Youth violence: A study of moral panics in terms of schismogenic loops.

Gary Jonathan. Hsu

University of Windsor

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YOUTH VIOLENCE: A STUDY OF MORAL PANICS IN TERMS OF SCHISMOGENIC LOOPS

by

Gary Hsu

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
Through the Department of Sociology and Anthropology
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1998

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0-612-52572-4
ABSTRACT

This study examines the problem of the moral panic over youth violence focusing on how these phenomena emerge and eventually subside. Utilizing data from the 1995 Toronto Star the evolution of a moral panic is outlined and a multi-causal model is employed to show the dynamics of the moral panic.

Findings indicate that three main article types contributed to the escalation and de-escalation of the moral panic. These were "Violent Youth Crime Articles," "Political Articles," and "Filler Articles." Violent youth crime articles initially fueled the beginning of the panic. Then political articles stressing harsher penalties emerged to create even more public fear and escalate the panic. When there was a lack of violent youth crime articles, fillers supporting claims that violence was worsening occupied the void to further ensure the continuation of the panic. However, without violent youth crime articles, the panic was unable to sustain itself solely on fillers and political articles. As fillers and political articles began to shift towards a softer, less punitive approach to youth violence, the panic eventually diminished.

By applying key concepts developed in the schismogenic model this study demonstrates the existence of escalation and de-escalation loops that can create and reduce a panic. The loops discovered in the findings do not indicate the pattern of loops all moral panics will follow. The dynamic nature of the model dictates that different panics will operate on different sets of loops. These findings suggest that simplistic and single-factor approaches to moral panics are insufficient because they fail to account for the multiple pathways that appear to operate in these events.
DEDICATIONS

I would like to dedicate this paper to my mother, father and girlfriend Danielle. I would especially like to thank Danielle for her encouragement and support throughout the course of my thesis, and also to my parents who have been very patient with me, and supported me throughout this endeavor. It’s been a longer journey than I anticipated, but without them I would never have completed this thesis. Thank you for everything.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A sincere thanks to Dr. Steve Baron (one of the good guys) for his support and for pushing me at just the right times. Steve has been a dependable and patient advisor who never gave up on me (even when he probably should have). I would also like to thank Dr. Muhammad Shuraydi for kindly participating as a last minute member on my committee, and Dr. Irvin Goldman for patiently sticking it out for my extended duration. I am also indebted to Sue McGilveary for keeping me in touch with Windsor and helping me administratively while I was working in Toronto. Finally, thanks to Ken Hatt who first cultivated my interest in moral panics during my final year at Carleton.
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CHAPTER I: THE MORAL PANIC OVER YOUTH VIOLENCE

BACKGROUND

In 1995 youth violence increasingly became the focus of public attention and media coverage. Announcements that new amendments were to be made to the YOA illustrated the force of this concern, and responded to the perceived rise of violent crimes committed by youths.

The public's concern may have been exacerbated by the media's failure to put news into context. This lack of context may have misinformed the public and spread an often, unreasonable fear of youth violence.

In 1995 "violent youth crime" made up 18% of all reported "youth offences" (Bala, 1995:1). Of this 18%, homicide (the most serious violent offence) comprised only .003% of all violent youth crimes (Hung, 1995:8), while common assault, the most minor violent crime, made up 50% of the total violent youth offences.

In 1993-94 the most common cases in the youth courts involved theft under, break and enter, and failure to comply (Department of Justice, 1994:2). These cases make up the majority of youth offences, yet the media habitually fail to provide a breakdown of categories, instead grouping crimes committed by youths into one common category of youth crime. Studies have shown that violence is the particular focus of popular news outlets and that violent crimes are dominant in the media (Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991:353). This further suggests that stories of youth crimes are only presented to the public if they involve acts of violence and the attention paid to violent youth crime is out of proportion compared to all other youth crimes. As a result, this gives the appearance that all youth crime is violent.

This thesis proposes that a moral panic was responsible for the concern over violent youth crime. By definition, the moral panic suggests that newspapers and other forms of media indulge in sensationalism by exaggerating social events such that the effects may seem more serious than they may have been prior to media attention (Hatt, 1994). The notion of the moral panic has been established as a criminological conceptual
apparatus, and has been used to explain public anxiety about, and official reaction to, crime (Waddington, 1984:245).

There has been a tendency for moral panic theorists to concern themselves only with the escalation (of the events) factors of the moral panic, disregarding any processes of de-escalation. In an attempt towards remedying this deficiency, it is the intention of this study to extend the original moral panic model, using violent youth crime as a case study. In order to develop the model of the moral panic, an examination of the theoretical literature will be undertaken. The weaknesses in the previous moral panic models will be exposed and a more thorough model will be developed and tested through a content analysis.
CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL REVIEW

MORAL PANICS

Various issues in the past have garnered considerable media coverage, and violent youth crime has consistently been the center of attention in Canadian journalism (Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991:260).

Media portrayals and the way in which the issue has been dealt with help to shape the public opinion on the issue (Cohen, 1972:78). In most cases however, the media tend to exaggerate the significance of a problem (in our case youth violence), which in turn leads to a heightened public concern and an increase within the area of social control and police enforcement (Zatz, 1987).

What has just been described is a "moral panic," a topic that has generated considerable discussion amongst academics throughout the latter part of this century (Jenkins, 1992:1). Using the literature, one can chronologically trace the development of the notion of the moral panic, and give an account of its origins in relation to violent youth crime.

The notion of a moral panic has been developed by several scholars who have built on the work of those who preceded them. These models use the concept of "feedback loops" to describe different social situations that primarily address issues regarding the escalation of a moral panic (Wilkins, 1959:90). However, all these discussions fail to deal with the abatement of a moral panic, and it is a discussion of these models that we now turn to.

1. THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MORAL PANIC

Wilkins (1959) first introduced the discussion of deviance amplification in his writing on social deviance as information loops. The "moral panic" had not yet emerged
as a sociological concept, and Wilkins used the concept of information loops to describe what he termed deviance amplification (Wilkins, 1959:87).

Information loops involve elements that impart information to other elements in the loop. As information is passed on to the ensuing element there is a possibility of two outcomes; it may increase the element positively ("+"ive) or decrease it negatively ("-"ive). Deviance amplification occurs when these information loops feed into each other positively. That is, each element in the loop increases (+ve = increase) because of an increase in another element operating within the same loop. When such a loop persists, the situation will continue unless a modification involving a negative feedback loop pushes the system back towards equilibrium. In an examination of youth crimes, the positive information feedback loop can be described as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Less tolerance leads to} & \rightarrow \\
\uparrow & \text{more acts being defined as crimes} \\
\uparrow & \text{leads to} \\
\uparrow & \text{more action against criminals} \\
\uparrow & \text{leads to} \\
\uparrow & \text{more alienation of deviants} \\
\uparrow & \text{leads to} \\
\uparrow & \text{more crime by deviant groups} \\
\uparrow & \text{leads to} \\
\uparrow & \text{less tolerance of deviants by conforming groups} \\
\uparrow & \leftrightarrow \text{and round again} \\
\text{(Wilkins, 1959:90)}
\end{align*}
\]

Drawing from the work of Wilkins, Cohen (1972) further developed this deviance amplification model to illustrate what he termed the "moral panic." In contrast to Wilkins, Cohen focused more upon the societal reaction to deviance, arguing that this reaction increased deviance and caused a moral panic to emerge. The following points can best summarize the general model used by Cohen.

1. Periodical incidents emerge to periods of moral panic.
2. Episodes and groups become defined as a threat to societal values.
3. Its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades manned by right-thinking people.
4. Socially accredited experts pronounce their solution and ways of coping are resorted to.
5. Panic changes, sometimes passes over and sometimes becomes more serious and long lasting.
(Cohen, 1972:9)

Throughout his analysis Cohen traced the development and reverberation of the societal reaction, looked at the effects of the reaction, and located the growth of the folk devils and the moral panic in historical and structural terms.

Through Cohen's discussion of moral panics and the issue of societal reaction, the media was established as a vital element in the creation of societal reaction. He felt that the media tended to create social problems suddenly and dramatically. The news media processed information so as to generate, anxiety, concern, and mostly panic. This would thereby lead to a rapid increase in the control culture\(^1\). However, because the agents of social control are generally unfair, indiscriminate, and ineffective, hostile behaviour within the targeted group increases and solidifies their collectivity. As a result, this further exacerbates the societal reaction and continues to fuel the moral panic.

As alluded to above, Wilkins's deviancy amplification model formed the basis of Cohen's analysis. Cohen, however, points out that Wilkin's model has a number of shortcomings in terms of explanation. The most obvious being its inability to fully explain how amplification occurs and under what conditions during amplification does the sequence end.

Despite his recognition of these shortcomings, Cohen made no apparent attempt to rectify theses shortcomings by explaining how and why the sequence in the loop ends. Cohen pointed out valid and consequential defects in the deviancy amplification model, but was unable to provide an explanation as to how one might resolve this linear way of thinking.

\(^1\)Term used by Cohen to describe various aspects of law enforcement, such as the police, legislation and the judiciary.
Despite these apparent weaknesses, the generic moral panic model as set out by Cohen has provided the basic prototype for others to adopt and use when describing social phenomena.

2. APPLICATION OF THE MORAL PANIC MODEL

Subsequent to Cohen's "moral panic model," a number of academics have used the moral panic to illustrate various types of social problems. They discuss how moral panic's are constructed. These scholars have utilized the basic postulates of Cohen's model, while introducing different terms to describe the amplification discussed in the previous section. However, in adapting the model set out by Cohen and Wilkins, they too neglect to address the problem of panic de-escalation.

Stuart Hall (1978) first adapted the moral panic model to explain and analyze the British mugging panic of 1972-3. Hall contended that the alleged epidemic of mugging was transformed into a moral panic, by the media, police and judiciary, since fear and concern over street crime increased at a time when its actual incidence was not rising. He determined that the media was the most powerful force in shaping public consciousness, but was explicit not to exclude the role of the police as amplifiers. According to Hall the police structure the crime in a way that highlights serious rather than petty crimes. They provide the news media with "raw materials" in which the media may (with relative autonomy) select and transform into finished news pieces (Hall, 1978:66).

Using the mugging panic in England, Hall demonstrated how the control culture along with the news media created a moral panic. He explicitly used the mugging situation because it demonstrated how the media sensationalized this label along with its American connotation to trigger a signification spiral\(^2\). The reason the mugging label had such immediate repercussions was that it was introduced to the British public in context of the American situation; already in it's most sensationalized form. That is, mugging was

\(^2\)An upward spiral of signifying events which also intrinsically escalates their threat. The notion of a signification spiral is similar to that of an amplification spiral (Hall 1978:223).
only used to describe a relentless attack on innocent victims and had no other definition or meaning. Prior to this, mugging was not used to describe anything within the British vocabulary. So every negative connotation attached to the label in an American context was appropriated and applied to the British situation. Thus because of the American transplant, not only did Britain adopt 'mugging' but also the fear and panic that was associated with the term.

Absent from others who have used the moral panic is the hierarchical nature of the moral panic. Hall applies an explicitly Marxist perspective to the moral panic that needs to be understood in its political context. Although Hall advances the notion that the media and police create the makings of a moral panic, he places culpability for creating it upon the powerful elite. Hall relates the moral panic to concepts of hegemony and the state to explain the utilization of the moral panic by those in "power." He argues that the panic over mugging served the powerful elite by legitimating a law-and-order criminal enforcement program. This diverted much unwanted attention from the poor economic conditions that were causing a crisis in the current capitalist structure. During such a crisis measures to divert attention away from the crisis were taken. By using a moral panic, the problem was no longer the crisis in capitalism, but the criminals and the way enforcement had dealt with them in the past. Using this concept of hegemony Hall is able to argue that the ruling elite managed to develop hegemonic conditions that deceived the rest of society.

"The effects of retaining the notion of 'moral panic' is the penetration it provides into the otherwise extremely obscure means by which the working classes are drawn in to processes which are occurring in large measure 'behind their backs', and led to experience and respond to contradictory developments in ways which make the operation of state power legitimate, credible and consensual." (Hall, 1978:220)

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3According to Ericson, Baranek and Chan, hegemony addresses how superordinates manufacture and sustain support for their dominance over subordinates through dissemination and reproduction of knowledge that favours their interests and how subordinates alternatively accept this knowledge. The hegemonic process is at the core of transactions between journalist and sources (1991:12).
Thus in a moral panic information is disseminated from the top. The media is utilized since they "reproduce definitions of the powerful"(1978:57) by interviewing individuals in powerful positions. Hall posits that, although moral panics generally involve the media and police, there is much more at work than meets the eye. Essentially, Hall argues that the moral panic in Britain was planned by the elite in order to maintain rule and capitalist stability, this in turn was sagaciously implemented by an unknowing media, legislature, courts and police.

Marjorie Zatz (1988) has used the moral panic model to describe the relationship between Chicano gangs, crime, the police, and the Chicano community. Zatz directly adopts Hall and Cohen's conception and applies it to Chicano gangs in Phoenix, Arizona. Zatz points out that the media handling of stories involving youth can create a moral panic by exaggerating the organization of these groups, conveying the sense of tight network to what may be only a loose peer group affiliation. She found that there was no clear evidence that Phoenix faced a major gang problem. However, it was clear that the media and the law enforcement agencies took the opportunity to use the social imagery of Chicano youth gangs to create a moral panic. Intensified media coverage of the gang problem further heightened legal repression and control over the escalating menace of gang violence. This led to the definition of Chicano youths as a problem to society thus deeming an increase in social control agents in the lives of 'barrio residents' as a necessary precaution. As a consequence, legal control was legitimized over the resistant behaviour of this economically and politically subordinate group, and the threat that it posed to the state.

Another study relying on the moral panic is seen in the works of Rob Sindall (1990). His discussion centers on moral panics in the early 19th century. Sindall used the situation in the 19th century to demonstrate how the phenomenon of street violence worked its way through a flow model. He contended that street violence in the late 19th century, although probably on the increase, was used to create sporadic moral panics. Sindall restated the moral panic model using a flow structure which events went through towards becoming a moral panic.
1) Initial deviance - the act that draws attention to the media  
2) Inventory - the information people draw upon to form an idea of what is going on - personal experience or news; and  
3) Sensitization - increased awareness created by the inventory, which feed back on each other and produce  
4) Over Estimation of the deviance which leads to,  
5) Escalation in the Control Culture  
(Sindall, 1990:33)  

Sindall illustrated the 19th century "street violence" moral panic through historical media and statistical evidence (Sindall, 1990:164,165), and found that although street violence may have been on a slight increase, but the rise was not enough to merit a moral panic. Sindall felt that right thinking people such as editors and politicians defined a group of persons (garotters and cornermen) as a threat to societal values. In turn the mass media presented the threat in a stylised and stereotyped fashion, thereby increasing self-protection measures by individuals and an increased presence of the police until the panic subsided.  

Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) have made recent contributions to moral panic literature. They trace the concept of the moral panic back to Cohen's attention to societal reaction, and further refine the concept by setting criteria for a moral panic to exist. The moral panic is defined by these five criteria:  

1. Concern - this is a concern whereby there is an increase in the level of concern of a certain behavior and the consequences that the behaviour presumably causes for the rest of society.  
2. Hostility - there must be an increased level of hostility toward the category of people that are involved in the threatening behaviour. Hostility is rooted in the perception that the behaviour is harmful or threatening to the values, interests, way of life, and possibly the very existence of the society.  
3. Consensus - in order for there to be a moral panic there needs to be some degree of agreement that the threat is real and serious.  
4. Disproportionality - it is implicit that the concern for a specific behaviour is out of proportion to the nature of the threat.  
5. Volatility - they erupt fairly suddenly and subside quite quickly  
(Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994:156-8)
Having delineated this criterion, Goode and Ben-Yehuda discuss how and why moral panics arise. They set forth three theoretical perspectives that address the origins of moral panics. These included:

1) The Grassroots Model - which argues that panics originate with the general public. That is the public feels that a given phenomenon presents a threat to them or society, thereby triggering a panic.
2) The Elite-Engineered Model - which posits that a small and powerful group or set of groups deliberately and consciously undertake a campaign to generate and sustain fear, concern and panic on the part of the public.
3) The Interest Group Theory - which says that interest groups (such as the police and the media) may have a stake in bringing to the fore an issue that is independent of the interests of the elite.

While the derivation of moral panics generally follows similar sequences, it is arguable that none of these models prevails when attempting to determine where moral panics begin. Different circumstances and events become the determining factor as to where a panic may originate. Goode and Ben-Yehuda argue that the Grassroots model together with the interest group theory best describe moral panics. They acknowledge that the elite-engineered model does not work for most moral panics, yet do not discount the possibility of such.

3. CONCERNS OVER THE EXISTING MODEL

As our review reveals, there is some agreement that the media and the control culture have a great deal of influence within the moral panic model. The way the two elements influence public opinion and where the moral panic originates is discussed disparately by each scholar. The vital problem however, is that moral panics are unable to continue indefinitely and this is never addressed. All the scenarios illustrate a linear application of the moral panic model, and by doing so, fail to address how a moral panic ever ends.

No one to date has addressed the problem of how a moral panic ever ends. Thus, it is the intention of this thesis to adequately complete the moral panic model by
developing it as a schismogenic loop. By doing this we look at how the moral panic ends as well as the different possibilities with which moral panics may originate. However before we can look at the moral panic in terms of a schismogenic loop we must take the work of Jason Ditton's "Contrology" into account.

4. CONTROLOGY: BREAKING OUT OF THE LINEAR MOULD

Ditton (1979) developed the theory of "Contrology" as an attempt to replace criminology, which he argues is based on linear models. Ditton did not address moral panics specifically, but did devote a large portion of his paper criticising the unending sequence characteristic of Wilkins's single-loop regenerative deviance amplification model.

Contrology was placed in context of the labelling tradition. Ditton took labelling theory a step further by rectifying what he considered to be the failings inherent within the original perspective. The primary precepts of Contrology are crime and control. According to traditional criminology, deviance leads to social control. Labelling theory reformulated this into social control leads to deviance. Ditton developed contrology out of the labelling perspective, basing it on a societal rather than situational level.

In his development of Contrology, Ditton's major criticism of Wilkins's model was that "there is no provision for anything else but an endless increase in the crime-rate." That is, Wilkins failed to explain that amplification cannot continue indefinitely. Ditton found five important ambiguities in Wilkins's formulation. These were:

1. Construction: more originally defined non-deviant acts defined as deviant
2. Fantasy: more acts originally committed are discovered
3. Book-keeping: more discovered deviant acts are officially collated
4. Reporting: more mass-media coverage of deviant acts
5. Real: more originally defined deviant acts are committed
(Wilkins, 1979:11)

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4 A concept developed by Gregory Bateson. Bateson felt that all social relations needed to be examined in circular chains (loops). Schismogenesis stated that social relations involving "A" and "B" would be subject to a progressive escalation whereby A would inevitably affect B in symmetrical or complementary interchanges (1979:105).
According to Ditton these were the five sources of the statistical problems faced by the users of official criminal statistics in accounting for crime or control. He discussed each of these five ambiguities, and came to the ultimate conclusion that it is control that makes an act a 'crime.' What was critical to this argument is that all society members are potential offenders. Since any act is a potentially criminal act, it is the offended not the offender that 'commits' the crime. That is, it is up to social control (state) to determine whether individuals who may not have been criminals before (potential offenders), are criminals now. To better understand this concept, Ditton developed a model of control waves as opposed to crime waves (1979:33).

According to Ditton, control is what makes an act a crime. Considering this, he stated that "it is the processes of social control which produce and define the 'criminal' population" (1979:34). He went on to say that "the size of the 'criminal' population is wholly determined by the exercise and experience of control, with particular members being periodically extruded into or included from the 'normal' population" (Ditton, 1979:34,35). Therefore, the only variable in this model is control.

Ditton argued that, much like the business cycle, control institutions experience processes whereby "peaks flatten out" and "troughs bottom out." Therefore, by using the study of the business cycle one can better understand how the control wave operates. In contrological terms, if social control is increased, then more criminals will be apprehended, thus starting crime expansion (negative degenerative feedback). As this progresses, expansion will eventually get caught up in amplification (negative regenerative feedback). This in turn would lead to more crimes being defined through legislation, thereby creating a larger potentially criminal population. More enforcement will catch more criminals. However, this does not continue indefinitely. At some point the "Principle of Diminishing 'Criminals'"(Ditton, 1979:35) must set in. As more criminals are apprehended there are fewer criminals left to commit the defined crimes. Therefore, criminal acts become depleted. At this point, a crime contraction (positive degenerative feedback) generates a crime depression. As a result "this begins to erode
juridical concern, and dampen legislative enthusiasm, and support for repressive criminal legislation will diminish" (Ditton, 1979:36). Such a rapid decrease in crime inevitably decreases control, thus Ditton's control wave slumps into attenuation (regenerative feed back with a positive effect). Eventually, (due to lack of control) fewer members are caught and once again there is a large 'criminal' population. As a result more crimes need to be defined and social control bounces back to an increase. Thus, expansion starts once again beginning yet another cycle of the control wave.

In developing this control wave model, Ditton adopted Maruyama's concept of cybernetics. If Maruyama were examining the processes within control institutions there would be two types of relationships occurring; morphogenesis and morphostasis.

Maruyama used the morphogenesis to make reference to deviation amplifying processes. Each element within morphogenesis escalates in a mutually causal relationship. Morphogenesis occurs within Ditton's "amplification" peak, and "attenuation" trough of the control wave. The difference depends upon the input. If the input is positive the output will escalate upward and result in amplification. In contrast, if the input is negative the output will decrease, still escalating, but downwards, thus resulting in attenuation.

In morphostasis Maruyama described the processes by which elements in a relationship (loop) tend to equilibrate (1962:169). Within morphostasis the input is nullified by the other sets of relations. That is, if the input is negative the output will be positive. Beginning in a contrary manner, if the input is positive the output will be negative. This can be found in the "contraction" trough and "expansion" peak of Ditton's control wave.

