That Photograph – serial killer as modern celebrity

Introduction

In October 1965, the police in Hyde, Greater Manchester received a phone call from David Smith reporting that he had witnessed a murder. Following the phone call, the police went to a house on a housing estate in Hattersley. The house was occupied by Ian Brady, Myra Hindley and her grandmother. The police found the body of Edward Evans. They arrested Brady and four days later Hindley (Cummins et al, 2019). Since that date, the Moors Murders case has never disappeared from popular and media culture. Brady and Hindley became icons of evil, a reference point against which future crimes were measured. The term serial killer was not in use at the time of their arrest. However, they were soon inducted into that category by the media. In analysing the wider cultural impact of the coverage of crimes, it is important to emphasise that we are in no way diminishing or underplaying the brutality, violence and degradation involved. We are arguing that one of the results of the salacious media coverage of the case is to do that. It is not that the media coverage sets out to do this. It is rather the cumulative impact of the obsessive mining of the details of the case and Brady and Hindley's relationship to produce a "*definitive account"*.

The Moors Murders case has become an archetype of mediatised murder. This archetype reflects the symbiotic relationship between the media and crime. As previously noted, the *'true crime'* genre is able to keep its market share and reproduce itself by a combination of new stories or new angles on old ones. The Moors Murders has been a feature of British cultural life for nearly sixty years (Lee, 2010). Following the death of Brady in 2017, this may be on the wane. Part of the reason for its position in the news media is the nature of the crimes that Brady and Hindley committed. Alongside this, the case has always been in "*the shadow of the rope"* – the death penalty was abolished whilst Brady and Hindley were on remand. If they had been arrested earlier then they would have almost certainly been executed. The involvement of a woman in such crimes is also a factor in the fascination in the case. Finally, there has been a series of astonishing news stories linked to the case – Hindley's attempted prison escape, the confessions to the murders of Pauline Reade and Keith Bennett and the taking of Brady and Hindley to

the Moors — that mean that it has never been that far from the centre of the news cycle.

Features of the Moors case and its aftermath, such as the payment of witnesses for their stories, the focus on exploring the lives of the perpetrators to construct a psychological profile and the exploitation of the victims' families suffering have all become aspects of the modern serial killing industry (Cummins et al 2019). These events occurred when TV representations of murder and violent crime did not dominate the schedules in the way that they do now. The photographs of Brady and Hindley taken at Hyde police station in 1965 have been produced countless times since. These images have come to play a key role in the representation of Brady and Hindley as icons of evil. They are also key factors in the development of the cult of the serial killer as celebrity. The creation and management of the image and public profile is a key element of modern celebrity culture. These images become texts, on to which the viewer transposes their own readings. Myra Hindley came to be seen as the most evil woman in Britain. In a sense, Brady and Hindley acted as some sort of yardstick, a point of reference for other crimes and acts of evil (Clark 2011). The photograph links Hindley to other '*evil'* blondes such as Irma Grese, the concentration camp guard who was executed for her role in the Holocaust. This chapter will use an analysis of the famous photographs taken of Brady and Hindley at the time of their arrest as a basis for the exploration of the modern celebrity status of the serial killer. It will then explore the pivotal role of *that photograph* in the construction of Hindley as "*a monster"* (Birch 1994; Clark 2011).

The Moors Murders

Following the arrest of Ian Brady, the police recovered two suitcases belonging to Brady at Manchester Central Station. The suitcases contained photographs and the tape of the torture of Lesley Ann Downey. Lesley Ann Downey had been missing since Boxing Day 1964. Brady and Hindley had abducted her from a fair in Manchester. Her body and that of John Kilbride were recovered from the Moors above Manchester. John Kilbride had been reported missing in November 1963. He had disappeared after helping stall holders clear up at Ashton Market. Brady and Hindley's trial began on 19th April, 1966 at Chester Assizes (Hansford Johnson,1967). This was the first high profile murder case since the passing of *The*

Murder (Abolition of Death Penalty) Act 1965 which suspended the death penalty for five years. On 6th May 1966, Brady was found guilty of the murders of John Kilbride, Lesley Ann Downey and Edward Evans. Hindley was convicted of two murders and being an accessory in the murder of John Kilbride. During the trial, the tape that Brady and Hindley had made of their abuse and torture of Lesley Ann Downey was played in open Court. Justice Fenton Atkinson described this as a *"truly horrible case"* and Brady as "*wicked beyond belief*"(Winter, 2002, p351). He felt that if Hindley was removed from Brady's influence then there was the possibility that she could be rehabilitated. They were sentenced to life imprisonment. In the I980s, Brady and Hindley confessed to the murder of Pauline Reade and Keith Bennett who been reported missing in Manchester in 1963 and 1964.

