

Trial by Media, The Megaspectacle and the Competition of Narratives: The Framing of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial by *News24*

Kim Alexa Johnson

JHNKIM004

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts specialising in Media Theory and Practice.

Faculty of the Humanities

University of Cape Town

2015

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Acknowledgements

I arrived at the University of Cape Town in 2009 as a young teenager with dreams of becoming journalist. In my second year I realised that this was no longer my goal, and I suddenly found myself without a purpose. Luckily for me, early on in 2011, in my final year of undergraduate study I was introduced to Communications research and, specifically, the analysis of crime coverage. I developed an enthusiasm for research, and little did I know that 4 years later my passion would be a viable academic path that I would be pursuing.

Throughout my 4 years of postgraduate study in the Centre for Film and Media Studies, I have had the privilege of working with, and being taught by, many talented lecturers who have all contributed meaningfully to my education. However, I would to thank my supervisor, Dr Wallace Chuma, specifically, as he was the one who introduced me Communications research during my undergraduate study. I am so appreciative of all that he has taught me and for all of the academic support that he has provided me.

Finally, I would like to thank Chris, Chelsea and Soraya who have also been instrumental in me reaching this point. Whether it was answering my many emails, text messages and phone calls, or making sure that I stuck to my deadlines, they all played a key role in keeping my spirits high so that I had the confidence to keep on going – especially on the days the when the sheer volume of work seemed to overwhelm me. I am thankful for the roles that they assumed in different spheres of my life, especially over the last two years.

Finally, I would also like to acknowledge the National Research Foundation for giving me the opportunity to pursue my academic goals. Without the funding I have been granted, I would not have been able to reach this level of academic achievement.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	4
1.1. Introducing Oscar Pistorius	4
1.2. Background, Research Objectives and Relevance of the Research	5
1.3. (Media Coverage of) Crime in South Africa	9
1.4. Celebrity Crime Coverage	13
1.5. Conclusion	14
Chapter 2: Literature Review	15
2.1. News Narrative and Media Framing	15
2.2. Trial By Media	17
2.3. The Media Event and The Media Spectacle	19
2.3.1. The Media Event	20
2.3.2. The Media Spectacle	21
2.4. Conclusion	23
Chapter 3: Methodology	25
3.1. Overview	25
3.2. Discussion	25
3.3. Visual Representation of the Coding Schema	35
3.4. Conclusion	36
Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Discussion	37
4.1. Overview	37
4.2. Trial By Media	38
4.3. The Megaspectacle and the News Narrative	54
4.4. Conclusion	66
Chapter 5: Conclusion	67
References	72

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introducing Oscar Pistorius

In the early hours of 14 February 2013, the twittersphere erupted with the allegation that Oscar Pistorius, the Olympic and Paralympic athlete, had shot and killed his girlfriend of three months, Reeva Steenkamp. This story first appeared on the *Beeld* twitter account. This story was only confirmed by local print media such as the *Cape Argus* the following day, 15 February 2013, after his first court appearance during which he was charged with premeditated murder, a schedule 6 offence, according to South African law.

The commencement of the bail application was postponed by Chief Magistrate Desmond Nair on 15 February 2013, so as to consider an application made by the media to be granted leave to broadcast the court proceedings live. In Magistrate Nair's judgement, that was handed down at noon the same day, he ruled against the media's broadcast application. However, he conceded that only the live audio of the bail application judgement could be broadcast ("Oscar faces murder...", 2013: 1). Additionally, the media was allowed to photograph the accused only in the presence of Magistrate Nair before the commencement of court proceedings, and once it had concluded for the day. This was the first formal assertion, and acknowledgement, of the role the media was to play in the „staging“ of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial, with Pistorius cast as the protagonist and the media contingent as one of the antagonists of the narrative construction of this case. In an attempt to compensate for the lack of direct (live) media access to the proceedings, twitter was co-opted as the primary alternative news media platform. Journalists tweeted the live proceedings to their followers in order to provide mediated access to the proceedings. *News24* lead the twitter reports by compiling a transcribed „live report“ of the proceedings which would allow members of their audience an opportunity to follow a sequential account of the narrative. This was in addition to their usual journalistic reportage of the trial.

At the time of his arrest, and during his bail application which took place from 19 February 2013 to 22 February 2013, Pistorius maintained that he perceived that there was an intruder who had gained entry to his home (Vermaak *et al.*, 2013: 4). On 19 February 2013, his defence Advocate Barry Roux SC read out a sworn affidavit detailing Pistorius' account of what happened in the early hours of the morning in question. Pistorius submitted to the Pretoria Magistrate's Court that "[he is] acutely aware of violent crime being committed by

intruders entering homes with a view to commit crime, including violent crime... [Having] been a victim of violence and of burglary before” (Vermaak *et al.*, 2013: 4). It is for this reason that when he heard a noise in the bathroom, he felt “a sense of terror rushing over [him]”, and subsequently armed himself with his 9mm Parabellum firearm (Vermaak *et al.*, 2013: 4). He then entered the bathroom where the perceived threat was lurking, and upon hearing noise in the toilet cubicle, he fired at the closed bathroom door (Vermaak *et al.*, 2013: 4).

1.2. Background, Research Objectives and Relevance of the Research

At the time of the incident, the researcher was designing the methodology for a Master’s-level study that focused on the racialized and gendered coverage of crime in print media (namely the *Cape Argus*). Naturally, this raised several significant concerns regarding the integrity of the data that was to be gathered as this was a high-profile criminal case that was sure to dominate the news agenda. The decision to switch from an analysis of crime coverage to an analysis of trial coverage was dictated by the available data. Continuing, as planned, with an analysis of crime coverage would have produced skewed results and would have nonetheless turned into a trial analysis. It was also decided, at the time of the bail application, that the sample for the trial coverage analysis would be drawn from an online news source, namely *News24*, as this news organisation was at the forefront of news coverage during this time. Additionally, on a more anecdotal level, this is the primary news source that undergraduate Media Studies students at the University of Cape Town¹ consulted in order to initiate tutorial discussions of the bail application and the murder trial.

In preparation for the analysis of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial media coverage, the researcher conducted a pilot study of the bail application media coverage in which the notions of „trial by media“ and „the media spectacle“ were examined. Both overt and covert assertions of Pistorius“ guilt were identified in the coverage of the *Cape Argus*. It is owing to this that the first objective of the research is to evaluate whether or not the accused has been subjected to a „trial by media“ (lead by *News24*), and convicted in the court of public opinion, by examining the framing of the trial coverage. Such an analysis is necessary as it has been argued that the point at which law and the media intersect produces favourable results for both bodies. In other words, the media is able to assist the legal process and in the

¹ The researcher is an Education Development Teaching Assistant and Branding seminar leader in the Centre for Film and Media Studies at the University of Cape Town.

administration of justice (see Innes, 1999). Prior to the analysis of the bail application media coverage, the researcher endorsed this position. However, after investigating the conviction of Pistorius in the court of public opinion, based on information irrelevant not only to the case also but to the entire issue at hand, the researcher has departed from this notion. It is the argument of this dissertation that the law and the media should be kept distinct. An examination such as this is necessary as it draws attention to the role of the media in the coverage of high profile cases. The media is lauded as a watchdog of the state and various other societal bodies, but there is a fine line that is often crossed between providing requisite „information“ and engaging in destructive „gossip“. In many cases extra-judicial commentary is of a negative orientation, and is likely to tarnish the reputation of the accused unnecessarily especially if they are pronounced innocent in court. In many high profile court cases; such as that of Donovan Moodley², Fred van der Vyver³, Jacobus Eksteen⁴, Shrien Dewani⁵, and the upcoming trial of Christopher Panayiotou⁶; the accused was pronounced guilty in the court of public opinion without legal processes running their course. In some cases the media prediction was correct, but in others such as that of Fred van der Vyver and Shrien Dewani, the accused men were cleared/discharged of the charges. Furthermore, the notion of „trial by media“ can be compared to „mob justice“ wherein members of the public take the law into their own hands for little faith is placed in the bodies that are meant to provide protection, law and order. It is similar to an insurance policy, should court processes be deemed ineffective by the media (and the public). „Trial by media“ is a prime example of the balance that must be struck between freedom of the press (i.e. freedom of speech) and the right of an accused to a fair trial. In this regard, the media are limited by the rule of sub judice. According to Kobus van Rooyen (2014: 1), an Emeritus Professor of Law at the University of Pretoria, the rule of sub judice “prohibits the publication of some statements which relate to pending litigation” that could prejudice the outcome of the case. In the United States, this is of particular concern

² At his trial in 2005 Donovan Moodley pleaded guilty to the charges of rape, murder and extortion related to Leigh Matthews, a student at Bond University at the time of her death (2004). He was convicted of all three charges (Eliseev, 2005).

³ Fred van der Vyver was accused of murdering his girlfriend Inge Lotz, a student at Stellenbosch University, who was murdered on 16 March 2005. In 2007 he was acquitted of the charges (Dolley, 2013).

⁴ In 2012 Jacobus Eksteen was sentenced to 30 years in prison for the rape and murder of Erin van Rensburg in 2009 (Schroeder & Kinnear, 2012).

⁵ Shrien Dewani was accused of orchestrating his wife’s kidnapping and murder whilst they were on honeymoon in Cape Town in November 2010. In December 2014 he was discharged of all charges by Judge Jeanette Traverso who said that “the state’s evidence had “fallen far below” the level needed to secure a conviction.” (AFP, 2014)

⁶ In 2015, Christopher Panayiotou was accused of planning, and hiring men to execute, the kidnapping and murder of his wife Jayde (Sesant, 2015). The legal process is still in the beginning stages at the time of writing this chapter.

as they make use of a jury system. Even though a jury system is not employed in South Africa, discourse of the commentariat, and the public at large, could influence witness recollection of events and therefore their testimony. An understanding of the rule of sub judice, and its implications, is therefore imperative for journalistic practice. Furthermore, the research will consider the „demonization“ of Pistorius, or to quote June Steenkamp, the mother of the deceased, it will examine his transformation in the public domain “from hero to devil” (Ferreira, 2014). The demonization of Pistorius will be the point at which the notions of „trial by media“ and „the media spectacle“ intersect owing to the Manichean discourse both of these theories employ.

The second objective of the research endeavour is to examine the construction of the media spectacle in relation to the coverage of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial. Owing to the magnitude of the trial, it is necessary to examine the construction of this media event. According to Kellner (2003a: 1), the spectacle facilitates the increase in the power and profit of the media through its constant reproduction and its resulting commodification in the public domain. Most significantly, „the media spectacle“ will arrest public attention, and will dominate public discourse over lengthy periods of time, insofar as other issues of public concern are excluded from the news agenda (2003c: 93-96). By this stage, the media event is transformed into „the megaspectacle“.

In terms of the murder trial, the successful application to broadcast the trial further facilitated the construction of the megaspectacle. Not only were the local and international journalists covering the trial for purposes of print and online publication, but members of the public *en masse* were granted „less mediated“ access to court proceedings. At the time of the O.J. Simpson trial (1995), it was considered the „trial of the century“ owing to the live television broadcast of the proceedings. However, with the vast public interest in The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial, it has been described as the „trial of the century“ owing to the unprecedented access to information. Not only was the trial broadcast live on radio stations (such as *Cape Talk*) and on the South African cable television on the dedicated Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial Channel, but it was also streamed live to the world via several online news platforms including local news organisation *News24* and the *Telegraph* in the United Kingdom. Additionally, journalists in the courtroom were tweeting and blogging minute-by-minute updates of the court proceedings. To facilitate access, the Pretoria High Court had also arranged for an overflow court for journalists who were not granted seats in courtroom GD. This level of access is owed to the notion of „open justice“. In other words, justice must not

only be done but it should also be *seen* to be done. With such levels of access to information regarding the trial, it should necessitate divergence (or pluralism) in media content with specific regard to the framing of the case. However, owing to the scale of the trial, and the limited financial resources of news organisations, it is the objective of the research to investigate whether convergence amongst the media is an observable trend. Increasingly, media organisations rely on each other for news content, which is evidenced by the cross-referencing of other organisations' news content. Rivalry seems to be curtailed in favour of a more cooperative relationship.