Therefore, Ditton used Maruyama's multi-causal conception of morphogenetic deviance amplification to develop the complete model for control waves. By linking two morphogenesis loops (amplification and attenuation) to two morphostasis loops (contraction and expansion), Ditton described how the state produces criminals as well as

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5 A branch of mathematics dealing with problems of control, recursiveness, and information.
control waves. Thus it is no longer the traditional view that crime creates control, but how the state creates different individuals into criminals depending upon the stage in which the control wave is experiencing.

Ditton's examination of circular, nonlinear models has finally broken out of the linear manner of thinking that most academics have used in the past. He argued that it is necessary to examine social problems (especially those associated with crime) in a way that does not limit socially dynamic situations to rigid models. Through the use of a broader set of analytical notions, Ditton has been able to address how amplification comes to an end. His investigation makes no explicit reference to moral panics, however his examination of Wilkins's theory of deviance amplification describes the major problem that typifies most deviance amplification models (such as moral panics).

Nevertheless, by limiting his model to the control variable, Ditton created serious problems in the analysis of crime and social problems. It is necessary to broaden the approach to include other inherent variables such as the media and public fear. It is the intention of this thesis to develop a model of the moral panic that is multi-causally based, yet broader than Ditton's analysis. Other variables that are intrinsic to a moral panic, such as the media and public fear, need to be included, as well accounting for the possibility of political power to influence trends in crime.

**POLITICAL INFLUENCE**

Looking at Ditton's work, we can see how the state is employed to create crime, although he lacks the details of state influence that Hall includes in his discussion. However, if we look at theories of the state (much like Hall did), multi-causal approaches, and moral panics we can see a connection between the state and how the moral panic can be employed to benefit the state. Earlier in the chapter, the elite-engineered model advanced by Goode and Ben-Yehuda was discussed. This model argues that a small and powerful group or set of groups deliberately and consciously undertake
campaigns to generate and sustain fear, concern and panic on the part of the public over an issue they recognize as not terribly harmful to the society as a whole (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994:164). Goode and Yehuda do not seem to feel that the elite engineered model works for most moral panics, but do not discount the possibility of a moral panic without elite's involvement. It is thus their argument that no moral panic is complete without an examination of all societal levels, from elites to the grass roots (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994:168). In terms of this thesis and our multi-causal model (discussed in depth later), the possibility exists that a moral panic can begin anywhere between the spectrum, even at the elite level. This is where we stray from Ditton's model of Contrology.

It is the intention of this section to demonstrate the reactions to crime elicited by political influence on the media and control culture, while still acknowledging that moral panics can initiate from anywhere; not just control.

To address the political influence aspect of the model we must situate the event at a macro level of analysis, one that turns towards an explicit Marxist perspective. Also, as discussed in the previous section, Hall has tendered the most detailed analysis of political instigation of a moral panic. According to Hall, "all crime control is an aspect of that larger and wider exercise of 'social authority' and in class societies that will inevitably mean the social authority exerted by the powerful and the propertyed over the powerless and the propertiless"(1979:190). His examination addresses theories of the state and class struggle.

General questions of law and crime, of social control and consent belong to questions of the capitalist state and the class struggle. By ignoring any type of political influence invites the common misconception that law stands outside the political process of the state.

Quinney offers an examination of crime and the state in advanced capitalism. According to Quinney, "a theory of crime necessarily presupposes a theory of the state"(1977:78). Quinney posits that the capitalist state of advanced capitalist society, is developing a greater amount of autonomy. He argues that in an advanced capitalist state
much of the superstructural character is lost (Quinney, 1977:79). Rather than being an instrument for specific capitalists as outlined by Marx, capitalism becomes a "complex apparatus with its own direction and its own contradictions" (Quinney, 1977:81).

Quinney says there are two contradictory functions of the capitalist state; accumulation and legitimation (Quinney, 1977:82). Thus the state, under late capitalism must establish the general framework for capital accumulation and foster the conditions for maintaining the capitalist system. Yet the new capitalist state cannot sustain private capital accumulation without legitimizing the relations of advanced capitalism. On the economic level the state cannot solve its own fiscal crisis that results from state expenditures to assure private capital accumulation. On the level of legitimation, the state cannot continue to maintain credibility as it fails to solve the problems that it either creates or expands in the promotion of the capitalist economy.

"As the state expands as the primary instrument for advancing capitalism, it will necessarily have to develop stronger and more pervasive means of dominating the population." (Quinney, 1977:86) Thus effective means of control are needed if late capitalism is to survive.

Two new modes of human domination are described to ensure the perseverance of late capitalism. The first form of domination is ideological (laws and the media), in restricting our conception of life chances and the problems of capitalism. The second form of domination is coercive physical control (police courts, and penal agencies) of our daily lives in the practice of criminal justice.

Under late capitalism, authority obscures the class basis of political domination. Ofte states,

The late capitalist welfare state bases its legitimacy on the postulate of a universal participation in consensus formation and on the unbiased opportunity for all classes to utilize the state's services and to benefit from its regulatory acts of intervention (1972:81).

Therefore, in late capitalism domination relies heavily upon legitimation in order to sustain.
Ericson, Baranek and Chan further describe legitimation in terms of law and the news media, looking at the two as a means towards maintaining hierarchical order. According to Ericson, news media are institutions that intersect with legal institutions as part of the coercive apparatus, but more as ideological apparatus (Ericson, Baranek, and Chan, 1991:12). While law is kind of an 'older system' that functions to allocate resources (by guaranteeing and protecting relationships, and by intervening to enforce policies and programs), to regulate and resolve conflict (by providing principles and procedures for doing so), and to keep peace (by establishing rules of behaviour and enforcing violations with sanctions), news discourse is dominated by these representations of law and legal relations in these terms. (Ericson, Baranek, and Chan, 1991:6)

The news media are recognized as institutions that legitimate claims made by the authority.

From the time of the found of newspapers, governments have recognized the significance of news communication as an organizer of public opinion and as an agency of social control. (Ericson, Baranek, and Chan, 1991:14)

As capitalism advances, the control function in society expands and is revised to effectively dominate those who resist control. As disciplinary and normalizing discourses, the law and news are both fundamentally concerned with policing and control. However, while in the process of policing, the law and the news articulate public morality. Morality is built into the classifications that members use for conducting their routine business. "The news media and law also share an affinity in claiming that their policing is in the public interest" (Ericson Baranek, and Chan, 1991:7). This gives the appearance that the law and the media are neutral entities, and accomplishes a degree of legitimacy and authority for their own institution.

The importance of legitimation is that it maintains stability and order. Habermas (1975:66-70) states, legitimation depends on the ability of authorities to make convincing claims, arguments that they are acting in accordance with social norms. The news media are pivotal to the ability of authorities to make convincing claims. It offers a pervasive
and persuasive means by which authorities from various institutions can attempt to obtain wider consent for their moral preferences (Ericson, Baranek, and Chan, 1991:8).

Therefore, theories of the state offer some insight about how moral panics may serve as an apparatus that can divert attention from a capitalist state whose main goal is to accumulate capital and maintain itself. Through capitalist domination this can be done, however as we have discussed domination cannot take an overt form. The media and the criminal justice system (enforcement) are effectively the means by which the elite state is able to integrate domination through representations of order. On the one hand the Criminal Justice System, is the embodiment of law and order, while on the other, news discourse represents order through a consistent, and particular obsession with the law.

As an example, "political influence theory" would posit that youth violence is singled out, and can be utilized in several ways by those vested with authority. For one it legitimizes the authority by effectively controlling that which it has designated as a problem. Using the tools of legislation and increased enforcement, the elite is able to attract media attention. By doing so the media, in the processes of making the news, inevitably participate in and contribute to capitalist domination.

However, borrowing Ditton's "principle of Diminishing Criminals" (Ditton, 1979:35), crime eventually subsides due to the success of enforcement. This will, of course lead the media, as well as legislation to redirect their focus on a more pressing concern, until youth violence again regenerates itself as a serious problem. However, it is through the manipulation of the media, that those in power positions are able to generate concern and fear in the public. There is a filtering process that works down from the elite to the public. In the middle lie legislation (police, and policies), and the news media.

**MEDIA EFFECTS ON THE PUBLIC**
As we have seen, in a moral panic the media plays an imminent role in the mythology of violent youth crime and its identification as a social problem. It is through this identification that the public learns of the social problem and comes to fear the event. Therefore, to establish a moral panic, one must measure "public fear" during the publication of the event. However, this is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Describing a moral panic will inevitably rely heavily on newspapers, and the effects that they have on the public. There have been studies conducted centering upon the media, crime, and general effects. These demonstrate escalation in public perception of social problems, and illustrate how public fear becomes a vital element to the moral panic model.

Hall touched on this issue, stating that both the media, as well as socialization are responsible for shaping public opinion. He feels that the media, judiciary, and socialization work hand in hand to construct explanations and meanings of certain incidents (Hall, 1978:298).

Gebotys (1981) argues that the media augments public perceptions of crimes and crime seriousness. He uncovered preliminary evidence that exposure to the news media, particularly television, was associated with heightened judgments of crime seriousness. Gebotys argues that the news media mislead and heighten public perception of crime. Liska and Baccaglini (1990) go further by pointing out that not only do the media heighten public perception, it will also instill fear in the audience. It is argued that variation in fear is dependent on whether the story is local or non-local, and on the location (e.g. initial pages) of the story in the newspaper.

Garofalo (1981) took his research beyond general crimes. He directed most of his attention to the overrepresentation of violent crimes in the media, and examined the limited relationship that exists between the crimes depicted in the media and the actual amount of crimes occurring. His research has revealed two things: that depictions of crime and violence in the media differ from the reality of crime and violence, and media portrayals appear to affect their audiences.
In a more focused and recent study conducted by Marsh (1991), four main areas regarding the media were found to be the same amongst the United States and other countries. First, there is an overrepresentation of violent crimes and an underrepresentation of property crimes. Second the percentages of violent crimes reported in newspapers do not match official crime statistics. Third, crime coverage presents a false image of the effectiveness of police and courts in controlling crime and punishing criminals. Fourth, newspaper coverage fails to educate readers as to causes of crime or how to avoid personal victimization.

In sum, the literature seems to show that the media play a significant role in presenting crimes and social problems to the public. The literature illustrates how the media work, its effects on the public, and how erroneous media depiction's can be. It can thus be generalized that the media is responsible for heightened perceptions of problems, and therefore can represent public fear in any of the escalation loops.

**SUMMARY**

Reflecting upon the literature, we have on the one hand, Ditton who has applied broader analytical notions to study the control-crime relationship. On the other, we have a group of critical criminologists who insist upon a broader approach when analyzing moral panics, none of whom discusses the cessation of amplification. We can combine certain elements of the two to create a more comprehensive model that might better account for the broader set of social relations while still setting limits upon indefinite amplification.

In the next section, the moral panic will be developed in terms of a schismogenetic loop (multi-causal as opposed to linear). In doing so we will be able to accomplish the task of creating a model that broadens both the analyzation and conceptualization of crimes and social problems.
CHAPTER III: THE MORAL PANIC AS SCHISMOGENIC LOOPS

SCHISMOGENESIS

It was argued in the previous section that the current model for the moral panic is inadequate. An alternate way of addressing this inadequacy is the schismogenic loop, a concept developed by Gregory Bateson in the mid 30's (1979). He argued that patterns of progressive differentiation (schismogenesis) are ongoing within situations of social contact and must be analyzed in their own terms rather than being subsumed in more abstract categories (Bateson, 1979:103). In expanding on this point, he suggests, where culture contact involves the persistence of different social entities, several types of differentiation can occur. He distinguishes between symmetrical differentiation (e.g., competitive relations) and complementary differentiation (e.g., dominance-submission). He felt that schismogenic loops more accurately characterize different social relations as they are observed in the field (Bateson, 1979:105).

Maruyama (1962) expanded on the concept of schismogenesis through the development of cybernetics, which emphasizes the process of mutual causality. A mutual causality approach analyzes relations that are both deviation countering and deviation amplifying.

He identified two forms of loops: deviation counteracting loops and deviation amplifying loops. The deviation counteracting mutual causal process is called morphostasis. The deviation amplifying mutual causal process is called morphogenesis. Causality in the classical philosophy said that similar conditions produce similar effects. Consequently, dissimilar results were attributed to dissimilar conditions. In utilizing morphogenesis, the law of causality is restated so that similar conditions may result in dissimilar products.

"For example, when a scientist tried to find out why two persons under study were different, he looked for a difference in their environment or in their heredity. It did not occur to him that neither environment nor heredity may be responsible for the difference. He overlooked the possibility that some deviation-amplifying
interactional process in their personality and in their environment may have produced the difference. (Maruyama, 1962:166,167)

Hatt (1993:2) posits that social relations in any context can be analyzed by identifying the relevant loops that are operating to escalate deviation and equilibrate deviation. The calculation of whether a loop is escalating or equilibrating can be schematized in terms of positives (+) and negatives (-). The positive outcome is designated as an escalating loop, and the negative outcome an equilibrating loop. Maruyama suggests the identification of whether the loops are amplifying(escalating) or countering(equilibrating) can be based on the number of negative's. Loops that have an even number of negatives are escalating loops (deviation amplifying). Loops in which there are an odd number of negatives are equilibrating loops (deviation countering) (Maruyama, 1962:177).

**THE NEW MODEL**

Looking at a moral panic in terms of a schismogenic loop involves four elements:

1) **Public Fear (PubF):** fear generated (eg. Fear of victimization, fear for their children)

2) **Media Coverage (Pub):** could be any type of news medium

3) **Series of Threatening Events (Ev):** any type of event (does not have to be a crime)

4) **Control Culture (CtlC):** any form of control, be it enforcement or legislation

![Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)
Each element is necessary for a moral panic to exist, however media publicity is vital, since without it, there simply would not be a moral panic. Political Influence is not a direct element in the loops however it effectively plays a role affecting the loops via Publicity and Control Culture.

Each element affects the other in a way that escalates one another when there is a full-blown moral panic. It is however the combined loop results of both the Publicity and Control Culture that work to escalate the crisis.

**ESCALATION**

In all the models that we have examined the moral panic has continued indefinitely, just like the above situation. Using all four elements this completely escalating form of the moral panic develops eight main loops:

1. +CtlC+Pub+Ev+PubF+CtlC
2. +CtlC+PubF+Pub+Ev+CtlC
3. +Pub+PubF+Ev+CtlC+Pub
4. +Pub+Ev+PubF+CtlC+Pub
5. +PubF+Pub+CtlC+Ev+PubF
6. +PubF+Ev+CtlC+Pub+PubF
7. +Ev+CtlC+Pub+PubF+Ev
8. +Ev+Pub+PubF+CtlC+Ev

Note: Not all four elements need to be involved in a loop. Variations of the above 8 are also possible.

Notice how each loop is positive. This is imperative for a loop to be purely escalating.

Although each of these purely escalating loops contains all four elements, it is entirely possible for loops to contain only three elements. For instance in loop eight CtlC may not be involved initially. The loop may begin as +Ev+PubF+Pub+Ev, and eventually turn into +Ev+PubF+CtlC+Pub+Ev as the problem escalates. Therefore variations of the main loops often exist as well.

Not all loops are mandatory for a moral panic to escalate. Sometimes a moral panic needs only one powerful loop to escalate the panic. But before we consider the relative "weight" of each loop we must first understand how loops work.

Loops indicate mutual causal relationships. In a loop the influence of an element comes back to itself through other elements. That is, each element influences the other
elements directly or indirectly. By influencing other elements, each element influences itself. To get a better picture of this, let us examine each loop in more depth.

Loop #1:
In this loop (+CtlC+Pub+Ev+PubF+CtlC), an increase in the Control Culture of an event causes an increase in the publicity of the event. This increases the actual event, increasing public fear which further increases Control Culture.

To better understand how this loop operates within the context of the model, an illustration of loop #1 is provided.

![Diagram](image)

The remaining seven loops work in exactly the same way.

Loop #2:
In this loop (+CtlC+PubF+Pub+Ev+CtlC), an increase in Control Culture would trigger fear in the public, which would increase publicity, and make the event appear more serious. Finally this would lead to more Control Culture.

Loop #3:
In this loop (+Pub+PubF+Ev+CtlC+Pub), an increase in publicity incites fear in the public. The event becomes worse, so Control Culture is increased, which also increase the media publicity.

Loop #4:
In this loop (+Pub+Ev+PubF+CtlC+Pub), an increase in publicity causes an increase in the event. Public fear increases as a result and Control Culture responds more seriously to this outcry. Finally, publicity increases.

Loop #5:
In this loop (+PubF+Pub+CtlC+Ev+PubF), an increase in public fear, would increase publicity, thereby increasing Control Culture, making the event more serious, thus increasing public fear.

Loop #6:
In this loop (+PubF+Ev+CtlC+Pub+PubF), an increase in public fear would support an increase in the event IF the event fed off of public fear. Then Control Culture would increase, instigating more publicity. Finally public fear would rise again.

Loop #7:
In this loop (+Ev+CtlC+Pub+PubF+Ev), an increase in the actual event, results in an increase in Control Culture. This attracts more media publicity, which increases public fear, thereby increasing the event.

Loop #8:
In this loop (+Ev+Pub+PubF+CtlC+Ev), an increase in the event causes an increase in publicity. This incites fear in the public, which causes Control Culture to rise, which keeps the event increasing.

We have examined eight purely escalating loops that serve only to perpetuate the moral panic. The loops can be categorized into two broad groups. Adopting the theories of moral panic's as set forth by Ben-Yehuda and Goode, we can categorize the moral panic loops 1-4 as "interest group theory" and "elite engineered" loops that originate in the media and government legislation. This position posits that rule creators and moral entrepreneurs launch moral crusades to make sure that certain rules take hold and are enforced. Loops 5-8 fall into the "grassroots model" that states that the general public is the main source of panics. Therefore the threat felt by the general public is often the cause for the panic loop. Using a multi-causal (moral panic as a schismogenic loop) rather than linear approach allows the possibility for all three models to co-exist in one more pragmatic model.

Regardless of which loop is operating, and where it originates, only one is needed to instigate a moral panic. This leads back to the original problem; escalation cannot go on forever. Panics are never unremitting, and to make the model complete, we need to address how the moral panic ends, leading us into a discussion of de-escalating loops.
DE-ESCALATION

It has been argued throughout this thesis that the primary problem with the moral panic model has been its neglect of de-escalation. An event cannot sustain a moral panic indefinitely.

Therefore, in this model there are influences between these four elements that not only escalate loops but also equilibrate loops within the moral panic. However, this depends upon the relative influence of the relationship. That is, there might be only one or two escalating loops operating, however the relative influence of this loop (or loops) determines whether it can overcome the equilibrating loops operating simultaneously. If it does, it can easily escalate the moral panic on its own. Since we know that a moral panic is not unremitting, the moral panic cannot continue predominantly positive forever. Eventually there must be a decline in the moral panic where negative outcome loop(s) have sufficient "weight" to suppress the positive outcome loops. That is, equilibrating loops (deviation countering) will have more of an influence than escalating loops (deviation amplifying). According to Maruyama,

"a loop with an even number of negative influences [positive outcome] is deviation-amplifying, and a loop with an odd number of negative influences [negative outcome] is deviation-countering." (1962:177)

Thus, we must look at relations (equilibrating loops) that may cause the eventual decline of a moral panic.

There are four possibilities of equilibration that are identifiable. These are:

1. +CtlC-Ev-PubF-Pub+CtlC
2. +Pub+CtlC-Ev-PubF-Pub
3. +Ev+Pub+PubF+CtlC-Ev
4. +PubF+CtlC-Ev-Pub-PubF
The main equilibration loop may occur if the media stops its coverage of the event. If the event becomes stale and there is a new topic that amasses more attention, then this would in turn cause a decline to the event.

Loop #1
In this loop (+CtlC-Ev-PubF-Pub+CtlC) an increase in Control Culture decreases the event. Because Control Culture is so effective, the public feels safer and publicity decreases since it is no longer interested in an event on the decline. Therefore, Control Culture increases again. Control Culture continues to increase until the event disappears.

To get a better visualization of how this works within the model, the following illustration is provided.

```
                  Pub
                 /   \
                  +   -
         Ev1      -  CtlC
                 |   |
           PubF1
```

The 3 remaining loops operate in the same way.

Loop #2
In this loop (+Pub+CtlC-Ev-PubF-Pub) an increase in publicity increases Control Culture. The Control Culture effectively decreases the event, which decreases fear. Since the event becomes stale, publicity also decreases.

Loop #3
In this loop (+Ev+Pub+PubF+CtlC-Ev) an increase in the event increases the publicity that increases public fear. Public fear forces Control Culture to rise and effectively decrease the event.

Loop #4
In this loop (+PubF+CtlC-Ev-Pub-PubF) an increase in public fear increases Control Culture. This increase in Control Culture decreases the problem, giving the media less to report on, and thereby decreasing public fear.
A PURELY DE-ESCALATING LOOP

Loops may also be purely de-escalating:

5. –Ev-Pub-CtlC-PubF-Ev

Loop #5
In this loop a decrease in the event will cause a decline in reporting since the media does not have any events to use. Then the Control Culture decreases since there is no longer a problem to alleviate, and public fear also decreases

This is the only purely de-escalating loop since a decrease in any of the other elements would probably in some way affect another element positively.

OVERVIEW

Throughout this section we have developed a multi-causal model that helps examine the moral panics surrounding crimes and social problems. However our focus is on the moral panic that surrounds youth violence. In the following section we have used a content analysis to test the media portion of our model to get a better view of how moral panics escalate and de-escalate.
CHAPTER IV: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE TORONTO STAR

METHODOLOGY

This study analyzed the articles of "The Toronto Star." The time frame encompassed by the sample started from the first article pertaining to youth violence in 1995 and ended with the last article pertaining to youth violence in 1995. Inclusion for youth violence surrounded anything remotely connected to youth violence. Particular attention was paid to the media's portrayal of youth violence, and the political influence that surrounded all of the coverage. However as we worked through the data another category (Fillers) emerged as well.