Bricolage

In carrying out the research for this chapter, we use bricolage as a research method. Bricolage as an approach is supported by Strauss' (1972) ideas on the cultural sphere. It allows for the exploration of complexity and ambiguity via a range of texts and sources. These sources can be historical texts, films, novels and so on. Lincoln (2001) sees the bricoleur as akin to an anthropologist. Wibberley (2012, p6) argues "*bricolage brings together in some form, different sources of data"*. The result is a form of reflexive commentary (Wibberley,2012) in which the subject guides or creates the methodology rather than there being "correct" methodologies that are universally applicable, creating a new hybrid method for each new project.

The continued fascination with the Moors Murders, which we should acknowledge our work contributes to, means that there is a huge range of texts that can be examined. In addition to the famous photographs, this research also explores novels, TV dramas, 'true crime' accounts, and Harvey's painting of Hindley. The 'true crime' accounts included for this study were *Beyond Belief* (Williams 1992), *The Trial of the Moors Murders* (Goodman 1986), *The Lost Boy* (Staff 2013), *Topping the Autobiography* (Topping 1989), *Witness* (Smith and Lee 2012) and *One of Your Own* (Lee 2010).

Serial killers, modernity and celebrity

The serial killing industry has been focused on producing 'psycho' biographies of serial killers and 'true crime' accounts of their crimes (Haggerty 2009), often combining lurid detail with a search for the causes of deviant behaviour. There are features of serial killing that set it apart from other forms of murder. The most distinctive feature is the lack of any prior relationship between the killer and the victim. The targeting of groups and selection of potential victims alongside the process of planning the crime is part of the motivation of the killer (Wilson, 2007). These are not, therefore, random acts. The victims become a means to an end for the killer. These factors are clear in the Moors murders case. Brady's notebooks, which contained detailed plans of the crimes, were found by the police after his arrest. The serial killer is in Foucault's (1990, pp 42-3) terms "*a new specification of individuals"*. Prior to the creation of the term, there were clearly people who carried out multiple murders. The development and usage of the term is a reflection of modern forms of classification — in Foucault's terms, the creation of the case. Alongside these developments, the current use of the term is bound up with new academic and popular discourses — for example psychological profiling – which seek to explain and categorise serial killers whilst unveiling their hidden motivations and the traumas that created them. Psychological profiling makes the claim that by the analysis of crime scenes and a series of other factors, it can provide a detailed psychological portrait of an offender that will assist the police. The overlap between academic discourse and popular culture is readily apparent here. As much as the serial killer, the psychological profiler is now a fixture in popular culture. In the academic world, offender profiling has become a recognised subsection of forensic psychology – with all that entails in terms of research funding, academic status and prominence. The circle is complete when psychology profilers appear on TV or in the newspaper to provide their explanations of the motivations of killers they have never met or produce programmes "solving" historical crimes, such as the Whitechapel murders, using modern techniques.

Haggerty (2009) sees serial killing as a by-product of the anonymity of modern life. This can be viewed in two ways. The first is that this anonymity and rootlessness leads to the corrosion of prosocial values in the modern urban "*society of strangers"*. The second element here is that modern society creates an environment where the serial killer can circulate amongst the population, their seeming normality allowing

them to move freely, undetected in this society of strangers, as ordinary people seemingly going about their ordinary lives. This allows them to commit crimes over such a long period (Haggerty,2009). One common feature of the reporting of serial killers is quotes from those who lived alongside or knew the killer describing them as ordinary (Cummins et al 2019). However, when they are convicted they are represented as the embodiment of evil. In the case of Brady and Hindley, prior to their arrests, they were clearly seen as an odd or unusual couple in the working class community they inhabited (Lee,2010). They cultivated an image and dressed in a distinctive fashion and so on. However, we have found no real evidence that they were suspected of any involvement in the abduction and murder of children prior to their arrest (Cummins et al 2019).