Members of the audience are able to experience the denouement of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial, and it is from the idea of „narrative construction“ that the research partially draws its title. The „competition of narratives“ refers to the idea that the trial is about a rivalry between versions of events: Pistorius' version in opposition to that of the state. To this end, the fourth objective of the research is to investigate the competition between stories published by *News24*, with specific attention being awarded to the framing of the trial. With regard to this, the researcher anticipates that competition is significantly reduced as Pistorius is subjected to a trial by media in which he is convicted of premeditated murder. There is also a struggle for power on the news agenda that is two-fold: by the media asserting Pistorius' guilt, their narrative theme is that of „guilty until proven otherwise“; in opposition to the law which guarantees an accused the right to remain innocent until proven guilty. Finally, there is a struggle for stories to receive adequate attention on the news agenda and as a result, in order to be granted air-time, stories were linked to the murder trial either directly or indirectly. In order to provide further commentary on this issue, the research seeks to examine the progression of the narrative and its themes.

Furthermore, the media coverage of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial is worthy of investigation owing to its capacity to motivate members of the South African public to participate actively in public discussion. The coverage is actively involved in the communication of the „politics of the everyday“ which affects the lives of all South Africans at various levels (Wasserman, 2010). The case has highlighted the issues such as the fear of crime, racialization, domestic violence, politicisation and the notion of justice.

The Research Hypotheses:

H1: The accused was subjected by a trial by media in which he was convicted in the court of public opinion.

H2: In order to convict the accused in the court of public opinion, the media relied on official sources (high in the hierarchy of credibility), but specifically on the arguments of the prosecutor.

H3: Convergence was a notable trend in the media coverage of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial.

H4: The orientation of the coverage presented the trial as a „megaspectacle“ which elucidated societal issues which were previously lower on the public agenda.

H5: The orientation of the coverage played a significant role in the construction of the „megaspectacle“, and hereby the progression of the news narrative.

1.3. (Media Coverage of) Crime in South Africa

If violence is an emotive issue, it is also profoundly political because it goes to the heart of the social contract between the state and its citizenry. High levels of crime inevitably erode confidence in government.

(Altbeker, 2007: 65)

Crime is a cause for concern for many South Africans, for at some point in the lives of most citizens they have been victimised either directly, through robbery, hijacking etc., or vicariously, by knowing someone who has fallen victim to crime (cf. „vicarious victimisation“ as cited by Smolej & Kivivuori, 2006). Crime is also an issue that we confront daily, if not overtly then at a subconscious level. It is the guiding factor behind certain behaviours that are perceived as „normal“ from not leaving one’s personal belongings unattended to bolting doors shut at night. These behaviours are so deep-rooted that they are recognised as responsible social behaviours. This perspective is reflected and reinforced through quotidian interactions with the media and via personal interactions. These interactions add substance to what some

may deem vacuous responses to crime. Thus the notion of „vicarious victimisation“ is validated.

From copious amounts of reading and engaging with people on this very topic, the researcher is partial to the notion that perceptions of crime, and the fear thereof, are not anchored expressions that withstand the passing of time. Rather, these expressions are fluid and are susceptible to constant construction and reconstruction. Superficial reformations may take place during conversations, but engrained beliefs are altered over an extended period of time. Crime is the staple topic for most media houses worldwide, thus it is not a trend unique to South African journalism. It is a topic that seems to fascinate readers, if not from an information-seeking position, then out of curiosity.

Why is this so? Is it because they are thankful that they are not involved? Or is it because mental notes are being transcribed, to add to the dozens of notes that are already taking up room in collections of incidences that confirm the “[erosion] of confidence” (Altbeker, 2007: 65) in those who are meant to ensure societal safety? This confirmation bias is supported by subtle, or indeed overt, directions for the interpretation of the crime problem that will influence the news consumer (cf. media framing). It is arguable that this determination does not take place immediately, as there is insufficient evidence to support the direct media effects model. Instead, it is more accurate to suggest that cumulative exposure to the media, coupled with one’s personal circumstance, will affect one’s perception (and fear) of crime.

Across the literature the consensus is that the media produces a misleading portrayal of crime through its emphasis and omission of details, with particular reference to (individual) sensational crimes (Wright *et al.*, 1995; Sacco, 1995; Greer & McLaughlin, 2012). Prominence is awarded to serious violent, street crimes, whilst other non-violent, white-collar crimes are overlooked (Wright *et al.*, 1995; Sheley & Ashkins, 1981; Carroll *et al.*, 1986). There are several reasons for this phenomenon that are all related to the economic structure of media organisation. The media are a business that is therefore subject to the same conditions of the market just like any other corporation. It requires funds in order to thrive, and uses „appealing“ news coverage to attract readers and stakeholders as a result thereof. Crime coverage has become the staple of media coverage with several studies citing it as the primary topic of discussion that has been privileged over all other subject matter such as politics, health and education (Vinson & Ertter, 2002). In their work, Vinson and Ertter (2002: 81 & 82) assert that media coverage of the courts, particularly the reportage of

sensational cases involving celebrities are preferred owing to the entertainment value it offers members of the audience. Owing to the fact that media organisations are in competition to maintain their readership, they are compelled to provide their audience with what they *want* to know, as opposed to what they *need* to know. That is to say that the “commercially-motivated press [is to capitalize] on the insatiable public appetite for the sensational...” (Geragos, 2006: 1168). Oney (2004: 64) extends this to the “competitive spiral of sensationalism”, which highlights the competition amongst media organisations. Each story needs to be more sensational than the next in order for an organisation to be able to engage meaningfully with their competition. A means by which this enthusiasm for crime reportage is shaped is by the “personalisation of harm” (Wright *et al.*, 1995:22).

This subjective outlook is supported by the „objective“ crime statistics that are annually released by the South African Police Services. The researcher has deliberately created an entry point for doubt as it is well-known that the South African crime statistics are inaccurate for a variety of reasons including the fear of further victimisation which cautions victims against laying charges, police corruption and incompetent record-keeping. This is also one of the reasons why the victimisation survey has been implemented (Altbeker, 2007: 45). Triangulating the data is likely to yield a more accurate picture of the crime situation in South Africa. Nevertheless, the recent police statistics indicate that over the last four years (2011-2014) there has been an increase in total reported incidents of murder, specifically, 1459 cases (South African Police Service, 2014). Although this number is high, and there can be no set level of importance assigned to human life, it is importance to view this statistic in context as statistics are not as objective as they appear to be. This is a cautionary piece of advice that both Altbeker (2007) and Govender (2013) offer in their work. In his book, *A Country at War with Itself: South Africa's Crisis of Crime* Altbeker, acknowledges that the occurrence of crime is high in South Africa, and that the statistics fail to provide the qualitative interpretation regarding the pervasiveness of this issue. He entertains possibilities such as urbanisation and immigration, but perhaps the most intriguing is his invocation of the process of „social diffusion“ which is the outcome of certain economic difficulties in the country. This is the notion that people are born with similar values, such as holding human life in high regard and the understanding that theft is morally wrong. Altbeker (2007: 57-58) asserts that „social diffusion“ is characterised by a conditions that cause a shift in the way human beings apply their values –the values, at their core, remain the same.

Wiener & Bateman (2014: 452-454), in their book titled *Behind the Door: The Oscar Pistorius and Reeva Steenkamp Story*, employ the work of Gareth Newham who asserts that regardless of the what the statistics reflect “this fear [of crime] is entrenched... [even though] there’s a huge gap in the reality of one’s risk and the perception [thereof]...” More significant, perhaps, is the authors’ elucidation of the fear of crime:

It has many names. „The fear of the other“, „the imagined intruder“, „the invisible witness“. It is the faceless, nameless criminal without a conscience or a consequence who perpetrates the violent crimes that feature in the country’s media.

(Wiener & Bateman, 2014: 452)

This assertion is most definitely identifiable in the South African media. From previous research into the framing of crime in print media, the research indicated the emergence of *thecriminalblackman* (as coined by Russell, 1998; cited in Peterson & Krivo, 2005: 331). This is the notion that criminal activity is framed as a phenomenon unique to males of colour. It is this individual that readers are conditioned to fear. This notion has been extended by two journalists who have written specifically about the Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial, namely Nastasya Tay (2014) and Margie Orford (2014). Orford (2014) writes that,

This imaginary body, of the paranoid imaginings of suburban South Africa, has lurked like a bogeyman at the periphery of this story for the past year. It is the threatening body, nameless and faceless, of an armed and dangerous black intruder.

Tay (2014) takes the „stranger-danger“ notion even further and situates it in the sullied racialized past of South Africa. She asserts that this case is not only about gun violence in South Africa, and domestic violence. Instead, the very fibre of this incident is related to deeper issues such as race and class, of which gun violence and domestic violence are symptoms (2014). She invokes the notion of „*die swart gevaar*“, the perceived threat that black South Africans supposedly posed to white South Africans that the Apartheid government used as its mandate to perpetuate its racist regime (2014). This concept is used to situate Tay’s discussion of the narrative that has dominated public attention since 14 February 2013.

So deeply engrained in South African Society is this fear that the “imaginary intruder” appears as a recurring character in various accounts of violent crimes, even if its presence is entirely irrational.

(Tay, 2014)

Before commencing the analysis, attention must be awarded to the mode of news coverage of crime, and the definitive role that „celebrity“ plays in garnering (media) attention for such incidences, particularly in relation to The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial.

1.4. Celebrity Crime Coverage

One of the simplest ways in which the press may arrest public attention with regard to a crime is when it involves a well-known individual. “...celebrities who are at the centre of criminal trials attract an inordinate amount of media coverage that invariably affects public attitudes, beliefs and behaviour” (Furno-Lamude, 1999: 26). Many scholars will interpret the effect as being negative, but it cannot be disregarded that the celebrity may benefit from the (positive) public persona constructed by their engagement with the media prior to their transgression.

Weinberg (2012) in his conceptualisation of the theory of „Media Burn“ distinguishes between the terms „fame“ and „celebrity“ which are frequently used interchangeably, though he insists they are entirely different concepts. Generally, the adjectives „celebrity“ and „famous“ are used to characterise individuals who, through the course of their profession, have captured public attention owing to their impressive ability in their field. However, according to Conrad (1982) (as cited in Weinberg, 2012: 54) „fame“ is the resulting adoration owed to the artistry of an individual, whilst „celebrity“ has less to do with an individual’s capability, than their desire for recognition for the sake of admiration. In South Africa, however, the conflation of these terms appears to be more commonplace, with the only requirement being that an individual is visible in the public domain, hereby increasing the probability that members of the public will recognise them. Generally, South African celebrities are only nationally known. One of the few South African personalities who enjoyed worldwide fame is Oscar Pistorius, for both his athletic ability and his involvement in the death of his partner, Reeva Steenkamp.

In many instances celebrity personalities are elevated to role model status, and are awarded great levels of influence amongst their followers. This is evidenced by the copious amounts of endorsement deals awarded to sportsmen such as Tiger Woods, Wayne Rooney and indeed Oscar Pistorius. Following this element of the discussion it is conceivable that when these individuals display deviant behaviours the public will maintain, if not increase, their level of curiosity in the lives of the „celebrities“ they assisted in constructing. For example when Tiger Woods was involved in a sex scandal in 2009, and subsequently Wayne Rooney’s sex scandal in 2010, the audience was privy to the transformation of their public persona. These individuals transitioned from being famous, to being heroes, then celebrities (along with all the ensuing attention and preferential treatment), to being demonised by the press. It is this transformation to which members of the audience are attracted. This sequence is also identifiable in the case of Oscar Pistorius. The media constructs these individuals, only to lead the disassembling of their public profile. Once their image is tainted it is difficult to restore; “thus we could say their “media burns” are permanent scars” (Weinberg, 2012: 55).

