example continuing to demand attention is the podcast Serial. The show broadcasts details of real life cases, although has yet to feature a serial murder (Yardley et al., 2016).

Due to these changes in technology, serial homicide survivors may find it increasingly hard to protect themselves from unwanted publicity about their case or other serial murders. There was a time when turning over from the evening news or not buying a newspaper could shield families from unwanted stories. Now news alerts on websites and mobile phone apps do not discriminate what news they bring you, nor is it possible to edit social media streams. For example, a person may be able to avoid reading the news headlines but cannot prohibit a friend from posting them on Facebook.

However, families can use these advancements in technology to their advantage. Two of the participants interviewed were hungry for any information and had set up Google Alerts to scour the Internet for updates on their daughter and sister, respectively. Online support groups and chat rooms can also bring people

in contact with others in different countries who have shared experiences. Given the relatively rare occurrence of serial murder in the UK, families here can now benefit from the experiences of those in the USA for example, where serial murder is more prevalent.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

This study set out to explore the phenomenon and newsworthiness of serial murder and the role that the families of victims play in propelling and then maintaining the crime in the news agenda. In doing so it sought to examine the complex relationship between the families, or 'co-victims', and the media in an environment where current academic and cultural interest lies with the offender. It also sought to distinguish research into the experiences of serial homicide survivors from single homicide survivors and demonstrate that research with this unique group is important. The primary research also aimed to develop a better understanding of how coping strategies are employed by families affected by serial murder and how they experience media contact following the death of a relative. The secondary research investigated the importance of victim narrative in news reporting from previously published data. Overall, both enquiries aimed to broaden the knowledge base surrounding the growing phenomenon of serial killing, and of the complex relationship between serial killing and 'newsworthiness'.

Current research on serial murder is primarily focused on the offender, with little attention to the victim, their family, or the role of society more generally. This study aimed to address that omission and provide an insight into the experience of serial murder and subsequent media attention of those left behind.

This study attempted to achieve those objectives in a number of ways. Firstly, the ten interviews and then the analysis of the subsequent data revealed that families, counter to public perception, gained benefits from media attention. Secondly, the review of current literature concluded that the engagement of victims' families with the media drives interest in what is already a significantly newsworthy crime.

These findings, which are extensively detailed in Chapter 6, and distilled in Chapter 7, so therefore not summarised here, have both theoretical and policy implications.

Until 2014 there had been not been a systematic review of literature on the effects of the families of murder victims (Connolly and Gordon, 2014), let alone the more aggravated crime of serial murder, or the specific implications of media interaction. This research shows that there needs to be a significant shift away from the well worn research path of typology of the offender and scholars need to take more seriously the role of co-victims in the phenomenon of serial murder. In agreeing with Skrapec (2001) this study highlights the need to move away from 'mere description' (2001:61) and calls for a greater focus on the structural nature of serial murder, which includes media portrayal, shaped by co-victim narrative. The stories of these ten participants highlighted the fact that the effect of serial murder is far reaching, with implications lasting a lifetime. An example being that reports of a new serial murder triggers media interest in past cases, particularly when the victim's body has not been found. These reports, often

without foundation, create a new sense of re-victimisation and prolong the families' bereavement career.

This study builds on Chermak's (1995) theory of the importance of victim narrative in news reporting by revealing the nature of victim's families' interaction with the media. However it contradicts Chermak's portrayal of families as passive, with the reporters seeking out testimony to add colour and context to their stories. This research found families playing an active role in driving the media agenda. The study found that some participants arranged press conferences, contacted journalists, and one even had a media agent. The participants quickly learned how to continue to engage the media when interest in their case began to subside and how to protect themselves from unwanted attention. Whilst these findings do not claim to represent a wider public, they open up a new field of enquiry in to the importance of co-victims and take an important step towards gaining a greater understanding of their agency.

The findings of a reciprocal relationship between reporters and a victim's family member also have implications for policy. The finding that co-victims gained a positive experience from talking to the media echoed the findings that victims can benefit from taking part in research (Campbell 2010, Griffin 2003, Lipson 1984). However, this calls into question the need to review procedures in both news agencies and police stations, given that previously it had not been known or expected that a co-victim could benefit from engaging with the media following such a traumatic event. Reporters currently receive no training as to how to engage with vulnerable family members following a murder. This study

supported Davis (1998) and Greenslades' (2010) observation that young reporters are often ill-equipped to understand the consequences of their engagement with families. These observations would seem now to have added urgency given that this research suggests, despite a lack of training, that they are unwittingly acting as quasi-therapists.

Policy implications are also relevant to police family liaison and investigating officers. In the study, participants spoke of police protecting families from media intrusion. Officers would sometimes wait outside family homes, and in one instance a participant described the police taking them in secret to a different police station to avoid detection by the media, when in fact media contact could have been beneficial.

These policy and theoretical implications lead on to the next section addressing the limitations of the study and how further research can improve practices.

Limitations of the research

This study did not seek to prove or claim that these findings could be applied to a wider public, or even to other families of victims of serial murder. It sought only to investigate the experiences of those who were the subject of this research. It aimed to uncover new information and provide a deeper, richer, theoretical understanding of a particular and unique group. However, it did encounter a number of limitations. The project was initially stalled by extensive ethical

procedures, and given the unchartered territory of the topic there was little guidance.

There were also limitations on gathering data. The sample was chosen in part, as outlined in Chapter 3, by 'snowballing' (Shinebourne, 2011). This method, although effective for the purposes of this research, did not result in an equal number of men and women in the study. Only two of the participants were women, leaving more scope to explore the gender dynamics of how families of serial murder victims interact with the media.

Another limitation was the sample more generally. Many requests to take part in the study were turned down or unanswered and it is impossible to say whether the results were influenced by the fact that the participants who took part had had generally better experiences and were therefore more willing to talk. It is theoretically possible that people who had bad experiences talking publically were the ones who declined to take part.

Impact and development of this research

It is hoped that this study acts as a starting point for further research into the previously unexplored relationship between families and the media following serial murder. As outlined in the previous chapter this research offers a number of areas to build upon and develop in relations to the theoretical, policy and practical implications.

The first is the application of the findings in relation to the training of journalists, both in terms of how they deal with co-victims but also how they themselves deal with the role of quasi-therapist. At present there is little training offered to media professionals in carrying out the so-called death knock, and none in terms to the emotional strain being placed upon them by the repeated contact with the victims of crime and their families. One practical step will be to contact the *Society of Editors* and the *National Council for the Training of Journalists* to discuss the findings and encourage a review of the current syllabus.

It is also my intention to disseminate the findings in relation to journalism practice by producing a series of articles for *The Press Gazette,* a media industry online news source and *British Journalism Review.* It is hoped that these will offer thought leadership to existing media professionals and assist in the on-going quest for 'conscious journalism'.

These findings also impact on how police advise co-victims when it comes to dealing with the media. It is hoped that this new knowledge will contribute to the thinking around whether the police should encourage media/family contact. In this instant the journal *Policing* would be an appropriate place for publication.

This study also highlights the need to look at serial murder under a different academic lens and to recognise the wider importance of agents other than the killer himself. Academic scrutiny has been largely focused on the medico-psychology of the killer with few scholars addressing the social and structural perspective. It is hoped that this research fuels further thought in this area.

More specifically the scope for future studies should include gender and age dynamics, length of time since the victim's death and the number of other victims. The intention is to produce a serial of articles for the peer review *Crime, Media and Culture* to encourage further research and ensure that the voices of co-victims are more widely heard.

References

1998. Data Protection Act. UK.

AAMODT, M. G. 2014. *Serial Killer Statistics* [Online]. 2014. Available: http://maamodt.asp.radford.edu/serial killer information center/project description.htm [Accessed 17 February 2015].

ACPO 2006. Murder Investigation Manual UK: NCPE.

ADAMS, S. 2010. Harold Shipman thought he was 'boring' *The Telegraph*, July 19 2010.

ADJORLOLO, S. & CHAN, H. C. O. 2014. The controversy of defining serial murder: Revisited. *Aggression and Violent Behavior,* 19**,** 486-491.

ALEXANDER, N. & CLARE, L. 2004. You still feel different: the experience and meaning of women's self injury in the context of a lesbian or bisexual identity. *Journal of community & applied social psychology,* 14**,** 70-84.

ALLAN, S. 2004. *News Culture,* Buckingham, UK, Open University Press.

ALLEN, P. 1990. Plaintiffs and the Media. *The New Law Journal* 140 (6478).

ALLEN, V. 2009. Where the £2m you gave to find Madeleine McCann has gone. *Daily Mail*, 29 January.

ALLFREE, C. 2009. Unravelling Jack the Stripper. *The Metro*, 3 December.

ANONYMOUS. 2014. Death knocks: the dark side of journalism. *The Irish Times*, August 29 2015.

ARESTI, A., EATOUGH, V. & BROOKS-GORDON, B. 2010. Doing time after time: an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of reformed ex-prisoners' experiences of self-change, identity and career opportunities. *Psychology, Crime & Law,* 16**,** 169-190.

AVISON, N. 1973. Victims of Homicide. *In:* DRAPKIN, I. & VIANO, E. (eds.) *Victimology: A New Focus.* USA: Lexington Books.

BAINBRIDGE, J., GOC, N. & TYNAN, L. 2011. *Media and Journalism: New Approacjes to Theory and Practice,* Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press.