Haggerty (2009) argued that the social atomization that occurs in late modernity leads to the marginalization of vulnerable groups. The status of the victim has been a factor in the failure to apprehend serial killers (Wilson 2007) and the hierarchy of victims constructed in media reporting of serial killing compounds the issue. The victims of serial killers are more likely to come from groups that are regarded as being on the margins of society (Egger 2002). This, alongside the fact that there is not a personal link between the victim and perpetrator helps to explain why the initial investigation into the first murders that serial killers commit are often not investigated adequately or given high profile media coverage. The police investigation into attacks and murders committed by Peter Sutcliffe highlight this (Wattiss, 2018, 2020). Egger (2002) described marginalised victims as the "*less dead",* in the sense that the media create a hierarchy of cultural value. In Sutcliffe's case the distinguishing between his different victims as innocent or somehow deserving, both by the investigating police force and the tabloid media, has been well documented (Smith 1989; Wattiss 2018). This is an area where there has been a shift from the early 1960s. To the modern reader, one of the startling features of the Moors murders case is how comparatively little attention was paid to the disappearance of the victims. Even allowing for the fact that they took place in areas covered by different police forces, it is surprising that links were not made between the missing children Pauline Reade, John Kilbride, Lesley Ann Downey and Keith Bennett. In contrast, Greer (2004, p. 113) notes that one of the features of the

modern reporting of crime is the *"foregrounding of crime victims"*. This is linked to a wider societal sense of insecurity. One of the features of late modernity is that wider personal freedom is accompanied by increased levels of insecurity (Bauman 2007). Crime and fear of crime has a particular place in these modern, particularly urban, notions of insecurity. Simon (2007) highlights the way that the media creation of the figure of the serial killer as a modern bogeyman has played a clear role here. These events are, thankfully, very rare indeed. However, media coverage and the dominance of the hunt for serial killers in modern cop dramas and films distort this.

In outlining serial killing as a product of modernity, Haggerty (2009) highlights the creation of the mass media and its symbiotic relationship with popular culture, with particular reference to the latter half of the 20th century. Celebrity and crime are key features here. Serial killing combines these features in one package. Modern celebrity is a bizarrely fluid category. It includes TV presenters, film stars, reality TV contestants and sexual killers like Brady and Hindley. In addition, there is an increasing group of celebrities who are famous for simply being famous. The roots of this fame are lost in the mists of time. However, fame is an ongoing process, that requires the creation and maintenance of an identity or a series of identities. Reinvention or the shedding of a previous skin is at the heart of the celebrity engagement with their public. Celebrity thus becomes a category in and off itself with its own rules and culture.

Cummins et al (2019) suggest that one way of examining the media responses to the Moors Murders is to see them as the dark side of the swinging sixties. Early commentators, such as Hansford-Johnson and her husband C.P.Snow, saw the case as the result of the alleged permissive nature of modern Britain and the collapse of traditional values. As noted above, Brady and Hindley became part of the nascent celebrity culture. Rojek (2001, p. 10) defines celebrity as *'the attribution of glamour or notorious status to an individual within the public sphere … the impact on public consciousness'*. He sees celebrity as a cultural fabrication, with mass media representation (Hall, 1997) as the key principle in the formation of celebrity culture. Rojek's (2001) explanation for the emergence of celebrity as a public preoccupation

is threefold; the democratisation of society, the decline in organised religion and the commodification of everyday life. While Rojek's (2001) work provides an attempt to explain the rise of celebrity culture in the late 20th Century, the features identified are already recognised as being in play in the 1960s the period, in which Brady and Hindley committed their crimes (Marwick 1998).