1.5. Conclusion

The key elements of the preceding discussion are the pervasiveness of crime in South Africa, the patterns in crime coverage and fear that biased coverage rouses in news consumers. It is argued that the cumulative exposure to crime coverage continuously alters news consumers’ interpretive framework. Related to the discussion of crime is the issue of race and gender, which is significant in the South African context, owing to its Apartheid history. Furthermore, the notions of „trial by media“ and „the media spectacle“ will be examined. As a case study that will elucidate the arguments outlined above, the research will analyse the Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial coverage published by *News24*, an online news organisation. Furthermore, the notion of „media burn“ was introduced to describe the tarnishing of a public figure’s image in the process of achieving media justice, otherwise known as „trial by media“. In Chapter 2, a comprehensive theoretical framework for the study will be provided.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. News Narrative and Media Framing

When relaying a news story, journalists make use of preconceived narrative formulae, well as the interpretive schemas of their audience (Johnson-Cartee, 2005; Fulton, 2005). This results in news standardisation and reduces the potential for a diverse array of constructions of an issue to form part of public discourse (Fulton, 2005: 220). The result thereof is narrative repetition, which builds certain expectations of the narrative. Consequently, the acknowledgement of these narrative patterns raises questions considering the notion of objectivity and truth. Is the public receiving a truthful, objective account of events? Or are the facts of the matter being spun, and restructured to suit a more exciting version that will entice the news consumer to „keep coming back for more“? The most dependable response to these questions would be somewhere in the middle of these polarizations. We are neither receiving a completely objective account, nor are we being deceived. The narrative is subjected to particular framing techniques so as to produce a particular version of reality which is not necessarily a lie, but is rather an alternate construction (cf. media framing and Robert Entman, 1993).

Another important element is the attribution of „truth“ to an occurrence through the use of sources. Of course, some sources are more reliable, and more desirable, than others. The hierarchy of credibility, as conceptualised by Becker (1967), dictates that there is a ranking system with regard to individuals who are consulted for commentary, expert or otherwise, regarding issues of public interest (Reich, 2011). More formal, superordinate sources, such as the police and representatives of organisations, are prioritised over informal, subordinate sources (Becker, 1967: 240). The superordinate sources are awarded greater definitional power as a direct result of their position at the top of the top of the hierarchy (Greer & McLaughlin, 2011: 25). This is, evidently, an avenue that is open to abuse, for the media may then be used as a tool to spread propaganda. As Yoon (2005: 283 in Reich, 2011: 51) states, “source credibility may be defined as a person’s believability as a source of information or as the degree to which information from a source is perceived as accurate, fair, unbiased, and trustworthy”. However, this hierarchy is not necessarily based on truth, credibility and objectivity alone, but can be used to foreground individual agendas and alliances. Once again, the notions of „truth“ and „objectivity“ are subject to interrogation.

Related to the discussion of truth and objectivity is the mechanism by which these notions can be constructed and deconstructed, namely media framing. According to Entman, “to frame is to *select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation*” (1993: 52; *italics in original*). Even subtle changes to a frame can result in a shift in opinion (Chong & Druckman, 2007: 104). This definition suggests that framing is a “process” rather than an isolated act (Benford & Snow, 2000; Simon & Xenos, 2000; de Vreese, 2005). Therefore the collective effort results in more than the sum of its individual parts.

This process is often examined in terms of its undesirable uses, specifically with regard to bias and misrepresentation of people, parties and events (e.g. Entman, 2007). Very few research endeavours are dedicated to the positive attributes of this technique. The first conceptualisation of what has come to be known as „media framing“ was developed by Goffman in 1974 (cited in Simon & Xenos, 2000; Benford & Snow, 2000; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Goffman asserted that „frames“ are a “schemata of interpretation” which assist individuals in making sense of the world (1974: 21 in Simon & Xenos, 2000: 366). However, from an analysis of the scholarly work that employs Goffman’s theory, it would appear that the development of “schemata of interpretation” occurs long before individuals encounter media framing. Nelson *et al.* (1997: 225; *italics in original*) assert this reading of the literature by asserting that “frames operate by activating information *already at the recipient’s disposal*, stored in long-term memory”. This, however, could also be a disadvantage as familiarity with a particular frame could potentially desensitise the audience hereby rendering them less affected than originally conceived.

Frames are either of a specific or a general orientation that simplifies and “thematizes” issues so as to facilitate the comprehension of an issue (Simon & Xenos, 2000: 367). More often than not, media framing functions to produce bias. Entman (2007: 164 & 163) even goes so far as to assert that framing is a type of bias of which there are three kinds: Distortion bias relates to the deliberate misrepresentation or falsification of events; content bias occurs by awarding preferentiality to one element of an issue over another; and decision-making bias raises attention to the partial decisions of journalists when discussing a particular issue (i.e. what information to include and to exclude; whether to include a photograph to accompany the text or not etc.).

2.2. Trial By Media

The term „trial by media“ describes a situation in which the press prejudges the outcome of a trial, sometimes even before the trial has commenced, and without any formal, and admissible, evidence being lead in court. Although „trial by media“ is the most widely used term for this spectacle, and generally refers to sensationalised prejudicial coverage relating to an accused, other terms that are used to indicate a more sinister explanation of the coverage of trials include „media justice“ and „media lynching“. „Media justice“ (Machado & Santos, 2009; Greer & McLaughlin, 2012) is a term associated with what comes to resemble a form of social justice that runs parallel to the societal system of justice; whereas „media lynching“(Oney, 2004) is a form of extra-legal punishment at the hands the media that can lead to more than just a negative public perception. The intensity and ferocity of the coverage can therefore be accurately summed up as a form of „attack journalism“ (Greer & McLaughlin, 2011; 2012).

“„Trial by media“ typically occurs when someone is facing emotionally charged allegations” (Aoun, 2005: 189), or when the case presents a set of peculiar circumstances in which the illegal activity took place (Lim, 2012: 4). This is exemplified by the case of Oscar Pistorius who was accused of the premeditated murder of Reeva Steenkamp, his girlfriend of 3 months, whom he shot through a locked toilet door in the early hours of Valentine’s Day morning in 2013. Greer & McLaughlin (2011: 27) take their definition of „trial by media“ a step further in stating that it is an “... impact-driven, news media-led process by which individuals – who may or may not be publically known – are tried and sentenced in the „court of public opinion“. They assert that although targets of such journalistic attacks are usually celebrities or well-known individuals, unknown „everyday“ persons may also be subjected to scrutiny and conviction should they have deviated from the commonly accepted notion of morality, and particularly if they are found to have circumvented being brought to justice (Greer & McLaughlin, 2011: 27). Celebrities who are observed as behaving as though they are above the law are targeted by the media prior to the trial, during the proceedings, and once their trial has concluded (Greer & McLaughlin, 2012: 397). It is almost as though the constant media attention is a precautionary measure so that an accused is punished in the event that the court delivers a judgement contrary to public opinion. The public humiliation of “24-7 news” (2011; 2012) would make it very difficult for the accused to lead any semblance of a normal life post-trial, to the extent that it would amount to the same social isolation and social ostracisation that would accompany a custodial sentence.

Many scholars have examined the notion of trial by media from a variety of variety of perspectives that include the legal debates of pre-trial coverage and the media construction of trials. Some of the discussions address issues of jury bias (Shaffer, 1986; Wright & Dente Ross, 1997; Geragos, 2006); the effect on the judicial process when inadmissible evidence is presented in the public domain (Dreschel, 1989; Potter, 2011); the fluidity of the notion of justice in light of press involvement in a trial (Schneider, 2006; Smolkin, 2007; Gildersleeve, 2009); and the construction of public drama (Machado & Santos, 2009; Miller & Sack, 2010). Although the debate is comprehensive there is very little, if any, deviation with regard to the following characteristics that underpin almost every discussion on the matter.

(a) Every individual that is accused of a crime has the right to a fair trial, and the press should be free of outside interference. Both of these values are important in the maintenance of a functioning democratic state. In light of this, these principles should be balanced (Carroll *et al.*, 1986; Shaffer, 1986; Wright & Dente Ross, 1997; Geragos, 2006; Resta, 2008). However, there seems to be a battle for supremacy between these two democratic principles. Resta (2008: 33) asserts that the law and the media are two systems of communication which appear to run parallel to each other as they cannot interact successfully. “Media interference” (Resta, 2008: 34) compromises the right to a fair trial, as a result of “... incomplete knowledge, or a misunderstanding, of the facts and issues in [a] case” that are widely publicised (Potter, 2011: 2). Legal cases do not necessarily have to be sensational in order to attract media coverage, although the most sensational parts of a trial are exploited to their full potential when the opportunity presents itself, in an attempt to extend the lifecycle of a story. According to Geragos (2006: 1172 & 1173), when “the exercise of one right threatens to interfere or actually interferes with another”, there are legitimate situations when the balance tips in favour of “freedom of expression [giving] way to other fundamental principles”. He notes that this course of action is undesirable, and that the only viable solution to avoid undemocratic restrictive press laws is for the media to engage in responsible self-regulation that curbs irresponsible, prejudicial discursive practices (2006: 1167). Without this mechanism, “[trial by the media] amounts to a public execution in the „society of the spectacle“ (Debord, 1967 in Greer &McLaughlin, 2011: 27).

(b) There is a link between pre-trial and trial coverage of a matter and (jury) bias against an accused (Shaffer, 1986; Dreschel, 1989; Wright & Dente Ross, 1997; Geragos, 2006). Extensive research was conducted for the purpose of this section of the literature review. Of an examination of thirty scholarly articles, only two articles argued that media coverage of a

trial does not necessarily bias the proceedings against an accused and, instead, the coverage can assist the defence case (Brown *et al.*, 1997; Waterhouse-Watson, 2009). Other articles also asserted that media coverage is not necessarily a burden on the judicial process and can safeguard the fairness of a trial (Innes, 1999; Geragos, 2006; Lim, 2012). „Attention decrement“ (Shaffer, 1986: 158), a result of saturation reportage, is characterised by bombarding the audience with volumes of information, regarding a crime and the investigation thereof, often without any informed explanation (Wright & Dente Ross, 1997: 398). It is arguable that saturation reportage is the modus operandi used by the press to conceal their framing of a case, as the overall sentiment of the framing is obscured in the volume of coverage. At face value, the coverage appears balanced or neutral. Only upon detailed enquiry of the corpus of the coverage will the framing of the trial become readily apparent (Johnson, 2013). An expected consequence of the persistent pursuit of an accused is that the media frenzy becomes legitimised by the pack. That is to say that “there is always safety in numbers”, as “we all want to find ourselves on the right side of the moral divide, the marketplace has to be able to make some hard choices – like whether to lead or to follow” (Aoun, 2005: 188). In other words, the unrelenting biased trial coverage remains unchallenged when saturation reportage is practiced by news organisations as a collective.

2.3. The Media Event and The Media Spectacle

Before expounding the notion of „the media spectacle“, which at an elementary level can be described as a transformation of an occurrence into a phenomenon, one must consider the genesis of such a sensation: The media event. The literature has a tendency to launch into a discussion of „the spectacle“ without contemplating how it came to be such an integral and influential component of social consciousness. The literature gives the impression that the spectacle is simply „there“ or it is not. It does not consider that there are certain criteria that must be satisfied, so that a foundation is laid upon which media events may morph into something larger, and more spectacular, than a media event. By this, it is meant that the spectacle is constituted by a continuous sequence of events, over a period of time, as opposed to an isolated event, that stands alone, and that takes place at a time that usually is known to media producers. The primary difference between „the media event“ and „the media spectacle“, therefore, is that the event can be interpreted in isolation to other content. It is self-contained. There are few inter-related nuances with other content that need to be considered prior to offering a reading of the event. The spectacle, on the other hand, by its

very nature demands that attention be paid to the context, and to the sequence, of content over a period of time so that an accurate reading of its orientation and its effect can be argued. Douglas Kellner (2009) a media spectacle specialist has attempted to ignite this dimension of discussion in his paper *Media Spectacle and Media Events: Some Critical Reflections*. This, however, is the only scholarly article that has attempted to do so. The remainder of this discussion will reflect on the theory of each notion in isolation, but it will also consider the interrelatedness of „the media event“ and „the media spectacle“, so that this offering may narrow the fissure in the literature that is clearly evident, but is so often ignored.

2.3.1. The Media Event

In their seminal book titled *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History*, Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz (1992) theorise what has been termed „media events“. From the outset it is evident that their models of media events apply to televised occurrences. “This book is about the festive viewing of television. It is about those historic occasions – mostly occasions of state – that are televised as they take place and transfix a nation or the world” (1992: 1). From this, a description of media events is evident. Events are “performative” (Katz & Liebes, 2007: 158) and “transformative” (Dayan & Katz, 1992: 147). It is also asserted that an event “explains the meanings of the symbols of the occasion” (1992: 8). This is a euphemistic statement to veil the fact that events are imbued with particular ideological and hegemonic meanings which undoubtedly influence the audience, given the immense degree of authority held by the media and therefore their definitional power.

