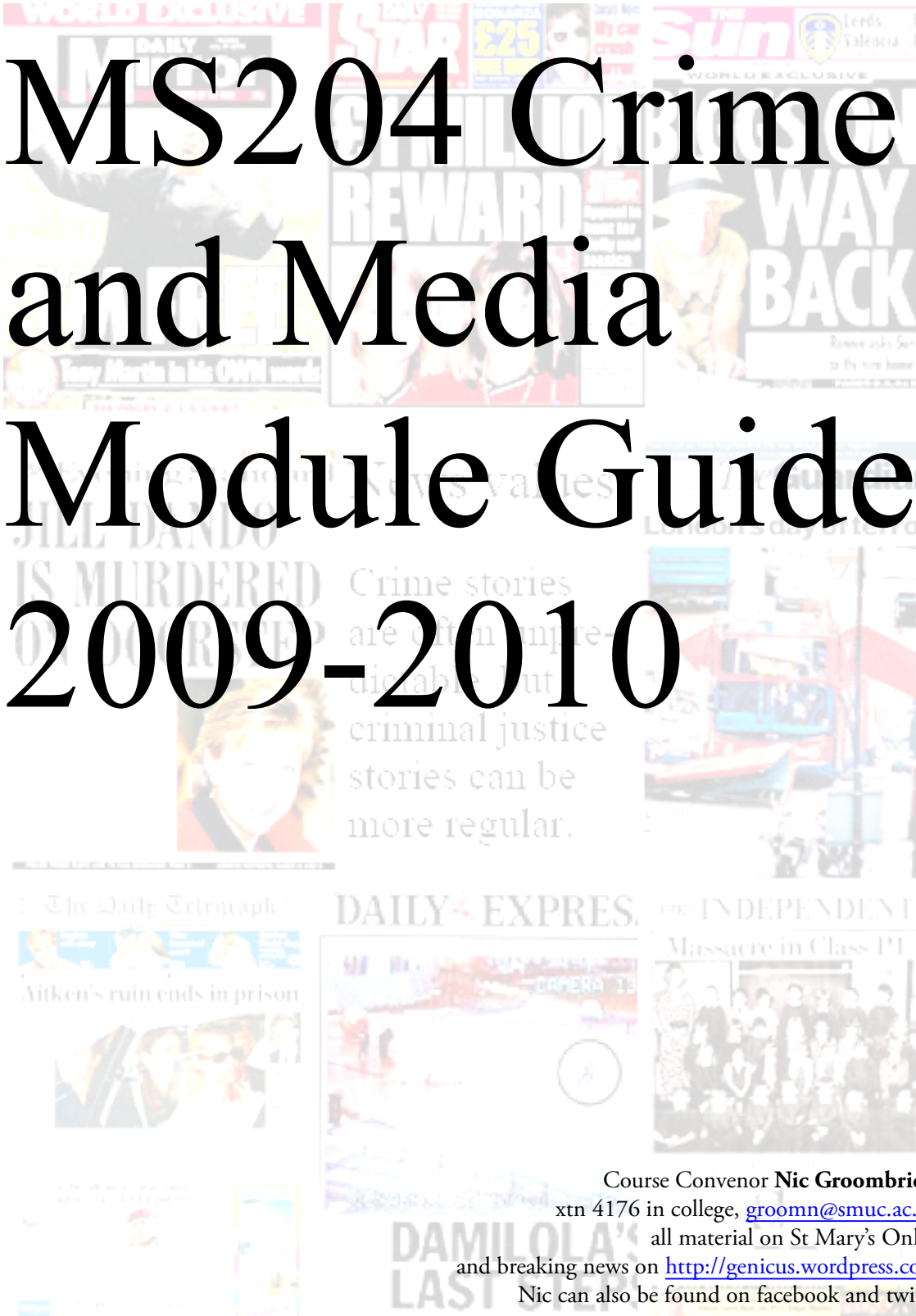


MS204 Crime and Media Module Guide 2009-2010



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all material on St Mary's Online
and breaking news on <http://genicus.wordpress.com/>

Nic can also be found on facebook and twitter

What is Crime and Media module all about?