The democratisation of *'swinging'* Sixties celebrity is well documented elsewhere (Sandbrook 2006; King 2013). A key feature in this was the rise of the '*ordinary'* man and woman to celebrity status, a world, real or mythical, where the Royals and the great and the good rubbed shoulders with working class actors, pop stars, film makers and photographers (Sandbrook 2006). David Bailey's *Box of Pinups* (1965) is regarded as a key artefact in documenting this phenomenon, featuring as it does members of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Michael Caine, David Hockney, Jean Shrimpton and others, an attempt to document this democratised celebrity. Among the others are the Kray Twins, notorious East End gangsters eventually jailed in 1969. Rojek (2001) argues that notoriety is one route into modern day celebrity. He states:

'the figure of notoriety possesses colour, instant cache and may even in some circles be invested with heroism for daring to release the emotions of blocked aggression and sexuality that civilised society seeks to repress'

(Rojek 2001, p.15).

However, Brady and Hindley's long term celebrity has been based on public revulsion. The contrast with the Krays is stark. Despite being notorious gangland torturers and killers, they still seem to be regarded, fifty years on with a kind of public benevolence. They have been celebrated in two feature films, the second of which, *Legend* (Helgeland, 2015) focuses on the style and glamour aspect of their 1960s' working class hero celebrity status.

The incorporation of serial killers into the modern category of celebrity is part of the transformation of violent crime into a cultural and entertainment product. There is a symbiotic relationship between crime and media. Violent crime is generally newsworthy and receives extensive coverage. The nature of sexual and violent crime

and its comparative rarity are factors in these decisions. It is not the case that all violent crime receives the same level of coverage (Jewkes, 2004). For example, femicide is marginalised and often presented in a misogynistic and victim blaming fashion (Wattiss, 2020). This moral economy is often reflected in the media profile that is given to the perpetrator. For example, Kenneth Erskine was convicted of the murder of seven senior citizens in 1988. He was sentenced to be detained under the provisions of the Mental Health Act (MHA 1983). However, this case has not received the level of coverage of other serial killers in England and Wales(Cummins et al., 2019). One factor in this is the marginalised status of his victims. With this important caveat in mind — that not all serial killing 'makes the news', and the reasons for omission reflect social hierarchies — it is more generally the case that serial killing as a category of crime is more newsworthy than other offences, despite its rarity. Burn (2008, p. 38) coined the term *"murder leisure industry*" to capture the nature of the media/crime relationship, and draw attention to the tendency for media to sensationalise and dramatise murder. It is certainly notable that there are overlaps between the narrative of news reporting and dramatic representations of serial killing, such that it is difficult to discern 'fact' from 'fiction'. From the initial discovery of the crime to the apprehension of the perpetrator, television news and 'true crime' accounts follow a similar arc, albeit that the former tends to be contemporaneous and the latter viewed from a distance. TV 'true crime' accounts use a number of tropes that also occur in film and dramas. The shot of the urban landscape at night to symbolise alienation, the heroic detective and the set piece news conference appear in both genres. Real events are then dramatized or dramatized events given the 'feel' of reality.

Serial killing, and 'true crime' more generally, have become a significant focus for cultural production (Soothill,1993). Books, films, novels, TV dramas and the news media dominate in these area. Alongside this, there is a market in serial killer memorabilia and murder mystery tours. The Ripper tours are one of London's biggest tourist attractions. There are tours of Edinburgh and Ystad based on the Rebus and Wallender novels (Cummins and King 2013). Within this media market, the serial killer has become a dominant figure. The relationship between serial killers and the public has many of the elements of fan culture – for example the collection of memorabilia and the obsessive poring over details of individual lives. Schmid (2006,

p. 297) noted that what he called the trade in *"murderabilia"* was booming, pointing to the selling of a brick from US serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer's apartment building for $300 and a lock of Charles Manson's hair for $995 as examples. The commodification of fame and celebrity creates this market. As with all markets, there is a need to develop new products. In this case, the new products are either new killers or new details and items about an established case.

There is also something of a hierarchy of interest. Brady and Hindley were at the top of this pyramid for fifty years. This is probably still the case despite the passing of time since their arrest and the fact that they are now both dead. The market requires the reproduction of commodity value. This is something that has happened in the Brady and Hindley case at regular intervals since 1965. The death of Brady and Hindley not only led to spikes in interest in the case but further convulsions about the morality of the public and media interest in the case (Cummins et al 2019). More generally, media coverage is sustained by what Lea (2014, p. 765) calls the "*disturbing attraction-in-repulsion of the transgressive celebrity"*. In Rupert Thomson's novel *Death of a Murderer* (2008), Tyler, a prison officer, guards the body of a killer who is clearly Hindley. The Tyler character sums up this attraction-in-repulsion as he addresses the dead Hindley. *"You did something people couldn't bring themselves to think about. You forced them to imagine it. You rubbed their noses in it"* (Thomson 2008, p. 298).