Dayan & Katz (1992: 1-9) propose several principles that serve to identify a media event. The primary condition is that it disturbs the daily routine of both the media producer and the media consumer. It is an occurrence that is attention-arresting, and cannot be ignored by either party. As a result thereof, the interruption will dominate public attention as a result of the vast media coverage awarded to the incident. Most importantly, according to the authors’ model of a media event, the event will be televised live to a national and international audience. Furthermore, the media cannot exert any control over the event, and is forced to take a more passive role in the organisation thereof. The authors assert that these events are “organised outside the media” (1992: 5). There is also a certain degree of preparation that is involved. That is to say that although the events are arranged by other bodies and panels, such as the International Olympic Committee (the Olympics) and The Academy (the Oscars), the media

also prepares for the coverage of this event. For example: Camera positioning, correspondent placement, time of live cross-over to a journalist etc. Finally, the coverage will exude a reconciliatory element, and will thrill an audience.

Katz & Liebes (2007) address critiques of the Dayan & Katz (1992) model with regard to the fact that it does not make room for events that “shock the world” (2007: 158) and are therefore unforeseen and unplanned. They assert that such events are of a different genre to media events (2007: 158). Indeed this is true, but it has been acknowledged by Dayan & Katz (1992) in the very first chapter titled *Defining Media Events*. The criticism of this model is therefore unwarranted. They propose that events that are unexpected, and that are often introduced as interruptions to on-going coverage, should be termed „news events“. „Media events“, on the other hand, are planned and tend to be of a ceremonial nature (1992: 9).

2.3.2. The Media Spectacle

„The media spectacle“ was first theorised by Guy Debord, a French Marxist theorist, in his book *La Société du Spectacle* in 1967. According to Debord (1967: Section 1), “the whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles”. The spectacle is a means of unification, as it is the part of society where all attention meets (1967: Section 3).

Douglas Kellner is the most influential academic researching „the media spectacle“ and his work largely remains unchallenged. Kellner’s research illustrates the application of this theory to a variety of subject matter ranging from celebrity and popular culture to American Politics and war. As a result of his dominance in this area of research, this section of the review will focus on his work. This is not a personal choice, but is rather a condition imposed based on the availability of literature in this field of study.

A media spectacle is an organising principle of society, and of daily life that has the potential to increase the potential for the media’s financial gain as a result of competition between media organisations (Kellner, 2003; 2008; 2009). Owing to such high levels of competition, the corporate media is forced to engage in this rivalry in any manner that yields prolonged and continuous interest from the audience. More often than not, this encourages a more tabloidised and sensationalised style of news coverage (Kellner, 2008; 2009). Spectacles

yield great financial returns as well as ideological and definitional power for news organisations.

From a reading of the literature, there are several characteristics by which a media spectacle may be identified. To begin, the spectacle is an “event that [is] out of the ordinary, habitual, daily routine which become special media events... [and] are highly public social events” (Kellner, 2008: 19). The spectacle is constituted “the moment when the consumption has attained total occupation of the social life” (Debord, 1967: section 42). To be clear, the spectacle begins when a media event or a news event displays total command of public attention for extended periods of time (Kellner, 2003a; 2003c; 2004). Often, public interest in a spectacle such as The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial extends beyond national borders and reaches an international audience. This gives rise to what Lilley (1999: 162) terms „the global village“, “in which people, though physically separated, experience an important event together.”

The complete attention of the public can be achieved in a variety of ways, with the primary tool being the involvement of a celebrity or a well-known individual. Such examples include O.J. Simpson, Oscar Pistorius or the President of South Africa. However, it is important to note that spectacles can also construct celebrities, whereby previously unknown individuals are awarded great public visibility. An example of this is Shrien Dewani, a wealthy British businessman, who was accused of orchestrating the murder of his wife whilst they were on honeymoon in Cape Town. Friends and family of an accused or a victim are also easy targets of the celebrity phenomenon. Since the incident on 14 February 2013, Aimée Pistorius, Carl Pistorius and indeed the whole Pistorius family have been awarded greater visibility within the public domain, whereas previously they were largely anonymous. Shortly after the death of Reeva Steenkamp, her friend Gina Myers was listed as a “celebrity makeup artist” in a local tabloid magazine.

Media spectacles produce copious amounts of public discourse of a positive, negative, and reflective orientation. However, the undesirable discourse tends to override affirmative contributions as a result of public appetite for drama (Kellner, 2004; Cockley, 2009;). Public discourse often elevates the individual concerned to super-human status. They are seemingly larger than life (Kellner, 2007; 2010). Or, as Kellner explains it in his paper titled *The Sports Spectacle, Michael Jordan and Nike*, the individual becomes a “commodity superstar [...] of the first rank” (2003b: 63) or a “media extravaganza of the highest order (2003b: 64). The use

of Manichean discourse is one of the significant elements of the spectacle (Kellner, 2004; 2007). Binary oppositions; such „us“ versus „them“; „good“ versus „bad“; „guilty“ versus „not guilty“; are powerful rhetorical strategies by which to influence the audience’s reading of an event. These constructs will also reinforce the elevation of an individual into a Herculean individual (2007: 11).

One of the most significant consequences of the spectacle is that it highlights issues that were previously obscured in the public domain, or that have not been on the agenda (Kellner, 2003a; 2005; 2010; Lilley, 1999). For example the Charlie Hebdo massacre and the subsequent killings around Paris (7-10 January 2015) reiterated the issue of Islamic tension with the West; it ignited the discussion of anti-Semitism; and also emphasized the issue of freedom of speech. Inasmuch as the spectacle can be used to a positive end, it can also be manipulated to spread a particular political agenda (Kellner, 2009; 2010).

In line with the work of Kellner, regarding the inter-relatedness of media events⁷ and media spectacles, the researcher asserts the notion that spectacles should be viewed on a spectrum: There are different sizes of spectacles – some are larger than others. The sustenance for spectacles comes in the form of (mini) events, which frame a particular reading of an event and build the overall spectacle (Kellner, 2005: 7). It is thus important that the theory of both concepts is considered so that it is discernible how they inform each other. It is pointless simply theorising the spectacle without considering the media event, as much of the literature has done. The spectacle is a multimedia series of events that take place over a period of time. The longer the period of time, the more likely it is that the spectacle will “come to define entire periods of culture and politics” (Kellner, 2003c: 93), thus promoting it to the level of the megaspectacle.

2.4. Conclusion

The review of the literature focused on 3 elements of the theoretical framework necessary for the comprehension of the research endeavour. The importance of narrative and, more specifically, the news narrative was foregrounded so as to lay the foundation for the introduction of media framing theory. Media framing theory is of vital importance to the research endeavour as it provides the interpretative framework for the media construction of

⁷ Kellner uses this term rather loosely compared to Dayan & Katz (1992). He does not make a distinction between media events and news events. Therefore, it is concluded that these terms are used interchangeably.

The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial. To assist the analysis of the framing of the trial, media convergence and source hierarchy, amongst other techniques, were emphasised. As the research is also concerned with the construction of „the media spectacle“, the literature review presented a discussion thereof from its genesis (as a media event) to „the megaspectacle“. This was put forward as the literature is limited in this regard. It presents „the spectacle“ from the point at which it exists – it does not discuss how it comes in to existence. This can pose a significant amount of confusion for scholars who study media events and media spectacles in isolation, instead of the point at which they coincide. This, evidently, is a limitation of the manner in which the literature discusses these concepts.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Overview

After much consideration, and following systematic sampling recommendations, the decision was taken to sample texts from the *News24* website. The other news source that was considered was *City Press* but based on reasons to be discussed below, *News24* was deemed most appropriate to suit the research purposes of this study. To that end, the methodology and theoretical framework to support the selection will be presented in this chapter. Each selection will be discussed in relation to the theory concerning the quantitative and qualitative research traditions, as well as sampling rules that have been followed and coding guidelines that have been developed. Finally, the complete coding schema will be presented in a visual format so as to facilitate the cohesion of this chapter with the data presentation and discussion chapter that is to follow.

3.2. Discussion

The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial was originally scheduled to take place from 3 March to 20 March 2014. However, it only concluded on 21 October 2014 - more than 7 months after it had commenced. The decision was taken to draw a sample from both the *News24* and *City Press* websites from a week prior to the start of the trial (Sunday 23 February 2014) until the day that Pistorius had been sentenced (Tuesday 21 October 2014). Both samples were drawn, and the details logged in an excel spread sheet, so that the decision of which news organisation to select could be made depending on the availability and volume of data (as a result of the extent of the trial coverage).

The beginning sampling date is significant as an application was brought to the court by the media for permission to broadcast the trial live for the duration of the proceedings. Prior to 23 February 2014 there had been „chatter“ about the upcoming „trial of the century“, but this soon transformed into full-blown news coverage and discussion when the broadcast application was made. This, in effect, catapulted the public into a debate about the murder trial. It is for this reason that the researcher selected Sunday 23 February 2014 to mark the start of the sampling period. Although the media coverage relating to Oscar Pistorius did not conclude on the day that he was admitted to Kgosi Mampuru II as an inmate, it was decided that the sampling should end on 21 October 2014 as the trial and sentencing procedures had

concluded. It has been well publicised that the prosecution has contested the ruling and sentencing of the trial, and this obviously relates to the trial, but at some point sampling had to end in order to maintain the required scope of the research. Furthermore, the research could not continue longitudinally, as a single researcher could not manage the size of such a research project.

At the beginning of the trial, the publications for potential inclusion in the sample population were considered. The pilot study was conducted using news content from print media, namely the *Cape Argus*. However, after observing the manner in which online media was utilised during the bail application period, by both the media practitioners and news consumers, it was clear that online news publications would be the leading news producers during the trial period. Many readers, in search of the latest information, as well as for reasons of convenience, rapidity and accuracy, used the internet as their primary means of access to information. These reasons were asserted by students in the tutorial groups hosted by the researcher. Additionally, these notions were reasserted in 2015 during discussions about the bail application period and the trial period during a third year seminar hosted by the researcher who is a tutor in the Centre for Film and Media Studies at the University of Cape Town. Of course, this is not a rigorous approach to sampling, but it offered support to the suspicions of the researcher, and it served as an indicator that online media was an appropriate focus of the research.

The counter-argument of exclusion could be raised in relation to the choice of online media, given the significant obstacle it poses to many South Africans who cannot afford the data costs incurred when surfing the internet, or indeed the devices required in order to do so. Admittedly, this was also one of the reasons the pilot study focused on print media. According to the 2013 General Household Survey published on 18 June 2014 by Statistics South Africa, only “40.9% of South African households had at least one member who had access to, or used, the internet either at home, work, place of study or internet cafés.” However, Goldstuck (2014) emphasises that if only one individual per household has access to the internet, the number of individuals who have access therefore drastically reduces. It is clear that only certain individuals have online access, and others do not (approximately 59% of South Africans). Of those who have internet access, 30.8% access the internet via mobile devices (Statistics South Africa, 2014) which are costly and unpredictable modes of access (Goldstuck, 2014).

The data collected from the sample was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative research instruments - content analysis and thematic (content) analysis respectively. Quantitative analysis is described in the literature as being an intransigent tool which enables the researcher to predict future phenomena and allows the findings of the study to be generalised to a wider population (Cochran & Dolan, 1984; Hansen *et al.*, 1998; Tewksbury, 2009). As a result of this rigidity, the reliability and the validity of studies are safeguarded (Lombard *et al.*, 2002; Wigston, 2009; Wimmer & Dominick, 2010). As a point of departure for the discussion Kassarjian (1977: 8), Deacon *et al.* (1999: 115), Lombard *et al.* (2002: 588) and Wigston (2009: 5) state Berelson's (1952) definition of content analysis: "Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication." Neuendorf's (2002: 10) definition, however, is the most complete explanation of content analysis that the literature has to offer. "Content analysis is a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method, including attention to objectivity/inter-subjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing. It is not limited as to the types of messages that may be analysed, nor as to the types of variables that might be measured" (cited in Neuendorf, 2011: 277). These definitions highlight 3 characteristics of this method which should be observed at all points of the research process: (a) objectivity, (b) systematism, which will result in (c) numerical values that will respond to the research objectives.