DATA COLLECTION

Data for this study was gathered at the Toronto Metro Reference Library. Using microfilm each article pertaining to youth violence in the 1995 period was obtained and chronologically filed. (Refer to Appendix A)

DATA ANALYSIS

Throughout the data analysis, the text was coded and categories were developed through comparisons and contrasts (Cresswell, 1994:153), thus developing what Tesch calls an "organizing system" (1990:139). According to Tesch, there are two methods of devising an organizing system 1) It can be created from prior material, such as the theoretical framework adopted and/or the research questions that guide the investigation; or 2) it can be constructed from the data themselves (Tesch, 1990:119). A combination of the two was used.

Initially in the creation of our “organizing system” main categories were created after reading all the data. These main categories represented a common theme that each story fell under. Each different theme made up one main category. Once all the articles were sorted, the data were examined a second time to search for overlaps. Finally, a third sort refined the data and three main categories emerged. These were:
A. Violent youth crimes  
B. Politically motivated articles  
C. Filler Articles (criminally related articles)

After the main categories were distinguished, the body text was divided into segments. Each unit of segmented text was comprehensible on its own and contained one idea, episode, or piece of information. Any segments that were extracted out of textual context retained their meaning outside of the data. These independent segments were then sorted into topics, which developed into categories (sub-categories of a main category). Although the categories were developed mostly from the data, the theory of moral panics acted as a preliminary guide for these categories. Initially the segmentation of the data revolved around broad topics that reflected elements of the schismogenetic moral panic model.

As the data became more familiar, topics were changed, expanded, or were eliminated. Codes were assigned for each topic so that all segments of the data corresponded to a topic. If a segment did not correspond to a topic, a new topic was developed. Once the coding was complete, topics were all completely converted into categories. Much like the main categories, each category was listed and compared to see if it coincided with another category, or represented similar concepts or ideas. In such instances, these categories were merged, under one category. Conversely, if the category contained too many diverse concepts or ideas (which was often our case), subdividing was necessary. In such instances, further sub-categories were created under the one category heading.

When this process was complete a final list of categories was compiled for use in the examination of our moral panic theory. Therefore various categories and smaller sub-categories were created under each of the main categories (refer to Appendix B). Often identical categories could be found under more than one of the main categories. This was the case with many of the categories developed (e.g. The category “Youth Descriptions” was used in all three categories, but applied in a different context) since identically named categories held different meanings under each main category.
RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The primary reliability problem in content analysis, was the instability in coding text into categories. Data should be reproducible, by independent researchers, at different locations, and at different times, using the same instructions for coding the same set of data (Krippendorf, 1986:132). Often, a coder may duplicate what they have done before, finding no major deviations between the two, and conclude that the data are reliable. However, since the coding was carried out by only one coder, inconsistencies in the coding were expected. To help alleviate this problem and establish sufficient reliability, this study used two coders. Since double coding the entire sample was not realistic in our study, a portion (random sample of articles), was double coded to ensure some degree of replicability. Reliability was expressed as a function of the agreement achieved among coders regarding the assignment of units to categories (Krippendorf, 1986:133). Only if the agreement among coders was not better than chance (50% for 2 coders), was reliability considered absent. In this study the standard of .8 was adopted for reliability. However, reliability was assured in all cases.

When addressing validity concerns, one must distinguish between internal and external validity. According to Krippendorf (1986), when using content analysis "internal validity is merely another term for reliability" (1986:156). He notes that we are concerned only with external validity which assesses the degree to which variations inside the process of analysis correspond to variations outside that process and whether findings represent the real phenomena in the context of data as claimed." (Krippendorf 156:1986)

To deal with external validity, I needed to make sure that the content analysis procedures were context sensitive. That is, it was imperative to ensure that the individually coded data actually represented the contextual meaning from which it was extracted. The

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6A term used by Krippendorf which is defined as "the specific segment of content that is characterized by placing it in a given category" (58:1986).
primary strategy to ensure external validity was the provision of rich thick, detailed
description so that anyone interested in transferability would have a solid framework for
comparison (Cresswell, 1994:168).

This directs us to a more specific type of validity threat: Semantical Validity. It
was possible that the units segmented in this study misrepresented the symbolic meanings
in the data. Whenever any portion of text is removed from the context of the data,
descriptions need to be validated since researcher's descriptions can never be entirely
arbitrary (Krippendorf, 1986:159). One semantically valid procedure involved an
examination of the units grouped under each category. By singling out the categories, the
researcher would inevitably find commonalities in content, however confusions and
contradictions in content may also be discovered. Krippendorf asserts that
the analyst often finds him/her surprised how his/her instrument fails to
distinguish between vastly different units and why his/her instrument makes
distinctions between units that are seemingly alike. (1980:160)

By employing this strategy, reevaluation of these categories either, further developed and
improved our "organizing system," and sometimes provided justification for re-coding
various sections of our system.

When attempting to guard against reliability and validity problems "no experiment
can be perfectly controlled, and no measuring instrument can be perfectly calibrated"
(Kirk and Miller, 1986:21). Achieving absolute validity was impossible, and since there
was never a 100 % level of agreement, full reliability was unattainable. Threats to
reliability and validity are inherent in any study. Although time and resources imposed
constraints on this study, I attempted to limit these threats by reporting in detail data
collection and analysis strategies in order to provide the clearest and most accurate
picture of the methods. The best that could be done was to scrutinize all phases of the
analysis, address the major threats and acknowledge the shortcomings that were intrinsic
to the study.
**RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

Ultimately the goal of this research sought to thoroughly demonstrate how the moral panic model works. Realistically, such a task would require a much larger study, therefore this study used a content analysis as the primary vehicle for testing the most vital element of the model: media. Thick, detailed description was used to illustrate how the media depicted different violent youth crimes, and determined whether the media actually initiated an escalation (and de-escalation) in a moral panic. Using other relevant studies, we have speculated how other elements in the model contributed to the moral panic; political influence, public fear, and control culture.

On a broader level, we carried out an in-depth examination of the engine driving this model; that being political influence. Having discussed the ramifications of political influence, we will see in our content analysis data how control culture can play a key role in fuelling moral panics.
CHAPTER V: DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction to the Data: The Toronto Star 1995

As we mentioned earlier in this thesis, a moral panic, by definition, elicits the impression that a particular phenomenon is greater than the actual incidence. Thus far in our discussion we have speculated that the news print media provide the instigation for the creation of a moral panic.

Using the data gathered from the Toronto Star, this analysis seeks to illustrate and explain by example, the moral panic surrounding youth violence. However, before we start the analysis of the moral panic, we need to break it into two types:

I. Textual Analysis
II. Historical Analysis

The sequence of these analyses will help us better understand the moral panic surrounding youth violence.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The first section will carry out a textual analysis examining the text to observe how the contents of the articles create and sustain the moral panic. This analysis will categorize textual segments, paying particular attention to what the articles focus on, how things are presented (through language), and what their intended impact is. Once this is explained, we will have a better comprehension of what is typically found in the data.

With an understanding of each type of article, what they contain, and the desired effects, we will move to the historical analysis to see how these elements come together in a moral panic.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS
Knowing the different types of text that are contained within the data puts us in a better position to examine the whole sample of articles. A chronological examination of how the articles and their language influence each other, will in turn illustrate how they weave together to create and reinforce a moral panic.

In sum, the second section of our analysis will look at the entire sample and provide a historical analysis of the 1995 moral panic surrounding youth violence. But first, we need to direct attention to the textual analysis.

4. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS: In Depth

In our sample we have different types of articles, each playing a vital role in spawning and sustaining the panic. The articles surrounding youth violence take on three distinct dimensions, which contain different types of information regarding youth violence. Each particular dimension (we refer to each dimension as a main category) serves to advance the moral panic making it escalate or de-escalate.

Our analysis found the following three main categories of articles:

1. VIOLENT YOUTH CRIME ARTICLES
   - These include any stories about or relating to crimes or acts of violence that occur

2. POLITICAL ACTION STORIES
   - These include any stories that dealt with the YOA or government action addressing the problem of youth violence EG. tougher legislation, Boot Camp

3. OTHER/FILLERS/SUBSTITUTES
   - These include any stories that are not violent youth crimes but are stories regarding youth violence, either in an act or in a special case study

The next sections will examine each main category and what is found in them.

1. VIOLENT YOUTH CRIME ARTICLES
Of the total number of articles in the sample, more than half (59%) are stories on violence and crimes. These include any violent crimes that are committed and reported on, be it once or multiple times. Its prevalence amongst the data merits first attention.

**Two sub-types of Violent Youth Crime Articles**

Before we delve into the text, there are two other categories that are found under “Violent Youth Crime Articles,” that needs some explanation. The breakdown of these two sub-categories are:

a) Articles that follow the entire course of the crime  
b) Articles that do not follow through after the first or second story

All Violent Youth Crime Articles fall into one of these sub-categories. Either the story follows the entire course of the crime (incident, trial, sentencing, etc.) or the crime is reported and follow up on the crime does not ensue.

- **Lack of follow through articles**

  These cases make up 72% of all our Violent Youth Crime Articles. In these cases, the story is often reported, and involves anything from homicide, assault, or robbery.

  For example, on February 12th, 1995 an article titled “Boy, 15 charged with murder in shooting death of 9-year-old” proceeds to give background information on the crime and the offender. The crime is described in great detail, along with descriptions of the weapons used and seized. As well, there is mention of a charge of first-degree murder. One would think that a homicide case like this merits attention, yet when examining the data for the rest of the year, no more articles are reported concerning this incident.
**Complete Coverage Articles**

On the other hand there are stories that report a crime much like the aforementioned article, but there is follow-up. These crimes have coverage from the incident, the charge, the trial, straight through to the sentencing.

This only happens for two incidents (both homicides), and they are both reported on extensively (comparatively - to the rest of the sample) approximately around the same period. This analysis makes many references to both these cases since the two incidents make up 28% of all violent crime articles and 17% of all our data.

The first incident starts on March 29th, (ref)er to Appendix A article 23). This involves the murder of an innocent man by two “high” teenagers; one male, the other female. The other, similar in nature, involves three youths that kill an elderly couple (April 6th, 1995). The media, for the duration of the case, follows both these incidents. However, the first case reports from the time the female’s trial7 begins (the incident occurred the year before) through to the time of conviction and sentencing stages. The other incident should have carried through, but the final arguments are being reported in December of 1995. We can speculate that since it was reported this far, it probably carried over into 1996. The following table follows the course of each crime.

| Initial Reporting | 1. Teen gets 8 years for fatal stabbing (see footnote) | 1. Teen said he wanted to kill, police say
2. Killing spurs call to toughen teen crime law
3. Lawyer fears for teen |
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trial</td>
<td>2. Girl, 15 wrote poem on stabbing court told</td>
<td>4. Teens accused of killing priest to face psychiatric evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Girl, 16, admits boasting of killing to impress pals</td>
<td>5. Final arguments given in Montreal murder trial of teens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Girl boasted about killing for 'gang loyalty' trial told</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Hurting girl not capable of killing, trial told</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentencing</td>
<td>6. Stabbing case girl reads her poem to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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7 The two teen homicides started before 1995 however there was separate coverage; the male is tried in 1994 and sentenced in March 1995. The female’s trial occurs in 1995.
Consistent themes found in Violent Youth Crime Articles

Regardless of whether or not the media coverage follows through or not, the following categories of text are consistently found within this "Violent Youth Crime Articles."

- Sensationalism: e.g. propagation of stereotypes and violent imagery
- Victimization: stories placed much of the emphasis upon victimization
- Concentration on Opinions of Authority: the press concentrated only on authority opinion

- Sensationalism

Studies have shown that people are interested in reading about violence, and that newspapers are a more "important source for violent than non-violent items." (Haskins, 1969:501) The images in The Toronto Star portray youth crimes of violence with horrific description. The stories usually include presentations of crime accentuated with exaggerated violence surrounding each act.

Sensationalism is a redundant theme that, in each article, over-emphasizes crime with countless depictions of inconceivable acts of violence; violence which in turn is propagated onto a helpless victim. One might suggest that The Toronto Star purposely present crimes of violence because of the entertainment value which stories of violence typically have.

Using vivid imagery, The Toronto Star presents to the public a view of society where youths are violently out of control, and the law is incapable of dealing with them.
For example on January 18th an article titled "Violence at school basketball game", reads as follows:

Sixty teenagers were involved in a violent incident in a gym yesterday after kicking in a steel door at Sir Sandford Fleming Secondary School.

Witnesses told The Star the incident followed a senior boy's basketball game won in the closing seconds by Fleming Chargers, 51-50, over Georges Vanier Vikings.

Vanier coach Ken Earthy, trying to protect his players and fans, was hit in the head by a wooden bench. He was released from Markham Souffville Hospital last night with five stitches.

The melee took place after a Fleming player taunted Vanier athletes by running by their team bench after the winning basket, according to witnesses. After some pushing, the player was cut in the face. Officials then cleared the gym of spectators, allowing a junior game to proceed.

Minutes later the gym door leading to the outside of the North York school was pushed in and a wave of screaming people started throwing chairs and tables, witnesses said.

A staff sergeant at metro police Division 31 confirmed there was a disturbance at the school but no charges were laid.

(THE TORONTO STAR Jan. 18th, 1995:A2)

In this particular article, "no charges were laid", however violence makes up a very large portion of this article. The threat of violence is implicated just by reading the headline. It implicitly tells the reader that violence is occurring and rising steadily, yet youths are getting away without being punished.

In this story, a coach (an authority figure who should have some degree of control over students) is reported to have been injured, or rather "hit in the head by a wooden bench" needing "five stitches," while trying to deal with "sixty teenagers.....kicking in a steel door" to participate in a "melee", which was instigated by a "player" who was "cut in the face." Stories such as this merit some attention however, the presentation and language used in the reporting affects the way readers perceive the theme being conveyed: the problem of growing violence.
As well, we have the possibility of fear of victimization instilled in the reader. Although no charges are laid, the presence of violence inflicted upon a victim has the same intended effect as if it happened in a violent crime article. These articles especially center on the threat the violence poses to the public and the sensational details involved in the act. In presenting articles like this, the focus of the stories’ move away from the act itself, by distorting certain details such as victimization or the violent acts involved.

Another example of this occurs on April 6th, 1995. Two articles positioned next to each other on the same page describe the brutal nature of the same crime; *Teen said he wanted to kill, police say (THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3)* and *Killing spurs call to toughen teen crime law (THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3)*. In this particular case the two are essentially identical articles. The information in each article does not vary; the only difference is the emphasis of each article. The first goes into a more vivid description of the abhorrent nature of the crime. Although the other does this as well, it has more material on the YOA and ramifications of amendments to it directly making references to this crime. This article will be described in greater detail in the next section.

The introductions of both articles begin with police accounts immediately following the crime. The first narrative is as follows: "*The savage killing of a retired Anglican priest and his wife occurred after a teenager told two friends he wanted to kill someone, police say.*" (*THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3*) The use of "savage killing" stresses the blatant disregard for human life by the teenagers in question. The fact that they would just kill on a whim might leave the reader appalled, mortified and unnerved.

The second narrative reiterates the first, but stresses the lack of compassion displayed by the youths and their act: "*Two of the three juveniles charged in the bludgeoning deaths of a retired Anglican priest and his wife laughed in the police cruiser after their arrest, police said.*" (*THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3*)

Both articles are about the same length, and describe the details of the crime further and the victims helplessness and victimization.
This first article also demonstrates the remorseless nature of the youths and how precocious youths have become. "The three, aged 13, 14 and 15, looking like the boys next door, stood calmly in youth court yesterday as their lawyer entered a not-guilty plea to first degree murder charges." (THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3) This description provides a stark illustration of how today's youths can behave, and calls upon the reader's sense of righteousness to identify the indecency of the young offender's demeanor and actions.

In another story (which has its trial reported around the same time), the same types of descriptions are used. In one of the articles, Girl, 16 admits boasting of killing to impress pals (THE TORONTO STAR Jun. 13th, 1995:A11), The Toronto Star describes preparations for the mugging in graphic detail. They report that the youth involved in the murder "like a punk Rambo armed to the teeth, concealed two steak knives in his jeans pockets and repeatedly stabbed Baylen from behind when he said he had no money and turned out his pockets to show it." (THE TORONTO STAR Jun. 13th, 1995:A11) The way in which the youth lacks any expression of sorrow, or compunction regarding this murder, sits in the reader mind and creates imaginable mixed emotions of fear and anger.

Fear is a likely result of stories that deconstruct the innocence of youth and portray our youths as ruthless "animal like" beings. By describing youths as inhuman, the media may create an inherent fear of becoming a victim. Sensationalism acts as the primary vehicle for this creation.

This sensationalism plays a vital role in the moral panic, because the language that is used is one that escalates and exacerbates criminal events in the eyes of the reader. The Toronto Star's use of sensationalism provides the reader with repetitive violent descriptions and vivid details, which might appeal to their sense of despair. Violent depictions are inherently one and the same with sensationalism. This inundation of sensationalism surrounding youth violence fosters the possibility of inflicted violence, and fear of victimization.
• Victimization and Fear

If the crime does not make up the majority of the article, focus shifts to the description of violence unleashed upon the victim. Beyond the descriptive violence characteristic of these articles, media descriptions of particular violent events and the effects on the victims can instill in the reader, a newfound fear, or build an existing fear. If we look back to the articles on April 6, the helpless victims "Rev. Frank Towe" and his wife "Jocelyn Towe" are constructed in exactly a manner in which the media is able to elicit fear from the reader. Their "slaying" is "planned" and they are apparently handpicked by the youths. The Toronto Star dedicates an entire paragraph to the speculation as to how she died. "An autopsy on the body of Jocelyn Towe indicated that she, like her husband, tried to protect herself during the brutal attack. the coroner's office said." (*THE TORONTO STAR* Apr. 6th, 1995:A3)

The victim in the article is used as a representation of what could happen to others, and the reader feels that this is a possible conjuncture that may happen to them. The possibility of the reader or someone close to the reader becoming the victim nurtures the small seed of fear planted by violent youth articles. The fear produces the panic and adds to the strength of the escalation. To the public, reading about the atrocities to innocent victims instills a fear that violent youth crime is threatening public safety and will inevitably affect them or someone they know, unless it can be stopped.

Even if the victim is not always mentioned, the way the assailant is described can also instill a tangible fear within the reader. A prime example of this is the following short article that leaves much to the reader's imagination, and feeds on the reader's fear even though a victim is not mentioned.

The article involves a 16 year old youth, who is being sought by police for a number of stabbings. This youth "...is wanted for attempted murder, aggravated assault, assault with a weapon and weapons dangerous to the public peace." (*THE TORONTO STAR* May 4th, 1995:A19) The article proceeds to provide a description of an average young black man with "a 2.5-centimetre scar on his forehead." To conclude the article, the writer reminds the reader that legally, a youth's name is usually not released.
But, because of the circumstances and the gravity of this youths capture, permission from a youth court judge is allowed for the revelation of his identity, because “he [was] thought to be a threat to the public.” (THE TORONTO STAR May 4th, 1995:A19)

This article is especially effective, because it is short, yet it emphasizes in a few short sentences the dangerous nature of the alluded youth. The fact that the alluded offender is wanted and has not been caught instills the fear that he could victimize someone else. Two specific references are made regarding the danger he is to society. The first reference is through the quote that he is considered a threat to public safety; the court decision to set aside provisions in the YOA and reveal the identity of young offender emphasizes the second. The reader is informed that young offender identities are not allowed to be revealed, but in this case extenuating circumstances allow for it. This leaves the reader wondering what heinous crimes must have been committed in order for this the court to override this. Because details pertaining to his victims are not provided, it is possible that past victims are strangers. A lack of information and the language that is used might often lead the reader’s fear into a festering frenzy since these stories can be seen to feed on the imagination and possibilities rather than sensationalized descriptive facts.

Therefore victimization, or even the possibility of victimization, can create fear and public outrage. This concentration of potentiality inherently leads to the element that is intrinsic to the moral panic; fear.

- **Concentration on Opinions of Authority**

Articles almost always use figures of authority to present their take on the crime; “The savage killing of a retired Anglican priest and his wife occurred after a teenager told two friends he wanted to kill someone, police say.” (THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3) In both of the previously mentioned articles on April 6th, 1995, the media makes use of authority comments to reinforce the heinous nature of the crime. More
evidence that the newspaper emphasis on violence may be concealed with the hidden agenda of fear creation.

This can be exemplified as well in an article on February 27, 1995 titled Youth mob beats man, swarms officers 400 youths on rampage after leaving club, police say. (THE TORONTO STAR Feb 27th, 1995:A6) Commentary from the police is made use of in the headline of the article. The use of language such as "mob", "swarms," and "rampage" from an authority figure often legitimates the claim that the occurrence was really as brutal as the media account describes. Already in the headline, emphasis is placed on the chaotic situation. These words evoke an imagery of destruction, and they are created not by the media, but by enforcement officers.

In the body of the article, various opinions about the violent nature of youths are voiced by Sergeant "Jeff Valentine." The Toronto Star uses these descriptions in the headlines using phrases such as "savagely beaten" ending with a reference to police as the source of the commentary. The following is an excerpt from the article:

But the 30-year-old man, whose name police would not reveal, was kicked, punched and hit with a beer bottle after he remonstrated with the younger people — mainly males — who were smashing streetlights and windows and had wrecked a parking lot kiosk.

Sergeant Jeff Valentine said the rampaging mob had just left the Tunnel Nightclub, on Adelaide St. W. at Duncan St., just west of University Ave.

Officers were in another club on Adelaide laying liquor charges and seizing booze when the mob came swarming out of The Tunnel, Valentine said.

The officers saw the man being attacked and rushed over.