This horror-filled attraction partly accounts for the extraordinary and sustained media attention to the Moors Murders case, including documentaries and films examining virtually all aspects of the case. *See No Evil: The Moors Murders* (dir. Menaul 2006), a television drama, shown on the fortieth anniversary of the sentencing of Brady and Hindley, is a dramatic reconstruction of the crimes of Brady and Hindley and as such blurs the lines between fact and fiction. At this point, Hindley was dead. In an example of the symbiotic relationship between the media and crime, there was media coverage of Brady's attempt to have the programme blocked (*MailOnline* 2005). Brady was clearly aware that these moves would receive significant coverage. Brady objected on the grounds that the mini-series was based on Emlyn Williams' (1992) *Beyond Belief,* which was originally published in 1967

following the conviction of Brady and Hindley. *Beyond Belief* used an approach inspired by Capote's *In Cold Blood,* by including events that the author had invented.

Given the subject matter and its cast including Maxine Peake, *See No Evil* (dir. Menaul 2006) was always likely to attract a large audience. The episodes were originally shown over two nights attracting audiences of over 6 million. The series won a BAFTA at the 2007 awards. The mini-series was a homage to the kitchen sink dramas of the 1960s — such as *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (dir. Reisz 1960) and the long running UK soap opera *Coronation Street*. These cultural products had a significant role in the creation of nostalgic images of post war, working class community life. The Moors Murders, in addition to the personal suffering and grief, destroyed this particular vision of community solidarity, so the use of conventions from the original kitchen sink drama in *See no Evil* (dir. Menaul 2006) was important in illustrating how the Moors Murders fractured this cosy image of working class life. While the series was made in consultation with and with the approval of surviving relatives of the victims it can still be seen as a cultural artefact which is part of the serial killing industry, a further commodification of the case.

Seltzer (1997) argued the public culture of modernity includes a fascination with — almost an addiction to — violence and its representation. Seltzer (1997) coined the term "*wound culture"* to describe this phenomenon. The term encompasses the fascination with a display of defiled and abused bodies. *Wound culture* can be extended from the physical to the psychological, thus it includes a fascination with trauma and its aftermath. Seltzer (1997) argues that a key element of *wound culture* is the public display of distress. This has become entwined with celebrity culture in several ways. Killers such as Brady and Hindley become the subject of salacious interest. As with all serial killers , there is both an academic and media interest in excavating their histories, looking for causes rooted in past personal trauma. In the case of the serial killer these traumas have usually remained as private 'wounds', whereas public displays of trauma have become a key feature of the arc of the modern celebrity narrative. One of the key points in the celebrity journey is the confrontation with their own 'personal demons', as they are usually referred to in the

press coverage. The repeated examination of 'the wound' is a cornerstone of modern celebrity culture. Hindley herself produced such an explanation for her involvement in the Moors Murders (*The Guardian* 2000) suggesting that she had been brutalised by Brady and then threatened into participating. For the public, however , this argument held little water and, did little to change media representation of public perceptions of Hindley or challenge her 'most evil woman in Britain' status. In many ways Hindley provides the perfect illustration of how Seltzer's (1997) *wound culture* operates, not least because one iconic artefact — 'that photograph' — has come to symbolize the epitome of evil in the eyes of the public, due to a media narrative which was consistent over a number of decades.

That photograph

Central to the construction of the image of Brady and Hindley have been the photographs taken by the police when they were arrested in 1965. Hindley became the *'most hated woman in Britain'* (see Wilde 2016 for a discussion of the media use of this term). The case raises fundamental questions about punishment and the potential for reform. Brady never sought parole but Hindley did. In her long campaign for parole, she was never able to escape *that photograph*, taken when she was twenty-three, which was used by the media as a cipher for evil but also as a representation of her continuing threat.