BARRILE, L. 1994. Review of Using Murder: The Social Construction of Serial Homicide. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture,* 2**,** 87-92.

BARTELS, R. & PARSONS, C. 2009. The social construction of a Serial Killer. *Feminism & Psychology,* 19**,** 267.

BERRY-DEE, C. & MORRIS, S. 2008. *How to Make a Serial Killer: The Twisted Development of Innocent Children Into the World's Most Sadistic Murderers*, Ulysses Pr.

BHASKAR, R. 1989. *A Critical Introduction to Contemporary Philosophy,* London, UK, Verso.

BHASKAR, R. 1997. *A Realist Theory of Science,* London, Verso.

BHASKAR, R. 2002a. *From Science to Emancipation: Alienation and the Actuality of Enlightenment,* UK, Sage.

BHASKAR, R. 2002b. *Meta-Reality: The Philosophy of Meta-Reality Volume 1: Creativity, Love and Freedom,* UK, Sage.

BHASKAR, R. 2011. *Reflections on metaReality: Transcendence, Emancipation and Everyday Life* London, UK, Routledge.

BHASKAR, R. 2014. *What is critical realism* [Online]. Available: http://roybhaskar.wordpress.com/ [Accessed November 25 2014.

BOLTER, J. & GRUSIN, R. 1999. *Remediation: Understanding new media,* Cambridge, MA, USA, The MIT Press.

BOYATZIS, R. 1998. *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development* Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, Sage.

BRADY, I. 2001. *The Gates of Janus: Serial Killing and its analysis by the Moors Murder, Ian Brady,* USA, Feral.
BRAITHWAITE, J. 2011. Foreward. *In:* BOSWORTH, M. & DOYLE, C. (eds.) *What is Criminology?* UK: Oxford University Press.
BRANSTON, G. & STAFFORD, R. 2010. *Media Student's Book*, Routledge.
BRAUN, V. & CLARKE, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology,* 3**,** 77-101.
BREWER, J. 2000. *Ethnography,* UK, Open University Press.
BROCKI, J. M. & WEARDEN, A. J. 2006. A critical evaluation of the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) in health psychology. *Psychology & Health,* 21**,** 87-108.
BRYMAN, A. 1988. *Quantity and quality in social research,* London, Routledge.
BUCKLAND, G. & WINCUP, E. 2004. RESEARCHING CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE. *Student handbook of criminal justice and criminology.* Cavendish
BULMER, M. 1982. *Social research ethics: an examination of the merits of covert participant observation*, Macmillan.
CAMPBELL, R., ADAMS, A. E., WASCO, S. M., AHRENS, C. E. & SEFL, T. 2010. What Has It Been Like for You to Talk With Me Today? The Impact of Participating in Interview Research on Rape Survivors. *Violence Against Women,* 16**,** 60.
CAMPESINO, M. 2007. Homicide Bereavement. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 13**,** 541.
CANTER, D. 2005. Suicide or murder? Implicit narratives in the Eddie Gilfoyle case. *In:* ALISON, L. (ed.) *The Forensic Psychologist's Casebook: Psychological profiling and criminal investigation.* Abingdon: Willan.
CANTER, D. V., ALISON, L. J., ALISON, E. & WENTINK, N. 2004. The Organized/Disorganized Typology of Serial Murder: Myth or Model? *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law,* 10**,** 293-320.
CANTER, D. V. & WENTINK, N. 2004. An empirical test of Holmes and Holmesís serial murder typology. *Criminal justice and behavior,* 31**,** 489.
CAPUTI, J. 1987. *The age of sex crime*, Bowling Green State University Popular Press.
CARRABINE, E. 2008. *Crime, culture and the media*, Polity Pr.
CARRABINE, E., LEE, M., IGANSKI, P., PLUMMER, K. & SOUTH, N. 2004. *Criminology - A Sociological Introduction,* London, Routledge.
CASTLE, P. 1999. Journalism and trauma: Proposals for change. *Asia Pacific Media Educator,* 1**,** 13.
CAULFIELD, L. & HILL, J. 2014. *Criminological Research for Beginners: A Student's Guide*, Routledge.
CENSUS. 2010. Available: http://www.census.gov/2010census/data/ [Accessed Feb 17 2015].
CHADEE, D. & DITTON, J. 2005. Fear of crime and the media: Assessing the lack of relationship. *Crime, Media, Culture,* 1**,** p322.
CHERMAK, C. 1995. *Victims in the News,* USA, Westview Press.
CHRISTIE, N. 1986. The Ideal Victim. *In:* FATTAH, E. (ed.) *From crime policy to victim policy: Reorienting the justice system.* New York, USA: St Martin's Press.
CHRISTIE, N. 2010. Victim movements at a crossroads. *Punishment & Society,* 12**,** 115-122.
CLARKSON, W. 2002. *The Good Doctor*, St. Martin's Press.
CLUFF, J., HUNTER, A. & HINCH, R. 1997. Feminist Perspectives on Serial Murder A Critical Analysis. *Homicide studies,* 1**,** 291-308.
COHEN, S. 2002. *Folk Devils and Moral Panics,* London, Routledge.
COHEN, S. & YOUNG, J. 1976. *The Manufacture of news. Deviance social problems and mass media,* London, Constable.
COHEN-ALMAGOR, R. 2014. After Leveson Recommendations for Instituting the Public and Press Council. *The International Journal of Press/Politics,* 19**,** 202-225.

COLLINS, K. & NICOLSON, P. 2002. The meaning of satisfaction for people with dermatological problems: Reassessing approaches to qualitative health psychology research. *Journal of health psychology,* 7**,** 615.
CONNOLLY, J. & GORDON, R. 2014. Co-victims of Homocide: A systematic Review of the Literature. *Trauma, Violence and Abuse,* 1.
CONNOLLY, K. & REILLY, R. C. 2007. Emergent Issues When Researching Trauma. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 13**,** 522-540.
CPS. 2013. *DPP announces new 'all-time high' for conviction rate in rape and domestic violence cases* [Online]. London, UK: CPS. Available: http://www.cps.gov.uk/news/latest_news/dpp_announces_new_conviction_rate_in_rape_and_domestic_violence_cases/ [Accessed December 30 2015].
CUTLIP, S. 1994. *The Unseen Power: A History of Public Relations,* USA, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
DAS, V. 2007. *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary,* Berkeley, CA, University of California Press.
DAVIES, C. 2008a. *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Ohters,* London, UK, Routledge.
DAVIES, N. 2008b. Flat Earth News. *London: Chatto and Windus*.
DAVIS, R. 1998. New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for thr 21st Century. *In:* JUSTICE, U. S. D. F. (ed.). Washington D.C: Office for Victims of Crime.
DAVIS, R. 2007. Truth and nothing like the truth. *British Journalism Review,* 18**,** 63.
DELISI, M. & SCHERER, A. M. 2006. MULTIPLE HOMICIDE OFFENDERS Offense Characteristics, Social Correlates, and Criminal Careers. *Criminal Justice and Behavior,* 33**,** 367-391.
DENZIN, N. & LINCOLN, Y. 2000. Introduction: The discipline and
practice of qualitative research
. *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage.
DITTON, J. & DUFFY, J. 1983. BIAS IN THE NEWSPAPER REPORTING OF GRIME NEWS. *British Journal of Criminology,* 23**,** p159.
DONALDSON, L. 2000. Harold Shipman's clinical practice 1974-1998: a clinical audit commissioned by the Chief Medical Officer. *In:* HEALTH, D. O. (ed.). London.
DOUGLAS, J., BURGESS, A. W., BURGESS, A. G. & RESSLER, R. K. 2011. *Crime classification manual: A standard system for investigating and classifying violent crimes*, Jossey-Bass.
DOUGLAS, J. D. 1976. *Investigative social research: individual and team field research*, Sage Publications, Inc.
DUNCAN, S. 2012. Sadly missed: The death knock news story as a personal narrative of grief. *Journalism***,** 1464884911431542.
DUNCAN, S. & NEWTON, J. 2010. How do you feel? Preparing novice reporters for the death knock. *Journalism practice,* 4**,** 439-453.
DUNCOMBE, J. & JESSOP, J. 2002. 'Doing Rapport'and the Ethics of 'faking Friendship'. *In:* MAUTHNER, M., JESSOP, J., MILLER, T. & BIRCH, M. (eds.) *Ethics in Qualitative Research* London: Sage.
DYER, O. 2002. News: Shipman murdered more than 200 patients, inquiry finds. *BMJ,* 325**,** 181.
EATOUGH, V., SMITH, J. A. & SHAW, R. 2008. Women, Anger, and Aggression. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* 23**,** 1767.
EDWARDS, R. 2008. Prime suspect in 1978 murder of schoolgirl Genette Tate will not face charges. *Daily Telegraph*, 18 August.
EDWARDS, R. 2009. Seven of ten murders solved by CCTV. *Daily Telegraph*, 1 January.
EGGER, S. 1990. *Serial Murder: An Elusive Phenomenon,* New York, USA, Praeger Publishers