"The officers were in turn swarmed," the sergeant said

The victim's head and face injuries were treated at St. Michael's Hospital and he was released. (THE TORONTO STAR Feb 27th, 1995:A6)

The rest of the article continues with comments from "Sergeant Valentine" and prior statistics from other similar violent incidents.
Using the voice of authority, the media legitimates the use of sensationalism since it was not the words of a journalist, but rather the words of someone vested with authority.

**Violent Crime Articles: In general**

Regardless of what the story is or how severe the crime, the violent crime stories in the Star appear to adhere to a similar pattern. Each violent crime story follows a general pattern, and can be outlined as such:

- Lead-in introduction where the violent crime is presented in a law and order framework
- An interpretive section which provides a privileged selection of speakers voicing their views and opinions (experts, lawyers, police officers, detectives, etc.)

In general each story’s format is centered on ideas and beliefs that perpetuate the propagation of brutal stereotypic images of youths.

This manner in which youth violence is portrayed, leaves the reader with a chasm between reality and perception. In “Violent Youth Crimes” we see a consistent theme in the portraits of Canadian youth. The Star’s portrayal of youths is one that describes them as an uncontrollable violent group that has absolutely no regard for authority. Teens are effectively presented as a reckless group of people that should be feared. The Toronto Star crime stories focus on creating a sense that anyone can be victimized and then use the various statements of authorities to support their stories. One thing the Star rarely does is allude to the causes of crime. By doing so they tend to individualize each crime and pathologize the offender. This makes it easier to call for a law and order reaction as opposed to a rehabilitative or economic reaction.

Since information about crime is primarily derived through the media, most people gain their images and opinions about the nature and extent of crime through the media. This constant array of violent crime provides the readers with a vastly distorted
view of crime and incidence. According to Doob, in a 1983 national survey 73.8% of the population overestimated the incidence of violence in crime (1984:68). According to the number and content of media reports on youth crime, it can be inferred that the public is being led to believe that youth crime is increasing in vast and unmanageable numbers, as is the seriousness of the crimes committed.

In our data violent youth crime articles make up 59% of all the articles. Of that 59%, 58% were homicide articles. According to Statistics, in 1995 "violent youth crime" made up 18% of all reported "youth offences" (Bala, 1995:1). Of this 18%, homicide (the most serious violent offence) comprised only .003% of all violent youth crimes (Hung, 1995:8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All reported youth offences</th>
<th>100%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of violent youth crime (of all reported youth offences)</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of homicide (of the % of violent youth crime)</td>
<td>.003%</td>
<td>58%</td>
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From this comparison it is safe to assume that the misrepresentation in the data would lead to a public overestimation in crime.

In society we look to the mass media to provide us with insight to that which we know little to nothing about. This dependence on the media for information leaves the media in a very powerful position to shape public opinion on certain issues. The public perception on anything, from seriousness to the rising incidence, can be manipulated through the media. As Doob, Marinos and Varma point out:

There is, very roughly speaking, one young person charged every week to ten days for a homicide offence. To the extent that our media report these event on a national basis, it means that the public has enormous opportunities to hear about homicides committed by youth. Thus, as University of Ottawa criminologist Julian Robers points out, it is completely understandable, if the media are reporting these quite regularly, for people to believe that there is an increase. We
remember these recent reports, and assume that it must not have been "like that" a few years ago. (22:1995)

Fear is often the result of the media's portrayal of youths, and the perception that ensues is one that sees youth crime as ineffectively controlled. This perceived rise and threat that is instilled in the reader is a necessary element for our next article type, the political article.

2. POLITICAL ARTICLES

Politically motivated articles make up 23% of our data. Political articles are any stories found in the Toronto Star that are written to discuss government or political action towards youth crime. These are articles that are representative of some authoritarian view, be it provincial or federal. With the continuation of violent youth events in the media, political articles often utilize the growing problem to legitimate election promises. To get a better understanding of this, we need to look at the content of the political articles.

Consistent themes in Politically Motivated Articles

In the data, politically motivated articles emerge in two forms, federal, and provincial.

The provincial articles are tough alternative measure articles put forth by the Provincial Progressive Conservatives. However we cannot properly classify them as provincial until June, since the Tories are not elected to power until later in the year. Therefore, for the first half of the year, the provincial articles are not so much articles that aim to solve a problem, as they might be seen as ploys to gain votes.

The federal articles on the other hand tend to focus more on amendments to the YOA. A few provincial articles also emerge to support the 'tough' measures of the YOA,
but most propose tougher boot camp measures to deal with problematic youths. When reading all the political articles the following common themes were identified:

- References to the YOA
- Identifies youth crime as a serious growing problem
- Proposals to remedy and rectify the problem

Be it provincial or federal, these all work together to legitimate and gain public support for an apparent fight against youth violence.

- References to the changes to the YOA

Most of the political articles focus solely on the Young Offenders Act and amendments to it. During this time Justice Minister Allan Rock proposes amendments to the Young Offenders Act which would double the maximum sentence for young murderers. These proposed changes come under Bill C-37. Each article contains the same information regarding the Act, but depending on the time during the year, reference is made to the stage in which the amendments are in (in terms of being passed).

These articles contain words and phrases such as “tough” and “stiffer penalties” to reinforce the fact that the government is making efforts to make the public a safer place by incarcerating “young killers” for longer periods of time. The word “tough” is especially prevalent in most of the articles, stressing the intended effect of the amendment. On February 27, 1995 a political article stresses the need for changes to the YOA. The headline reads: “Young killers to face stiffer law MP’s expected to okay tough youth crime bill.” (THE TORONTO STAR Feb 27th, 1995:A3) The body of the article proceeds to discuss more punitive measures when dealing with youth violence.

The following sections from the article discuss the proposed changes to the YOA:

Tough new legislation what would double to 10 years the maximum penalty for murder committed by young offenders is expected to receive final approval in the House of Commons tomorrow.

Justice Minister Allan Rock, when he introduced the legislation last June said he wanted stiffer penalties in the 10-year-old act to ensure Canadians can live and raise their children in safe communities.
Besides doubling the penalties for murderers aged 12 to 17, it provides for a seven-year maximum prison sentence (instead of five) for juveniles convicted of second-degree murder.

It also places the onus on 16- and 17-year-olds charged with murder to show why they should be tried in youth court, rather than adult court where the penalty is life imprisonment.

"It is high time young people who commit violent repeat offences are held accountable," said Reform MP Jay Hill

"We should quit blaming society, family or peer pressure for their crimes."

(THE TORONTO STAR Feb. 27th, 1995:A3)

This portion from the story exemplifies the way in which the government has taken a more punitive approach towards dealing with youths. Political articles making reference to the YOA are very consistent throughout the year. The same information is presented to the public delineating the amendments. Each article basically contains the details surrounding the YOA and the status of its approval. Four months later, another article is published with almost identical details. Here is an excerpt from the body of the article:

A tough new law that would double to 10 years the maximum penalty for first-degree murder committed by young offenders has been approved by the Senate.

The amendments to the controversial young Offenders Act could receive royal assent as early as today but must still be proclaimed before taking effect.

Justice Minister Allan Rock wants the law to go into effect by Jan. 1, 1996.

"I am very pleased," Rock said in an interview last night. "This bill will strengthen the criminal justice system. We are sending a strong message regarding violent crime committed by young people that it will not be tolerated.

Under Bill C-37 any juvenile convicted of second-degree murder under the act, which applies to young people 12 to 17, would face a maximum seven-year jail sentence.

At present, the maximum penalty for both offences under the act is five years less a day.
Teenage killers convicted in adult court face life imprisonment, but they can apply for parole after serving between five and 10 years. 
(THE TORONTO STAR Jun. 22nd, 1995:A13)

This article goes on to describe the onus of youth murders and the history of why the legislation was introduced. Some of the article differs, because of the different stages the amendments are in. Regardless, there is little variation in the content of the article, and the undertone suggests that the “tougher” new law will deter youth violence and severely punish offenders.

- Reference to crimes to support YOA changes

All the political articles in the sample have one common theme in the text: there is a dire need for YOA change. To support these changes to the YOA, each article presents youth violence as a menace to societal safety by making references to current cases occurring concurrently with the article. It is important to note during the period that political articles are presented, legislation has not gone through yet. This legislation ensures that youths committing crimes will face harsher penalties for their actions.

In the violent youth section on April 6th, 1995 we reviewed an article about three teens that murdered a retired priest and his wife. To reiterate, this article portrays the youths as impassive and remorseless. This was one of the few articles that is a violent youth article as well as a political article (explained in the historical analysis). This article is entitled, Killing spurs call to toughen teen crime law. (THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3) The lead-in after the violent description of the boys and the crime is:

*The youths cannot be named under the Young Offenders Act.*

*The emotionally charged case has sparked renewed calls for toughening the young Offenders Act, which sets a maximum sentence of three years followed by two year’s probation.*

*If convicted in adult court, they would face a life sentence with parole possibility after they serve five or 10 years.*
Amendments to the Young Offenders Act which would double the maximum sentence for young murderers have been passed by the House of Commons and is before the Senate
(THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3)

The article goes back to brutal descriptions of the crime, and ends with support statements from previous victims with regards to the amendments.

*Mivilled Deschenes said a decision has not been made on whether the two older suspects would be moved in adult court. The 13-year old is too young to be tried as an adult.*

*Morris Rose, whose son was beaten to death by several youths on a Montreal bus five years ago, attended yesterday’s hearing to see “if the prosecutor and the judge have any guts” to transfer the cases to adult court. Canadian Press reports.*

*Rose has made it a personal mission to lobby for changes that would provide tougher sentences for young offenders found guilty of vicious crimes.*
(THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3)

Therefore without violent youth crimes and public fear, there is no purpose for changes to the YOA. Within political articles, reference to crimes that occur and victim statements, give substance and justification to legislative amendments.

- **Proposals to Rectify the Problem outside of YOA changes**

In the article *“Commons gets tough on young offenders”* on March 1st, 1995, Rock talks of other methods other than the YOA amendments for curbing youth violence.

*Justices Minister Allan Rock says he's ready to go beyond harsher sentencing for teenage criminals in the continuing overhaul of the Young Offenders Act.*

*Rock was speaking yesterday as MP’s gave final approval to tough amendments to the act which double the maximum sentence for young murderers.*

*That is merely phase one, Rock said.*

*"The changes Parliament has now passed are an important improvement to the legislation," Rock said. "But the second phase will draw the attention of Canadians to the real facts about youth crime."*
"Let's look at alternatives and more effective ways of dealing with crime to ensure the re-offending rate goes down."

Because the sentences are stiffer, the amendments mean more time must be served before parole.
*(THE TORONTO STAR Mar. 14th, 1995:A4)*

Although mention is made for alternative measures, Rock does not address what these measures will entail. Despite alluding to alternative measures the article still places the brunt of its emphasis on harsher, punitive sentences. These changes follow up on part of the Liberals elections promise that Rock is following through on. In the articles alternative measures usually refer to rehabilitative means. While these may be more effective, the public needs to see immediate retribution to find comfort in. Long term rehabilitative and preventative measures do not provide the same instantaneous results of punitive action. Therefore we see that solutions to youth violence tend to streamline towards a more immediate punitive approach, but alludes to a softer, alternative approach to appease those opposed to tougher measures for later.

Outside of the federal measures taken towards youth crime, proposed provincial measures are also reported. The Tories realize that a complete hard-line punitive approach is not necessarily the answer. Therefore Harris, who is not yet premier of Ontario at the time of the first boot camp article, proposes that 'boot camps' be established to deal with young offenders. These present both a tough but alternative means of dealing with troublesome youths. On May 30th, 1995, the story *"Tories tout boot camp for young offenders Harris gets tough on law and order"* is printed. Not quite stiffer penalties, however the recurring word "tough" is once again mentioned.

*A Mike Harris government in Ontario would get tough on young offenders by sending them to a form of boot camp.*

"I don't know whether reformatory's the right word...you can use boot camp: everybody comes out with a different word" Harris said.
Harris outlined his law-and-order theme yesterday at Scarborough's Cedarbrae Collegiate, once a hotbed of violence that is now on the straight and narrow, he said, largely due to a police presence.

The Progressive Conservative leader also announced his government would join other provinces in forcing the federal government to toughen up the Young Offenders Act, including lowering the age from 17 to 16. (THE TORONTO STAR May 30th, 1995: A1)

The "tough" theme is recurrent throughout the article and comes in anticipation of upcoming provincial elections. Upcoming elections that year will be on June the 8th, 1995. At this point the provincial Progressive Conservatives and the federal Liberals are fairly evenly split, and Harris needs a way of obtaining extra votes.

In the last statement the provincial government gives the reader an impression that it if elected their government will rally against the Liberal federal government to change the YOA. This statement gives the illusion that the federal government will not be able to pass the bill without Tory support. This illusory impression is utilized, and perhaps helps the Progressive Conservatives gain votes, since they are trying to rectify the problem of youth violence and crime. Youth violence is the ideal problem that the Tories can use to gain votes as long as they can provide a picture to the public that they are the driving force behind the solution. With a problem of such magnitude in the public eye, efforts to come up with a viable solution should be enough to sway public opinion come voting time.

We can see that, although boot camps are presented as alternative measures the stress is still placed on the fact that laws need to be tougher, and that efforts to deal with the problem will solve it as long as they are tough. This redundant "get-tough" message appears to appeal to the public. The view is that the current measures are too lenient, and the moves towards stricter, tougher measures are what the public needs and wants to see.

The point is, regardless of whether it is a provincial or federal level of politics, people look to politicians to lead them into safer communities and crime prevention. The reader needs to read about what measures are being taken, and the solutions as we have seen are always indicative of a vigorous approach to dealing with youths.
• **In Sum**

Regardless of the type of political article (provincial or federal), these article types appear to serve the purpose of creating fear (and perhaps reducing depending on the stage in which the moral panic was in) in the public. For violence to be so severe that the government is reacting to it might have the effect of instilling fear. It keeps the issue of youth violence at the forefront of publicity and in doing so legitimates its own actions as well as increasing fear. To further keep issues of youth violence prominent other means are used, which leads us to our next category.

3. **Fillers**

We have discussed the content of violent youth crime articles and political articles. In our data we find ourselves with a third main category.

Often when there are not enough violent crimes occurring to keep the topic at the forefront of media publicity, there is a need to keep the violence in the public eye. In order to maintain panic momentum, it is necessary to create reminders to the readers that the problem still exists.

We know from official statistics that the rates of crime are low when it comes to serious violent crimes (Hung 1995:8). We also know that the media are not able to fabricate stories. Therefore to ensure that a panic sustains, even when there are no real stories (murders, manslaughter, sexual assault) the media uses topical articles that keep youth violence alive in the public eye; what this thesis called fillers, which make up 18% of our data.

**Consistent themes found in Filler articles**

Fillers, are articles that substitute violent crime articles when crimes do not occur. Fillers in the context of The Toronto Star could be one of the following:
• Special Case/Statistical Studies
• Wired articles/out of region articles - articles that were violent but occurred outside the vicinity of the reader

• Special Interest/ Awareness articles

Special interest articles consist of stories that examine either the legislation, or rising youth crime (mostly statistical). They generally make reference to a particular crime or type of crime that has occurred. This type of article usually provides background with statistics and reasoning to explain rationales behind youth crime.

For example, in an “Insight” section on the 26th, of April a defense lawyer writes an article, which uses a case scenario. This article describes a youth sitting on the threshold of a criminal career. It argues that we are inherently an “imprisonment” driven society, and that this only serves to exacerbate the situation for many youths that can be deterred using preventative measures.

It does not directly attack the government, but rather calls this a problem that is a “circle without exit.” If the media is simply a tool as described in this thesis, why then does it allow this article to be published?

This may serve the media in two ways. First, the media as we have discussed must appear to the public as an autonomous unbiased, separate entity from government, policing, corporations, etc. To maintain itself as such requires the presentation of both sides of the story. This is presenting both sides of the story. However it still presents youth violence as a problem.

Another article appears on August 17th about a family’s petition to the government to move youths to adult court. This article gives detailed history behind the case that prompted the family’s push for YOA revisions; the victim “Louis Ambas” killed during a robbery. This article has an ongoing theme that revisions need to be made to the YOA and support is needed in order for this to happen. In the article the family has set up 1-900 numbers for petition support, and it states that,

“more that 120,000 people across Canada have signed the petition.”
"It calls on Justice Minister Allan Rock to change the act so that youths accused of murder are identified and tried and sentenced as adults."

(THE TORONTO STAR Aug. 17th, 1995:SC1)

This particularly long article reiterates over and over that youth crime of this particular nature should be treated as adult crimes and tried as adult crimes. Its primary focus is targeting the current YOA and sees amendments as the only solution to the problem. Filler articles such as this emanate from the public. These fillers provide a perfect example of the Grassroots Model put forth by Goode, and Ben-Yehuda. To reiterate, this stance on moral panic’s argues that panics originate with the general public. That is, the public feels that a given series of events presents a threat to them or society, thereby triggering a panic. Fillers in support of the grassroots model, make up 26% of all the filler articles.

A third example of a special case or report is on August 12th, 1995. This article headline reads, Female teens turning to crime at twice the rate of young males. The gap between Barbie and GI Joe is shrinking violently. (THE TORONTO STAR Aug. 12th, 1995:C4) This article is filled with various phrases, and depictions that make the story appalling. It primarily combines reference to a violent youth crime, and uses it alongside statistical evidence as a primary driving vehicle for the portrait of violent youth crime.

This story follows five consecutive violent crime stories about a 16-year-old Mississauga teen convicted of manslaughter in the death of a man who was stabbed from behind with a steak knife. The story leads with a detective describing female teen crime:

"Girls will stalk, follow other girls home, go into their houses and beat them up, they will use extortion, they will utter threats of harm, physical assault in the form of hair pulling, scratching and gouging - they often drag the conflict on and on, for many school years."

(THE TORONTO STAR Aug. 12th, 1995:C4)

Going back to our original analysis of the violent youth crime articles, the credibility of an officer’s statement is deemed reliable in the eyes of the public. Most of this article is composed of similar detective statements, therefore in some ways it falls under both
categories. However, it only uses the case to support its main thesis about rising female crime. After describing the case, a list of supportive statistics on the problem of female criminal behaviour are delineated:

"Data from the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, a branch of Statistics Canada, show that between 1986 and 1990-91, the number of female youths charged by police increased by 29 percent, more than double the 14 percent increase for male youths."

*(THE TORONTO STAR Aug. 12*th, 1995:C4)*

We must bear in mind however that this crime is the only homicide crime committed by a female in all of 1995. Only one other crime (July 14*th*, 1995) committed by a female is reported in the Star in 1995. The primary problem here is that the article uses statistics and detective interviews concerning one case to assume that female crimes are getting worse. Although there are still a very small percentage of female crimes reported, the media’s repeated reporting on one female crime, alongside with supportive statistics shows the reader that the problem of female youth violence is on the rise.

These articles are especially important, because they validate the perceptions that readers come to via the stories printed by the media. Here the public is presented figures and statistics that affirm that a problem exists. Numerical evidence shatters any doubts that the perception might have been an illusion.

**Out of region articles**

"Out of region articles" occur when stories (mostly wired) appear in the local paper. These stories assist in the perpetuation of a moral panic, but do not necessarily occur in the Canadian context.

A prime example of this is a wired story from Washington, D.C., which reports teenage crime on the rise; *Teen homicides on rise FBI says. (THE TORONTO STAR May 22*nd, 1995:A11)* It is a report by the FBI that reveals that "*American teenage boys commit murder at alarming rates.*" *(THE TORONTO STAR May 22*nd, 1995:A11)* and uses numbers compiled from U.S. statistics. Regardless, the fact that youth crime is not
on the rise in Toronto, the Star can capitalize on this "FBI" report to help support the moral panic.

Another example of this article type is found on December 28th. This headline reads, *Kids aged 3 strong enough to fire a gun study shows.* *(THE TORONTO STAR Dec.28th, 1995:E10)* This article is a wired story from Dallas. Not only is this a study (not a violent crime article) it also is a story written in the U.S. citing American statistics. This article is similar to the FBI article.

As well in March, a youth violence story from Jacksonville Florida reads *Teens caught starring crime video.* *(THE TORONTO STAR Mar.10th, 1995:A16)* It describes youths "kicking in walls, smashing toilets with hammers, cooking a live fish in a microwave until it exploded and putting a paper bag on a dog's head and blowing marijuana smoke into it." *(THE TORONTO STAR, Mar.10th 1995:A16)* This, much like other wired stories from outside the reader's vicinity, are published and further help to fuel the moral panic.

Often the origin of the story is not mentioned in the article. In the Florida incident, the article only read Jacksonville in small print at the top of the article. In the article itself there was no mention of where the crime occurred. Regardless of where the violence is happening, it is occurring and the reader still feels the effects of these articles. Elicited feelings of anger and outrage are still tangible despite the vicinity in which the incidents originate from. The point however, is that, wired articles like these would not be necessary if the magnitude of youth violence was really as serious as the media portrays. A steady stream of crimes in Toronto would be enough to keep the media reporting consistent and thereby propel the panic.

**OVERVIEW OF THE TEXTUAL ANALYSIS**

We have now examined the categories and textual sub-categories in which all of our stories fall into. Our data illustrates the different types of accounts that are used to present the topic of Violent Youth Crime to the Toronto public.
Although the main categories contain different elements, the contents all point to youth violence as a mounting problem. Whether the article is political, filler, or violent youth crime, youth violence is always posed as an uncontrollable problem.

Throughout this section, we have demonstrated in the data that "violent youth crime" articles and "filler" articles serve to create the public perception of rising youth violence. We have also looked at "political" articles, which represent an authoritarian view of how the problem can be tackled. We have yet to tie the articles together, however the content of each category already demonstrates an emerging pattern.

Through sensationalism of violent youth crimes, the apparent increase gives rise to a public perception that there is a growing problem, and that nothing is happening to the youths. The contents of these articles radiate a perception that the YOA is too lenient. This view is just as prevalent in public perception as the view of rising youth violence, and many of the articles reiterating the "get tough" issue point to a need for the Young Offenders Act to reflect a more punitive stance. In presenting such a view, the political articles also provide the public with a solution; one that supports a movement away from the perceived leniency to a less discretionary and more punitive YOA.