To satisfy the requirement of objectivity, the coder should reject all subjective explanations of the data and should rely on the coding instruction with which they have been furnished by the head researcher. In the case of the researcher, a detailed coding manual containing the coding rules was utilised throughout the coding process. This ensured that "the researcher's personal idiosyncrasies and biases [did] not enter into the findings" (Wimmer & Dominick, 2010: 157). Of course, the issue of interpretation has been discussed at length in the literature as it is one of the leading causes of compromised research findings. It is argued that interpretation should be abandoned so as to ensure that the research is actually reflective of the phenomenon as it occurs in context. However, this issue is highly problematic as interpretation constantly takes place during the research process. Can the habitual tendency to interpret information be restrained? The answer is "no". Interpretation takes place at all times during the research process, from the literature that is read in order to structure a theoretical framework, to the coding of content into individual categories and the interpretation of the

statistical data. It has been argued that this could introduce a highly subjective element to the research process, and could introduce great discord with regard to the reliability of the data. This is not necessarily the case, however. If the coding instructions are detailed enough (i.e. systematic) the subjectively derived judgements can be objectively influenced by the coding rules (Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999: 266 in Lombard *et al.* 2002: 589). In other words, a different route (thought process) is taken, but the result (coding choice) remains consistent. „Systematism“, as with „objectivity“, shields the numerical reliability and validity of the numerical outcome of the analysis.

In research texts specifically orientated towards the field of Media Studies, content analysis is generally viewed as a more deductive approach that allows the researcher to test the knowledge gained through qualitative enquiry (an inductive approach). Qualitative research is seen as an exploratory form of research that produces foundational knowledge (i.e. theory) which is then confirmed via quantitative instruments (Chesebro & Borisoff, 2007; Tewksbury, 2009). Similarly, Bradley (1993: 438) asserts that qualitative research promotes discovery, whilst quantitative approaches test the existing body of knowledge. It is for this reason that methodological triangulation is a recommendation that this study will follow. Using this technique, the weaknesses of one method are neutralized by the strengths of another (Jick, 1979). To that end, thematic (content) analysis will be used in addition to quantitative content analysis as these instruments examine the construction of meaning at different levels. Thematic analysis investigates latent meaning “within texts”, whilst content analysis only has the potential to quantify surface-level, readily apparent messages “across texts” (Graber, 1989 in Deacon *et al.*, 1999: 117). Using these two methodologies together will allow for a more holistic understanding of the phenomena under study. After all, numerical values have very little meaning without contextualisation and description.

Thus qualitative research is useful as it allows for deeper exploration of the phenomena under study. Whilst quantitative analysis is able to quantify manifest meanings in texts that are detached from their context, qualitative analysis grants the researcher entry to a plethora of meanings that cannot be accessed nor comprehended by way of quantifications alone. Many scholars have emphasised the value of qualitative research endeavours (Bradley, 1993; Schilling, 2006; Chesebro & Borisoff, 2007; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). It is arguable that although qualitative research is often criticised for being flexible and for relying on interpretation, these characteristics are also an asset to the research process as a deeper level of discovery is enabled. As long as the four criteria for trustworthiness, namely credibility;

transferability; dependability; and confirmability, are satisfied (Bradley, 1993: 436), there is no reason to doubt the validity and reliability of data that has been produced in such a manner.

As previously indicated, *News24* and *City Press* were the only two news sources that were considered for inclusion in the sample. There were a variety of arguments to take into account for the inclusion of either one of these news publications. Although *City Press* takes more of an investigative approach to their news coverage, and this would yield interesting research findings, *News24* was selected owing to its prominence in the online domain during the trial period. This online news source provided „up-to-the-minute“ trial coverage in the form of „As it Happened“ articles which collated tweets from journalists who were present in the courtroom. This allowed for news consumers to keep track of the events taking place if they were unable to watch the live coverage. There were also constant news updates throughout each trial day. Not a single detail, minor or otherwise, was left unpublished. This is evidenced by the large size of the population of texts that was drawn from 23 February 2014 to 21 October 2014, namely 1167 articles. This is compared the 307 news items in the population of texts drawn from the *City Press* website during the same period. It was also decided that a larger sample would provide the researcher with more data to sample from, which would yield more detailed findings. The argument for conducting a census on the *City Press* articles, compared to analysing a systematic sample was considered. However, the prominence of *News24* during this time could not be ignored, as this particular news source is held in high esteem by many South Africans.

In order to limit the size of the sample, and to obtain a representative sample of texts, the systematic sampling technique was used. Terre Blanche *et al.* (2008: 132) draw the researcher's attention to the distinction that is made between the „population“ of texts and the „sampling frame“. “The population as an abstract category... is the larger pool from which our sampling elements are drawn”, whilst the sampling frame is “the actual form in which the population becomes accessible to us” (2008: 132). In other words, the „population“ of texts is what should theoretically be available to the researcher, and the „sampling frame“ is the means by which the sample becomes available for study (2008: 132). Furthermore, Terre Blanche *et al.* (2008: 132) assert that, in practice, the researcher will rarely have complete access to a population of texts, and will rely on a sampling frame. In the case of this research project, the sample frame was obtained via manual collection as there was no computer programme or database that could mine the data automatically. The researcher made sure that

this process was rigorous. The search term used to sample the texts was “Oscar Pistorius”. This search term was deemed adequate as the name of the accused was employed in every context that allowed for it. In other words, it was a very popular term and was, in all probability, highly likely to collect all data necessary for the project. The researcher considered conducting an additional search using “Reeva Steenkamp” as a search term, as in previous papers she asserted that the importance of the deceased has been demoted in favour of that of the accused owing to his celebrity status. Understandably, the researcher did not want to be accused of the same thing. Furthermore, this decision was reinforced by the finding that Oscar Pistorius was mentioned 5790 times during the sample, whilst Reeva Steenkamp was only referenced 1789 times. This phenomenon, along with the time constraints and scope of this study, lead the researcher to decide against a second search for news content.

In total, it took three weeks to capture 1474 articles retrospectively from the *News24* and *City Press* websites. The metadata⁸ was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet, and the actual articles were copied and pasted into a Microsoft Word document as a precaution, should the news organisation have removed the articles from the internet. This did not occur, however. Even though every precaution was taken to maintain the integrity of the sample, Deacon *et al.* (1999: 42) insists that “some degree of sample error is unavoidable”, and this is echoed in the work of Wimmer and Dominick (2010: 88). The authors then take this further in differentiating between two types of error, namely „sampling error“ and „non-sampling error“ (2010: 88). „Sampling error“ relates to miscalculations of the sample size, poor selection of the population, whilst „non-sampling error“ covers issues such as poor data interpretation and the credibility of sources (2010:88).

The consensus amongst scholars is that the larger the sample, the more likely it is that it will be representative of the phenomenon under study (Deacon *et al.*, 1999). Therefore it is advised that the sample “should be sufficiently [large] so that the phenomenon under study has enough time to occur” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2010: 161). As Krippendorff (2004: 122) explains, the size of the sample is guided by the notion that if the textual units needed to answer a research question are rare, the sample must be larger than when these units are in abundance. This assertion is guided by the argument that sampling theory is concerned with representation (Krippendorff, 2013: 114). “The sample drawn from a population [should

⁸ The metadata recorded consisted of the URL of the article, the title of the article, the date and time it was published, and what type of content it included (e.g. video, photo, text).

have] the same distributional properties as the population [under study]” (2013: 114). In this statement, Krippendorff (2013:114) cautions the researcher against the occurrence of sampling bias which is inevitable should he/she not devise an adequate “sampling plan”. This is reinforced by the work of Holsti (1969: 3-5 cited in Wigston, 2009: 6) in which he states that quantitative content analysis should uphold the values of objectivity, systematism which would safeguard generality (objectivity).

The size of the sample that was taken from *News24* was not a predetermined rule, for the size should be based on variables such as the orientation of the project; the purpose of the project; the time constraints placed on the project; and the number of articles the researcher deems necessary to preserve the reliability of the research findings (Wimmer & Dominick, 2010: 102). The size of this sample was determined by drawing a comparison between the sampling frames chosen by the researcher that were applied to the two publications that were considered for analysis. These sampling frames were further limited based on the type of content that was published in these articles. Owing to the multimodal orientation of online news, the content on the *News24* website is routinely made up of textual, visual, and aural components. This makes the coding process rather complex as this research endeavour is not concerned with a multimodal analysis of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial. This research project is a textual analysis of the news coverage provided by *News24*. This, however, this does not mean that the visual and aural components of the article (specifically videos) will not be considered in the process of coding the data.

Other content that was restricted from the sample included „As It Happened“/ „AS IT HAPPENED“ and „in court – day...“ articles. These articles became very popular during the murder trial as they were minute-by-minute updates (collections of tweets) covering what was taking place. This was a very useful resource for members of the public who were unable to watch the live coverage. Items labelled „As it Happened“ or „Live Updates“ were excluded from the sample as they are problematic to code. This is not due to the brevity of tweets, consisting of only 140 characters, but rather owing to the fact that there are multiple authors constructing a narrative that does not necessarily progress in a linear manner. Each tweet is subject to its own framing and to its own agenda. In addition to this, minor information such as the advocates talking to each other in court was also tweeted. Coding such an item as a whole would be irresponsible, and coding each and every tweet from a day in court would not only be tedious, but it would not add significantly to the discovery of substantial findings (in this case scenario). An examination of „As It Happened“/ „AS IT HAPPENED“ or „Live

Updates“ articles would be an interesting research endeavour on their own merit. Articles labelled as „In Court – Day ...“ were also excluded from the sample as they are photo galleries of the day’s events before court, during the adjournments, and after the day’s proceedings had ended.

Although this research endeavour focuses on a textual analysis, it allows for video content to be considered provided there is a textual accompaniment to the item. This was decided for several reasons: Videos offer a verbal explanation as opposed to a visual indication where many different deductions can be made. Videos are often used in these articles specifically to continue the narrative, or are embedded within the news narrative. This is not to say that photos do not hold a narrative function. Instead, it is asserted that discerning their function is more challenging than taking verbal cues (from the news reader) such as facial expressions and intonation. The interpretation will also be guided by the text accompanying the video. Photographs simply introduce greater subjectivity into the process of interpretation than audio and textual content. Summary videos also hold a very special place in the news narrative as they are often used as „quick (5 minute) fixes“ for those who have missed the trial events of the day, or for those who ignored other news content owing to their fixation on the trial. Furthermore, any articles with „multimedia“ cited in the URL were excluded from the sample as this label signalled the articles that were photo galleries of the events of the day.

Methodologically speaking, great caution was taken in the sampling process and in the exclusions of the relevant articles. However, the idea of error must be entertained on both the part of the researcher (with regard to the exclusions) and *News24* (in the labelling of the articles in the URL). As far as possible, the labelling trends of *News24* were noted and have been used in the restrictions applied to the sample so that the final sample accurately reflects that which should be considered for examination. However, the descriptive measures of *News24* could have changed without the researcher identifying this change. Should this occur, it would be considered an anomaly and would be excluded from the analysis. These anomalies would not be substituted with other articles. Substituting anomalies with other articles could introduce bias into the sample. This would raise questions regarding how these substitutions are selected.

To ascertain the number of articles necessary for analysis, Terre Blanche *et al.* (2008: 134) indicates that “a sampling ratio ... of about 30% is required for small populations of approximately 1000.” Furthermore, the authors proceed to explain that as the sampling ratio

decreases as the size of the population increases (2008: 134). After the relevant articles were excluded from the sampling frame it reduced by 94 articles to 1073. The researcher decided that a third of the articles (33%) would be the ideal number:

$$33/100 \times 1073 = 354 \text{ articles}$$

A sample of 354 articles was deemed adequate to imbue the study with validity and reliability as it is a larger sample than would have been analysed, had *City Press* content been examined. (After the restrictions in content were applied to the *City Press* sample, the final sample size was 289 articles). Additionally, a sampling interval had to be determined. A sampling interval is “a fixed distance [k] between elements” (Terre Blanche *et al.*, (2008: 135). To determine (k), the size of the sampling frame/population (N) is divided by the number of articles to be included in the study (the sample of articles is also referred to as (n)) (2008:135):

$$1073/354 = 3.03 \text{ (therefore every 3}^{\text{rd}} \text{ article will be sampled)}$$

According to Deacon *et al.* (1999: 46), to eliminate further bias, a number is selected between 1 and the value that is determined after doing the above calculation. For purposes of this endeavour the number 3 has been chosen as a point of departure. Thereafter, as $k=3$, every 3rd article will be sampled. Systematic sampling draws its strength from the fact that it is considered a form of probability sampling. Probability sampling methods are often considered the most reliable methods of sampling as they tend to eliminate much of the researcher’s predispositions to certain types of content that could reinforce their hypotheses. There are formal calculations that must be adhered to in the sampling process, and these reinforce the notion of transparency and replicability that is advocated by the literature when discussing reliability and validity of research. “The key component of probability sampling is the... idea that each element in a sample frame should have a known, calculable chance of being included into the sample” (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2008: 135). This has little to do with being fair-minded, and is in line with searching for a representative sample of texts (2008: 135).