This module is clearly about crime and media and some thoughts about both are set out below. But who are the audiences for 'texts' about crime, how is crime represented and how are those representations produced – often by a media industry. The course will examine each of these in turn over several weeks. Current social structures and past history are relevant too. Moreover a number of recurrent interlocking themes will be examined.

Crime

This course covers everything from the deviant to the seriously criminal and the policing, punishment and prevention of crime etc; from individual crimes to discussions of 'crime': from murder to industrial pollution or 'accidents' via 'mugging', celebrity shoplifting and drink driving. In media cultures even difference can be labelled deviant and both easily criminalised.

Media

For purely practical purposes newspapers and internet news sources will be to the fore in illustrating the course but all media whether newspapers, magazines, TV (including CCTV), film, books, comics, videogames and internet etc are considered. Moreover, factual, fictional and all genres are allowed even if not all covered. Whilst sometimes 'the media' are covered *en bloc* the differences between each are often important too, particularly when one bit of the media has a go at another. Within the media, owners, editors and journalists may have different perspectives.

Sociology and History

Criminals, deviants, victims, criminal justice all have sociological characteristics. So there will be class, 'race'/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age and other differences between those reporting and those reported on which may impact on coverage/attitudes.

Much off the course focuses on the present or recent past but the persistence of the interest in crime is telling: for instance, the media aspects of the Jack the Ripper case are examined.

Themes

The course is about all the above but, as has been mentioned, three, often interlocking, themes are key.

- Media effects
- News values
- Moral panics

Does the media have an effect? Is it benign or malign? Destructive of society or supportive of capitalism/patriarchy/'the system'? Long term or short? On all people or just some?

What stories are covered? Small burglaries (so Liverpool players' houses don't count here) or a juicy murder? Even all murders? Some sociological analysis of this but what about journalistic imperatives too? Surrrette's Law of Opposites states the less frequent the crime or criminal the greater amount of coverage. Clearly frenzies arise in the media – sometimes about a supposed media effect – but are these moral panics? Are moral panics inadvertent or deliberately stoked by 'moral entrepreneurs' or those with a PR mission?

So the course, essentially, only about one thing how the media (multiple numbers and types) cover crime/deviance and criminal justice (again multiple instances) and using criminology to give some context (i.e. figures for actual crimes instead of those focussed on by media) and sociology and cultural/media/film/literary studies for analytical methods.

In many respects the course is very easy as we are surrounded by the media. The difficulty is in standing back from that and asking why we enjoy police chases on *Sky Cops*, for instance or are horrified by what might have happened to Maddy McCann or the activities of Gary Glitter.

Media effects, moral panics and news values will each be covered separately for analytical purposes. In addition some other relevant contemporary issues will be addressed. Discussions of crime often focus on 'good' and 'bad' but media representations also offer black and white, male and female, straight and gay or young and old in similar and interlocking ways.

Teaching methods, books etc

In many respects the teaching is fairly standard in using lectures and seminars but a considerable use will be made of St Mary's Online, the internet and augmented by my own [website](#) and [blog](#). The set book, which you should obtain, is Eamonn Carrabines's [Crime, Culture and the Media](#) from Polity. The overall shape of the module is derived from the book though material placed on St Mary's online will augment it. You are also highly advised to look at Yvonne Jewkes's [Media and Crime](#) from Sage which has been the set book in past years. Other useful books are: *Crime and Media: A Reader* by Chris Greer (Editor) and [Crime, Justice and the Media](#) by Ian Marsh and Gaynor Melville. Each week time will be given for any crime or criminal justice stories covered by the media to be looked at.

Further useful resources are these book and websites:

Armstrong, Nancy (Ed) Tennenhouse, Leonard (Ed) [The violence of representation: literature and the history of violence](#) London Routledge 1989

Barak, Gregg (ed) [Crime and crime control: a global view](#) Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press 2000

Barker, Martin (ed) [Ill effects: the media/violence](#) London:Routledge 2001

Boyle Karen [Media and Violence: Gendering the Debates](#) Sage

Brown, Sheila [Crime, law and media culture](#) OUP 2003

Chibnall, Steve. [Law-and-order news : an analysis of crime reporting in the British press](#) London : Tavistock Publications, 1977

Collins, Philip [Dickens and crime](#) Macmillan 1994

Ericson, Richard V [Representing order : crime, law and justice in the news media](#) Milton Keynes : Open University Press, 1991.