EGGER, S. A. 2002. *The killers among us: an examination of serial murder and its investigation*, Prentice Hall.
ELLSBERG, M., HEISE, L., PENA, R., AGURTO, S. & WINKVIST, A. 2001. Researching Domestic Violence against Women: Methodological and Ethical Considerations. *Studies in Family Planning,* 32**,** 1-16.
ERICKSON, R. 1991. Mass media, crime, law, and justice: an institutional approach. *British Journal of Criminology,* 31**,** p219.
ESMAIL, A. 2005. Physician as serial killer - The Shipman case. *New England Journal of Medicine,* 352**,** 1843-1844.
FBI. 2005. *Serial Murder: Multi-disciplinary Perspectives for Investigators* [Online]. FBI Available: http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/serial-murder/serial-murder-1 - three [Accessed February 18 2015].
FERRELL, J., HAYWARD, K. & YOUNG, J. 2015. *Cultural Criminology: An Invitation* UK, Sage.
FIDO, M. 2003. *A history of British Serial Killing,* UK, Calton.
FLEMING, T. 2007. The history of violence: Mega cases of serial murder, selfpropelling narratives, and reader engagement. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture,* 14**,** 277-291.
FONTES, L. A. 2004. Ethics in violence against women research: The sensitive, the dangerous, and the overlooked. *Ethics & behavior,* 14 (2)**,** 141-174.
FOX, J. A. & LEVIN, J. 1998. Multiple homicide: Patterns of serial and mass murder. *Crime & Just.,* 23**,** 407.
FOX, J. A. & LEVIN, J. 2011. *Extreme Killing: Understanding Serial and Mass Murder*, SAGE.
FRANCIS, T. 2008. *Media Today: An Introduction to Mass Communication*, Taylor & Francis.
FRIESEN, B. K. 2010. *Designing and Conducting Your First Interview Project,* USA, Wiley.
FROST, C. 1998. Ethics of local journalism. *In:* FRANKLIN, B. (ed.) *Making the local news.* London: Routledge
FULLERTON, C. S., URSANO, R. J., VANCE, K. & WANG, L. 2000. Debriefing following trauma. *Psychiatric Quarterly,* 71**,** 259-276.
GALTUNG, J. & RUGE, M. 1965. Structuring and selecting news. *In:* COHEN, S. & YOUNG, J. (eds.) *The Manufacture of News: Deviance, Social Problems and the Mass Media (1981).* London: Constable.
GEERTZ, C. 1973. *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*, Basic Books (AZ).
GERRARD, N. 2004. *Soham: A Story of Our Times,* UK, Short Books Limited.
GIANNANGELO, S. 1996. *The Psychopathology of Serial Murder: A Theory of Violence,* Westport, USA, Greenwood Publishing Group
GIBSON, D. C. 2006. *Serial Murder And Media Circuses*, Praeger Publishers.
GILLHAM, B. 2005. *Research Interviewing: The range of techniques,* Berkshire, Open Univ Press.
GLASER, B. & STRAUSS, A. 1967. *Grounded Theory: The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Aldine Transaction.
GORSKI, P. S. 2013. What is Critical Realism? And Why Should You Care? *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews,* 42**,** 658-670.
GRAEBER, D. 2014. Roy Bhaskar obituary. *The Guardian* Dec 4 2014.
GRAY, D. 2009. *Doing Research in the Real World,* London, UK, Sage.
GREENSLADE, R. 2010a. The death knock - how a journalist coped with journalists on the doorstep. *The Guardian* 21 July
GREENSLADE, R. 2010b. What the PCC does to help the bereaved deal with 'death knocks'. *Greenslade Blog* [Online]. [Accessed 16/02/11 2011].
GREENSLADE, R. 2011. Eight newspapers pay libel damages to Christopher Jefferies. *The Guardian* July 19.

GREER, C. 2007. News Media, Victims and Crime. *In:* DAVIES, P., FRANCIS, P. & GREER, C. (eds.) *Victims, Crime and Society.* UK: Sage
GREER, C. 2010. *Crime and media: a reader*, Routledge.
GRESSWELL, D. M. & HOLLIN, C. R. 1994. Multiple murder: A review. *British Journal of Criminology,* 34**,** 1.
GRIFFIN, M., RESICK, P., WALDROP, A. & MECHANIC, M. 2003. Participation in Trauma Research: Is There Evidence of Harm. *Journal of Traumatic Stress,* 16**,** 221-227.
GRIX, J. 2004. *Foundations of Research*.
GROVER, C. & SOOTHILL, K. 1997. British Serial Killing: Towards a Structural Explanation *In:* BROGDEN, M. (ed.) *British Criminology Conferences.* Belfast
GRUENEWALD, J., PIZARRO, J. & CHERMAK, S. M. 2009. Race, gender, and the newsworthiness of homicide incidents. *Journal of Criminal Justice,* 37**,** 262-272.
HABERMAS, J. 1974. The Public Sphere: An encyclopedia Article. *In:* M DURHAM & KELLNER, D. (eds.) *Media and Cultural Studies: Keyworks.* Wiley.
HAGGERTY, K. 2009. Modern serial killers. *Crime, Media, Culture,* 5**,** 168.
HALL, S. 1973. The Determinations of News Photographs. *In:* GREER, C. (ed.) *Crime and Media: A Reader.* London: Routledge.
HAMMERSLEY, M. 1990. *Reading Ethnographic Research,* London, Longman.
HAMMERSLEY, M. 1992. *What's Wrong with Ethnography,* London, Routledge.
HARE, R. D. 1999. *The Hare Psychopathy Checklist-Revised: PLC-R.* , MHS.
HARRISON, P. & WILSON, D. 2010. *The Last British Serial Killer*, Little, Brown Book Group Limited.
HECHT, B. 1954. *A Child of the Century,* New York, Simon and Schuster.
HEIDE, K. & KEENEY, B. 1995. Serial Murder: A more accurate and inclusive Definition. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 39.
HENN, M., WEINSTEIN, M. & FOARD, N. 2005. *A short introduction to social research*, Sage Publications Ltd.
HERBERT, T. & DUNKEL-SCHETTER, C. 1992. Negative social reactions to victims: An overview of responses and their determinants. *In:* MONTADA, L., FILIPP, S. & LERNER, M. (eds.) *Life crises and experiences of loss in adulthood.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
HICKEY, E. W. 2012. *Serial Murderers and Their Victims*, Wadsworth.
HINCH, R. & HEPBURN, C. 1998 Researching Serial Murder: Methodological and Definitional Problems *Electronic Journal of Sociology,* 3.
HLAVKA, H. & KRUTTSCHNITT, C. 2007. Revictimizing the Victims? Interviewing Women About Interpersonal Violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* 22**,** 894-920.
HOLMES, R. & BERGER, J. D. 1988. *Serial Murder,* USA, Sage.
HOLMES, R. & HOLMES, S. 2001. *Murder in America,* USA, Sage.
HORSLEY, L. 2005. *Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction*, Oxford University Press.
HOWARD, P. & HUSSAIN, M. 2013. *Democracy's Fourth Wave?: Digital Media and the Arab Spring,* UK, Oxford University Press.
HOWITT, D. 2010. *Introduction to qualitative methods in psychology,* UK, Pearson Education.
HUTCHINSON, A., JOHNSTON, L. & BRECKTON, J. 2009. Using QSR-NVivo to facilitate the development of a grounded theory project: an account of a worked example. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology,* 13**,** 283-302.
INNES, M. 1999. The Media as an investigative resource in murder enquires. *British Journal of Criminology,* 39**,** 269.
INNES, M. 2004. Crime as a Signal, Crime as a Memory. *Journal for Crime, Conflict and the Media,* 1**,** 15-22.
JAEGER, R. W. & BALOUSEK, M. 1991. *Massacre in Milwaukee: The Macabre Case of Jeffrey Dahmer*, Waubesa Press.
JANOFF-BULMAN, J. 1992. *Shattered Assumptions,* New York, The Free Press.