For the convenience of the reader, the coding schema that was employed in the research process has been presented graphically in the section below. Although researchers recommend that only 10-20 coding categories be used, it also recommends that there should rather be more coding categories than fewer, as certain types of information can easily be

absorbed into one category during the data interpretation process. In the case of this research endeavour, certain categories confirm the existence of others, and others serve to assist in the identification of the item (such as the date).

Note on the coding process after it had been concluded:

It is important to note that during the coding process, 6 anomalies were discovered owing to poor labelling of the URL. This means that **the sample size was reduced to 348 news items**. This does not pose a threat to the reliability and the validity of the inferences drawn from the data. If these 6 articles were removed from the sample prior to the coding process, resulting in 1067 news items (and not 1073 items), 348 items accounts for 32% of the sample, and the sampling interval (k) remains at 3. In addition to this, a sample of 348 news items is still within the range of being a third of the sample, and is sufficiently large enough to produce accurate findings regarding the phenomena under study.

3.3. Visual Representation of the Coding Schema

DATE	HEADLINE	FRAMING OF HEADLINE	THEME OF HEADLINE	FRAMING OF TEXT
For purposes of identification.	For purposes of identification.	Positive; negative; neutral?	e.g. unintentional; intentional; negligent; neutral.	Positive; negative; neutral?

THEME OF TEXT	WHOSE POSITION?	PISTORIUS REFERENCES	TYPE OF PISTORIUS REFERENCES	STEENKAMP P REFERENCE S:	TYPE OF STEENKAMP REFERENCES
e.g. unintentional; intentional; negligent; neutral	Prosecution; defence; media; none.	Number.	In terms of sporting abilities; by his name; using legal terminology („the accused“).	Number.	In terms of her personal accomplishments (i.e. law degree); career (i.e. being a model).

PRIMARY/SECONDARY	ROUX REFERENCES:	TYPE OF ROUX REFERENCES	NEL REFERENCES:	TYPE OF NEL REFERENCES
Pistorius/ Steenkamp.	Number.	By name; nickname; legal talent; professional.	Number.	By name; nickname; legal talent; professional.

SOURCES:	TYPE OF SOURCES	SPECIFIC SOURCES:	CROSS-REFERENCING	CROSS-REFERENCED
Number.	Official versus unofficial, or none.	Legal experts, family members etc.	Other organisations.	Specific news organisations.

VIDEO FOOTAGE?	VIDEO FOOTAGE OF WHOM?	TYPE OF ARTICLE
Yes/ no?	Journalist; experts etc.	Hard news/ feature/ opinion editorial?

3.4. Conclusion

The discussion of the methodology employed by this research endeavour indicated that the data would be both quantitatively and qualitatively analysed, in keeping with the recommendation of methodological triangulation (Jick, 1979). The sample of texts was drawn from the *News24* website from 23 February 2014 to 21 October 2014, using the search term “Oscar Pistorius”. The sample was selected using the systematic sampling method, with a sampling interval of 3. This produced 348 news items for the analysis, which will be explicated in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Discussion

4.1. Overview

This study has yielded interesting findings in response to the research objectives and hypotheses. The most anticipated finding that is likely to attract the attention of the reader is the fact that Oscar Pistorius was unquestionably subjected to a trial by media in which he was convicted (and sentenced) in the court of public opinion. This trial played out in the media, with *News24* substituting as the judiciary. Throughout the analysis there was a reliance on official sources, in addition to a dependence on wire services, namely the South African Press Association (SAPA). Some scholars advocate this as media convergence – an expected, contemporary, feature of news production. In opposition to this, although this is expected in the age of “24-7 news” (Greer & McLaughlin, 2011; 2012), the researcher argues that it is a contributing factor to the dearth of pluralism. This is to say that it limits the possibility of competing ideas being disseminated in the public domain. This furthers the assertion of the researcher that the law and the media should be kept separate, at least until a successful balance between freedom of speech and the right of an accused to a fair trial can be reached.

The trial by media of Oscar Pistorius lent velocity to the ensuing megaspectacle which highlighted many issues in the public domain, some of which were already high on the news agenda. Such issues include crime, fear of crime and domestic violence. Furthermore, the spectacle of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial functioned as a donor media event from which other issues could draw sustenance. In colloquial terms, this is a form of „riding on the coattails“ of the trial. Issues such as these included (celebrity) justice and the practice of politicisation.

With regard to the competition of narratives, two overarching narratives guided the news coverage of the trial: „Guilty“ and „Not Guilty“. The scale of the trial in relation to other issues, dominated the news agenda as a whole. This is why the only way certain issues could gain air-time, was to be attached to The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial in some way, however loose this relation may be. Nonetheless, one cannot ignore the fact that although prejudicial coverage dominated throughout the trial and sentencing periods, there was some opposition to the primary narrative of „guilty until proven innocent“.

An analysis of the framing of the trial also produced fascinating and unanticipated findings, and certainly results that had not been encountered in the literature. Specifically, this included

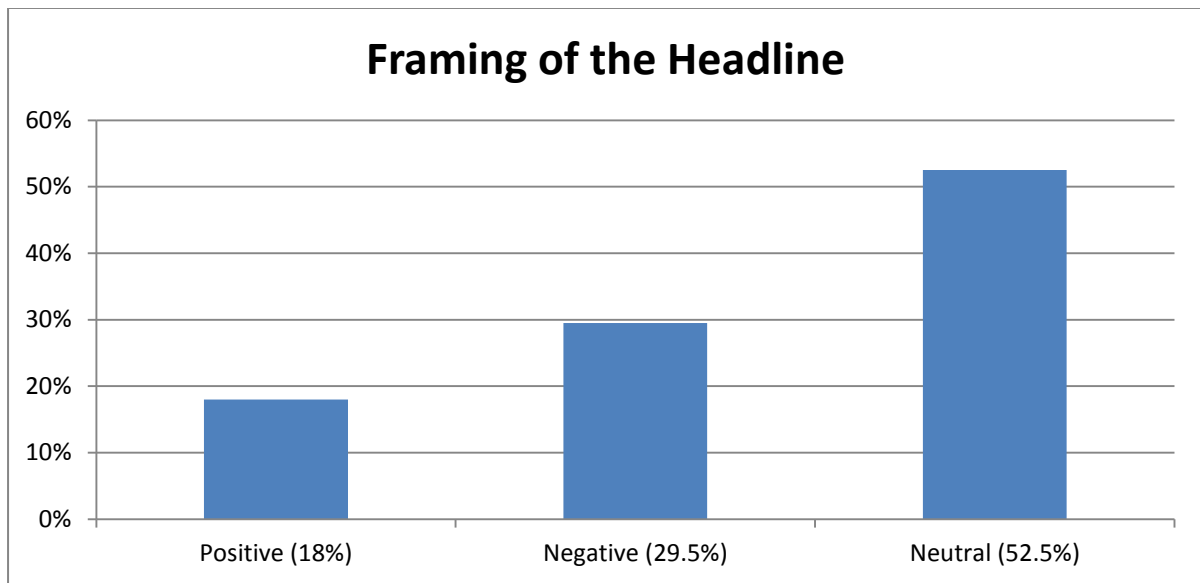
the introduction of doubt which was not strong enough to constitute a counter-frame, but nevertheless „planted the seed“ of doubt. The researcher termed this technique „embedded tagging“. Similarly, the introduction of innocence was also utilised. This, however, was not as prevalent as the introduction of doubt which speaks to Pistorius“ conviction in the court of public opinion.

Before the presentation and analysis of the research findings commences, it must be asserted that although the literature discusses the notions of „trial by media“, „the media spectacle“ and „news narrative“ in isolation, the research findings lend support to the view that these three models are interlinked and form a symbiotic, mutually reinforcing relationship. Although these concepts are distinct and have their own theoretical grounding, coupled with the fact that they will be discussed in separate sections of this chapter, they are not to be perceived as completely distinct and unrelated. This will be made clear throughout the remainder of this chapter.

4.2. Trial By Media

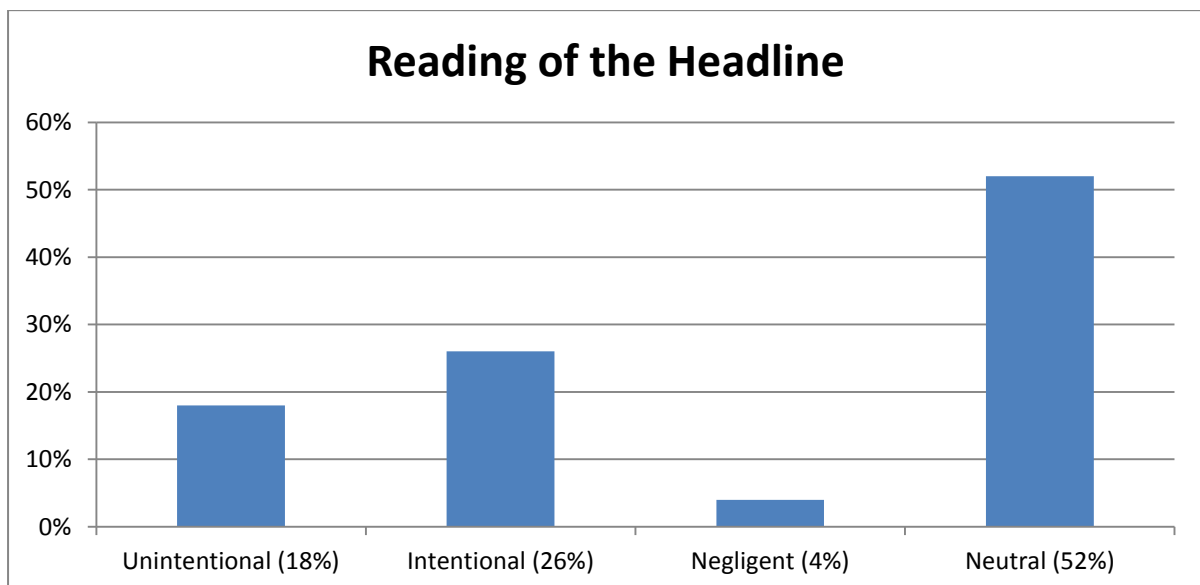
From the beginning of *News24*“s trial coverage, the framing of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial was made abundantly clear: he was guilty. This was based on the selection of evidence presented in the coverage, and on the arguments foregrounded by Advocate Gerrie Nel. Oscar Pistorius was convicted and sentenced in the court of public opinion, sanctioned by *News24*. The first hypothesis (H1) was evidenced by the qualitative and the quantitative analysis of the data. This, however, would not be the conclusion that one would draw upon looking at the quantitative findings regarding the framing of the headline of the articles and the reading of the articles. The researcher specifically coded the framing of the headline and the text separately, as misleading the reader (or „window-dressing“) is a common tactic that news organisations employ in order to conceal their framing strategies.

Figure 1



⁹Figure 1 indicates the framing of the headlines of the stories in the sample. From these numbers, one can conclude that 52.5% of the headlines were neutral in orientation, whilst 29.5% were negative (a form of bias against the accused), and 18% of the headlines were positive (a form on bias in favour of Pistorius). However, further analysis of the headline allowed for a „reading“/assessment of the headline to be drawn regarding the assertions made in the headline.

Figure 2



⁹ In figure 1, n= 348.

¹⁰Figure 2 depicts the data drawn from an analysis of the reading of the headline. Most noticeably, the majority of the content (52%) did not advance a particular conclusion and was coded as „neutral“. 26% of the headlines asserted that the incident was intentional (i.e. asserting that Pistorius is guilty of pre-meditated murder), and 18% of the headlines opposed this reading in favour of the accused’s version that the incident was unintentional (i.e. asserting that the accused is innocent and/or the incident was a tragic mistake). Only 4% of the headlines asserted that negligence resulted in the death of Reeva Steenkamp. Most notably, the assertions of negligence only appeared in the headlines on 11 September 2014 once the accused was found not guilty of murder, and guilty of culpable homicide.

