AC1.5 Explain the impact of media representations on the public perception of crime

List three examples of moral panics
1-
  Mods and Rockers

2-
  The Knife Crime Epedemic

3-
  Video Nasties

Explain how in the case of the 'mods and rockers' a moral panic was created?

A moral panic is a feeling of fear spread among many people that some evil threatens the well-being of society. This fear is beyond the threat posed by the feared thing, and is often fanned by exaggerated reports in the media. The original moral panic was the portrayal of the clashes between 'Mods and Rockers' at seaside towns in 1964. The media portrayed the events in a sensationalist way, with 'lawless' gangs engaged in 'battles'. Stanley Cohen coined the term 'deviancy amplification' to describe a situation where the media creates more of the deviance, that it is reporting on. This is what happened in 1964, initially there were only a handful of people involved but reporting in the national media led to people taking notice of what was going on and soon after, joining in. A similar phenomenon was observed in the 'London Riots' of 2011, where media reports, both social and mainstream, highlighted the disorder which quickly spread out from London, and onto the rest of the UK in copycat rioting.

How can stereotyping criminals in the media affect the public?

The representation of BAME groups in TV drama is an important source of stereotypes. For example, the BBC TV drama, the Bodyguard was singled out for it its negative representation of Muslim women. An example of stereotyping affecting judgements is the Islamic terrorists 'trope', this was shown when the Arab student 'Ahmed Mohamed' was arrested for bringing a disassembled clock into school to show his teachers; Ahmed was arrested on suspicion of making a bomb. Media stereotypes can be very harmful to certain marginalised groups. Criminals are often portrayed as young working-class males, often from BAME backgrounds, and from a rough neighbourhoods or council estates. Another way in which stereotyping is harmful is that it can lead to the 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. That is if police officers believe that offenders have certain characteristics, consistent with the public perception of offenders, then they are likely to concentrate policing resources on those offenders, and the prophecy will become true.

How can the media have the power to change the publics concerns and attitudes? E.g. Racism Meghan Markle or Islamophobia (case or Jean Charles De Menezes)

Barker et al (2017) carried out research into the reporting of Muslims and Islam in UK and the Worlds news media. Islam and Muslims were often reported alongside terms such as fundamentalist, terrorist and extremist. The term 'Muslim community' was used to portray Muslims as a homogenous group i.e. all the same. Newspapers used various devices to portray Muslims as dangerous such as the use of mugshots. The reporting of Islam and Muslims became increasingly negative, and positive stories about Muslims, and stories where Muslims were the victims of aggression, decreased.

Give three examples of how the media has the power to change police priorities e.g. Protests, COVID fines
  James Bulger and the sentencing of children for serious offences
  The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act ('rave'culture)
  The Dangerous Dogs Act (1991)
  The 'London Riots' – 2011
  Sarah Everard – 2021 (Response includes better lighting and CCTV (£45m) Undercover police will be sent to clubs, bars and popular nightspots to identify offenders to uniformed officers (Project Vigilant).

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