JARVIS, B. 2007. Monsters Inc.: Serial killers and consumer culture. *Crime, Media, Culture,* 3**,** 326.
JENKINS, P. 1991. Changing Perceptions of Serial Murder in Contemporary England. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice,* 7(4).
JENKINS, P. 1992. A Murder" Wave"? Trends in American Serial Homicide 1940-1990. *Criminal Justice Review,* 17**,** 1-19.
JENKINS, P. 1994. *Using murder: the social construction of serial homicide,* New York
, A. de Gruyter.
JENKINS, P. 2002. Catch Me Before I Kill More: Seriality as Modern Monstrosity. *Cultural Analysis,* 3**,** 1-17.
JEWKES, Y. 2004. *Media and crime*, Sage Publications Ltd.
JONES, S. R. 1992. Was there a Hawthorne effect? *American Journal of Sociology***,** 451-468.
KARIMI, F. 2015. *Reeva Steenkamp: Model and law graduate with 'wicked' sense of humour* [Online]. USA: CNN. [Accessed August 29 2015].
KATZ, J. 1987. What makes crime news? *Media, Culture and Society,* 9**,** 47-75.
KEEBLE, R. L. & MAIR, J. 2012. *The Phone Hacking Scandal: Journalism on Trial*, arima publishing.
KINNELL, H. G. 2000. Serial homicide by doctors: Shipman in perspective. *BMJ,* 321**,** 1594-1597.
KNIGHT, K. 2011. I escaped a child killer - but he destroyed my life. *Daily Mail*, 3 November
KVALE, S. 2007. *Doing Interviews,* London, UK, Sage.
LEPORE, S., COHEN SILVER, R., WORTMAN, C. & WAYMERIT, H. 1996. Social constraints, intrusive thoughts, and depressive symptoms among bereaved mothers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 70**,** 271-282.
LEYTON, E. 1995. *Hunting Humans: The Rise of the Modern Multiple Murderer*, McClelland & Stewart Ltd.
LINNING, S. 2015. Serial killer Peter Tobin 'recovering in hospital after being attacked by another inmate in Edinburgh prison. *Daily Mail*, 2 July
LIPSON, J. G. 1984. Combining research, clinical and personal roles: Enrichment or confusion? . *Human Organization,* 43**,** 348-352
LOPEZ, J. & POTTER, G. 2001. *After postmodernism: an introduction to critical realism,* London, UK, Athlone.
LUNDMAN, R. J. The Newsworthiness and Selection Bias in News about Murder: Comparative and Relative Effects of Novelty and Race and Gender Typifications on Newspaper Coverage of Homicide. Sociological forum, 2003. John Wiley and Sons, 357-386.
LYNES, A. & WILSON, D. 2015. Driven to Kill: British Serial Killers and their Occupations. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice***,** 54.
LYNES, A., WILSON, D. & JACKSON, C. 2012. Zola and the Serial Killer: Robert Black and La Bête Humaine. *International journal of criminology and sociology,* 1**,** 69-80.
MAERCKER, A. & MEHR, A. 2006. What if Victims Read a Newspaper Report About Their Victimization. *European Psychologist,* 11**,** 137-142.
MAIER, S. R. 2007. SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: When the press errs, do corrections follow? 1. *Journalism Practice,* 1**,** 33-43.
MANICAS, P. 1998. A Realist Social Science. *In:* ARCHER, M., BHASKAR, R., COLLIER, A., LAWON, T. & NORRIE, A. (eds.) *Critical Realism.* UK: Routledge.
MARTIN, R. 2009. *Shannon: Betrayed from birth,* UK, John Blake.
MARX, K. 1852. The eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. *In:* MCLELLAN, D. (ed.) *Karl Marx: Selected Writings.* Oxford, UK: OUP.
MASON, P. & MONCKTON-SMITH, J. 2008. Conflation, collocation and confusion British press coverage of the sexual murder of women. *Journalism,* 9**,** 691-710.

MASTERS, R., FRIEDMAN, L. & GETZEL, G. 1988. Helping families of homicide victims: A multidimensional approach. *Journal of Traumatic Stress,* 1**,** 109-125.
MATTHEWS, R. 2009. Beyond 'so what?'criminology Rediscovering realism. *Theoretical Criminology,* 13**,** 341-362.
MAWBY, R. 2007a. Criminal investigation and the media. *In:* NEWBURN, T., WILLIAMSON, T. & WRIGHT, A. (eds.) *Handbook of Criminal Investigation.* London, UK: Routledge.
MAWBY, R. 2007b. Public sector services and the victim of crime. *In:* WALKLATE, S. (ed.) *Handbook of Victims and Victimology.* Uffculme Cullompton, UK: Willan Publishing
MAWBY, R. 2012. *Policing Images: Policing, communication and legitimacy,* London, UK, Routledge.
MAY, T. & WILLIAMS, M. 2002. *An introduction to the philosophy of social research*, Routledge.
MAYS, N. & POPE, C. 1995. Rigour and Qualitative Research *British Medical Journal,* 311**,** 109-112.
MCCALL, M. & WITTNER, J. 1990. The Good News About Life History. *In:* BECKER, H. & MCCALL, M. (eds.) *Symbolic Interaction and Cultural Studies.* Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press.
MCKENZIE, C. 1995. A study of serial murder. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology,* 39**,** 3-10.
MERTENS, D. & GINSBERG, P. 2008. *The handbook of social research ethics*, Sage Publications, Inc.
MERTON, R. 1938. Social Structure and Anomie. *American Sociological Review,* 3**,** 672-682.
METH, R. & PASICK, R. 1991. *Men in Therapy: The Challenge of Change,* UK, Guildford Press.
METVIER, A. 2009. The Gates of Janus - A review. *Internet Journal of Criminology*.
MILKINS, N. 2011. *Who was Jack the Stripper? ,* UK, Rose Heywood Press.
MILLER, L. 2014. Serial killers: Development, dynamics and forensics. *Agression and violent behaviour,* 19.
MINE. 2016. *Murder is not Entertainment* [Online]. USA: Parents of Murdered Children. Available: http://www.pomc.com/mine.html [Accessed January 9 2016].
MORRIS, S. 2011. Joanna Yeates Murder: The full truth may never be known. *The Guardian*
MORTON, J. 2008. *Serial Murder: Multi-disciplinary Perspectives for Investigators,* USA, U.S Department for Justice.
MULLEY, K. 2001. Victimized by the Media. *Criminal Justice Matters,* 43**,** 30-31.
MYTHEN, G. 2007. Cultural Victimology: are we all victims now? . *In:* WALKLATE, S. (ed.) *Handbook of victims and victimology.* Uffculme Cullompton, UK: Willan Publishing
NEWMAN, E. & KALOUPEK, D. 2004. The risks and benefits of participating in trauma focused research studies. *Journal of Traumatic Stress***,** 383-394.
NEWMAN, E., KALOUPEK, D. G., KEANE, T. M. & FOLSTEIN, S. F. Ethical issues in trauma research: The evolution of an empirical model for decision making. 1997. Sage Publications, Inc.
NEWTON, J. 2011. The Knock at the Door: Considering bereaved families' varying responses to news media intrusion. *International journal of Communication Ethics,* 8**,** 7-13.
NOMOKONOV, V. A. & SHULGA, V. 1998. Murder for Hire as a Manifestation of Organized Crime. *Demokratizatsiya,* 6**,** 676-680.

NUJ. 2011. *Code of Conduct* [Online]. London: National Union of Journalists. Available: http://www.nuj.org.uk/innerPagenuj.html?docid=174 [Accessed March 14 2011].

ONS 2015. Homicide Index. *In:* HTTP://WWW.ONS.GOV.UK/ONS/DCP171776_394478.PDF (ed.). UK.

PALMER, E. 2012. *Christopher Halliwell Murder Charge Against Becky Godden-Edwards Dropped Following Police Blunder* [Online]. UK: International Business Times. Available: http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/christopher-halliwell-second-murder-charge-dropped-396305 [Accessed December 30 2015].

PANTER, S. & SITFORD, M. 1999. *Harold Shipman: The True Story*, Virgin.

PEELO, M. 2006. Framing homicide narratives in newspapers: Mediated witness and the construction of virtual victimhood. *Crime Media Culture,* 2**,** 159-175.

PEELO, M., FRANCIS, B., SOOTHILL, K., PEARSON, J. & ACKERLEY, A. 2004. Newspaper reporting and the public construction of homicide

. *British Journal of Criminology,* 4**,** 256-275.

PETLEY, J. 2012. The Leveson Inquiry: Journalism ethics and press freedom. *Journalism,* 13**,** 529-538.

PONSFORD, D. 2015. Sky News broadcasts virtual reality news report on migrants crisis. *Press Gazette*, 19 November.

PONTEROTTO, J. 2005. Qualitative Research in Counseling Psychology: A Primer on Research

Paradigms and Philosophy of Science

. *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 52**,** 126-136.

PPC. 2010. *How the PCC can help you* [Online]. PCC. Available: http://www.pcc.org.uk [Accessed November 9 2010].

QUINET, K. 2007. The Missing Missing. *Homicide studies,* 11**,** 319.

QUINN, B. 2012. Human remains found near Queen's country retreat at Sandringham. *Guardian*.

RADFORD, J. 1992. Introduction. *In:* RADFORD, J. & RUSSELL, D. E. H. (eds.) *Femicide: The politics of women killing.* New York: Maxwell MacMillian International.

REES, C. & GATENBY, M. 2014. Critical realism and ethnography. *In:* EDWARDS, P., O'MAHONEY, J. & VINCENT, S. (eds.) *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism: A Practical Guide.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

REID, K., FLOWERS, P. & LARKIN, M. 2005. Exploring lived experience. *Psychologist,* 18**,** 20-23.

REINEMANN, C., STANYER, J., SCHERR, S. & LEGNANTE, G. 2011. Hard and soft news: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings. *Journalism***,** 1464884911427803.

REINER, R. 2002. Media made criminality: The representation of crime in the mass media. *The Oxford handbook of criminology,* 3.

RESSLER, R., BURGESS, A. & DOUGLAS, J. 1988a. *Sexual Homicide: Patterns and motives,* USA, Lexington Books.

RESSLER, R. K., BURGESS, A. W. & DOUGLAS, J. E. 1988b. *Sexual homicide: Patterns and motives*, Simon and Schuster.

RESSLER, R. K. & SHACHTMAN, T. 1993. *Whoever fights monsters: My twenty years tracking serial killers for the FBI*, Macmillan.

RICHES, G. 1998. Spoiled memories: Problems of grief resolution in families bereaved through murder. *Mortality,* 3**,** 143-159.

ROCK, P. 1998. *After Homicide: Practical and Political Responses to Bereavement,* Oxford, UK, Clarendon Press.

ROSHIER, B. 1974. The selection of crime news by the press. *In:* COHEN, S. & YOUNG, J. (eds.) *The manufacture of news. Deviance social problemsn & the mass media.* London: Constable.