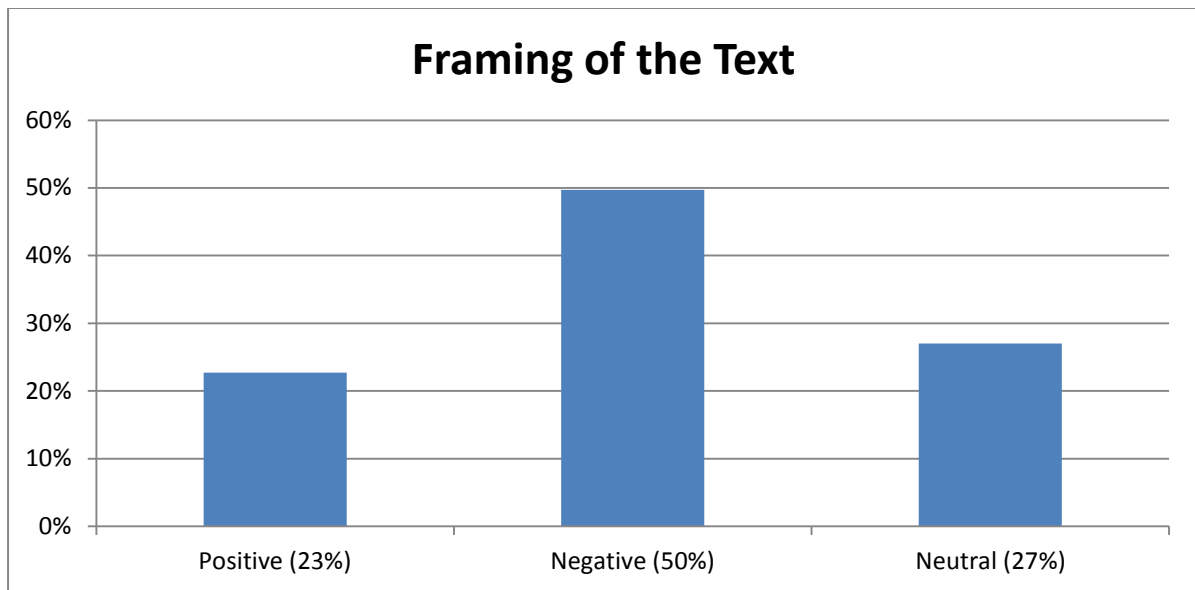
Upon analysing these numbers, the assumption could easily be made that the content of the text would follow similar framing patterns. There are three explanations that guide this assumption: (a) headlines are meant to reflect the content of articles, (b) they are also meant to guide our interpretation of the article (as framing begins as early as the headline), and (c) news organisations are meant to put forward content that is free of prejudice. For these reasons, it is not unreasonable to think that the neutrality of the headline would extend to the framing of the article. And yet, this is not the case.

As ¹¹figure 3 indicates, the framing of the text is overwhelmingly negative (50%). This is far removed from the framing of the headline of which 52% is neutral. The framing appears to shift and form the inverse of each code. This lends even more support to the façade of neutrality that *News24* has constructed, especially since there is a 1 in 2 chance that readers will encounter coverage prejudicial to the accused. On average, if every second story is framed negatively (i.e. against the accused) it is possible that readers are more likely to internalise the negative coverage as Kellner (2004) and Cockley (2009) assert that undesirable discourse tends to override alternate views owing to the public appetite for dramatic news content.

¹⁰ In figure 2, n= 348.

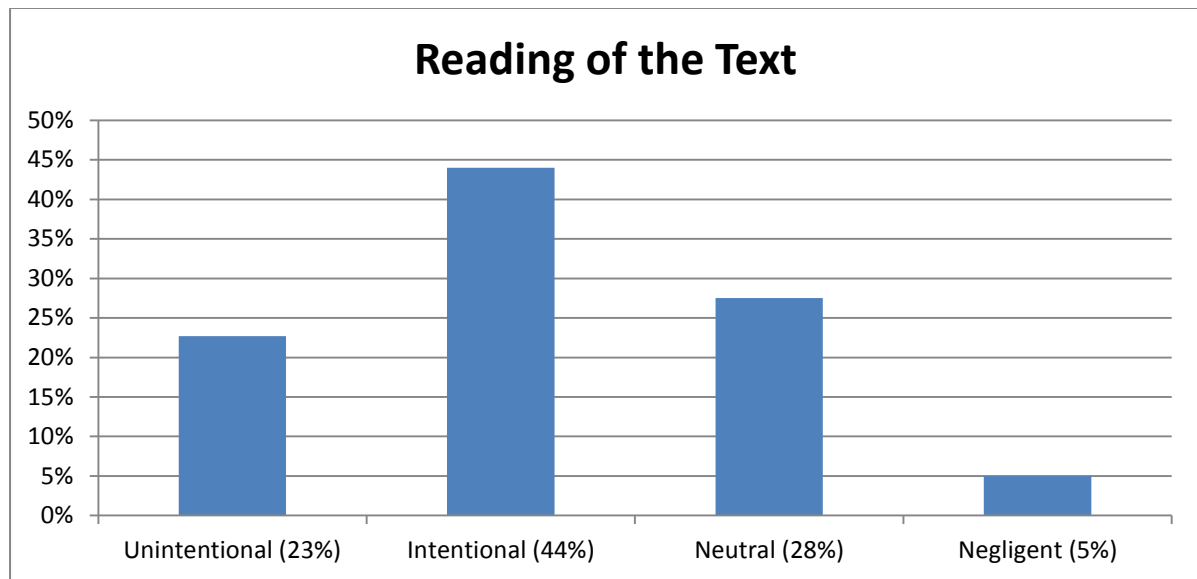
¹¹ In figure 3, n= 348.

Figure 3



Furthermore, only 27% of the sample of texts was neutral in orientation, whilst 23% of the texts were framed positively. These findings are significant as they illustrate the extent to which *News24* published prejudicial content against Pistorius. There are a variety of reasons for going this route: (a) entertainment keeps the audience interested in reading the content that a news organisation provides, (b) in order to compete with other news organisations who are advancing prejudicial (and entertaining) coverage, a news organisation needs to engage in the same practices, and (c) it is arguable that the audience did want to consider an alternate point of view, and as a result *News24* „gave the audience what they wanted“. However, the validity of the final argument would depend on whether or a researcher aligns with the notion that news organisations reflect what occurs in society, or whether or not they construct phenomena that are not necessarily evident in society. The position of the researcher is that news organisations engage in both practices. News organisations reflect what is taking place in society, but their construction thereof can be misguided and skewed (for reasons such as (a) and (b) listed above).

Figure 4



As is depicted in ¹²figure 4, 44% of the coverage advanced the assertion that Oscar Pistorius was guilty of premeditated murder of Reeva Steenkamp. It is interesting to note that more neutrally-framed stories were presented (28%) than stories that presented a counter-frame, namely one that favoured the accused (23%). On 11 September 2014, stories which advocated that negligence was involved in the death of Steenkamp were introduced. This is why only 5% of the textual readings were coded as negligent.

From a qualitative analysis of the sample, there were countless techniques by which *News24*'s coverage of the trial produced a negative problem definition (Entman, 1993). To begin this discussion, a very important discovery was made regarding the framing of the trial. The researcher has labelled this finding as a form of „false logic“ is employed in order to produce “a particular problem definition, causal interpretation [and] moral evaluation” (Entman, 1993: 52). In terms of this study, „false logic“ is defined as the flawed logic employed by entertainment/ infotainment. The „logic“ is deemed“ flawed as it misguidedly draws conclusions from information that does not lend itself to such conclusions. False logic is not something that readers are usually aware of as they are slowly drawn in to this way of thinking. This goes back to media effects debates regarding direct effects and cumulative effects of media exposure. The researcher aligns herself with the latter argument regarding media effects debates. Of course news consumers are not passive members of an audience who willingly accepting all that the media disseminates. However, after continued exposure

¹² In figure 4, n = 348.

to this type of coverage, they slowly start to accept the logic presented to them. The news consumer is often unaware of this, and it is a result of the definitional power that media organisations, especially *News24*, are awarded by members of the public who look to be informed about matters of public interest. The process of „accepting“ this false logic is much like a seduction. After time, and within the right context, readers abandon objective reason and adopt a different form of reasoning, if only for this particular discussion (i.e. The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial). This is similar to the “dance-party chain reaction” that Altbeker (2007: 113) describes in his book *A Country At War With Itself: South Africa’s Crisis of Crime*. “Once it gets going, it sustains itself” (2007: 113). In this situation “it” [the chain reaction] begins when people apply their logic/values differently, depending on the situation at hand (2007: 57).

Furthermore, „false logic“ manifests in two forms: ignoring other possible interpretations of information, and/or drawing conclusions that could not possibly be made given the evidence that has been presented. To demonstrate this, the example of Oscar Pistorius“ internet connection on the night of the incident will be used. In the story titled *Oscar’s browser history revealed*, it discusses the fact that porn sites were searched from a device owned by Pistorius. However, it is not expressed as such:

According to the time next to the history, Pistorius searched the porn website at 18:30 on 13 February 2013. After that, the iPad was used to browse auto trader, used car websites and to search for cars, including the Ford Ranger and Aston Martin Rapide R.

(“Oscar’s browser history...”, 2014)

In this extract, *News24* is clearly overlooking the possibility that Reeva Steenkamp could have been the one who had searched those sites, considering that her enthusiasm for cars was discussed in court¹³. There is no way of knowing who was using the iPad at the time. Similarly, the article titled *Pistorius used phone hour before Reeva's death* (2014) is equally as negligent, as even the headline attributes the action of using the phone to Pistorius when no-one, not even an IT specialist, is able to make that deduction.

¹³ During Oscar Pistorius“ testimony, he testified that one of the things that he and Reeva Steenkamp had in common was an enthusiasm for cars.

In relation to this „false logic“ is the use of character evidence (as presented by the *News24*) and biased assertions put forward by *News24* journalists. The types of character evidence presented include Pistorius“ relationship with his ex-girlfriend Samantha Taylor, the fact that he is enthusiastic about guns, and the actions of the members of the Pistorius family. To introduce these issues, consider the following quote (transcribed by the researcher) from a video update by Sipho Hlongwane, a *News24* correspondent for The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial:

*Whether the state is going to try to prove character flaws... and **therefore** (emphasis in original) **have premeditated murder... or you know, therefore have premeditated murder that way...** The picture that they“re trying to create of Oscar **explain certain parts of Valentine’s Day morning...** We“re not sure yet, but we“re definitely getting the picture of a **not very nice human being. He’s not the golden boy** that we believed he was before he shot his girlfriend.*

(Hlongwane, 2014a; **bold my emphasis**)

This statement was made with reference to the discussion of Pistorius“ relationships with Samantha Taylor and Reeva Steenkamp. In the article titled *Ex: Oscar doesn't scream like a woman* (2014), Taylor testified that the accused had shouted at her in the past. She also testified about him shooting through the sunroof of a car (which is one of the other charges that he faced). Furthermore, *News24* also chose to focus on the accused“s love of guns and his use of black talon ammunition which, as Prof Gert Saayman testified, are “expanding bullets designed to cause maximum tissue damage” (“Pathologist to continue...”, 2014). Pistorius“ purchase of several more guns prior to the death of Steenkamp was also discussed in court. The article *Pistorius planned to buy more guns – dealer* (2014), discussed the fact that Pistorius had ordered 6 more guns, one of which is “a rifle or carbine vector LM6... [which is] a civilian version of the semi-automatic assault rifle that South Africa“s police or military use.