Therefore, to identify youth violence as a problem we have a group of articles that utilize vivid imagery and language to exacerbate the issue of violent youth crime. To further support the fact that youth violence is on the rise "fillers" also emerge to fuel the moral panic. Both fillers and violent youth articles lead the public to believe that the existing YOA is much too lenient and impotent when dealing with youth violence. Affecting the overall scope of this moral panic is the political entity that draws on the public perceptions created by the media about youth violence and the Young Offenders Act. This political entity attempts to assuage the public to believe that it can alleviate the problem through amendments to the YOA and alternative measures.

To get a better picture of how the three play off each other we will examine the data set as a whole through a historical analysis.
B. HISTORICAL ANALYSIS: In Depth

When looking at the sample as a whole, we see some escalation and de-escalation throughout the 1995 period. As well, the data illustrate that a number of trends emerge to, escalate, sustain or de-escalate the moral panic surrounding youth violence. Together, these ebbs and flows demonstrate the fluctuating nature of moral panics that we have already discussed. In our historical analysis of the data we will illustrate a trend whereby, small moral panics (one or two articles on an incident) come and go to create and dictate the direction of (in the grand scheme) the larger moral panic.

Throughout the sample period, each one of the main categories that we have described, interweave together to create the moral panic. We will see how violent youth crimes and related violence (fillers) play a specific role in creating and perpetuating the moral panic. With political articles entering the picture as well, we will illustrate how the moral panic is quelled by effectively controlled legislation. This thereby legitimates governmental functioning and degenerates the moral panic.

In the following section we will examine the three main categories of articles, and look at their relationships in building moral panic trends. The analysis will walk through the entire sample from January to December highlighting the elements indicative of the moral panic.

CHRONOLOGY

1995

Beginning in January we will walk through each month to examine the key moral panic trends that occur throughout the year. I will start at the beginning of the year, where a mixture of 17 violent youth crime and filler articles are written in January and February before the emergence of the first politically motivated article.
January

Of the first seventeen articles, the first article is Police use pepper spray on teen suspect outside school (THE TORONTO STAR Jan. 4th, 1995:A7). This filler opens up the 1995 year for youth violence. The second article is a violent youth crime article, which reads “Teen jailed two years for killing an 8 year old.” (THE TORONTO STAR Jan 1995:A7) The thought that this could happen to anyone’s child, and that a teen would only receive 2 years is disturbing. Receiving only two years for a murder, to anyone would seem too lenient, even if it is only a youth. This article plants the seed at the beginning of the year that there is a need for tougher punishment when dealing with youth violence and crime. Although this is a serious crime, there is not another story that pertains to it throughout the year.

Five more articles appear (both fillers and violent youth crime) after this incident.

2. Two boys charged in stabbing (THE TORONTO STAR Jan. 10th, 1995:A7)

This consistent stream of articles provides the reader with an initial view of youth violence at the outset of the year.

As we can see sensational violence makes up many of the articles at the beginning of the year. At the beginning of the year we also see the beginnings of a small sub-panic that arises around the violence in basketball.

Earlier I mentioned that smaller moral panics can emerge within a larger panic. Three articles appear to create such a panic on basketball violence in schools. In the second article the panic begins to escalate, saying,

"following a series of violent incidents, including the wounding of two coaches, education officials will meet athletic staff today to decide what should be done – and the options include cancellation of the game."


In the final article in this sub-panic “police and education officials” get involved, with measures such as metro police security at the games and identification checks (TS. Jan 28th, 1995:A6). This final article displays intervention on the part of public enforcement, and regardless of whether or not this may really be effective, the public perceives that the problem is being solved with the implementation of such measures.

Therefore, we see a trend whereby three consecutive filler articles give rise to a small panic, but the abrupt ending to the coverage gives the appearance that the problem is going away. The media’s sudden lack of coverage suppresses the escalation early and the moral panic on basketball violence fizzles out soon after.

February

In the subsequent month the following articles are published:

1. Young drawn to Neo-Nazi’s, author warns (THE TORONTO STAR Feb. 6th, 1995:A8)
2. Armed boy, 10, can’t be charged (THE TORONTO STAR Feb 10th, 1995:A13)
4. Student 12 suspended is facing 27 charges of sex assault, extortion’s, robbery among allegations (THE TORONTO STAR Feb 14th, 1995:A3)
5. Program will assist aggressive students (THE TORONTO STAR Feb. 16th, 1995:OS2)
6. Youth mob beats man, swarms officers 400 youths on rampage after leaving club, police say (THE TORONTO STAR Feb. 27th, 1995:A6)
7. Young killers to face stiffer law MP’s expected to ok tough youth crime bill (THE TORONTO STAR Feb, 27th, 1995:A3)
The first six articles represent a mixture of fillers or violent youth crimes. If we were to merge January into this list as well, we would see string of 17 fillers/violent youth crimes consummated at the end of February by a politically motivated article. However at this point we still see violent crime articles representing the brunt of the coverage.

But first let us examine the articles in February leading up to the political article. The first article two articles provide one filler and one violent youth crime article. The second article serves the purpose of priming the reader to re-examine the YOA. Since the article's focus is on the YOA's inability to deal with young criminals under the age of twelve.

The next violent youth crime article marks the first violent youth crime of this month; *Boy 15 charged with murder in shooting death of 9 yr. old.* This article headline elicits the same effect as the article published on January 8th, thereby further feeding on the need for more serious measures to combat youth crime. Two days after this, another headline emerges, this time outlining various charges of youth crimes attributed to one youth. The headline reads *Student 12 suspended is facing 27 charges of sex assault, extortion's, robbery among allegations.* The headline alone should produces an appalling reaction. The reader does not have to read the story to be made uneasy about a 12-year-old who is facing a number of charges more than two times his years in age.

Sexual assault and robbery are crimes not usually associated with a 12-year-old. The fact that there are so many serious charges associated with such a young child leaves the reader wondering why the system has allowed this “child” to progress so far along in a career of crime. Already the seed of fear and perceived inadequacies inherent in the youth justice system are evident in the articles.

The next article (6th) provides a filler to compensate and keep youth violence alive until another violent youth crime occurs, which headline sensationalizes the event with terminology created by the Canadian media to describe unruly, violent situations. *Youth mob beats man, swarms officers 400 youths on rampage after leaving club, police say.*
The words ‘mob’, ‘swarm’, and ‘rampage’ connote chaotic, indomitable, lawless behaviour, and are words likely to instill public fear.

Up to this date (since January) violent youth articles have progressively become more sensationalized giving the impression that youth violence is on the rise. This article signals a need to attend to a situation which is progressively getting out of control. As the problem of youth violence mounts in the public eye, a politically motivated article emerges on the same day; *Young killers to face stiffer law MP’s expected to okay tough youth crime bill*. This article is the first politically motivated article of the year and emerges as the public perception of youth violence mounts. It is tactfully placed immediately after *Youth mob beats man, swarms officers 400 youths on rampage after leaving club, police say*, since this particular article does not single out one individual but 400. The use of “singular individual crimes” leading up to an article involving “400 youths” gives the impression that the problem has grown exponentially.

Two months into the year one can already see an escalation loop beginning to operate. Stories up until this point are consistently generating and building fear. For the first time this year, however, the entrance of the political realm adds the possibility of further increasing this fear. Therefore we also begin to see the beginning of a Control Culture initiated loop.

**March**

On the first of the next month the first article to appear is, *Commons gets tough on young offenders (THE TORONTO STAR Mar 1st, 1995:A3)*. Again the historical placement that the articles are ordered in must be examined to see how it effectively plays into the moral panic. Approximately two months into the year, (during which 17 acts of youth violence were reported in the media, two of which were homicides) legislation drafted nearly a year prior, is about to be introduced before senate. This legislation ensures youths committing crimes will face harsher penalties for their actions (Bill C-37).
Strategically, the first politically motivated article (February) says *Young killers to face stiffer law MP’s expected to OK tough youth crime bill (THE TORONTO STAR Feb 27th, 1995:A3).* Since the media has done such a good job presenting the problem of youth crime in such a biased way, these are amendments embraced by the public at the height of a moral panic. Without any political action for 17 consecutive articles, the readers are given a chance to see an unremitting escalation pattern of youth violence as presented by the media.

The very use of "young killers" presents an image of all young offenders as killers, even if homicides make up only a minute percentage of crimes. Up until this article, youth violence has gotten progressively worse for the everyday reader. When they read about "swarming" and "rampaging youths," their dire need for these amendments to the YOA are reinforced, and support for the bill will increase. Government legislation imposing tougher laws obviously uses the impact of the previous sensationalized articles in order to gain support for stiffer penalties. "Tough" is the key word in that headline, and anyone (ignorant of actual youth crime incidence rates) following the Star’s stories would applaud "tough" legal action towards an apparently growing threat. Violent crime articles, instill an inherent fear in the public, and political articles such as these help (as Allan Rock says) "to ensure Canadians can live and raise their children in safe communities." *(THE TORONTO STAR Mar. 1st, 1995:A4)* With youth violence running "rampant" in the media, political articles provide the image that new amendments to the YOA will diminish the margin for leniency, which has allowed youth violence to grow. Tough is the recurrent theme we hear throughout the article. This word, being the antonym of lenient, indicates a move away from leniency. Therefore with a perception that crimes are rising and youths not being punished enough, tough legislation is welcomed in the public eye.

To stress the force of political concern, another article appears two days later reiterating the same toughness of Bill C-37, thereby reinforcing the government’s action towards youth violence, and possibly forging a perception that crime is presently out of control. This article reiterates the first with identical details and information. The only
difference is the headline, and the addition of some attempts to implement other
alternative measures in, what Rock calls "phase two," to complement these punitive
changes.

After some exposure to political articles, the public again is presented with more
violent crimes and fillers. Immediately after the introduction of the political articles,
some fillers appear, since there is an approximate two week span between the political
article and the next violent youth crime. The following filler stories occur before the
beginning of the two major stories for the Star in 1995:

1. Victim’s mother seeks change to law - Wants youths to lose their anonymity
   after being convicted (THE TORONTO STAR Mar 7, 1995:A22)
3. Real culprit youth crime isn’t the law (THE TORONTO STAR Mar 13,
   1995:A17)

These filler articles are necessary, since there are not any violent crimes that are
reportable at this time. There is an inherent need for violence to remain prevalent in
public perception if the panic is to continue. The first and third articles provide
contrasting views of the youth violence problem, while the second is an ideal example of
deceptive filler, since it does not describe any crimes or injuring violence. It only
describes teen vandalism, but with usage of sensationalism it makes the acts seem
unthinkable and extremely violent.

The first article follows only six days after other tough punitive measures are
announced. This sympathetic article plays off a mother, "whose grief and determination
led to a new trial for her son’s killer." (THE TORONTO STAR, March 7th 1995:A22) It
is supportive for Rock’s proposal in that it focuses on a mother’s plight to strip young
offenders of their anonymity. The article makes reference to an earlier case where a
young offender murdered the mother’s son (pre-1995). It provides support for Rock
throughout the article stating, “a member of our family was murdered seven years ago by
a young offender who is now protected by the young Offenders Act." (THE TORONTO
STAR, March 7th 1995:A22)
Articles that focus on victims of the crimes and their outrage help to fuel the public’s misconception and add strength to public support. This article concludes with the victim’s comment, which probably confirms sentiments felt by other readers. The mother is “calling for stiffer penalties (and) the family called it ‘disgraceful that we have been letting our young get away with murder at the cost of our loved ones.’” (THE TORONTO STAR, March 7th 1995:A22) This article provides further fuel for the moral panic’s existence and provides the first example of how the moral panic can be fuelled by means of public fear (grass roots perspective).

The third filler article is not actually an article on Allan Rock’s legislative changes, rather it looks at the act itself, and also attends the issue of anonymity in the YOA. This article and its focus on youth and the YOA reinforce the perception that youth crime is a problem. The whole theme of the article stresses the fact that youth crime is growing beyond our control, and regardless of how we deal with it, it needs immediate attention.

After these filler articles, two violent youth crime articles appear that The Toronto Star covers in their entirety; from arrest to sentencing. The end of March and the beginning of April sees the emergence of two major incidents that garner the most coverage in our data. Although these two homicides are reported primarily in June, it sets the stage for the only two incidents that are reported on extensively (comparatively - to the rest of the sample).

Before looking at the first article in the sequence of complete coverage articles, it is important to note that up to this point there have been enough articles (crime and political) to keep up the momentum of the moral panic and drive most of the public fear. This is a major transition during the moral panic, where the coverage, for the first time, moves to a different type of coverage. Although the media employs a different tactic in coverage, the effect is presumably still the same; escalation of fear.

The first complete coverage incident (look at table 1 in Violent youth crime article: textual analysis) starts on March 29th: Teen gets 8 years for fatal stabbing. (THE TORONTO STAR Mar. 29th 1995:A6) This involves the murder of an innocent man
by two "high" teenagers; one male, the other female. The case spans back to the previous year and is the final article to appear in March. The offenders are described as remorseless and unfeeling individuals that "enjoyed the experience of killing." *(THE TORONTO STAR Mar. 29th 1995:A6)* By this time the arrest and sentencing is completed for the male youth. He is sentenced as an adult to 8 years in prison, and in March 1995, the female is about to be tried in court. Using the male teenager's sentencing the media recounts the heinous nature of the crime and in so doing provides preamble to the female teenager's trial.

This article also takes the opportunity to feed off the readers declining faith in the system. It does this by describing the male's involvement and his background at the end of this article.

*Long has had a troubled life, having been involved with the Metro Children's Aid Society since he was 2, court was told in a social worker's report.*

*When he was 11 he was involved with an older youth in mugging a elderly man.*

*In August, 1993, he went to live with his father in Scarborough, but they couldn't get along and he left within a week.*

*Over the next nine month he was in and out of youth detention facilities for theft and robberies, and refused CAS help to go to school or find a job.* *(THE TORONTO STAR Mar. 29th 1995:A6)*

This background tells the reader the history of the offender. The fact that he was constantly in contact with the law and that he was not put away until he murdered someone, leaves the reader with two conspicuous impressions:

i. that the law is unable to detect dangerous offenders, and  
ii. that rehabilitative measures are ineffective when dealing with criminals such as this youth.
April/May

The second incident, similar in nature, involves three youths that kill an elderly couple. Two stories on the same crime both appear on April 6; *Teen said he wanted to kill police say (THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3)* and *Killing spurs call to toughen teen crime law. (THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 6th, 1995:A3)* They both describe the ruthless killing of a minister and his wife, and talk about the changes that need to be made to the YOA. Again, the use of the complete coverage tries to create the image that there is more crime than there actually is. This can be used to create even more fear. The interesting fact here is that both articles contain essentially the same information but different headings. Since the only element separating the two is the heading we must examine this further.

Based on the heading alone, the first, *Teen said he wanted to kill police say,* was categorized as a violent youth crime, because of the nature of the headline and the wording. The second, *Killing spurs call to toughen teen crime law,* could be categorized as a violent youth crime but was not. It was categorized as a Political Article, because of the first article’s existence, and the words used in the heading. The phrase “*toughen teen crime law*” and the contents (refer to Textual Analysis Political Articles) are indicative of a political article even though it has elements of a violent youth crime article. Although the article describes the violence of the crime it follows through with support for the YOA amendments.

This crime works in the favour of the government, since it is only recently (March 1995) that politically motivated articles emerge. The presentation of political and violent youth crime articles allows the media to portray the crime in both a political context as well as a violent crime context. Regardless of the same content, the fact that they have different headlines effectively conveys two different aspects and serves two separate purposes; enhancement of public perception and dissemination of political awareness. The media thereby creates attractions using inherently different angles (sensationalism
and political) through the use of differing headlines. In doing so, it also allows different loops to start escalating the panic, such as politically motivated loops and event initiated loops.

In April and May we see more violent youth articles, and fillers. Alongside the introduction of the two main stories, smaller isolated incidents (lack of follow through stories) and filler articles fill the void until June. Stories like,

1. 2 boys, 15, charged in Edmonton double killing (THE TORONTO STAR Apr 12th, 1995:A4)
2. Hall invited to watch youth swarms on Queen St. (THE TORONTO STAR Apr.20th, 1995:A28)
3. Jailing young offenders may be a circle without exit (T.S Apr. 26th, 1995:A17)
4. Lawyer fears for teen (THE TORONTO STAR Apr. 27th, 1995: A11)

Each one discusses the violence of youth and how it is an ever-increasing problem. Through sensationalism and focus on the youth violence, the public again is presented with a perception that violence of youth is out of control, thereby fostering the view that a solution to youth violence is needed.

In particular, "Hall invited to watch youth swarms on Queen St" exemplifies how this is achieved. This article provides a good example of how an incident, can be blown up using sensational vocabulary, and victim testimony. This article summarizes a store owners plea to the mayor, to have something done about youth stealing from his convenience store. A video release by police shows "a dozen or so youths entering the Food Plus Convenience store and boldly walking away with soft drinks, food and magazines. " (THE TORONTO STAR Apr.20th, 1995:A28) This article describes "uncontrollable" youths running "rampant" through the city. The article ends with, "100 officers needed to break up a rampage by 400 youths who left a nearby after-hours club and savagely beat a man," (THE TORONTO STAR Apr.20th, 1995:A28) (referring to an incident which happened in February) to reinforce the problematic phenomena called "swarming" which needs attention.
This reference to swarming is a media and control culture created concept that appears to be concocted to instill fear in the readers. The word swarm leaves the reader with an image of bees, or hornets incessantly attacking helpless people. One single word takes on a media-created connotation of viciousness that often takes lengthy descriptions to achieve. Conveniently, this *swarming* involves no criminal charges, but it does once again, convey the message that youth crime and violence is beyond control and that youths are not being punished.

After this smaller stint of youth violence, another political article appears; *Tories tout boot camp for young offenders Harris gets tough on law and order* (*THE TORONTO STAR May 30th, 1995: A1*). At the end of the month (May), a lengthy front page article describes the Tories attempt (Mike Harris not yet elected, but ahead in the polls) to "*get tough on young offenders by sending them to a form of boot camp.*" (*THE TORONTO STAR May 30th, 1995: A1*) It is a program that proposes the enforcement of strict discipline, imposing "*physical activity such as long jogs, and a more regimented existence to whip wayward teens back into shape.*" (*THE TORONTO STAR May 30th, 1995: A1*) The article provides a Star photo with Pat Haghgoo (a storeowner who was robbed and was fed up). It illustrates Mike Harris shaking hands on Queen St. W. (where the youth violence occurred). The paper uses this to illustrate the potential government's intentions of curbing youth violence in the community.

This article is effective in showing both sides of the government. Although one is in power (federal) and the other is attempting to obtain power (provincial), we can see that the two types of political articles carry similar agendas. They both manipulate the moral panic in order to justify their actions in an effort to achieve public support. This public support is integral to the maintenance of their power positions, and therefore any means to sustain (or gain in the provincial situation) their position should be utilized.

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8 Reference made to an incident on April 20th involving "swarming". Headline reads, "*Hall invited to watch youth swarms on Queen St.*" This article summarizes a store owners plea to have something done about youths stealing.
June

From this point forward in the year, numerous violent crime articles and filler articles emerge to saturate the media with youth violence. The beginning of June sees the appearance of the most articles since January. The two "complete coverage" crimes that are reported begin to emerge more rapidly during this period, especially the stories about the 16-year-old Missisaugia girl. Four of the eleven articles are on one of the complete coverage crimes. Another four are politically motivated articles, and the remaining three are two fillers with only one other violent youth crime article. Although, this period has the most violent youth articles, the paper’s emphasis is really only on two crimes. What is significant here is that there is no heavy crime wave that is occurring during June. Repetition of two spectacular crimes keeps the panic going without any actual crime. After breaking out the articles into categories, besides the complete coverage articles, most of the coverage is really filler and political articles.

The first article is a violent youth crime, entitled “Shaken’ kids get therapy after stabbing of classmate." (THE TORONTO STAR June 1st, 1995:A32) After this article two politically oriented articles are printed. The first one “Rock urges jailing fewer teen offenders Ottawa-funded plan clashes with Mike Harris aim” (THE TORONTO STAR June 2nd, 1995:A10) is an article which indicates Justice Minister Allan Rock’s plan to jail fewer non-violent young offenders. This is in conflict with the prior “get tough” pieces.

Immediately following this article, a story appears on the “Boot Camp’s” that are proposed by the soon-to-be provincial Harris government; Don’t call military school a boot camp, founder says (THE TORONTO STAR Jun. 4th, 1995:A12). The article has two large color photos illustrating discipline drills for young offenders, and is a long special article that builds support for the proposal led by the Provincial Progressive Conservatives. To reiterate, during this time Mike Harris has not yet been elected. He is ahead in the polls, and these tougher proposals may have propelled him in popularity.
Once again the use of media portrayal continues to be exploited by the politicians. In this case the potential election victory by the Provincial Progressive Conservatives may provide the motivation to use the moral panic generated around youth violence for obtaining votes. It does this by creating proposals for more punitive programs that will look towards alleviating the problem of youth violence.