Eysenck, H. J. Sex, violence, and the media. London : Temple Smith, 1978.

Fishman, Mark (ed) Cavender, Gray (ed) [Entertaining crime: television reality programs](#) New York: Aldine de Gruyter 1998

Fowles, Jib [The Case for television violence](#) London: Sage 1999

Gauntlett, David (ed) [Web studies: rewiring media studies for the digital age](#) London: Arnold 2000

Green, Jen (Ed) Reader, I murdered him: an anthology of original crime stories Women's Press 1989('95)

Hollingsworth, Keith [The Newgate novel : 1830-1847](#) ; Bulwer, Ainsworth, Dickens & Thackeray Detroit: Wayne University Press 1963

Howitt, Dennis [Crime, the Media and the Law](#) John Wiley 1998

Kerekes, David. [See no evil : banned films and video controversy](#) David Kerekes & David Slater.

Kidd-Hewitt, David (ed) Osborne, Richard (ed) [Crime and the media: the post-modern spectacle](#) London: Pluto Press 1995

Krutnik, Frank [In a lonely street : film noir, genre, masculinity](#) Frank Krutnik. London ; New York : Routledge, 1991.

Leishman, Frank and Mason, Paul [Policing and the Media](#) Cullumpton: Willan 2003

Maguire, Mike (ed) Morgan, Rod (ed) Reiner, Robert (ed) [The Oxford Handbook of Criminology](#) Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007

Mason Paul (ed) [Criminal Visions: media representations of crime and justice](#) Cullumpton: Willan 2003

Millwood Hargrave, Andrea [Violence in Factual Television](#)

Potter, W James [On media violence](#) London: Sage 1999

Rafter, Nicole Hahn, [Shots in the mirror: crime films and society](#) Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, 2000.

Schlesinger, Philip Tumbler, Howard [Reporting Crime: The Media Politics of Criminal Justice](#) Oxford Uni Press 1994

Soothill, Keith Walby, Sylvia [Sex crime in the news](#) Routledge 1991

Wall David S. (ed) [Crime and the internet](#) London : Routledge, 2001

Wilson David (2006) [Serial Killers: Hunting Britons and Their Victims, 1960 to 2006](#) Waterside

Men and violence research <http://www.fms.stir.ac.uk/mvv/violence.html>

Crimeinfo <http://www.crimeinfo.org.uk/>

American Society of Criminology <http://www.asc41.com/>

British Society of Criminology <http://www.britisoccrim.org>
Centre for Crime and Justice Studies <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/ccjs/home.htm>
The Guardian <http://www.guardianunlimited.co.uk/>
The Home Office <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/>
BBC Crime page <http://www.bbc.co.uk/crime/>

Assessment

A 2,000 word essay (40%) due in on Friday 13 November. A 2 hour examination (60%) in December. The questions for the essay are:

- a) Compare the contributions criminology and media studies can make in explaining serial killers.
- b) Critically explore the media coverage of and 'blame' for school shootings.
- c) Is fear of crime a result of moral panics or can it be related to general media coverage or, indeed, just 'crime'?

The Module in brief

Wk1	25 Sept	Introduction to module and discussion
Wk2	2 Oct	Video: Jack the Ripper
Wk3	9 Oct	Media Effects
Wk4	16 Oct	Fear of Crime
Wk5	23 Oct	How audiences make sense of sex and death
Wk6	30 Oct	UK TV cop shows

Mid-semester break

Wk7	13 Nov	US TV cop shows <u>hand in essay</u>
Wk8	20 Nov	Printed media – newspapers and books
Wk9	27 Nov	The production of news
Wk10	4 Dec	More All Panics?
Wk11	11 Dec	Revision

The Module in full

Wk1

Introduction to module and discussion based on last couple of month's news etc.

The module will be introduced through a guided reading of this module guide and looking at some of the resources available.

The introductory lecture reminds students about the significance of audiences, representations and the industries that serve those audiences and produce those representations (or texts). This will be done with reference to the examples given by

Carrabine but also updated to include new news stories and fictional contributions to the crime genre.