The news of the arrest of Brady, and subsequently Hindley, led to the police search for bodies on the Moors. From that point, there was huge public interest in the case accompanied by ongoing media coverage. This was a period where there was a significant expansion in TV news coverage alongside the print media. It was apparent that the killers were aware of their image and attempted to manage it. Lee (2010) draws attention to their smart attire, clothes cleaned and pressed before each day as part of their performance and public persona. Lee (2010) argues that Hindley in particular was the focus of media attention, adding that:

How she looked became an obsession; for many the concept of evil had a face and walked into a courtroom. Her freshly bleached blonde hair was tinted lilac and she wore her make-up like a mask (Lee 2010, p. 270).

Hindley demonstrated a keen awareness of what Goffman (1967) calls the 'presentation of self'. A letter written to her mother before the trial, for example, reveals her interest in projecting a particular appearance:

Dear mam, as you know the trial begins three weeks on Tuesday …… could you bring me a bottle of make-up, it's Pond's Angel Face, shade Golden Rose. If you can't get Golden Rose, Tawny will do (Lee 2010, p. 219).

Hansford Johnson (1967, p22) tells us something about the public reaction to Hindley's image, and does so, interestingly, through comparison to the apparently more normal-looking Brady:

…he is a cross between Joseph Goebbels and a bird …. He is dressed in a grey suit, a natty white handkerchief in his breast pocket. On the whole he looks ordinary. Myra Hindley does not….. she could have served a nineteenth century Academy painter as a model for Clytemnestra: but sometimes she looks more terrible, like one of Fuesli's nightmare women drawn giant sized, elaborately coiffed.

She then goes on to describe Hindley's outfit and hairstyle in some detail. The language is florid and journalistic and the reference points a little obvious, but the concern with the minutiae of appearance is reminiscent of modern day celebrity-focused magazines or the reporting of Royalty. Photographers were not allowed into the trial. However, photographs appeared of the couple in *Paris Match* – a magazine that covered news but was more widely known for its fashion and celebrity gossip. Williams (1992) notes how composed both the accused were in the dock. Brady and Hindley's attention to personal grooming and immaculate presentation each day was part of a public performance – their last together and the creation of a public image that remained intact until their deaths (Lee 2010). There was a focus on Hindley partly because of the widespread disbelief that a woman could be involved in such crimes against children (Lee 2010).

In addition, Hindley had presented an aura of calm since the day of her arrest – only becoming distressed when told of the death of her dog (Benfield 1968).

In his summing up, the judge, while not denying Hindley's responsibility in the murders, emphasised Brady's influence. This was in keeping with the dominant gender norms at that time concerning female passivity, which were beginning to be challenged by the feminist movement (Ehrenreich 1983). Brady's Svengali-like influence over Hindley had been a feature of her defence. It was strengthened, not necessarily intentionally, by the judge's comments in his summing up. The judge suggested that away from Brady's influence there was some hope that Hindley would be capable of reform. The judge made it clear that he thought Brady was '*evil beyond belief*'. (Winter, 2002, p 352) These comments took on greater significance in the context of Hindley's quest for parole. Hindley, herself, argued that she had been mesmerised by Brady and coerced into taking part.(Lee,2010)

Hindley, throughout the trial then, was framed as monstrous 'other', a trope that goes back to Gothic fiction. Part of the attraction of the Gothic is that it produces fear (Ingesbretsen 1998). It is the frisson of fear that is the key to audience enjoyment. It can be difficult to distinguish between truth and fiction in this field as the "myth" of the serial killer overwhelms the reality. For example, the portrayal of the serial killer as some sort of criminal mastermind, plotting, planning and outwitting the authorities is completely at odds with the overwhelming majority of such crimes. Serial killers are often described in the language of Gothic fiction or myth (Halberstam,1995). They are monsters, vampires. The designation 'Ripper', generally thought to have originated with Jack the Ripper via media reporting of the Whitechapel murders, is a relatively modern addition to this Gothic lexicon. The use of the phrase 'Moors Murderers' establishes a broader cultural link to the Gothic representation of the Moors, given that the Moors is a key trope in Gothic fiction. Gothic fiction seeks to examine a relationship between space and the subject. The process of externalization is such that the space comes to stand in for the subject. The location and the rugged terrain of the Moors become an ongoing feature, a character in the drama. They are an area of beauty but also they hold terrible secrets – they continue to do so, as the body of Keith Bennett, has never been found.