ROWE, M. 2013. Just Like a TV Show: Public criminology and the media coverage of the 'hunt for Britain's most wanted man'. *Crime Media Culture,* 9**,** 23-38.
ROY, K. 2011. Public Lives, Public Morality. *Scottish Review,* 431.
SCHECHTER, H. 2003. *The Serial Killer files: the who, what, where, how and why of the World's Most Terrifying Murderers,* USA, Random House Publishing.
SCHEERHOUT, J. 2012. Victim's family celebrate as Beast of Manchester Hardy dies. *Manchester Evening News*, 28 September.
SCHMID, D. 2005. *Natural born celebrities: serial killers in American culture*, University of Chicago Press.
SCOTT, D. K. & GOBETZ, R. H. 1992. Hard news/soft news content of the national broadcast networks, 1972–1987. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly,* 69**,** 406-412.
SEABROOK, D. 2006. *Jack of Jumps,* London, Granta Publications.
SELTZER, M. 1997. Wound culture: Trauma in the pathological public sphere. *October***,** 3-26.
SELTZER, M. 1998. *Serial Killers: Death and Life in America's Wound Culture,* USA, Psychology Press.
SHAPLAND, J. & HALL, M. 2007. What do we know about the effects of crime on victims? *International Review of Victimology,* 14**,** 175-217.
SHAW, A. 2004. Outburst By Rape Suspect. *Mirror* February 28.
SHINEBOURNE, P. 2011. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. *In:* FROST, N. (ed.) *Qualitative Research Methods in Psychology: Combining Care Approaches.* Berks: Open University Press.
SILVERMAN, P. & KLASS, D. 1997. What's the problem? . *In:* KLASS, D., SILVERMAN, P. & NICKMAN, S. (eds.) *Continuing Bonds: New Understandings of grief.* London, UK: Taylor and Francis.
SIMPSON, P. 2000. *Pysycho Paths: Tracking the Serial Killer THrough Contemporary American Film and Fiction,* USA, SIU Press.
SKRAPEC, C. A. 2001. Phenomenology and Serial Murder. *Homicide studies,* 5**,** 46.
SMITH, D. 2014. Shrien Dewani goes free after trial doomed from day one. *The Guardian* 8 December
SMITH, D. J. A. & OSBORN, M. 2007. Pain as an assault on the self: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of the psychological impact of chronic benign low back pain. *Psychology and health,* 22**,** 517-534.
SMITH, J. 2005. *Shipman Enquiry* [Online]. Available: http://www.shipman-inquiry.org.uk/home.asp [Accessed August 3 2012.
SMITH, J., FLOWERS, P. & LARKIN, M. 2009. *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*, Sage Publications Ltd.
SMITH, J., JARMAN, M. & OSBORN, M. 1999. Doing interpretative phenomenological analysis, M. Murray, K. Chamberlain, Editors, Qualitative health psychology: theories and methods. Sage, London.
SMITH, J. & OSBORN, M. 2003. Interpretative phenomenological analysis *In:* SMITH, J. (ed.) *Qualitative Psychology. A practical guide to research methods.* London: Sage.
SMITH, J. A. 1999. Towards a relational self: Social engagement during pregnancy and psychological preparation for motherhood. *British Journal of Social Psychology,* 38**,** 409-426.
SMITH, R. 2011. *Ethics in Journalism* USA, John Wiley & Sons,.
SOLOMAN, Z., MIKULINCER, M. & FLUM, H. 1989. The implications of life events and social integration in the course of combat-related post-traumatic stress disorder. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology***,** 41-48.
SOOTHILL, K. 2001. The Harold Shipman case: a sociological perspective. *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry,* 12**,** 260-262.

SOOTHILL, K., PEELO, M., FRANCIS, B., PEARSON, J. & ACKERLEY, E. 2002. Homicide and the media: identifying the top cases in The Times. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice,* 41**,** 401-421.
SOOTHILL, K., PEELO, M., PEARSON, J. & FRANCIS, B. 2004. The reporting trajectories of top homicide cases in the media: A case study of The Times. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice,* 43**,** 1-14.
SOOTHILL, K. & WILSON, D. 2005. Theorizing the puzzle that is Harold Shipman. *Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology. ,* 16**,** 685-698.
STAR, I. 2009. *Somebody's Daughter Will Help Save Lives* [Online]. Ipswich, UK: Ipswich Star Available: http://www.ipswichstar.co.uk/news/somebody_s_daughter_will_help_save_others_1_175003 [Accessed Oct 14 2015].
STEVENS, A. 2013. *Offender Rehabilitation and Therapeutic Communities: Enabling change the TC way.,* London, Routledge.
SURTEES, J. 2000. The Strange Case of Dr Bodkin Adams: The Life and Murder Trail of Eastbourne's Infamous Doctor and the view of Those Who Knew Him. SB Publications, London.
TARLING, R. 2005. *Managing social research: a practical guide*, Routledge.
TAYLOR, D. 2013. Thug who plotted to kill Peter Tobin sent to solitary. *Daily Record*, December 2.
TAYLOR, I., WALTON, P. & YOUNG, J. 2012. *The New Criminology,* London, UK, Routledge.
THOMPSON, T. 2001. Boxing Hero Freddie Mills 'murdered eight women'. *The Observer*, 4 November.
THURMAN, N. 2008. Forum for citizen journalists? Adoption of user generated content inititaives by online news media *New Media and Society,* 10.
TURVILL, W. 2015. UK police forces spend more than £36m a year on PR. *The press Gazzette*, 1 May
USSHER, J., KIRSTEN, L., BUTOW, P. & SANDOVAL, M. 2006. What do cancer support groups provide which other supportive relationships do not? The experience of peer support groups for people with cancer. *Social Science & Medicine,* 62**,** 2565-2576.
WALKLATE, S. 2007. *Handbook of Victims and Victimology,* Uffculme Cullompton, UK, Willan Publishing.
WALKLATE, S. 2011. Reframing criminal victimization: Finding a place for vulnerability and resilience. *Theoretical Criminology,* 15**,** 179-194.
WALLACE, A. 1986. Homicide: The Social Reality. *In:* RESERACH, B. O. C. S. A. (ed.). Sydney: BCSR.
WALTER, T. 2007. Modern grief, postmodern grief, . *International Review of Sociology,* 17**,** 123-134.
WANSELL, G. 2011. *The Bus Stop Killer - Milly Dowler, Her Murder and the Full Story of the Sadistic Serial Killer Levi Bellfield,* London, UK, Penguin
WARD, V. & EVANS, M. 2012. Tia Sharp's step-grandfather admits 'shady past' but denies harming 12-year-old. *Telegraph*, August 10.
WARWICK, D. P. & BULMER, M. 1983. The politics and ethics of field research. *Social research in developing countries: Surveys and censuses in the Third World*.
WELLS, K. 2005. *Goodbye Dearest Holly* UK, Psychology News Press Ltd.
WHITE, P. 1997. Death, disruption and the moral order: the narrative impulse in mass-media 'hard news' reporting. *Genres and institutions: Social processes in the workplace and school***,** 101-133.
WHITTLE, B. & RITCHIE, J. 2009. *Harold Shipman - Prescription For Murder: The true story of Dr Harold Frederick Shipman*, Little, Brown Book Group.
WIER, N. 2011. *British Serial Killers,* USA, Author House

WILLIAMS-THOMAS, M. 2008. Serial Killer Probe: Focus is on Suspect Peter Tobin. *Sky News Website*, 27 February.
WILLIG, C. 2008. *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology,* UK, Open University Press.
WILSON, C. 2011. *Escape From Evil*, Pan Macmillan.
WILSON, D. 2007. *Serial Killers: Hunting Britons and Their Victims, 1960-2006*, Waterside Press.
WILSON, D. 2008. *A History of British Serial Killing*, Little, Brown Book Group.
WILSON, D. 2010. Is this Peter Tobin, the UK's worst ever serial killer? . *Daily Mirro*, July 16.
WILSON, D. 2013. *Mary Ann Cotton Britain's First Serial Killer,* UK, Waterside Press.
WILSON, D. & HARRISON, P. 2008. *Hunting Evil: Inside the Ipswich Serial Murders,* UK, Sphere.
WILSON, D. & HARRISON, P. 2010. *The Lost British Serial Killer*, Little, Brown Book Group Limited.
WILSON, D., TOLPUTT, H., HOWE, N. & KEMP, D. 2010. When serial killers go unseen: The case of Trevor Joseph Hardy. *Crime, Media, Culture,* 6**,** 153.
WINLOW, S. & HALL, S. 2006. *Violent Night: Urban Leisure and Contemporary Culture. ,* Oxford, Berg
WOLFGANG, M. 1958. *Patterns in Criminal Homicide,* New Jersey, USA, Patterson Smith.
WRIGHT, K. & BOUFFARD, L. 2016. Capturing Crime: The Qualitative Analysis of Individual Cases for Advanced Criminological Knowledge. *International Journal of Offender Therapy andComparative Criminology,* 60**,** 123-145.
YARDLEY, E. & WILSON, D. 2015. *Female Serial Killers in a Social Context,* UK, Policy Press.
YARDLEY, E., WILSON, D. & KENNEDY, M. 2016. To its [sic]real life" Secondary victims of homicide in newer media. *Victims and Offenders [forthcoming]*.
YOUNG, J. 1987. Murder Most English. *Time Out* 5ed. London.
YOUNG, J. 1991. Left Realism and the Priorities of Crime Control. *In:* STENSON, K. & COWELL, D. (eds.) *The Politics of Crime Control,.* London, UK: Sage.
YOUNG, J. 1994. Incessant chatter: recent paradigms in criminology. *The Oxford handbook of criminology,* 1.
YOUNG, J. 1999. *The Exclusive Society,* London, Sage

APPENDIX

Samples

Sample email/letter request for interview

Dear xxxxxxxx,

Sorry for this intrusion and for your loss.