In the remaining time we can all discuss some of these issues.

For next week you should read the introduction to the set book.

Wk2

Video: Jack the Ripper

In the lecture a video about Jack the Ripper ([***TO KILL AND KILL AGAIN: JACK THE RIPPER 2002***](#)) will be shown because of its references to the media interest in the case (then as now) and how the media might, itself, be implicated. This recent [***article***](#) suggests papers still interested. The case of Jack the Ripper is history but it shows things weren't necessarily better then.

In the seminar we'll discuss your reading of the set book's introduction particularly the models used in the book (and widely elsewhere), the politics of porn and how we amuse ourselves to death with death.

For next week you should read up on media coverage of Jack the Ripper from the past and more recently. See <http://www.met.police.uk/history/ripper.htm> for Met Police take on this and http://www.casebook.org/press_reports/ for very full details of press coverage from around the world.

Wk3

Media Effects

From the [***murder of James Bulger***](#) to the [***Columbine shootings***](#) commentators have sought to blame the effect of the media; implicitly linking to [***Bandura's Bobo***](#). This lecture is based on Chapter 1 of the set book.

In the seminar media coverage of Jack the Ripper and other violent crime is considered.

For next week you should read Chapter 1 of the set book.

Wk4

Fear of Crime

Some presume criminology is the just study of crime but increasingly fear of crime a topic, and a contested one. One 'effect' of the media is said to be fear or anxiety or even panic (possibly moral) about crime (or swine flu or AIDS or the economy). This lecture is based on Chapter 2 of the set book.

In the seminar we discuss Chapter 1 of the set book concentrating on the contending approaches (mass communication v cultural theory) and criminology's take on this in the form of 'moral panics'.

For next week you should read Chapter 2 of the set book.

Wk5

How audiences make sense of sex and death

Psychoanalytic approaches might suggest death our greatest fear and sex our greatest desire and that the two are intertwined. If we don't 'read' texts can we 'read' audiences? What methods might we use? This lecture is based on Chapter 3 of the set book.

In the seminar we will discuss Chapter 2 of the set book, in particular some of the feminist interventions in the debate.

For next week read Chapter 3 of the set book and Robert Reiner's [Media Made Criminality](#).

Wk6

UK cop shows

This week Sara Steinke will talk about TV cop shows from UK with clips.

In the seminar we discuss Reiner's work. In particular we'll concentrate on the summary on page 393 though note various sections helpfully relate to other week's work. Obviously we shall try and relate this to Sara's lecture.

For next week read Chapter 4.

Mid-semester break

Wk7 NB hand in essay

US cop shows

This week Sara Steinke will talk about TV cop shows from USA with clips.

In the seminar we will discuss Chapter 4. In particular we will examine crime reporting and detective fiction. Series 5 of [the Wire](#) largely features the inter-relationship and parallels between police and news media. You might find Nick Davies's [Flat Earth News](#) useful.

For next week you should read Chapter 5.

Wk8

Printed media – newspapers and books

Both newspapers and novels often rely on transgression or crime to supply shocks or plot devices. This lecture is based on Chapter 4 of the set book.

In the seminar we will discuss Chapter 5, particularly on detective fiction. Kate Summerscale's [The Suspicions of Mr. Whicher: or the Murder at Road Hill House](#) shows how a real life case inspired both Dickens and Collins.

For next week you should read Chapter 6.

Wk9

The production of news – particularly sex and violence

What are the economics, politics and socio-cultural aspects of news production? In particular how is violence against women and children 'sexed up'? This lecture is based on chapter 7.

In the seminar we discuss Chapter 6. In particular we'll look at police series using that reading and the examples given in past two weeks. There will also be general feedback on essays. You should see Nic for individual discussion.

For next week read Chapter 7

Wk10

More All Panics?

This week we seek to locate moral panics in post/late-modern/risk society. Are all 'panics' 'moral', or even about crime and deviance? This lecture is based on Chapter 8.

In the seminar we discuss Chapter 7 particularly the politico-economic aspects of crime reporting and the 'sexualisation' of such reporting.

For next week read Chapter 8 and Conclusion.

Wk11

Conclusion of book and revision for exam.