In Gothic fiction, the external physical appearance of a place can come to imbue evil just as a particular image of a killer can become a representation of the evil of which the individual is capable. There is often a glamour or attraction to this appearance. The modern media use of mugshots – the photographs of Brady and Hindley, taken at the point of their arrest in 1965, being amongst the most used example – alongside the reports of crime are an example of this. The photographs themselves are a standardised format but the audience can project feelings of repulsion and disgust on to them. The images of Brady and Hindley can be used for shock value – they are guaranteed to generate a response. Harvey's painting of Hindley, *Myra* (1995), is a leading example. Harvey's painting is a huge, 11 ft by 9ft representation of the police mugshot photograph of Hindley. As you get nearer, it becomes clear that the painting consists of handprints of children. Walker (1998) suggests a semiotic analysis would emphasise that the use of the plaster cast of a child's palm print to make the painting is a way of indicating that Hindley will never escape her crimes – *you may sleep but you will never dream* as the singer Morrissey put it. There is another connection to the Gothic here as there is an uncanniness to the image. From a distance it looks like one thing, on closer inspection it reveals something else, something horrifying. Harvey was seeking to make a comment about the nature of the media representation of Hindley and society's obsessive interest in her. One suspects that, however serious the artistic intent, Harvey knew that the painting would inevitably create a media storm. This it duly did. The painting was vandalised and then withdrawn from exhibition.

This fascination with seeing Hindley and Brady — motivated by an attraction-repulsion discussed above — has continued in various forms over the years. When Brady gave evidence at the Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) hearing in 2013, there was a huge media interest accompanied with the Gothic frisson of the possibility of the sight of Brady fifty years on from his arrest (Cummins et al 2016). It reflected, perhaps, a desire from the media that he would still look like his original mugshot, Dorian Gray-style, frozen at the point of his evil doings. Brady himself was clearly aware that the MHRT would be a media event. It was shown via a live-feed from Ashworth Special Hospital Media, and tickets were rationed with around 40 members of the Press watching from the media room (Cummins et al 2016). There were also some tickets for the public in a separate court. Almost all reports of the

hearing concentrated on Brady's appearance and his voice as though they would offer some final insight into his crimes. TV and newspaper reports were accompanied by a court artist's sketch alongside his arrest photograph (Cummins et al 2016).

That arrest photograph — of both Brady and Hindley — must also be among the most reproduced images in modern media. Lee (2010, p. 228) makes a similar point in his reconstruction of the photographing of Hindley:

> *She was shown into a tiled cell. At one end stood an old-fashioned modern camera on a tripod. Lights glared down from the ceiling. The photographer told her where to stand and, then draped a black cloth over his head and adjusted the focus of the lens. The lights flashed and an image of unparalled British female notoriety was made.*

Barthes (2007) argued the beauty of humanity can be read through the face of one woman, Greta Garbo. The opposite is also the case: one image — that of Hindley — came to encapsulate horror. *That photograph* was a symbol of evil and degradation. It is clearly significant that these images are both of women. The picture of Hindley often appeared alongside that of Brady. However, despite Brady's more central role, it is her image that has a more powerful cultural influence, reflective of her transgressive position and the public horror at her multiple transgressions; as a criminal, as a female criminal and as a woman involved in the murder and torture of children. The issue of gender is often discussed in this case. Cummins et al (2019) note that this obscures the fact that these debates are really focussed on a specific set of gender-related issues — they're about Hindley and women who kill. There is no real discussion about what Brady and other male serial killers might tell us about masculinity.