My name is Harriet and I am researching the effects of media intrusion for people who have suffered bereavement such as yourself. I am a senior producer at Sky News but I am also carrying out PhD research into the effects of media attention following a murder and I would really appreciate your help. I have worked for many years in the crime field and have seen first-hand the unnecessary pain caused by the media - be it from continued intrusion or spelling mistakes and I am hoping, following my research, to help change this.

I am in the process of carrying out a series of interviews with people who have been affected in this way. If it is something you may be able to help with I would be really grateful if you could reply to this email or call me on 07977 268669.

All the best

Harriet Tolputt

Consent Form

Consent to participant in research interview

Please read this form carefully

This interview is being conducted as part of PhD research to investigate the personal experiences of people affected by serious crime – in particular serial murder or suspected serial murder – and the media. Participants will be encouraged to talk freely

about their experiences with the media, but will also be asked questions about the circumstances surrounding the death, or disappearance of their relative.

Participation in this study is voluntary. The interview will last for approximately 60 minutes and be recorded. Participants are able to withdraw from the study at any time, or chose not to answer certain questions but remain part of the study.

Your identity will be protected and at no time will your name be revealed. You will not be named in this study, or subsequent publications, which may emanate from data collected during this interview.

Data collected during this study will be used by Harriet Tolputt for solely academic purposes and not be passed to third parties. All data collected will be held in a secure location adhering to standard data policies.

I _____ volunteer to participate in this research conducted by Harriet Tolputt, of Birmingham City University after having my involvement fully explained. I consent to information collected forming part of Harriet Tolputt's PhD and to be published in subsequent.

Name :_____ Date: _____ Signed: _____

Example Interview Schedule

Participant: XXX, whose daughter XXXX, 13, went missing in on 19 August 1978 while delivering newspapers in Devon. Her body has never been found and the case remains unsolved.

Date: 8 February 2012

Time: TBC

Venue: [Simon's] home in Greater Manchester. The participant is a wheelchair user and suggested his home due to the poor wheelchair access in the area. His home was deemed ideal as it would provide a private place to conduct and record the interview and it was the venue the participant said he felt most comfortable in.

Interview

In preparing an interview schedule it was first necessary to return to the research question: Do families of serial homicide victims suffer secondary victimization at the hands of the media? It was important to make sure all questions asked could in fact be answered, and to ensure there were no redundant or repetitive questions as Gillham notes 'the most striking difference between an expert and a notice interviewer is the clarity, focus and economy of the questioning on the part of the former; and the redundancy and lack of clear focus in the questions posed by the latter' (Gillham, 2005:18).

The interview will take a conversational, semi-structured format using six questions as a guide. This approach is designed to allow for the exploration of new topics while maintaining commonality to assist data analysis.

Care was given to the wording of each question and the possible responses as part of the 'process of operationalization' (Friesen, 2010:98) The questions conform with the guidelines laid out by Smith and Osborn (2003:63) when carrying out interpretative phenomenological analysis. The questions will be open, rather than closed, avoid jargon and be neutral rather than leading.

The interview process will take place in three stages. Firstly I will gain rapport with the participant after informal introductions. Talking about general, non-sensitive topics relevant to the day eg: the weather, latest TV show, news event. During this phase I will explain that consent is needed to conduct the interview and ask the participant to sign the form agreeing to his taking part in the research. Once the situation is relaxed and I am satisfied that the microphone is picking up an adequate level of sound I will explain to the participant that the interview is about to begin. At this stage I will reiterate that he is able to withdraw consent at any stage, that he may choose to not answer certain questions, and that if he finds the experience upsetting or uncomfortable that the interview can be stopped entirely, or paused so that he can compose himself.

The second phase is the actual interview. Below are six questions, which will be used as a guide. However, following the participants' replies will be 'prompts and probes' which are in effect 'supplementary or subsidiary questions or modes of exploration' (Gillham, 2005:24) Care will be taken to ensure the interview flows in a conversational manner and prompts not overused (Smith and Osborn, 2003). The participant will be encouraged to expand on points he feels are pertinent to his own experience. After all he is the expert of his own story.

Howitt (2010) sums this up when he says ' as a rule of thumb it is best to let the interviewee say what they want to say at the point at which they choose to say it.' (2010:285)

Questions	**Prompts and probes**
1. Tell me about your [daughter's] disappearance?	When? Where?
2. What was your experience of the media?	Intrusion? Helpful?
3. How could dealing with the media be improved?	Protection? Access?
4. What was your experience of police media strategy?	Helpful? Control?
5. How do you feel involvement with the media can be improved?	
6. How has your experience changed your relationship with the news?	

The third and final stage, referred to by Gillham (2005) as the closure stage will involve reviewing the interview process with the participant. I will ask [Simon] whether he has any questions about the research and whether he has anything to that he would like to add. This phase will also allow me to clarify any topics, which have emerged and to revisit the issue of consent.

References

FRIESEN, B. K. 2010. *Designing and Conducting Your First Interview Project,* USA, Wiley.

GILLHAM, B. 2005. *Research Interviewing: The range of techniques,* Berkshire, Open Univ Press.

HOWITT, D. 2010. *Introduction to qualitative methods in psychology,* UK, Pearson Education.

SMITH, J. & OSBORN, M. 2003. Interpretative phenomenological analysis *In:* SMITH, J. (ed.) *Qualitative Psychology. A practical guide to research methods.* London: Sage.

Example Redacted Interview

[Roger] 63, father, husband conducted at his office on June 17 2012

Interview length 53 minutes

Additional Notes: He was very friendly, free talking, his religion is clearly key. I skirted around the point of actually saying murder or using his daughter's name

Interview

A: I am quiet experienced with the press because I have had 30 years of it you know so I can say I know them fairly them and what to expect from the press. I learned that 30 years ago, and learned not to say too much and to say it at certain times to not ever to be interviewed without organising yourself to be interviewed. Thinking about what you want to say and using the press to an advantage, I don't mean that in a bad way just that rather than them use you, one thing about press in this country we have had a lovely relationship with them. David (Sky reporter) is just lovely and a few I know well now, you know over the years.

Q: What about in the beginning? What was your first encounter with the media?

A: When [ ] first went missing then, very quickly the media was there. There's a lot of old footage of that, we were very quickly thrust into the media and we very

quickly learned that they never really write down what you said. They would write it down but maybe in a different way, swap sentences, put a sentence… you actually say it but it was put in a different area so that it looks different, you could never deny saying it, so we quickly learnt that it wasn't all just easy, so it wasn't. Being interviewed on the television wasn't as bad because you are speaking but they would cut quite a lot of that out but saying that sometimes the papers didn't really say what you had said.

Q: What was your reaction with being thrust into the media – were you hoping they could help?

A: Yes we would have appealed at the beginning, I think you will find some footage of us saying that who ever took our daughter, if you could bring her back, or at least say where she was. And we used it to that end and the media was very helpful in that. Particularly the television, there wasn't the same amount of coverage throughout the world but we would have used the television and the papers to see if we could get someone to find her, you know. That would be the first reaction.

Q: And when you said you learned quickly - how did you feel reading the words that they reported which you hadn't said?

A: It firstly made me quite upset. I remember one comment was made when a member of the press said to me, you know it could be one of your neighbours and I said something like 'yeah suppose it could be', and then in the press that night was: "Family suspect" you know, it wasn't as graphic as that but it was like "family suspect it could be a neighbour" and that was very upsetting so it was, because that wasn't what I meant but I couldn't deny having said that it could be a neighbour. And then when the trial was over… I made a comment on the news

that if RB doesn't know or come to an understanding of forgiveness with Jesus Christ he could actually burn in hell and *The Sun's* headline was "Father said Black will burn in Hell" and they also had a picture of me, as I was coming out of the court I was pointing for the rest of the family to go over to the press. But they took the rest of the family out of that photograph and just had me standing pointing and it looked like that was me saying "RB will burn in hell" you know. That's how they constructed and made the thing, it was devious, it was horrible and someone actually said to me you know that they complained to *The Sun* for that. I hadn't said it that way. The press want headlines and that's what sells papers, headlines, and I came to that understanding very quickly.

Q: Is there a way you learnt to try and avoid those situations?

A: You will not find much after the initial losing of [ ] and the funeral, you will not find much in the press after that. Because we took a conscious decision to avoid meeting with the press, we had many, many offers, and since it [the trial] we have had many, many offers but we aren't in to that. We didn't give any interviews at all because we were so scared of our words being manipulated in a way. And when they cut things out, you know you can't say you didn't say it but they would cut something else out that leads to it. It's like me saying " I don't like you – but I really do love you" what they would do is they would put down [David] says he doesn't like Harriet but they don't say that he loves Harriet. That's what I am getting at. It's two tiered. So we quite quickly found that the press sensationalised things, rightly so, it's what they are into, and we learned how to avoid the press.

Q: How did you do that?

A: From time to time there was something, over the years that something rears

its head and what we would do is say "no comment". My girls were very good at not letting anyone come through to me from the press [meaning employees] and coming up to the trial. You see we knew for a long time the trial was going to happen before it happened. And there were lots of occasions where I would say no comment. And I got the pastor at my church to comment on a few occasions. So that I wouldn't have to.. because I saved it up for the last.. when it's over. Because we didn't talk to the media at all until the trial was over.

