

Panel 1: Perspectives on Homicide

Ella Parr: *Quantifying Justice: Investigating the Influence of Clearance on Homicide Rates in the United States*

Using homicide data in the United States between 1965 and 2023 from The Murder Accountability Project (2023), this research assesses the influence that clearance rates have on future homicide rates, as well as the key characteristics of cases which influence their solvability. A quantitative analysis approach was utilised using R studio to develop a linear regression model which determined that a higher clearance rate in one year can lead to a lower homicide rate in the following year. Additionally, a logistic regression model was fit to assess which case characteristics influence the likelihood of a homicide being cleared. There were many contributing factors to the likelihood of a case being solved, such as the use of a firearm, the relationship status of the victim and offender, and victim characteristics like age, sex and race. The increasing complexity of homicide has led to a decreased clearance rate over this time period, meaning that new policies need to be developed to improve investigation techniques, ultimately resulting in higher clearance rates and lower homicide rates.

Victoire Cabot: *Homicide in post genocide society*

I study homicide in post genocide societies in a comparative study where I compare the homicidal rates to the ones in countries that did not suffer genocide. I study across 5 continents, taking two countries (except in North America, as finding a country without mass violence isn't easy). I analyse Argentina (and Uruguay), Guatemala, Bosnia and Herzegovina (and Albania), Rwanda (and Botswana), and Armenia (and Singapore).

Lou Janssen: *From 'Rainbow Nation' to Fragmentation?: A Mixed-Methods Investigation into Homicide Trends, Racial (dis)Trust and Growing Social Divisions in Post-Apartheid South Africa*

This dissertation examines the deepening social fragmentation in post-Apartheid South Africa, questioning the enduring validity of the "Rainbow Nation" ideal. Despite the promise of unity and reconciliation in 1994, the country continues to struggle with high levels of violent crime (especially homicide), racial distrust and inequality. Using a mixed-methods approach, this dissertation explores how the legacy of Apartheid continues to shape experiences of intergroup relations, ethnic distrust and tolerance towards violence. On the quantitative side, the research analyses national-level homicide trends (from Worldbank Data) and draws from Afrobarometer survey data to investigate public attitudes toward trust, violence and racial cohesion. Qualitatively, it employs thematic analysis of opinionated media-articles and parliamentary speeches to draw connections beyond correlations and uncover the social realities behind the statistics. By combining statistical patterns with narrative insights, the dissertation reveals that the vision of a harmonious and post-racial South Africa remains largely unrealised. Instead, it finds a nation still divided - economically, spatially, and psychologically - where violence is both a symptom and a catalyst of broader societal breakdown. This research ultimately calls for a reimagining of reconciliation that accounts for structural transformation and social justice.

Chair: Abbie Walton

Discussant: Nicola Fox

Panel 2: Mass violence and visual criminology

Abbie Walton: *The Dark Obsession: How True Crime Docudrama Coverage Fuels the Romanticisation and Glorification of Serial Killers on Social Media in the United Kingdom*

Ted Bundy, Richard Ramirez and Jeffrey Dahmer are names well-known to individuals all over the world, especially younger audiences, despite not having lived through this era. In a decade driven by social media and dramatised television, individuals are known to romanticise criminals, especially

serial killers, and therefore wider concerns have been raised about the impact this can have on society and crime. With limited research in this area, this research ultimately investigates how these dramatised portrayals contribute to the sympathetic and admired narratives around serial killers from docudramas, and how these narratives are therefore amplified through social media trends on platforms such as TikTok, X and Instagram. Through a qualitative interview approach, this study aims to understand why people have these feelings towards criminals, why they post this content, how individuals feel towards this type of content and how this differs between gender groups.

Olivia Cox: *A Visual Analysis of Moral Disengagement in World War Propaganda Posters*

This dissertation proposes a study which will use visual criminology techniques to analyse archival propaganda posters from 1914-1945, with the aim of producing common themes and keywords that can be used to identify dehumanising propaganda in the future. Past literature regarding moral disengagement will be reviewed, and used to examine how posters can convey strong messages that help the justification of dehumanising an enemy.

Celine Giese: *Cold Calculations: How Conflict Characteristics Shape External Support in Armed Conflicts*

Despite its relevance to violence, victimisation, and state power, Criminology has historically neglected the study of armed conflicts (Hagan (2015); Jamieson (2003); Ruggiero (2015); McGarry and Walklate (2015)). This dissertation aims to bridge this gap, using random and fixed effects logistic regression to examine the impact of conflict characteristics on the provision of external support. It seeks to provide insights into the motives and strategies of external supporters, essential for discussions around liability and responsibility in armed conflicts. Aligning with existing literature, the findings of this study suggest that external supporters tailor the provision of specific indirect support to specific conflict dynamics (Schultz (2010); Bapat (2012) Sawyer et al. (2015)). Based in criminological research on violence (Collins (2008) in Rafter (2016)) this suggests a 'cold', calculated approach to the provision of external support, where external supporters consider the conflict dynamics and the potential for escalation before providing support. This research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between external interventions and conflict dynamics, bridging critical gaps in criminology and offering a starting point for criminological discussion around the liability and responsibility of external supporters.

Chair: Ella Parr

Discussant: Borja Alvaro Alvarez Martinez