On June 6th, 1995, the trial begins on the case that was first introduced on March 29th, 1995 (Teen gets 8 years for fatal stabbing). The story, *Girl, 15 wrote poem on stabbing court told (A11)* begins,

*Look me in the face,*

*Or I'll stab you*

*And put you in your place*

*A 15-year-old Mississauga girl wrote those words the day after telling friends she and a youth, 16, stabbed a man who had walked away from them during a robbery attempt, the girl's first-degree murder trial has heard.*

*Clifford Arnold Long, now 17 and serving an eight-year prison term for manslaughter, has testified he broke his knife while stabbing Brian Baylen in the back after Baylen had said he had no money and then walked away.*

*He said he stabbed Baylen after the man pushed him in the chest when he confronted him again for money.*

*The girl then ran forward and stabbed Baylen so severely in the back that her knife stuck and he had to remove it, Long has testified.*

*The girl is now 16 and cannot be identified under the Young Offenders Act. (THE TORONTO STAR June 6th, 1995:A11)*

The rest of the article goes on to describe the victim as a 44-year-old father out for a midnight stroll. This violent youth crime article appears in the wake of two political articles. The perception is one that portrays youths as congenital murderers. The very use of the poem creates a dark, almost demonic preamble before bombarding the reader with brutal details of the crime. The stark imagery and sensational language provides readers with an image of youths who hold absolutely no value for life. This article promotes a
perception that youths can go out and kill on a whim, and feel absolutely no remorse for their actions.

The next three stories retell the horror of her actions, and explain in detail other aspects of the crime. This crime is much like a continuing saga for the reader. Each article leaves the reader hanging and wanting to read more regardless of how repellent the details may be.

3. *‘Hurtling’ girl not capable of killing trial told* *(THE TORONTO STAR Jun 20th, 1995:A26)*

At this point in our data the number of violent youth crime articles are at their peak, but in reality, coverage is focused on only one case. It is important to note that the emphasis and focus placed on this one case gives the reader the impression that there is continuous violence. Each article reiterates the prior, but uses different language and updates the reader with a few more details regarding the murder. In the second article, the story makes two references to the Young Offenders Act, stating that the girl could not be named. These references point the reader back to the amendments, which are partially on their way to being implemented.

On June 22nd, 1995 Rock’s proposed new legislation (Bill C-37), appears again and is almost identical to the article which first appeared on February 27th introducing the legislation to the public. The title reads *Young offenders face tougher punishment.* *(A13)* This in effect (much like the constant reminder of violence) works as a reminder to the public that crime is out of control and measures are being taken to respond to the growing violence.

While these stories are being reported the second story regarding the three teens and the elderly couple is breaching the headlines as well. Therefore the next story to appear after the political article is *Teens accused of killing priest to face psychiatric evaluation.* *(THE TORONTO STAR June 28th, 1995:A13)* Once again we have an article that displays the same sensational language and brutal detail indicative of violent youth
crime articles. This article only restates the original details of the article with statements that the accused must undergo a psychiatric evaluation if ordered by a judge. Again, we have a complete coverage crime where one event creates the impression of a crime wave.

The last main article in June is a filler article which provides further evidence that the YOA is inadequate when dealing with violent youth; *Young Offenders Act under fire Thousands sign petition by brother of slain man* (*THE TORONTO STAR* Jun. 30th, 1995:A7). Again we see the grass roots notion in moral panics where public fear fuels the panic. This is important to note because it marks the beginning of a more prominent filler emergence.

Much like the article in March regarding the victim’s mother who sought retribution for her son’s murder, this article makes use of a family member’s death to bring out the faults of the YOA. Familiar phrases such “toughen up the Young Offenders Act,” and “demanding the federal government.” are accompanied by daunting descriptions of the murder, which precipitated this outrage. The article is unique in that it uses not only the sentiment of the victim’s family, but “thousands” of other people who feel that the YOA is too lenient

*Ambas said that since he sent out copies of the petition 10 days ago, he has collected about 45000 signatures.*

*...Results of the petition and opinion poll will be sent to Justice Minister Allan Rock.*

(*THE TORONTO STAR* Jun. 30th, 1995:A7)

During this time two complete coverage cases dominate The Toronto Star. Since there are not enough crimes to keep the moral panic going, we begin to see more statistically based filler articles emerging to discuss the problem of youth violence using numerical evidence to support their claims.
July

The next article *Sentencing revolt or a slap on the wrist? Program to keep young offenders out of jail causes a stir (THE TORONTO STAR July 4th, 1995:A15)* provides yet another article that puts the Young Offenders Act at the forefront of debate. In this case a youth is spared a 14-month sentence for drinking and driving which resulted in two deaths. As a result he receives a light sentence of “a speaking tour of Windsor high schools.” As the overhaul of the “too lenient” YOA continues throughout this year, the sentence is in contention because of the view that has been fostered around youths in the media. This article calls it a “slap on the wrist” and cites various supportive statistics that “violent youth crime is increasing among all age groups.” It goes on to say that “these numbers spark cries for a crackdown.”

The next article *Man gets 10 months for crime done as a teen (THE TORONTO STAR July 6th, 1995:A24)*, is an article, which again promotes the “grass roots” call for tougher penalties. Although this man is 23 years old, his identity is protected under the Young Offenders Act since the crime was committed when he was a teenager. The article concludes with, “The victims family has asked Justice Minister Allan Rock to change federal law so convicted young offenders lose their right to anonymity.” *(THE TORONTO STAR July 6th, 1995:A24)*

For a week there is a lull, then *Girl, 13 beaten by gang of girls (THE TORONTO STAR July 14th, 1995:A3)* appears in the paper. It is interesting to note that there has not been any mention of female in crime up until the first complete coverage story in March. In the media males are predominantly the offenders. In the past it has been mainly male youths “fatally stabbing” other males, and going on “killing sprees.” It is not surprising then that it is generally male youths that are perceived as the threat. For the most part, we see a continuation of this trend in our data, although female violent crime articles does make up 22% of the data. 82% of the female articles concentrates on one incident. This article describes a “brutal beating” by “three girls.” With the most extensively covered crime in the Star for 1995 reporting the perpetrator as a girl, there opens up other
possibilities for further female coverage. This article goes on to describe the daunting acts that were committed against the victim.

_The terrified youngster was beaten red and black in the face and painted with nail polish._

_Her arms were burned with cigarettes, her long brown hair was chopped._

_And she was forced to drink muddy water from a puddle. During the two-hour ordeal Sunday, the girl was dragged into a ravine and then taken to a home where she later fled. (THE TORONTO STAR July 14th, 1995:A3)_

Usually readers will read about a story that involves boys torturing other boys, however what makes this unique is the gender. While feeding off the other case involving the female offender, the article also points the finger at the federal government regarding the leniency of the YOA. "The brutal attack has sent chills through the community, drawing calls for tougher measures to the Young Offender's Act." (THE TORONTO STAR July 14th, 1995:A3)

Coincidentally the complete coverage story involving the girl’s murder trial is written the next day after brutal beating involving the three girls. _Residents angry over girl’s bail (THE TORONTO STAR July 15th, 1995:A10)._ On this day, two other violent youth crime articles are written about a 7-year-old boy’s "gruesome killing." _Boy, linked to child’s killing (THE TORONTO STAR July 15th, 1995:A20)_ and _Boy, 7, said accomplice to vile killing (THE TORONTO STAR July 15th, 1995:A13)_ Using vivacious language, the Toronto Star takes this case and prevaricates it with intense sensationalism.

Following this, one more violent youth crime article emerges (5 BC teens charged with murder (THE TORONTO STAR July 17th, 1995:A2)) before two more fillers are once again written to intensify the public’s perception of youth violence.

The first article, _Study rejects boot camps for young offenders (THE TORONTO STAR July 21st, 1995:A12)_ says, "more money should be directed toward locking up and
treat the violent young offenders." In the next article, Youth violence on rise, police say (THE TORONTO STAR July 22nd, 1995:A4) the introduction says,

"Youth violence on the streets of Toronto is still on the rise and young offenders are not being justly punished, say Metro Police."

"It's something that is real and it's not going away"

.....Moise said trends also indicate more youths now own guns and gang violence is rising.

.....He faulted the application of the Young Offenders Act.....

(THE TORONTO STAR July 22nd, 1995:A4)

This article is effectively clamped between violent articles (after this article Youth to be tried as adult for shooting (THE TORONTO STAR July 25th, 1995:A9) appears).

Each violent youth crime article leaves the reader with the same recurrent feeling that youth violence is rising beyond control. Filler such as this provides a more concrete view of the images and ideas portrayed in the crime stories. The comments in this article are reflective of a police detective and the reader once again obtains affirmation that their sentiments towards the YOA are not unfounded. This authoritative opinion verbalizes and reiterates media presented articles, thereby strengthening the perception people have about rising youth violence and the leniency of the YOA.

The final article to appear in July is a filler, Youth to be tried as adult for shooting (THE TORONTO STAR July 25th, 1995:A9). This article is written with regards to the incident that prompted Rock to draft legislative changes to the YOA in the first place. This crime involves the drive-by shooting of a Ph.D. student in Ottawa, and it too provides ample backing for the perpetuation of public misperceptions. Both youths involved are tried as adults and receive harsher treatment. This article effectively provides a supportive stance that violent youths need to be treated with stricter force, and that this is "just punishment" for their crimes.
August

Between July and August we see a shortage of actual crime that has carried over from late May. Since then, the complete coverage stories are able to keep up the impression that continuous crime is occurring. However, with the lack of crime, the fillers that begin back at the end of June emerge more frequently now to keep the panic going. On August 12th, 1995 an article headline reads, "Female teens turning to crime at twice the rate of young males. The gap between Barbie and GI Joe is shrinking violently." (C4) The article spawns a list of supportive statistics on female criminal behaviour:

"Data from the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, a branch of Statistics Canada, show that between 1986 and 1990-91, the number of female youths charged by police increased by 29 percent, more than double the 14 percent increase for male youths." (THE TORONTO STAR Aug 12th, 1995:C4)

We must bear in mind however that this crime is the only homicide committed by a female in all of 1995. Furthermore, only one other crime committed by a female(s) is reported in the Star in 1995. The use of statistical evidence and professional opinions create the view that, not only is youth violent crime a problem, but specifically female youth crime is also a rising problem.

Rosemary Gartner, another University of Toronto professor and a sociologist who studies violent crime says highly publicized cases in history such as Patty Hearst and the women who followed Charles Manson, gave rise to a feeling that the women's movement was leading girls to become more aggressive or violent. She points to current crime cases involving women, such as Karla Homolka and Susan Smith, and says these are once again raising questions about young girls and violence.

"There is without doubt, an increase in perception of violent youth crime," she says.

But Matthews [Fred Matthews is a University of Toronto teacher and director of research at Central Toronto Youth Services] says the existing statistics are enough evidence for him.

"The perceptions don't happen in a vacuum," he insists. "Those numbers are very clear that we need to take this very seriously."
After this lengthy article, the second and third story referring to the family petition appears for murder victim Louis Ambas; Petition urges changes to law for young killers (THE TORONTO STAR Aug 17th, 1995:SC1) and Family's petition is gaining support. (THE TORONTO STAR Aug 17th, 1995:NY2) Once again, these two articles are essentially identical to each other and bear similar resemblance to the first article written. These grass roots filler articles raise the issue of youth identity, using the murder of Louis Ambas, and a petition by family and friends. There are even three identical paragraphs that are plagiarized in both articles.

The existing law is "outrageous," Hurley charged, adding the public seems to understand this as between 2,000 and 4,000 signatures are added to the petition each day; family and friends of Ambas aim to get more than a million.

The House of Commons justice and legal affairs committee is scheduled to review the law in the fall and Hurley said many MPs have already responded positively to a letter from the Ambas family, which set out the need for changes.

People who agree with the petition can call 1-900-273-7171, or if they oppose it, they can call 1-900-273-8181. Using the 1-900 numbers at a cost of $2 a call also raises money for a trust fund for the man's children.

(THE TORONTO STAR Aug 17, 1995:NY2 and SC1)

With such a low level of crime the media takes advantage of the public outrage with grass roots fillers and use them to continue the panic.

Following this article, four days later appears an article entitled Tories halt message of tolerance (THE TORONTO STAR Aug 21st, 1995:A13). Ironically this filler article provides a view of violence contrary to those that have appeared before it. This article examines a document called "A blueprint For Justice and Community Safety in Ontario," which outlines party policy with respect to the legal system (half of which is devoted to young offenders). This article written by a freelance Journalist (Donna Laframboise) outlines the statistics as put forth by the Provincial Progressive Conservatives and uses her own statistics to demonstrate that violent youth crime has
actually improved over the years. She uses a number of statistics to illustrate the benefits of tolerance, and castigates the Tories for wanting to abandon such policies in favour of zero-tolerance policies.

Because there is little crime available we can see weakness developing in the panic as this article reports that youth violence is improving. This provides some indication that the only element that can escalate a moral panic solely on its own is a series of actual violent events and crimes that are occurring. Fillers can sustain the panic for a period and can complement complete coverage articles to give the appearance that there is actual violent youth crime occurring, however this cannot continue indefinitely.

The next article follows up further on the Mississauga girl's trial. *Stabbing case girl reads her poem to judge (THE TORONTO STAR Aug, 22nd 1995:A22).* At this point, the girl is facing sentencing for manslaughter. The defence and the crown’s perspective are presented to the reader, with the end of the article reinforced with the crowns sentence request.

*Peel assistant crown attorney Lori Montague called for a sentence to reflect society's abhorrence of the "horrible, totally unprovoked" knife attack by the girl and her 16-year-old male companion "on a totally innocent victim."*

*Montague asked for the maximum three-year sentence in closed custody allowed under the Young Offenders Act.*

*It's crimes like this that make everyone scared to walk around at night," Montague told Wolder [judge] (THE TORONTO STAR Aug, 22nd 1995:A22)*

The next article is filler: *Condo tenants fear rising violence Girl, 8, injured in 4th incident in the past month (THE TORONTO STAR Aug 25th, 1995:A6).* This article is used to help perpetuate the view that violence is rising. This whole article revolves around a girl being pushed down stairs. However the language used in this article makes periodic reference to "increasing violence" and "gangs" to exacerbate public perception.

The next article returns to the sentencing of the Mississauga girl. It reviews the judge’s rejection of her defence lawyer’s plea for her to be returned home, and delineates the term of her sentence and the conditions after her term is finished.
A Brampton youth court yesterday ordered that, after that term was finished, she serve a further six months in open custody, such as a group home, followed by 20 months probation with strict provisions that she abstain from alcohol and street drugs and stay away from "unsuitable associates."

(THE TORONTO STAR Aug. 26th, 1995:A14)

Like the other articles, a description and background are given to provide the reader with details of the crime. Again we see the return of an old offence since there are no new crimes to report. The Toronto Star cannot create crime, but they can attempt to make something out of nothing by reporting a union of fillers and previous crime coverage.

As we near the end of August two more articles appear. **Teen to be tried in adult court (THE TORONTO STAR Aug. 27th, 1995:A15),** and **How youth can resolve their crimes (THE TORONTO STAR Aug 28th, 1995:A17).** The first article refers to the 1994 drive-by-shooting incident inspiring Rock to make changes to the YOA. It provides a more punitive approach that shows a tougher stance to youth crimes.

The second is a special interest filler article titled **"How youth can resolve their crimes."** This article contradicts other special interest articles that have appeared throughout the year. The opening paragraph states, "According to Statistics Canada, the youth crime rate dropped 6 per cent last year and has been in decline for the past three. The overall trend has been an upward one, however, with the number of youths charged still about 25 per cent higher now than in the mid-1980's – even when the recent downward dip is factored in." (THE TORONTO STAR Aug 28th, 1995:A17) The remainder of the article discusses peer mediation as a viable solution. It urges the Harris government to continue program funding to the peer mediation and challenges the predominant view on youth crime.

After a long period where there is little new crime and the focus on fillers and old crime stories have been exhausted, The Toronto Star provides an alternative view of crime. This first appearance of alternative views appears to mark the turning point by which the panic finally loses its momentum.
September

The end of August sees the beginning of a slow tapering and de-escalation of media coverage. In September, only two articles are written with regards to youth violence, but neither is a crime article.

2. *Boot Camp for brits young offenders face 16 hours a day (THE TORONTO STAR Sept. 19th, 1995:A3)*

Possibly this is further evidence that de-escalation is beginning. It appears that when there are no crime stories to report and the filler can no longer keep up the panic, we start to see the presentation of alternative views on crime. This trend in reporting may decrease the fear of crime.

The first article is filler that describes the background of the Missassauga girl. The article blames her social upbringing on the inadequacies of under-funded social services (CAS specifically). The second article is written about the boot camps in Britain. Because of Tory plans this article provides a background on boot camps. Articles during this period appear sporadically, but do not have much of an impact because there are not very many. From this point on during the year most of the articles consist of fillers or provincial political articles referring to boot camps.

October

For nearly four weeks violent youth crime, politically motivated, and filler articles are non-existent. On October 12th, 1995, it is possible that due to the lack of incidence, that the topic of boot camps emerge once again. The article *Tough judge set to head boot camp committee Ex-mountie won ‘Hammer Jack’ nickname in his 28 years on bench (THE TORONTO STAR Oct. 12th, 1995:A2)* describes the Conservatives choice for the boot camp committee leader. Again the “tough” theme emanates in the
manifestation of the judge himself. They describe his character in this article and "his capacity for hard-line, controversial decisions."

The next article is also a political article. "Province quietly scraps young offender office Staff would seek out alternatives to jail for convicted youths." (THE TORONTO STAR Oct. 13th, 1995:A12) provides a different type of political article. It provides the message that the YOA's tougher approach continues. However, the article reports the governments neglect of alternative measures. This is the second mention of alternative measures albeit in a different light, since this article describes the "dismemberment" of an alternative measures office.

Some see the closing as a political move by a government they say appears to have little interest in anything but a 'get-tough' approach with youth.

Mavin Wong, a Toronto criminal lawyer who represents young offenders, said yesterday the office's closing would seem to indicate that the government considers alternative measures as less than a priority (THE TORONTO STAR Oct 13th, 1995:A12)

As we can see through this quotation, the paper has effectively presented the government’s “tough” stance on youth justice by reporting the dismemberment of an alternative measures office.

The witnessed trend thus far observes a potential de-escalation when the media begins to shift towards the coverage of alternative measures. The dismemberment of this office may provide some indication that the tough stance has overextended its punitive approach to youth violence. The lack of alternative measures might result in public worry over the deficiency of alternative measures hailing from views that the “governments tough stance” has become too extreme now. Therefore, it is possible that this article might mark a public anxiety shift from the lack of punitive measures to the lack of alternative measures.

Some see the closing as a political move by a government they say appears to have little interest in anything but a “get-tough” approach with youth.
...Wong said she finds the move particularly disappointing because 'when they set it up, I though they had chosen very good people.'

Since the office was set up last year, its seven employees had devoted most of their time to expanding "alternative measures" programs for young offenders—substitutes for jail, often involving community service, that had not been offered consistently throughout the province. (THE TORONTO STAR Oct 13th, 1995:A12)

Therefore, in this period we continue to see the beginning of a new trend. A trend that appears to emerge when crimes are scant and issues surrounding alternative measures begin to circulate. However, these may not be the sole de-escalation factors. Panic decline may also be indicative of the perceived success of the implementation of tougher measures.

At the end of October we have one violent crime article and two fillers.

1. Conference tackles crime Student council aims to promote youth issues (THE TORONTO STAR Oct. 20th, 1995:SC4)
3. Justice for youths can begin with a hug Accused and victims hold special meeting to reach agreement on suitable penalty, jail term (THE TORONTO STAR Oct. 24th, 1995:A21)

The first filler deals with youth confronting youth problems, and violence is mainly the focus of this article. It looks primarily at alternative ways of dealing with youth violence issues, aiming at action plans emphasizing family and values. This is a community based response to youth violence, and provides yet another alternative measure for youth violence. The second article is a short article giving a brief summary of a crime, but the details are concise and to the point. The final out-of-region filler article looks at an alternative measures used in New Zealand to deal with youth crime. Again "family" is stressed as an alternate way of dealing with youth crime, NOT punishment. "In New Zealand, a family group conference takes place instead of a trial and have been required by law in the majority of cases—even violent offences" (THE TORONTO STAR Oct. 24th, 1995:A21) Support for this method is printed throughout the article stating why it works, "One of the things about the family group conference is that it brings more accountability," says Hakiana. "It makes the young people accountable, it
makes them responsible...they grow up with an awareness you don’t just go through the court system, which is impersonal and purely clinical.”

Articles 1 and 3 both mention alternative measures. Ironically they appear in the wake of “Province quietly scraps young offender office Staff would seek out alternatives to jail for convicted youths.” (THE TORONTO STAR Oct. 13th, 1995:A12) which reported the elimination of an office dedicated to alternative measure programs. This is the most reporting of alternative measures the whole year. The two support fillers for alternative measures offer the public with a gentler view on punishment and since crimes during this period are practically non-existent, there is cause to believe that public fear is decreasing as a shift in media coverage gives signs of softening.

November

As the articles dwindle further in the year, only three articles on youth violence arise in November, none of which are violent crime articles.

1. A lesson in remorse is better than boot camp for kids (THE TORONTO STAR Nov 2nd, 1995:A27)
3. Schools talk out the violence Programs work to limit flareups educators say (THE TORONTO STAR Nov. 30th, 1995:OS6)

Again in the absence of youth crime, we have a de-escalating loop effect. We see alternatives presented to the public more frequently. The second article provides a final reiteration for the year, whereby Rock once again announces amendments to the Young Offenders Act. However, at this point in the year the first phase of the changes to the act have already been passed by parliament. This includes doubling the maximum sentence for first-degree murder to 10 years and making it easier to transfer 16-17 year-olds to adult court. Ironically on this day Queen’s Park also announces that it will go ahead with boot camps. However, with punitive changes in place Rock begins his appeal to the more
preventative/rehabilitative stance for less serious crimes. We can see that the two filler articles supporting alternative measures begin the descent of the moral panic. This decreases fear because of the softer approaches being stressed upon in the media. Then, the government reinforces this softer approach by verbally demonstrating their commitment to a shift in punishment. Thereby potentially further decreasing public fear.

The final article of the month is a filler article, but again there is no crime. 