Q: You seem to be managing the press how did you learn that strategy?

A: We knew that we didn't want to be in the public domain, that was the first thing. The second thing was we didn't want to comment in case we jeopardised the case, and that could have happened very easily. All we had to say was something on the news and the defence lawyer would have used it and we took advice from the public prosecution lawyer on that. And even when it went to court the prosecution complained about the bad press RB was getting and if I would have contributed to that so I was very, very aware of not ever commenting and I remember half way through the trial and a journalist said "You know we are writing all these stories and we don't have a photograph" and I said alright what we will do is as long as you don't ask me any questions we will go out at dinner time today and we will go out and if you have a cameraman there and we will pose for pictures and we did. And to give them a wee bit, to keep them at bay, and we always said, I talked to all the press and said we wouldn't be doing anything all this was over.

Q: And did they respect that?

A: Yes they were lovely yes.

Q: How did it feel being thrust into the media?

A: I was ready for it then

Q: But what about in the beginning?

A: You see the problem with that was when [ ] disappeared, life was just stunned. You know honestly even remembering a lot of it, I can't remember a lot of it because I was just stunned, absolutely stunned. If you came home one day and your daughter is missing it's a stunning occasion. I can certainly remember talking to the TV, and to talking to reporters but when I'd seen some of the comments I very quickly stopped talking them. I gave the odd television interview but I became very shy after that. Many people had asked me to appear on radio shows and things and I just totally refused and said no, I can't.

Q: The reason being because your words had previously been taken out of context?

A: Yes and I didn't see any mileage in it. You know what I mean, it didn't seem.. you know, I don't want people to feel sorry for me, I don't have a victim mentality so I didn't want people knowing me, because my daughter had been murdered. I can't walk up the street, I have been in [town] for 40 years and I am well known but now it's worse no matter where I go will know somebody – or somebody would say to me, this happened just recently, I woman said I have seen you before. I know you, and said no I don't think you do. But she says no you are familiar – now I could have told her why but I didn't you know. And I thought maybe she would catch on, and she said so you're not going to tell me and I said well maybe you will find out. I just went on with what I was doing. You know it's very hard. You see, when [ ] went missing it was such a paralysing experience you can't really think straight and to say that I managed the press then would be wrong. All I can tell you is that eventually I avoided the press because it just

became sensationalised. At the beginning we would have used the press obviously to see if we could find her, but when she was found and she was found dead the press had no further, no further profit for me. And that sounds very calculating but I am a very private person and so is my wife. You know, we don't particularly like being in the limelight – but saying that one of our ambitions was that we would be able to glorify God through the whole thing. And that's what we are about now and we saved it til now. We hoped that one day, when Black was convicted that we could use it. And now I am out two or three times a month in a church talking about it. So it would and that would be the only place we would talk.

Have you heard of [BBC journo] well I would ask [ ] you know when it comes to the trial and I asked him if he would do a final interview with me and he said yes he would. And we did an interview with BBC and to even it up we did one with ITV, so we did two interviews but we were offered other things like Spotlight and the Nolan Show but we totally refused to do that, you know, because we are not into that. [wife] and I want to talk in churches that's what we are about. I was in Surrey recently, and you know the word "saved". To be born again. Well a young girl of 11 got saved that meeting, that's what I am about, bringing people into the kingdom through the death of [daughter]. So we glorify God through her death, so we don't have a victim mentality.

Q: What made you want to do those interviews with BBC and ITV? Did you just want to the spread the word about God?

A: That would be primarily the main reason. But they didn't broadcast everything we would have liked them to broadcast but I never imagined they would, we never ever said our sights to have every word we spoke to have

broadcast but there was enough broadcast to show that we were Christians and that we had had that faith and that understanding and that peace from knowing the Lord Jesus. And that was what we were about. We also did the interview to put a full stop to it, you know what I mean, so we had a full stop and we haven't been bothered that much after. We had been contacted but not much.

Q: How did you feel that you gave up your time to do the interview, you clearly had a message to get across and your words weren't broadcast in full. How did that make you feel?

A: I didn't have a high expectation of that because I understand that my interviews with news media is not a religious programme. So I am in the real world when it comes to that. I am not going to condemn someone but there was enough in it to show people how we lived our lives and our aim was to glorify God. And that this murderer, who is now hugely famous, I would say he is now more famous than his victims, now there are three programmes each Tuesday night, and Tuesday night week that how programme is dedicated to Robert Black. So it's a whole programme sensationalising serial killers.

Q: How as a father of one of his victims, how does that make you feel that he is the focus of it. It is common that it is the killer that gets that sensationalism?

A: I don't want, I don't want, the media to be talking about me or about [ ] but I would prefer that they wouldn't sensationalise Black, because Black is evil. I don't know whether you have ever heard the interview tapes but what he did to wee girls, would be beyond your imagination. As a normal male with sexual urges it wasn't even in my imagination and also I wouldn't be interested in wee girls, if I was looking it would be mature girl or mature woman, but he looked for

wee girls, and what he did to them, you know he had things in the van that he would stick into them, it wasn't even in my remit, the defence and the prosecution on what was going to be admission, and I can remember we sat there for two days and the shock of it was just unbelievable and on the Wednesday the judge ruled what was admissible and what was not. And I remember coming home and going to a prayer meeting and all I could do was sit and cry. The thoughts of what that man would come out of his mouth and he thought there was no harm in it. And he is going to be sensationalised. Like Adolf Hitler. Probably more people have heard of Adolf Hitler than people who have done good. You always get programmes about people like Adolf Hitler and it looks like it the same with people who do serial killings. This is not the end of it, Black will be convicted for more.

Q: How do you feel that this programme will feature info about [ ] and probably her picture?

A: Would you believe that it's the most annoying thing that no one would have the courtesy to ring from the media. It would just be lovely if someone lifted the phone and said '"Look I am ringing to warn you that something is on today'. It would just be lovely if somebody, one of the things that really bothered me coming to the trial is that sometimes the press knew things and broadcast them before the police knew. The public prosecution never thought to tell us. The only thing I did complain about was that. The police were lovely and the public prosecution were lovely but sometimes people would be ringing in the car and say – look don't be going in the newsagent [ ] picture is all over the front of the papers again and no one had rang to say that there was another step in this. For example I read recently that Black was still in [ ] here and I didn't know that.

And it was in the press and no one thought to keep me up to date. I can't expect every time but it would just be nice if someone was considerate enough in the press. Now [son] has a very good system on his iphone that every time RB name comes up in the press it brings an alarm up. So over the last few months, you know we won't have known about this programme on the television. And it came on his alarm, so any time it comes up in the press and we buy the paper to see what it says you know, so it does. But that is probably the biggest complaint that I would have that people have no courtesy to tell you.

Q: Would you want the media to tell you or the police?

A: Well when the police know they would tell me, the police team that we have worked with over the years, since the 1990s, well they have changed slightly over the years but the liaison officers we have, have been fantastic and they have said well, sorry but we don't know and the public prosecution have said well we didn't know.

Q: I guess it's more difficult as it was part of a serial murder and other victims may lead to stories about [ ] you now if they charge him with more murders.

A: I think he will. It's not over yet. He is appealing at the moment and no one can give us information about that appeal. It won't be this side of the summer recess. But we don't know any of the arguments at the moment so we don't . The defence team is a money spinner for somebody – these lawyers earn up to 1500 to 1700 pounds a day. I had one paper ring me up, and it just shows how insensitive they are sometimes. They rang up, it was a Scottish paper, or someone working for a Scottish paper freelance, they were very nice but he said they were doing an article on the cost, on the cost of what it was to convict these criminals and it costs 350,000 to put Black down this time and he asked me how

I feel about that – and I said you know it's the law, he is innocent until he is proven guilty and if it costs that much to prove him guilty what can I do about that. Well he said how would that compare to the compensation you got, and I said what do you mean compensation, he said surely you got compensation during the time that [] was lost, and I said no we never got it and we never asked for it. I don't think he believed me and I never would have wanted it. We looked it up on the computer and it was small article, it also appeared in *The Sun* so he must have sold it on. It was very insensitive, there were times when we have been a wee bit annoyed but during the trial I set out to get a relationship with the press. I made sure that almost every day I went and spoke and greeted them.

Q: Why did you do that?

A: I wanted them on my side so I did, I know that sounds very conceited but I didn't want them printing things. I wanted them to know who I was, and what I was about, I didn't want them writing stories about someone who was remote. I became a friendly with a lot of them. We became friends. And another thing the trial was a hugely touching story. When it was over the clerk of the court told me after we had met the press and the clerk of the court said [David] I have been on this job 33 years and I have never sat through anything like that ever. I have never seen the jury cry, I have never seen the legal profession cry, I have never seen the press or the police cry, I have never cried. And it was just that sort of a case you know. There was a presence about it. It was God he was in it. There was one day and we were just sitting there and before we went to court and said we should pray and people cried at my prayers. There was just that, what's the word, ambience about it. There was a senior police man there who has since retired and coincidentally his son Raymond Murray, RM was the policeman that

eventually brought Black to trial over [ ] now coincidently his father Eric Murray was a sergeant or police inspector when [daughter's] body was found so on the news reel you can see Eric standing there when the body was carried out and put into the back of the hearse, or the van I can't remember. And he has become a friend and he came to the trial almost every day. And he said he had never cried at a trial before in my life – so there was a presence about it and I don't think the press could have ever treated us badly. So that was something nice about it – during that time there was nothing in the press that annoyed me, so it didn't.