Following her arrest, despite spending the rest of her life in prison, Hindley was consistently in the public and media gaze. The fact is that the serial killing industry, like other areas of modern celebrity life, often needs new commodities. Fame is often brief and fleeting, but notoriety is another matter. *That photograph* meant that neither Hindley nor the public were able to escape her crimes. Thompson (2008) in

his novel suggests that this continued confrontation with her crimes, generated in part by Hindley's campaigns for parole, was part of the explanation for the vilification of Hindley. *That photograph* appeared in countless newspaper articles. There is something of a subgenre of true crime that is based on the Moors Murder case, and the arrest photographs appear on the cover of most such books. Hindley resented the continued use of the image, arguing that it presented her as cold and callous when, in fact, she was frightened but trying not to show it. (Birch, 1993).Any attempts to move the narrative – to present a more complicated picture of Hindley either before her arrest or during her life in prison — usually fell on stony ground. For example, in her Open University degree graduation photograph, taken whilst she was incarcerated, she is smiling and has long brown hair (Stanford,2002). The major response to this was for some to object to the fact that she had been awarded a Humanities degree. *That photograph* remains dominant. A woman beyond redemption, an image that has become '*synonymous with the idea of feminine evil*' (Birch 1993, p. 42). In his novel, *Alma Cogan,* Gordon Burn (2011) describes the image and the audience relationship with it, thus:

> *Is it possible to discern evil, as many have supposed, in the cavernous upturned eyes, the pasty planes, the heavy bones, the holed head of bleached blonde fringe, the fondant of deep shadow…As usual Hindley looks like a composite, an identikit, a media emanation, a hypothetical who never existed in the flesh* (Burn 2011, pp. 93-94).

Conclusion

Storrs (2004) argues that even though there have been debates about the exact nature of their roles in the commission of the murders, in the public view it is Myra Hindley who has borne the burden of responsibility. If crimes are committed jointly, by men and women, it is the women who become the subject of the wider society's fascination and repulsion (Gavin 2009). The media and public treatment of Myra Hindley is an extreme example of this, both in the nature of her crimes and the fascination and repulsion that was generated. One factor in this wider fascination is the idea that it is rare for women to be involved in such crimes. An additional factor is that such women are doubly transgressive as they are considered to have offended against the biological essence of women's nature, to love and nurture children.

Women who commit such offences challenge deeply entrenched cultural notions of female passivity and nurture (Storrs 2004). Whatever the truth of Hindley's claims and Brady's counter-claims about the exact role she played in the Moors Murders, her prison letters reveal an intelligent woman (Cummins et al 2019). She was very aware that she had become a tabloid monster, icon of evil and that "*The tabloids have turned me into an industry" (The Guardian* 2000*).* She recognised that stories about her would increase newspaper circulation figures.

Her campaign for parole in effect led to the development of the whole life sentence. It also gave successive Home Secretaries the opportunity to prove that they were " tough" on crime and violent crime in particular (Schone,2000). She remained in prison long after she was deemed to pose any threat. Whenever the case was discussed, *that photograph* appeared, reiterating its importance in fixing a particular idea of Hindley and legitimizing the decision to keep her locked up. Here, it said, is a reminder of the face of evil and the things that this woman did in a particular place at a particular time. Public opinion and opposition to her release was a hugely significant factor in Hindley's continued incarceration. It cannot be denied that she was held hostage to public opinion (Stanford 2002). Brady never showed any remorse. He made it clear that he committed these horrendous crimes for his own personal gratification and would do so again. This, it can be argued, had a knock on effect for Hindley, overriding her attempts to reinvent herself as a reformed character. Clarke (2011), argues that the depiction of Hindley as *'evil'* was linked to her gender. However, this was further compounded by wider cultural developments. The use of *that photograph* made her the poster girl for two contemporary moral panics. The first is the "discovery" of the serial killer. As previously noted the term was not in common usage at the time of the Moors Murders but in retrospect Brady and Hindley have been termed as such, perhaps because they were the first serial killers in the modern TV age, and reporting of their crimes provided a template for reporting subsequent cases. Secondly, the 80s and 90s saw a recurrent interest in paedophiles, again rooted in the narrative of the '*evil'* and '*predatory'* outsider. In stark contrast to the evil, predatory male outsider, she was the evil predatory female insider, able to take children into her confidence because of her gender. The image of Hindley was subsumed into these two distinct but increasingly entwined

discourses— serial killer and paedophile. These combined with her gender to cement her extreme deviant status (Clarke 2011). This is a status that *that photograph* — taken at Hyde Police Station in October 1965 — has been used to emphasise since its first appearance. The creation of stock categories has been a key feature of the commodification of celebrity, creating a shorthand through which the public can easily recognize types and are aware of their expected reaction to them. *That photograph* is a cultural artefact which provides a perfect illustration of this process.

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