*Schools talk out the violence Programs work to limit flare-ups educators say (THE TORONTO STAR Nov. 30th, 1995:OS2).* The beginning of new policies (phase II as mentioned by Rock in an earlier political article) spark a different tone in the filler articles at this point in the year. This third filler article on alternative measures provides yet another supporting article to soften punishment, which again can be seen to decrease fear and de-escalate the panic. This article examines school violence (where much of youth violence occurs) and looks at ways of curtailing disputes before they escalate into violence. It also acknowledges that “violence tends to be over-dramatized in the media,” (THE TORONTO STAR Nov. 30th, 1995:OS2) and voices parental opinions to support this view. “*The numbers and the people who work in them tell us that our schools are a safe place to be.*” says Brimble (parent) (THE TORONTO STAR Nov. 30th, 1995:OS2). Here we have not only the press presenting a softer approach, but also parents (grass roots model), arguing for alternatives to the “get tough” approach. These comments indicate that perhaps fear in crime is actually dropping. Furthermore, in this late-year period where most youth violence views are changing, it is also important to note the shift in parental comments. Parental comments found in this article are much different than those parents whose comments were presented earlier in the year.

**December**

In the final month of December six articles are printed on youth violence.

1. *Final arguments given in Montreal murder trial of teens (THE TORONTO STAR Dec 14th, 1995:A19)*
2. Ex wands fear 'atrocities' at boot camp (THE TORONTO STAR Dec 19th, 1995:A11)
5. Kids aged 3 strong enough to fire a gun study shows (THE TORONTO STAR Dec 28th, 1995:E10)

Again none of these articles is a current crime. The moral panic cannot continue with
actual violent events or crime. Trying to start or keep the panic going with no crime is
likely difficult. This also demonstrates that there is probably a need for some real crime
stories to kick-start a panic.

The first article is the second complete coverage crime that has been followed
throughout the year. In this short article a few details are reiterated and a summary of the
final arguments are told.

Rock has, throughout the year, expressed his opposition to the provincial efforts
for boot camps. “Although Rock called for alternatives to custody for those who commit
non-violent crimes, he wouldn't endorse Premier Mike Harris's boot camp proposals.”
(THE TORONTO STAR Nov. 21st, 1995:A13) At this time more articles against boot
camps begin to appear. The second article in December is a good example of this. This
article looks at the possible ramifications of boot camps and suggests that the
“government scrap plans for boot camps for young offenders.” (THE TORONTO STAR
Dec 19th, 1995:A11) It seems that the decline of the panic may be linked to the
availability of alternative information and views, as well as the lack of crime to report.
Further, the success of political influence may play into the de-escalation, by ultimately
curb rising fear.

The next article, More kids are victims of violent crimes, is a statistical filler
article. The whole article cites numbers regarding violent crime rates and victimization
rates, but most importantly shows “kids” as victims as opposed to offenders. Once again
the use of charts and numbers are used, but this time in an effort to de-escalate the panic
by reversing the labels placed on youths.
On December 23rd, 1995, two days before Christmas, the Amba's family petition makes some headway; *Boot-store accused to be tried as an adult is printed (T. S. Dec 23rd, 1995:A11)*. After seven months of petitioning the victim's family sees some results. This article finishes the year with some positive results regarding the YOA and the federal government.

*It's a good start – we'll see what happens now,* said Tom Ambas, the slain man's brother who owns the store located in the Cliffside area. *"We've waited for this for seven months."

*Carol Ambas, the victim's widow, said: "I don't know why we had to go through this but I guess it's the result that counts."

Support for the amendments to the YOA are evident, although the amendments were in the works long before the petition was instigated. The appearance is, however that the government has made a positive change, which was in response to the voice of the people.

Finally, to bring youth violence for the year to an end, two fillers are provided between Christmas and the New Year. The last filler offers yet another alternative youth justice strategy. Thus, as the year winds down, we see an uneasy balance between two distinct views on crime. But, with the lack of crime, the softer approach prevails and probably continues to de-escalate the panic.

**OVERVIEW OF HISTORICAL ANALYSIS**

As we can see by the analysis, the moral panic surrounding youth violence escalates and de-escalates. This data sample provides a snapshot of the escalating and de-escalating effects of a moral panic within one year.

A better illustration of the escalation and de-escalation can be seen in the following graph. This graph traces the actual number of articles, under each main category, throughout the course of the year.
Within the broader youth violence moral panic, small panics appear to rise, and subside at various times which help illustrate the escalating and de-escalating effects of this particular moral panic as well as the dynamic nature of the youth violence moral panic. In the “Conclusion” section of this thesis I will link these findings back to the theory in terms of schismogenic loops, but first, a recapitulation of the rising and falling trends in this moral panic.

To recap, we can see that violent crime articles are very high at the beginning of the year to start the moral panic. As violent events occur, the media portray these events in a sensational fashion that can be seen to escalate public fear. Then political articles emerge to add another loop to further escalate the moral panic. Political articles calling for increased penalties potentially fuel the existing fear. Then subsequent political articles are timed to appear regularly after a series of violent events. With fewer violent crimes in March and April, fillers appear to complement and sustain the building of the moral panic surrounding youth violence. After March and April, all three categories begin ascending again from May, then peaking in June/July and tapering in August.
Three important events happen during June, July and August that give rise to the peaks in all three article types.

First, violent youth articles are fueled by the complete coverage articles. There is little violent crime so the panic is maintained by filler and political articles. By reporting the full trial of a prior violent incident elicits the perception that more crime is occurring. Hence, during this peak, when there are few real current crimes to report, two complete coverage articles are intensively reported to give the appearance that there is a crime wave.

Second, the awaiting legislative changes that can escalate the public fear via political articles (these changes are presented before the senate for approval [late June], therefore it is not surprising that the time period sees such growth) become more extensive.

Finally the fillers peak in late July. This occurs as the complete coverage articles begin to exhaust the publicity of these cases and the political articles descend. Therefore fillers arise towards the end of the complete coverage articles, to mix in and reinforce the panic around youth violence. This combination is especially effective in complementing and creating a solid perception of mounting youth violence.

De-escalation is demonstrated in the forms of the successful implementation of legislation (via political influence), a shift in political policy and publicity. In order for the panic to sustain itself, it is necessary for the escalation factors to outweigh the de-escalation factors. As can be seen, most of the panic activity occurs in the first eight months. After this it becomes evident that a slow tapering off effect occurs in the final four months of the year.

It appears that de-escalation can be accounted for by two main factors. First it appears that the crimes are not there. This dissipation of crimes accompanied with a shift in filler coverage (fillers also shifted their emphasis late in the year --- the fillers later all discussed alternative means of dealing with youth violence) later in the year, provides enough de-escalation to dampen the panic downward. The second appears to comes from a shift in political punishment. At the beginning of the year, the political focus is
completely punitive and this escalates fear while the panic is on the rise. In the latter part of the year, when the panic begins to subside due to successful punitive change, emphasis is placed on more rehabilitative or alternative measures of punishment.
CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to examine moral panics to determine how they arise and how they eventually subside.

The classic moral panic has been described in terms of media portrayals and the way in which the media exacerbates an issue in order to shape the public opinion (Cohen, 1972:78). The media tends to exaggerate the significance of a problem (in our case youth violence), which in turn leads to a heightened public concern and an increase within the area of social control and police enforcement (Zatz, 1987).

The data display how violent youth crime fits the mould of the “classic moral panic.” Content analysis allowed us to scrutinize our data and reveal how violent youth articles are hardly indicative of the actual incidence of violent youth crime.

Looking at our data, homicides are the most reported of the violent crime categories, yet they make up the smallest percentage of violent crimes according to Statistics Canada (97/98). Despite homicide rates in 1995 making up only .003% of all violent youth crimes (Hung, 1995:8), homicides represent 58% of all our violent crime stories. The perception this creates is highly out of proportion to the actual ratio. Further, of that 58%, more than half of the homicide articles in the Toronto Star (52%) surround two particular incidents.

Violent crime as defined by Statistics Canada also involves other crimes such as robbery, assault and attempted murder. Common assault is the most common violent crime. According to Statistics Canada, 50% of all violent crimes are common assault (Hung 1995:8), yet these offences are ignored in the media. Common assault makes up only 4% of all our violent youth crime articles. Therefore, instead of focusing on typical crimes such as common assaults, the media concentrates on relatively rare events, such as homicides.
If one were to judge crime based on The Toronto Star, the perception of violent crime (especially murder and homicide) would be vastly out of proportion to the reality put forth by Statistics Canada.

Further, it is important to note that throughout this year examined, real violent youth crime is actually decreasing. Statistics Canada (1995) reported that the rate of violent crime had dropped by 3 percent from the previous year, with homicide statistics remaining “relatively stable.” (Statistics Canada. 4:1997/98) Therefore, it appears that the media create perceptions of violent youth crime, and regardless of whether coverage increases or decreases, we cannot presuppose actual youth violent crime is doing the same.

All perceptions of crime are relative to the media’s portrayal of youth violence. The apparent crime waves are hardly indicative of real crime waves. Support for this can be found in two major comparisons. First, Statistics Canada comparisons reveal that the perceived crime waves in the data are unfounded in official statistics. Second, media attention is devoted to a rare crime (homicide) rather than to a far more prevalent crime (such as common assault). Both reveal a vast misrepresentation of the types of crimes in the media. Barak supports this saying, “the crimes that dominate public consciousness…..are not common ones, but the rarest ones.” (Barak 1994:135)

Alluding back to our literature we determined that the media augments public perceptions of crimes and crime seriousness. The literature uncovered preliminary evidence that exposure to the news media, was associated with heightened judgments of crime seriousness. In addition, other studies concluded that the news media mislead public perceptions of crime, and instill fear in the audience. Sutherland (1950) notes that, “fear is produced more readily in the modern community than it was in our history because of increased publicity.”
**THE ROLE OF ARTICLE TYPES**

During the year of 1995 we find three main categories of articles in the Toronto Star. Each category uses unique language to potentially create youth violence as a rising problem. Therefore regardless of whether the article was a violent youth crime, political, or filler article, youth violence is presented as the core problem; a problem in most articles that is out of control.

59% of the articles are made up of violent youth crimes themselves. These articles consist mainly of crimes or acts of violence that have occurred throughout the year. A prominent trend within the violent youth articles is an extensive use of complete coverage crimes. It is found that in the absence of real crimes, complete coverage articles give the illusion that there is more crime than there actually is. Of the 59% of violent youth articles, complete coverage make up 28% of these articles and 17% of the entire data examined. Therefore more than a quarter of all violent youth crime articles are complete coverage articles.

About a quarter (23%) of the articles that appeared in The Toronto Star were politically motivated articles, which for the most part supplement violent crime articles to manipulate public fear. The emphasis on punitive measures at the beginning of the year escalates fear, and toward the end of the year, when legislation is passed, begins to de-escalate fear as the emphasis shifts from punitive to alternative measures.

Finally, 18% of the data are fillers. These articles appear to provide substance when crimes are not occurring. In doing so, fillers supplement the violent youth crime articles in the creation of fear. Especially with statistical studies and petitions voicing public outcry about youth violence (grass roots fillers), the fillers help to keep the panic going by keeping the issues in the public eye. Fillers serve to validate public fear by publishing opinions regarding youth violence, when violent youth crimes are lacking.

Each article category plays a vital role in perpetuating the moral panic. The common role of each type appears to be fear creation. Using exaggeration and
sensationalism, the media present violent youth crimes in a manner, which portrays the youths as uncontrollable and vicious. The distortion of youth crime and violence allows for a public predatory depiction of youths, potentially creating public fear regarding violent youth crime. As the articles increase, the pervasiveness of these media generated themes are legitimated by political articles lending control culture support to the apparent problem. With rising fear, control culture proposes legislative amendments to a perceived YOA that is too lenient. To further compliment this view of youths as a growing menace, fillers arise using much of the same language and depictions used in violent youth crime articles.

As the panic diminishes, the article types, with the exception of violent youth articles, take on a different form. Political articles begin to shift their penalization stance from punitive to rehabilitative. Fillers, also shift their views on youth violence using softer language and presenting youths as human beings as opposed to animal-like beings.

Therefore at the beginning when there are many crimes to report, the media use overstated sensational language to present the problem of youth violence. When there are no longer any crimes to substantiate the problem, the media use of language softens and adopts a more humanitarian tone to its presentation. The types of articles and the usage of language contained in each article affects the general pattern when looking at the articles from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

**THE SCHISMOGENIC MODEL: Theoretical Application**

**ESCALATION**

Most of the violent youth articles appear early in the year. A large number of violent youth crime incidents appear to be used to propel a moral panic into motion. This large number of “events” attracts media attention regarding youth violence. The heightening of media attention has the effect of increasing public fear. The initial loop of
an increase in the event leading to an increase in publicity, leading to an increased public fear (+Ev+Pub+PubF+Ev) appears to be the prevalent loop at the beginning of the year, which starts the panic.

As the media continue to present sensationalized violent youth articles, public fear begins to escalate higher, which precipitates a demand for control. As Public fear mounts, people look to the government to alleviate the problem. Therefore, a second loop commences with publicity, increasing fear, which increases control culture (+Pub+PubF+CtlC+Pub). Prior to this the moral panic has been built solely on the escalation of the first loop which begins with violent youth crime articles to further create publicity and fear (+Ev+PubF+Pub+Ev).

As the year progresses there is a timely spacing of political articles outlining increased control culture between articles on violent youth crimes. This appears to reveal a political agenda for the shaping of the moral panic. Hence, in order to see the increase in control culture through to fruition, brutal acts of youth violence are needed to continue the moral panic, and justify the changes.

To keep the impression that youth violence has reached crisis proportions, the media continue to report heinous crimes, and politicians feed the media with information regarding legislative intentions to provide a solution to the growing problem. A show of governmental response informs the public that their fears are warranted and the government is acting towards eliminating and alleviating the growing problem; a problem which is threatening the safety of society. Thus, after the second loop where increased publicity led to more public fear and control culture (+Pub+PubF+CtlC+Pub), it seems that a third loop appears where control culture now becomes the instigator. This third loop starts with an increase in control culture and leads to an increase in publicity, which further increases public fear (+CtlC+Pub+PubF+CtlC). If we return to our theoretical model, we see that political influence fundamentally influences control culture. To reiterate, control culture is defined as the means by which the government controls the broad spectrum of the law (more so legislative changes than enforcement for our purposes). As control culture becomes dominant, this third loop subsequently replaces
the second loop (increased publicity led to more public fear and control culture
{+Pub+PubF+CtlC+Pub}) since political articles (in the form of legislative changes)
appear consistently from this point forward.

To ensure the perception of youth crime and the need for increased control
remains at the forefront of media publicity, a steady stream of violent youth articles are
needed to keep the panic from de-escalating. Following two particular crimes from their
genesis to their conclusion provides this material. At this point, the first loop where the
event increases publicity and fear (+Ev+Pub+PubF+Ev), and the third loop (where
control culture increases publicity and fear {+CtlC+Pub+PubF+CtlC}) provide the fuel
for the panic by creating fear.

As increases in control culture proceed through the stages towards
implementation, the media continue to promote youth violence as a serious problem
making the changes justifiable in the public eye. Hence, the first and third loops work
continuously as repetition of the two same events impresses on the reader the illusion that
more crime is occurring. However, when there is a shift from actual violent crimes to the
repetitive coverage of a crime, the event in the first loop which increases publicity and
fear (+Ev+Pub+PubF+Ev) takes on a different form. Initially this first loop escalated
publicity and fear using numerous individual crimes. However, when youth violence is
low, the panic feeds off the intensive coverage of only two crimes. Therefore the events
are somewhat different, but the loop is still the same, escalating the panic to newer
heights.

During this time there is no significant crime to report on. The paper attempts to
give the impression that there is by utilizing control culture. To ensure the maintenance
of panic escalation, other types of articles on crime emerge to preserve the perception that
crime is rampant.

Special interest fillers begin to dominate crime coverage. These fillers are made
up of mainly insight case studies on worsening youth violence or the petitions that voice
public concern about youth violence.
Therefore as the panic slows and levels off, fillers are mixed in to maintain, or escalate it further. However, fillers do not appear to be able to sustain the panic itself. With the absence of current crimes, the tactical mix of filler and continuous coverage of older crimes appears to reinforce and further escalate the panic.

Therefore as fillers emerge, a fourth loop where publicity increases the event that increases public fear (+Pub+Ev+PubF+Pub) joins the already operating first loop (where the event increases publicity and fear {+Ev+Pub+PubF+Ev}), and third loop (where control culture increases publicity and fear {+CtlC+Pub+PubF+CtlC}). Finally, to escalate the panic even further, grassroots fillers expressing public outrage create a fifth escalation loop. The fifth contributing loop begins with an increase in fear, which in turn leads to increased publicity that augments control culture (+PubF+Pub+CtlC+PubF). Thus at the height of the panic four identifiable loops are operating.

**DE-ESCALATION**

Our data show that the continuation of a moral panic is problematic. This appears to happen at the point, when crime is no longer reported, the control culture has been escalated, and media presentation shifts to the examination of alternative measures.

The effects of the increase in control culture on public fear are twofold. One, the punitive measures passed can serve to pacify the public, and two, control culture articles shift to softer alternative punishments which may decrease public fear. This tempered with a tapering decline of youth violence itself allows for a perception that serious youth violence is on a gradual decline at the end of the year. Therefore when this happens, the first de-escalation loop appears where an increase in control culture decreases the event, which decreases publicity, which reduces public fear (+CtlC-Ev-Pub-PubF+CtlC).

As violent youth articles virtually disappear this gives the impression that youth crimes are declining. When this happens a second de-escalation loop occurs whereby a decrease in event further decreases publicity, which reduces control culture, which
diminishes public fear (−Ev-Pub-CtlC-PubF-Ev). This second loop interplay’s with the first loop to reduce the moral panic.

One might argue that the moral panic does not disappear entirely. The moral panic can emerge again anytime there are events to ‘kick-start’ the panic, and whenever it can be used again in the future to help support political gains. However when it does emerge again, the “new” moral panic is heralded by the media as though it were unprecedented and becomes an index of some new political interest.

**IN COMPARISON TO THEORY**

If we compare the loops found in our data with the loops developed in theory, we find that none of the escalating loops found in our data corresponds identically to any of the eight original loops. However, as discussed in the theory section, each loop has variations. The eight loops that we developed are representative of purely escalating loops that include *all four elements*. We discovered variation of five loops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8)</th>
<th>+Ev+Pub+PubF+CtlC+Ev</th>
<th>1)</th>
<th>+Ev+Pub+PubF+Ev</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>+Pub+PubF+Ev+CtlC+Pub</td>
<td>2)</td>
<td>+Pub+PubF+CtlC+Pub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>+CtlC+Pub+Ev+PubF+CtlC</td>
<td>3)</td>
<td>+CtlC+Pub+PubF+CtlC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td>+Pub+Ev+PubF+CtlC+Pub</td>
<td>4)</td>
<td>+Pub+Ev+PubF+Pub</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For instance in our data, the first and fourth loop control culture (CtlC) is absent when we compare them with our theoretical model. In our second, third and fifth loops, we do not see the event (Ev) as playing a vital role in the panic the way it does in theory. Therefore, it appears that not all the elements are needed to have an escalation loop.

With respect to de-escalation, our two loops correspond directly to two of the loops identified in the theory (loops 1 and 5). However, there were three other loops in
the theory that were not evident in the de-escalation of the panic. Therefore the
escalation loops were similar but not identical, while the de-escalation loops found were
exactly alike.

All the loops developed in theory were provided as a preliminary guideline
towards understanding how moral panics operate. As we have demonstrated only some
loops were used in the moral panic surrounding youth violence. For other moral panics,
our findings suggest that the elements, and the way they interact, may not create the same
series of escalating and de-escalating loops. The model is structured in such a multi-
faceted way where loops (and ultimately panics) can originate from any of the elements in
the model (event, publicity, public fear, or control culture). It is possible for moral panics
to follow similar loop patterns, but this does not necessarily indicate that other moral
panics will operate in the same fashion. Loop proliferation does not necessarily follow set
patterns or rules due to the complexity and diverse nature of elemental interaction and
loop combinations. Hence, even though the panic surrounding youth violence was
initiated by events, depending on certain extraneous factors, the panic could very well
have been initiated by publicity, or control culture rather than actual events. Therefore a
moral panic on a particular type of crime or phenomenon (youth violence for example),
but generated at different points in time, may operate upon different sets of loops.
Although, it would be false to say that it is impossible for the panic to follow the same
general pattern, moral panics will undoubtedly act differently depending on the
circumstances surrounding it.

Further, the findings suggest that panics do not necessarily need all the elements
to escalate a panic. It may even be possible for only two elements such as publicity and
public fear to escalate a panic.

The schismogenic loop model is not indigenous to youth violence. The diversity
of loop creation in this model can be used to examine any moral panic. Depending on the
loops involved and the way they relate will inevitably make some panics similar and other
panics different. However, no matter how similar they may seem, circumstances such as
timing, sequencing, and interaction will always make each moral panic somewhat unique.

**MEDIA AND POLITICS**

In 1996 data from Statistics Canada reported that the rate of young people aged 12 to 17 charged with violent crime fell 4% (Statistics Canada. 6:1997/98). However, judging from data from Statistics Canada on homicide rates, youth homicide rates were relatively stable throughout 1986 - 1996 (Statistics Canada. 4:1997/98). Therefore amendments to address more serious crimes like homicide did not really affect homicide rates in the following year. However, as we have seen, these statistics are often immaterial, since the media potentially dictate the way in which the public perceives violent youth crime.