I think one of the reasons was that I and [wife] struck up a relationship with them, and we never once avoided them in the court. And I knew that everything I said that they couldn't repeat it. I would say to them than when I was talking off the cuff that it wasn't for them to repeat it and they respected that.

Q: Previous to the trial were there times when things were broadcast that did upset you?

A: Yes, but I was really just when I didn't know when things were coming up. But there was never really anything during that time that would have annoyed me. *The Sun* upset me this time, but they did score some points at a later date when they put a really good headline in it. About [daughter] it really was good and I have kept that *Sun* actually because of it.

A: What was good about it?

Q: Well they spoke very nicely about [daughter] and the family and they actually said that [daughter] had been saved when she was seven years of age and coming from a paper like *The Sun* that was something else. I actually buy *The Sun* would you believe. I can sit here in the morning, I go into the newsagents every morning at seven o'clock when I come into work and I can sit before they come

in and I can read the news in *The Sun* in 10 minutes. I can't do that in *The Mail*, I buy *The Mail* and bring it home to read. But I can do *The Sun* in 10 minutes, everything is abbreviated but if you read it in *The Mail* and it's a novel, everything is novel so you know. I can get *The Sun* and skip through the day's news but I would never put the TV on. So I enjoy *The Sun* so I do.

Q: And what would you say to people setting out about how you want to be treated to make the whole experience better.

A: I think it is very hard for young journalists to learn something like that overnight. That only comes from age and experience so it does, and everybody as they grow older, like I am more sensitive now to people's problems now than I would have been when I was 20. So young people are not as sensitive as an older person would be. Also older people have come through more things in their life, so they understand what hurt is all about. The young people don't have that experience in their life so it is very hard for young people to be that sensitive. Although there are people who are gifted that way. But would have thought in all honesty that journalism is a gift. It is a gift of God, because you are reporting on people's lives and you have to talk in a very sensitive way in people. And I have found that most journalists are like that and they are very respectful. Most journalists are not pushing. When [daughter] went missing it wasn't as a professional job as it is now, I would honestly say that journalism is now more professional than ever and journalists are more professional than ever. I don't know about how you feel. But that's how I feel.

Maybe it's me – that I am maybe more tuned into it. So I am, but sensationalism is what journalism is about. Like it didn't matter what I said on one occasion but [wife] said that if Robert Black asked to meet her she would meet him and if he

asked for forgiveness she would forgive him. And that was the headline. It didn't matter what we said, because it was sensational. And we walked away and someone said to me [name] that's what the headlines will be in the morning and it was.

Q: How do you feel about that?

A: I have no problem with it because I understand that, that is what sells stories. Because at the end of the day that's what it is all about – because you can't have your cake and eat it. We think in all honestly have come to terms with the media on this occasion and I think that we along with the media have worked well. I think that we almost got it perfect and I mean that, I am not saying that's a plus to us – because it is a plus to them as well. Because they were very sensitive to our, to our problems – it was the most awful six weeks in your life, listening to what we listened to. I was in Portadown the other day with people, measuring a job, and I know the guy, and we were talking about it and even then all I could do was sit and cry. You know the thoughts of it, you know and we tried to avoid over the last 30 years thinking about it. In fact my wife never knew that she had been sexually abused. I kept that from her for years and it was only about 6/7 years ago and we used to meet the police, you know that's what I was saying about keeping away from the press, when the police wanted to update us with what was going on, because we were waiting on this trial since the 1990s when he as caught – and when they wanted to update us we would have met them in places where the press won't have known we were there. For example there's a town called [ ] near to here and we would have met them in [ ] because the police station is only part time so there weren't even police there. If we would have met

them, in the local police station people would have known that we would have met them – it would have been in the papers.

Q: So you really had to go out of your way then to avoid the press?

A: Yes, yes, we went out of our way to avoid the press for years and we just said no we are not doing anything. There was an odd occasion that I would have sat down with an odd person when I found out what their motives were, there's a girl I remember giving an interview to. I think I must have given like two interviews in 30 years, I can't remember the number, but we learnt to use the press who were using us in a way that suited both of us. And that worked very well so it did. You know. And that comes with age.

A: Clearly you have a very strong support from your family and the church some people haven't had that. Do you think it has been cathartic talking to the press? To have someone who is interested in your story.

Q: Yes I think that you would be telling lies if there wasn't something in you, that, if for example when the trial started if the media hadn't been interested I would have been very disappointed. In truth, I would have been very disappointed. Not for my sake but for [daughter's] sake. I wanted the media to be there. But I wanted them to print what was right to be printed. The other thing about life that was touched on there was that we have a very good family life which is probably the routes of, the routes of being a satisfied fulfilled person. Because it is not about the money, it's about relationships, but because we are a Christian family we are the member of the body of Christ which is part of a church, and how the church is unbelievably, unbelievably sensitive to backing people in trouble. And not only the church I go to but the whole community of churches in the province and beyond. There wasn't a day for months that there wasn't some

two dozen cards coming through our door. That was the lovely thing about the whole thing because I knew I was a member of a special family but I knew that I was a member of the body of Christ, which was very special and I don't know how I could have gone through that without knowing Jesus. I mean that. I really do mean that. Some of the lovely times, even during the trial, some of the lovely times we spent with the Lord was just beautiful, he brought us through it all so he did. I feel sorry for people who lose loved ones and they don't really have a family and they are not members of churches. I just feel so sorry for them and I really feel so sorry for that McCann family. Who haven't found her. I remember when they found [ ] just even knowing she was dead, just the anticipation and the excitement of seeing even her body again was just unbelievable. To be reunited with her, even though she was dead. Just knowing that, you know was just great. It was awful seeing her, you know, but at least we know what had happened to her, them people don't know what has happened to their child. Just so terrible.

Q: Why did you feel that you wanted the media there for []?

A: I felt that it was warrant or justified that for 30 years [daughter] that no one had been caught for her trial and this paedophile murderer was caught and the police had worked so hard, they had millions of hours on it really, I just think that when it had come to a conclusion, that it was justified to tell people that the police had done a good job. It was justified to say that the jury had done a job, justified to say that the defence had done a good job and that we as a family had done a good job. You know I just felt that should have been spoken, you know.

So I felt that I would have been very disappointed if the press hadn't been interested and I would also tell you that there's an arrogance involved. There

was an arrogance on my behalf, to want to tell the story, you know. I wanted the story to be told but I wanted it to be told right. And I wanted it to be told and over with. Now I am still carrying the story around churches but that is my decision to be able to tell others how [daughter] is now with the lord in heaven and that she had been saved as a child and I know that people.. I have wonderful experiences with people, I went on a walk I met people who had been to one of my meetings and there was a woman there who had been saved. I was sitting on top of the mountain one day and some woman, someone came along who had lost a person on the mountain and I had seen them and I told them I had seen them, and told them to go round to intercept them, and in the conversion I introduced myself and he said I heard you did a testimony at such and such a place and they said they had been saved at that place. That's what has made it all worthwhile. It's not worthwhile making me or [wife] famous. I want the lord to be made famous.

Q: And you saw the media as a vehicle for that.

A: At that time yes. But not any longer. You know, certainly I was willing to talk to you as I never felt like a victim. I have never had a victim mentality, so I didn't. Certainly [daughter] was a victim and we as a family was a victim but we never had a victim mentality. We don't want people to be feeling sorry for us when we have such lovely positives out of it you know. And the positives are that we have a lovely family and that we have lovely memories of [ ] and we have made wonderful friends even in the media, and we really have. Some of them even now send through emails you know once a fortnight to say hello and [BBC reporter] was a lovely man and [the ITV] girl, you know but we would have liked more the

religious side of the interview broadcast we got enough over that we were Christians and about our faith.

This might me foreign to you.

Q: No it's not.

A: Are you sure you don't want a cup of tea

Q: No thanks – is there anything you want to ask me about this?

A: No I know what you are doing is a complex subject and I think to teach young journalists to be sensitive is not that easy but it's nice to think there could be a vehicle to show them how to conduct their lives. I think to be a journalist is definitely a gift – to have a way with people, you know so it is and most of the journalists have met have a way with people. Some can be pushy but I wouldn't bother with people like that – I like people with a softness and a politeness and not an aggressiveness, you know

Q: Do you think there's a difference between freelance and staff journalists or from different organisations?

A: No – you know I couldn't say. You know me and [wife and son] say you know that it's not really over. We think there's more to come and we don't know why or how. We just feel there is more to come. So lets hope this appeal is not allowed because I don't know how he will ever get a fair trial because he is so well known.

Q: You say that but then Peter Tobin got another trial.

A: We had a big problem here because a lot of the evidence was blown up and they lost a lot of evidence. A lot of the clothes and they didn't have any DNA. But they didn't need it because they were able to prove he was in [ ] on the day and

they were about to prove he was a scavenger he was a predator, if you heard the tapes of his speaking, and how he liked and what he liked, of little girls, you know. That he didn't like pubic hair and he didn't like breasts. He sat and told us that you know. This was in the court, and he sat there and he wasn't embarrassed. You know, if someone spoke about me like that, I would be embarrassed so I would you know. I would be ashamed and obviously he has no conscience so he hasn't and I just pray that one day he comes up with a conscience you know. He doesn't know what he has to meet the day her dies, you know. It's just so terrible, a lot of these criminals are the same, they don't have a conscience so they don't you know, so they don't.

ends