The media is largely responsible for public misperception. Doob has documented studies of the media coverage of crime that have shown that news organizations themselves create apparent, but no real crime waves (1984:69). If the media know that they present such a distorted image of youth crime and violence why do they continue to do so? The obvious answer is the attraction of the readers. Newspapers are institutions built for ratings. Their job is to get the readers attention with headlines. Headlines we see in our data like “Student 12 suspended is facing 27 charges of sex assault, extortions, robbery among allegations” and “Girl 16 admits boasting of killing to impress pals.” In a report to the National Commission on the Causes of Mass Media and Violence, Jack Haskins states, “there is no doubt that topics of violence are of intense interest to the public and attract large audiences” (Haskins: 1969, Appendix iii-H) He goes on to mention that “entertainment value is what people want to read in their newspapers,” and that violence holds entertainment value in North American society. (Haskins: 1969, Appendix iii-H)

The media’s sensationalism is twofold, it obtains reader interest while also serving a much larger political cause. We have discussed that the universal response to
crime, particularly violent crime, is anger and fear. "The fear and apprehension crime generates in communities is controlling. It restricts people's sense of freedom and breeds distrust and intolerance. The fear of crime can lead people to secure themselves behind locked doors and protective systems and to harbour suspicions against people who are unknown to them."9

This lost sense of security is easily manipulated by politicians who believe they can gain votes by proposing swifter penalties and harsher punishments in an effort to inflame these powerful feelings and legitimate their existence. Relationships of the media with politicians, police officers and other public officials, along with the hunger for 'leaks' and 'scoops', make it difficult for the media to maintain an unbiased and independent stance. The government's ability to manipulate the media (through editors and managers) by leaking reports to inform the public of selected information make them a very powerful force in an apparently media driven moral panic. "Very rarely does a news story go through to the public from the reporter untouched by an editor or someone else in the newsroom hierarchy" (Grabosky, P and Wilson, 1989:19).

In the Toronto Star the media was probably able to effectively shape public opinion on youth violence to spawn a moral panic. In this particular instance the moral panic appeared to draw a great deal of fuel from the political front. Even if the government did not directly create or massage the crime, it procured the existence of a crime and exploited the media's created perception and images of the crime in order to serve its own political needs. In the case of the youth violence moral panic, the perception of growing violence also led to the perception that the YOA was too lenient in dealing with these youths. The passing of Bill C-37 should have brought upon a positive correlation between violent crime rates and the YOA in the sense that crime rates should have decreased at least for serious violent crimes. Political actions resulting from these (amendments) created yet another perception that legislation would become the panacea and ultimately curb the swelling violence.

9 http://toscane.crdp.umontreal.ca/publications/prevention/english/02-01.html
To completely solve the problem of youth crime would not be in the best interests of the government or the media; youth crime will always be needed. Although youth violence and crime may be on the decline statistically, it is in the best interests of the government to continue manipulating the media and perception to legitimate and protect their position of authority.

Going back to political theory, Quinney states that government’s act is to accumulate and legitimate. (1977:82) There is a need to maintain (or establish) the government as a viable source of public guardianship. To do so, they need to legitimate their existence to the public, by dealing with that which the public deems problematic. Youth Justice plays a large part in that legitimation. The government effectively uses youth crime, since it legitimates the authority by effectively controlling that which the media has designated as a problem.

In 1995, using the tools of legislation the government was able to attract media attention, by talking about dealing with the problem. In doing so the media, in the processes of making the news, inevitably participated in and contributed to capitalist domination masked by government policies and agendas.

To get a better picture of this, the following graph illustrates the timing of political influence throughout the year. Each section of the graph (eg. Jan 1st to Feb 27th) represents the accumulated number of violent articles until political articles were
Every break horizontally along the graph represents political action towards youth violence. Therefore this graph represents the number of consecutive youth violence articles that were printed in The Toronto Star until a political article appears addressing the problem of youth violence.

As you can see, the longest stream of stories appears two months before the government's announcement to increase punitive measures emerges. From that point on political articles are timed consistently to appear after a series of violent events.

Moral panics occur in cycles of escalation and de-escalation. Governments recognize and use the moral panic cycles to legitimize their existence. As they take an existing issue and define it as a problem, they begin to manipulate the problem into the beginnings of a moral panic. Once this is fed to the media and ultimately the public, public fear is palpated to foster escalation. Then as the problem mounts the moral panic takes form. Eventually the media plays their part to give the appearance that the government has solved the problem, thereby de-escalating the panic. Then the panic waits only to be revived as a new panic and used once more in an ongoing cycle of escalation and de-escalation for political necessity.
CONCLUSION

Using the content analysis we were able to test the moral panic model via the media. Although we relied on publicity as our primary element for study, we were still able to demonstrate the model developed in the early part of this thesis and illustrate how schismogenic loops can invoke dynamic effects upon the escalation and de-escalation of youth violence. Using other relevant studies, we were able to speculate how other elements in the model contributed to the moral panic: political influence, public fear, and control culture. Since control culture and political influence were evident in media reporting, we were able to surmise the effects of these elements more easily. Public fear on the other hand, was rarely if ever covered and was immeasurable in our study. To compensate, assumptions on the effects of the media were made based on literature that supported a correlation of media crime coverage and public fear. Although we were unable to actually measure fear, the language and presentation used by the media presented the likelihood that fear was an inevitable outcome of such sensationalism.

In the data two de-escalating loops (1 and 5) corresponded with loops developed in theory. Although none of the escalation loops set forth in the theory section of this thesis were found in the data, slight variations of five loops (1, 3, 4, 5 and 8) were discovered in the escalation phase of the moral panic. It is important to understand that the eight loops that were developed were representative of all the possible loop scenarios that could realistically occur in the schismogenic model. Moral panics ultimately involve a set of four core elements, however the way in which these elements interact is variable. Therefore, it is entirely possible for the same panic to occur, but to operate on different loops. Conversely, it is also possible for a completely different series of events to follow a similar series of loops that we have observed for youth violence. The essence of the moral panic as a schismogenic loop is the multi-causal way in which one can examine the moral panic. Despite some similar patterns that moral panics follow, all of panics are distinctive, whether they have the same loops or not, since patterns of escalation and de-
escalation and the frequency in which they occur will invariably be different. What makes them common are the elements that are potentially involved, and the ongoing loops that occur in a moral panic to give the appearance of intensifying or diminishing the seriousness of a particular crime or event.

**MOVING FORWARD**

This thesis has examined the media and the way in which moral panics work to create strong public concerns and fears surrounding issues of youth violence and crime. Beginning with the history of moral panics we were able to come away with a newer, less linear method of examining moral panics.

The findings in this thesis illustrate how the trends in a moral panic, alongside media content, can result in many public misconceptions about youth crime. The analysis we have undertaken has further revealed that the groups that dominate the media are primarily to blame for creating these distorted perceptions about crime. This only serves to reaffirm that which numerous studies have previously discovered. Prior research literature in this area has already provided a plethora of evidence for the media exaggerated “spiraling” of perceived crime waves. Although escalation of crime perception via media distortion was an integral part of this study, it was not exclusively the focus.

This thesis argues for a different approach to the study of moral panics; that is to look at the de-escalation that inevitably occurs when there are no more crimes to fuel the panic. The study of escalation is vital to moral panics, but as we have shown in this thesis there is still important research to be done in the future on the de-escalation of panics.

To give a final summary, most of the blame for this panic was directed toward the media. However, with the public outcry concerning the inadequacies of the youth justice system, pressures for YOA amendments have resulted. From this process we have noticed influence from more than one source. As the moral panic developed, indication
of political involvement became more evident. When studying moral panics it is easy to
direct the blame to the most immediate and apparent source. The most obvious antecedent
for the escalation of moral panic points to the media, but upon closer scrutinization, more
powerful political forces are at work. Furthermore, escalation is not the sole process
behind a moral panic. With evidence of effective control culture, and a perceived lack of
crime, it appears that de-escalation is an equally essential component.

Therefore, if future examinations of moral panics are to progress, it is fatuous to
neglect two less conspicuous, but equally important details resulting from this study.
First, we must devote more attention to the inevitable de-escalation of the moral panic.
One can do this by applying the model we have developed and loops associated with it.
Second, we must not ignore the invisible strings by which the government effectively
plays puppet-master in order to escalate and de-escalate moral panics to achieve its means
and in the end meet its agenda. For further research on the topic of moral panics, the
absence of either will undoubtedly create a study which is unfounded and ill informed.
## Appendix A

### The Toronto Star Data Sample

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<td>Police use pepper spray on teen suspect outside school</td>
<td>A7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/8/95</td>
<td>Teen jailed two years for killing 8 year old</td>
<td>A7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/9/95</td>
<td>Children beat paperboy unconscious</td>
<td>A8</td>
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<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>4a</td>
<td>1/10/95</td>
<td>Two boys charged in stabbing</td>
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<tr>
<td>4b</td>
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<td>1/11/95</td>
<td>Students trapped by pair throwing knives, police say</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/20/95</td>
<td>3rd attack has guards worried</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>8b</td>
<td>1/25/95</td>
<td>North York may sink basketball program</td>
<td>A6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>8c</td>
<td>1/28/95</td>
<td>Some students glad basketball cut at school</td>
<td>A6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/6/95</td>
<td>Young drawn to Neo-Nazi's, author warns</td>
<td>A8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/10/95</td>
<td>Armed boy, 10, can't be charged</td>
<td>A13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/12/95</td>
<td>Boy 15 charged with murder in shooting death of 9yr old</td>
<td>A4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/14/95</td>
<td>Student 12 suspended is facing 27 charges of sex assault, extortion's, robbery among allegations</td>
<td>A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/16/95</td>
<td>Program will assist aggressive students</td>
<td>OS2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/27/95</td>
<td>Youth mob beats man, swarms officers 400 youths on rampage after leaving club, police say</td>
<td>A6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18a</td>
<td>18a</td>
<td>2/27/95</td>
<td>Young killers to face stiffer law MP's expected to OK tough youth crime bill</td>
<td>A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>18b</td>
<td>3/1/95</td>
<td>Commons gets tough on young offenders</td>
<td>A4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20a</td>
<td>20a</td>
<td>3/7/95</td>
<td>Victim's mother seeks change to law. Wants youths to lose their anonymity after being convicted</td>
<td>A22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>3/10/95</td>
<td>Teens caught starring in crime video</td>
<td>A16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>20b</td>
<td>3/13/95</td>
<td>Real culprit in youth crime isn't the law</td>
<td>A17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>23a</td>
<td>3/29/95</td>
<td>Teen gets 8 years for fatal stabbing</td>
<td>A6</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>24a</td>
<td>4/6/95</td>
<td>Teen said he wanted to kill, police say</td>
<td>A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>24b</td>
<td>4/6/95</td>
<td>Killing spurs call to toughen teen crime law</td>
<td>A3</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/12/95</td>
<td>2 boys, 15, charged in Edmonton double killing</td>
<td>A4</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/20/95</td>
<td>Hall invited to watch youth swarms on Queen St.</td>
<td>A28</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/26/95</td>
<td>Jailing young offenders may be a circle without exit</td>
<td>A17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>24c</td>
<td>4/27/95</td>
<td>Lawyer fears for teen</td>
<td>A11</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>Placement</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>5/4/95</td>
<td>Police release picture of teen sought in attack</td>
<td>A19</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>5/22/95</td>
<td>Teen homicides on rise, FBI says</td>
<td>A11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>32a</td>
<td>5/30/95</td>
<td>Tories tout boot camp for young offenders</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Harris gets tough on law and order</td>
<td>A32</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>6/1/95</td>
<td>Shaken' kids get therapy after stabbing of classmate</td>
<td>A12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>6/2/95</td>
<td>Rock urges jailing fewer teen offenders Ottawa funded plan clashes with Mike Harris aim</td>
<td>A10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>6/4/95</td>
<td>Don't call military school a boot camp, founder says</td>
<td>A21</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>6/6/95</td>
<td>Student's &quot;life ban&quot; lifted School board votes to reinstate four who used knives, replica guns</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>36a</td>
<td>6/6/95</td>
<td>Girl, 15 wrote poem on stabbing court told</td>
<td>A11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>6/13/95</td>
<td>Girl, 16, admits boasting of killing to impress pals</td>
<td>A20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>6/15/95</td>
<td>Girl boasted about killing for 'gang loyalty' trial told</td>
<td>A26</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>6/20/95</td>
<td>Hurting girl not capable of killing, trial told</td>
<td>A26</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>6/22/95</td>
<td>Young offenders face tougher punishment</td>
<td>A13</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>6/28/95</td>
<td>Teens accused of killing priest to face psychiatric evaluation</td>
<td>A13</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>6/29/95</td>
<td>Teenager jailed 60 days for sex assault on children</td>
<td>SC2</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>6/30/95</td>
<td>Young Offenders act under fire Thousands sign petition by brother of slain man</td>
<td>A7</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>7/4/95</td>
<td>Sentencing revolt or a slap on the wrist? Program to keep young offenders out of jail causes a stir</td>
<td>A15</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>7/6/95</td>
<td>Man gets 10 months for crime done as a teen</td>
<td>A24</td>
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<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>7/14/95</td>
<td>Girl, 13 beaten by gang of girls</td>
<td>A3</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>7/15/95</td>
<td>Residents angry over girl's bail</td>
<td>A10</td>
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<tr>
<td>48a</td>
<td>7/15/95</td>
<td>Boy, linked to child's killing</td>
<td>A20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>7/15/95</td>
<td>Boy, 7, said accomplice to vile killing</td>
<td>A13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>7/17/95</td>
<td>BC teens charged with murder</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>7/21/95</td>
<td>Study rejects boot camps for young offenders</td>
<td>A12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>7/22/95</td>
<td>Youth violence on rise, police say</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>7/25/95</td>
<td>Youth to be tried as adult for shooting</td>
<td>A9</td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>8/12/95</td>
<td>Female teens turning to crime a twice he rate of young males The gap between Barbie and GI Joe is shrinking violently</td>
<td>C4</td>
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<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>8/17/95</td>
<td>Family's petition is gaining support</td>
<td>NY2</td>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>8/17/95</td>
<td>Petition urges changes to law for young killer</td>
<td>SC1</td>
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<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>8/21/95</td>
<td>Tories halt message of tolerance</td>
<td>A13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>8/22/95</td>
<td>Stabbing case girl reads her poem to judge</td>
<td>A22</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Link</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Headline</td>
<td>Placement</td>
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<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td>8/25/95</td>
<td>Condo Tenants fear rising violence Girl, 8, injured in 4th incident in the past month</td>
<td>A6</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>23h</td>
<td>8/26/95</td>
<td>Teen Convicted in slaying will serve two year term</td>
<td>A14</td>
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<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td>8/27/95</td>
<td>Teen to be tried in adult court</td>
<td>A15</td>
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<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td>8/28/95</td>
<td>How youth can resolve their crimes</td>
<td>A17</td>
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<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>23i</td>
<td>9/9/95</td>
<td>Teen killer never go help she needed society failed girl by not getting her necessary care</td>
<td>A2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
<td>9/19/95</td>
<td>Boot Camp for brits young offenders face 16 hour days</td>
<td>A3</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/12/95</td>
<td>Tough judge set to head boot camp committee Ex-Mountie won &quot;hammer Jack&quot; nickname in his 28 year on bench</td>
<td>A2</td>
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<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/13/95</td>
<td>Province quietly scraps young offender office Staff would seek out alternatives to jail for convicted youths</td>
<td>A12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/13/95</td>
<td>Bully gets four years for beating 4 year old</td>
<td>A21</td>
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<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/20/95</td>
<td>Conference tackles crime Student council aims to promote youth issues</td>
<td>SC4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/22/95</td>
<td>Teenagers wounded in two knifings</td>
<td>A20</td>
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<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td>10/24/95</td>
<td>Justice for youths can begin with a hug Accused and victims hold special meeting to reach agreement on suitable penalty, jail term</td>
<td>A21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
<td>11/2/95</td>
<td>A lesson in remorse is better than boot camp for kids</td>
<td>A27</td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
<td>11/21/95</td>
<td>Jailing youths a waste justice minister says</td>
<td>A13</td>
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<tr>
<td>73</td>
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<td>11/30/95</td>
<td>Schools talk out the violence Programs work to limit flareups educators say</td>
<td>OS6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>24e</td>
<td>12/14/95</td>
<td>Final arguments given in Montreal murder trial of teens</td>
<td>A19</td>
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<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td>12/19/95</td>
<td>Ex wards fear 'atrocities' at boot camp</td>
<td>A11</td>
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<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td>12/20/95</td>
<td>More kids are victims of violent crimes</td>
<td>A2</td>
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<tr>
<td>77</td>
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<td>12/23/95</td>
<td>Boot-store accused to be tried as an adult</td>
<td>A11</td>
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<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
<td>12/28/95</td>
<td>Kids aged 3 strong enough to fire a gun study shows</td>
<td>E10</td>
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<td>79</td>
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<td>12/29/95</td>
<td>Alberta tries local justice for bad teens</td>
<td>A12</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

CRIMES OF VIOLENCE (Main Category)

By “lack of follow through” and “complete coverage”
(If it is blank beside the category it applies to both)

SENSATIONALISM (Category)
- VIOLENCE DESCRIPTION
  - VIOLENCE
  - VIOLENT ACTS
  - VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR
    - WEAPONS
      - WEAPONS SEIZED
      - WEAPONS INVOLVED
- YOUTH DESCRIPTION
  - YOUTH AGE
  - POSSIBLE YOUTH SUSPECTS
  - YOUTH DEFENCE
  - YOUTH PREDICAMENT
  - YOUTH BACKGROUND
  - YOUTH FAMILY COMMENTS
  - YOUTH FRIENDS COMMENTS
- ENFORCEMENT
  - RESISTANCE TO ENFORCEMENT
  - OFFICER CONDITIONS
  - POLICE REPORTS
- CRIME
  - CRIME DETAILS
  - CRIME TYPES
  - CHARGE (complete coverage only)
  - # OF CHARGES (complete coverage only)
  - CHARGES LAID (complete coverage only)
  - NO CHARGES LAID (lack of follow through)
  - CHARGES PENDING
- DEFENCE
  - REJECTION OF THE DEFENCE (complete coverage only)
  - ACTS OF DEFENCE (complete coverage only)
  - COURT DEFENCE (complete coverage only)

VICTIMIZATION (Category)
- VICTIM SYMPATHY
- VICTIM AGE
- VICTIM BACKGROUND
- VICTIM CONDITION
  - VICTIM DESCRIPTION
  - SITUATION DESCRIPTION
  - VICTIM COMMENTS
- SENTENCE
- SENTENCE LENGTH (complete coverage only)
- SENTENCING TRIAL (complete coverage only)

**RELIANCE ON AUTHORITY INFORMATION (Category)**
- AUTHORITY COMMENTS
  - RESIDING JUDGE COMMENTS (complete coverage only)
  - ENFORCEMENT COMMENTS
  - EXPERT COMMENTS
  - PRIOR VICTIM (another incident) COMMENTS

**THE READER’S GULF BETWEEN REALITY AND PERCEPTION RE: YOUTH VIOLENCE (Category)**
- STATISTICS
  - PROJECTED INCREASE IN VIOLENCE
  - CRIME RATES
POLITICALLY MOTIVATED ARTICLES (Main Category)

REFERENCES TO THE YOA (Category)
YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT
- LENIENT PENALTIES
- SHORT SENTENCE LENGTH

Identifies youth crime as a serious growing problem (Category)

BACKGROUND
- YOUTH DESCRIPTION
  - YOUTH AGE
  - YOUTH PREDICAMENT
- CRIME
  - FACTS ABOUT YOUTH CRIME
  - CRIME TYPES

VIOLENCE
- VIOLENT ACTS
- VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

VICTIM INFORMATION
- VICTIM CONDITION
  - VICTIM DESCRIPTION
  - VICTIM COMMENTS

COMMENTS
- CRITIC COMMENTS
- GOVERNMENT COMMENTS

STATISTICS
- CRIME STATISTICS
- YOUTH STATISTICS
- VIOLENCE STATISTICS
- POLICE STATISTICS
- PROJECTED INCREASE IN VIOLENCE

PROPOSALS TO REMEDY AND RECTIFY THE PROBLEM (Category)
YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT
- STIFFER PENALTIES
- LONGER SENTENCE LENGTH
- AMENDMENTS
  - INCREASED PUNISHMENT

ALTERNATIVE MEASURES
- REHABILITATIVE
- BOOT CAMP
- SPECIAL PROGRAMS
**FILLERS (Main Category)**

**SPECIAL CASES/STATISTICAL CASES (Category)**

**BACKGROUND**
- VIOLENCE DESCRIPTION
  - VIOLENCE
  - VIOLENT ACTS
  - VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR
    - WEAPONS
  - YOUTH DESCRIPTION
    - YOUTH(S) AGE
    - POSSIBLE YOUTH SUSPECTS
    - YOUTH PREDICAMENT

**STATISTICS**
- CRIME STATISTICS
- YOUTH STATISTICS
- VIOLENCE STATISTICS
- POLICE STATISTICS

**PROJECTED INCREASE IN VIOLENCE**

**COMMENTS**
- ENFORCEMENT COMMENTS
- GOVERNMENT COMMENTS
- PROFESSIONAL COMMENTS
- KIN/RELATIVE COMMENTS
- COMMUNITY COMMENTS
- BY-STANDER COMMENTS
- OBSERVER COMMENTS

**STATISTICS**
- CRIME STATISTICS
- YOUTH STATISTICS
- VIOLENCE STATISTICS
- POLICE STATISTICS

**PROJECTED INCREASE IN VIOLENCE**

**OUT OF REGION (Category)**

**BACKGROUND**
- VIOLENCE DESCRIPTION
  - VIOLENCE
  - VIOLENT ACTS
  - VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR
    - WEAPONS
  - YOUTH DESCRIPTION
    - YOUTH(S) AGE
    - POSSIBLE YOUTH SUSPECTS
    - YOUTH PREDICAMENT

**STATISTICS**
- CRIME STATISTICS
- YOUTH STATISTICS
- VIOLENCE STATISTICS
- POLICE STATISTICS
- CRIME STATISTICS
- YOUTH STATISTICS
- VIOLENCE STATISTICS
- POLICE STATISTICS
- PROJECTED INCREASE IN VIOLENCE
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Vita Auctoris

Name: Gary Jonathan Hsu

Place of Birth: Toronto, Ontario

Year of Birth: 1970

Education:
- West Hill Collegiate Institute, Toronto, Ontario
  1985-1989

  Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario
  1989-1993 Hons. B.A.

  University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario
  1994-1998 M.A.