These examples illustrate the second manner in which false logic manifests in the *News24* trial coverage. Simply because the accused shouted at his girlfriend; and enjoys buying, collecting, and shooting guns, does not mean that he is guilty of premeditated murder. It does not serve as „evidence“ for this charge even though this is the case in the court of public

opinion. These incidences do not form substantial or logical proof to substantiate such a charge, yet the media employs them as such. The figurative picture of which Hlongwane (2014a) speaks *does not* “explain certain parts of Valentine’s Day morning”, nor can “we have premeditated murder that way”. Simply because Taylor stated that the accused has shouted at her before does not necessarily mean that he was arguing with Steenkamp before he shot her. Certainly, this information paints a different picture than we usually consume about Oscar Pistorius, but it must be made clear that although there may be a link between his actions in the past and his actions on 14 February 2014, objectively speaking, correlation does not imply causation. This level of objective thought, however, would not accord with the subjective system of false logic employed by *News24*, that plays to the emotions and taste for drama of the audience (Kellner, 2004; Cockley, 2009). Going even further than this, is *News24*’s coverage of the rest of the Pistorius family (namely Carl Pistorius). In early August 2014, the brother of the accused was involved in a car accident. At the end of the article in which his recovery is discussed it states the following:

[Carl] Pistorius was acquitted in May last year of culpable homicide and reckless driving over a fatal crash in 2008 in which his vehicle collided with a motorbike driven by a woman who died in hospital a few days later.

(“Carl Pistorius makes...”, 2014)

There is no other reason to conclude the article in such a manner, citing charges of which he was “acquitted”, other than to remind the reader of the Pistorius family conduct. There is a clear purpose behind its inclusion on the news agenda, save for the fact that the Pistorius family was being monitored very closely during this time. It serves as a form of character evidence. The sentiment is that the Pistorius family behaves in a manner contrary to socially and legally accepted norms; „therefore“ Oscar Pistorius is guilty of premeditated murder.

The text messages sent by Steenkamp were also used as key sources of evidence indicating the circumstances of her relationship with the accused. As will be discussed later in the chapter, the *News24* coverage relied heavily on the assertions of Advocate Gerrie Nel. Just as Nel used these text messages as key evidence in his argument for premeditated murder, so too did *News24*. In the article titled *I’m scared of you sometimes – Reeva* (2014), *News24* published the following:

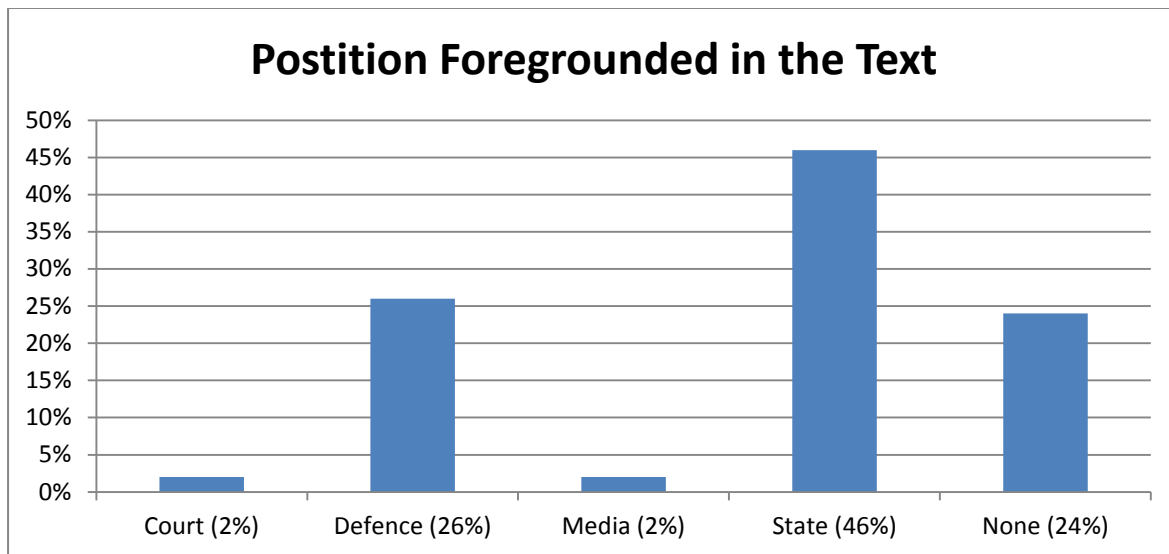
"You have picked on me excessively... I do everything to make you happy and you do everything to throw tantrums [...] I'm scared of you sometimes and how you snap at me and how you react to me," Steenkamp said in a message after the athlete thought she had flirted with another man, the court heard.

In response to this testimony, Hlongwane (2014b) wrote an article which is considerably negative towards the accused, and leads the reader to a particular interpretation of the events of the day.

If the State will contend that Pistorius was a jealous and angry lover, prone to outbursts and bouts of rage that frightened his girlfriend, it's all there in the messages [...] But it's pretty damning stuff. It was as if Steenkamp was speaking from the grave. [...] But he's sitting in court for killing her, and such exercises are placing a certain context on the incident [...] Together with the screaming that the neighbours are certain they heard, it is not implausible (at the moment) to fit the evidence to the reason why the State is arguing for murder."

It should be left up to the reader whether or not the information is "damning" or not. The readers should be left to decide whether or not to consider these text messages in the formation of their opinion of the case. They should not be led by a journalist. Moreover these text messages do not necessarily contextualise the incident. Once again, this evidences false logic. These texts may be entirely unrelated to what happened on 14 February 2013. We do not know, and it is not for anyone (but members of the judiciary) to decide.

Figure 5



¹⁴Figure 5 demonstrates the positions from which the coverage of *News24* was discussed, and provides evidence that begins to respond to the second hypothesis (H2) of this research endeavour. *News24* relied significantly on the arguments of the state (in 46% of the articles) in order to convict Pistorius in the court of public opinion. There is a 20% difference in the coverage from the position of the defence, compared to that of the state, which is significant from a quantitative, but also from a qualitative perspective in terms of what Nel was quoted as having said in court. Advocate Gerrie Nel was quoted on issues such as Pistorius' self-serving personality, and his refusal to take responsibility for what he has done as is evidenced by the article titled *Oscar an egotistical liar – Nel* (2014). Nel was also quoted when he asserted that Pistorius' version of events was a fabrication: "Your version is so improbable that nobody would think it is reasonably or possibly true" ("Oscar's version not...", 2014). "Nel said Steenkamp had run to the toilet, and Pistorius armed himself with the sole purpose of killing her" ("State wraps up...", 2014). In very few cases was the defence's position foregrounded as an alternate point of view. In instances when it was the focus of the article (26%), it was tainted by the introduction of doubt.

The findings for the analysis of the framing also highlighted a phenomenon that the researcher has not encountered in the literature or in her previous research: the introduction of doubt. The introduction of doubt does not constitute a strong enough counter-frame in order to alter the overall frame that is being employed in a news article. All it serves to do is to

¹⁴ In figure 5, n= 348.

plant the seed of doubt of doubt in the minds of the readers. The introduction of doubt is affected by what the researcher has termed „embedded tagging“. It is also notable that it is not only doubt that was introduced via embedded tagging. Views in favour of the accused were also manifested via this technique, albeit infrequently. Embedded tagging is manifested by way of the following patterns:

Figure 6

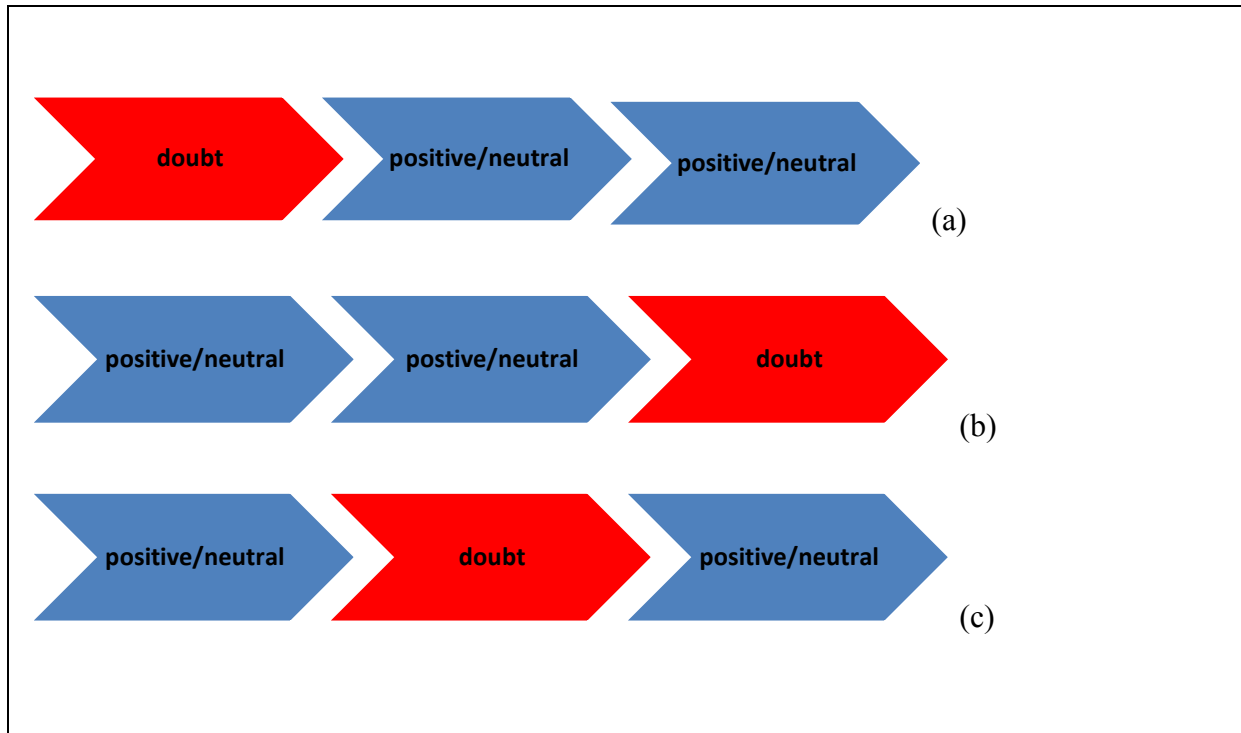
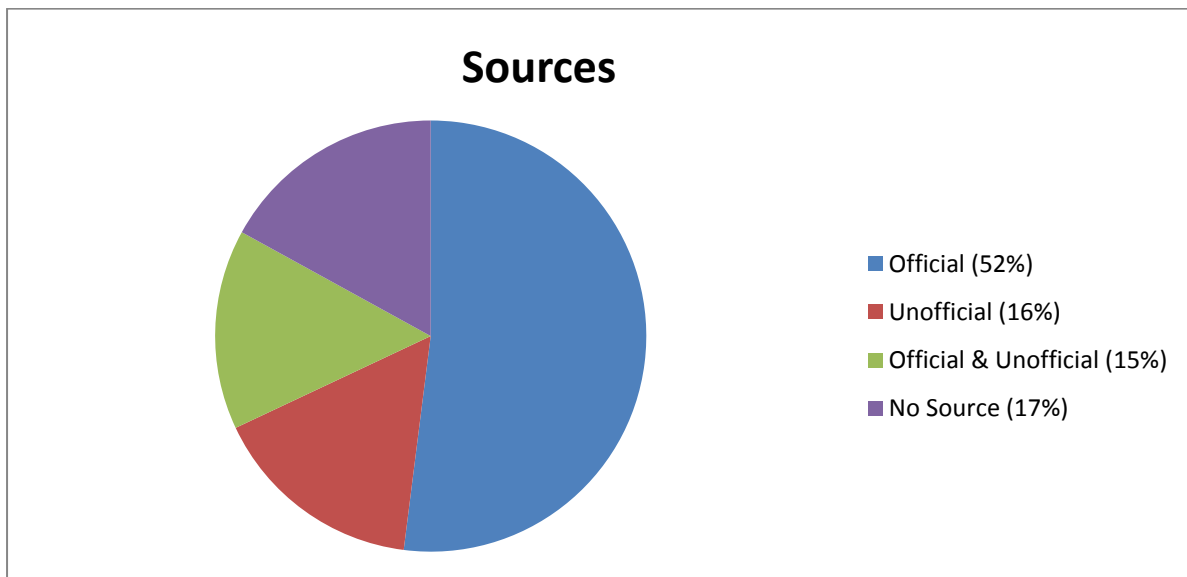


Figure 6 depicts the embedded tagging patterns observed in *News24*'s coverage of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial. The introduction of doubt is used as the example as it was encountered the most in the coding of the sample (far more than the introduction of favourable arguments). Pattern (a) indicates that doubt was introduced at the beginning of the article before shifting to the dominant mode of framing (either positive or neutral). This pattern was not that common, but was evident in far more articles than pattern (c) which was the least common, as doubt was embedded in the middle of the text. Pattern (b) was encountered the most, and is the reason that „embedded tagging“ patterns were examined. Pattern (b) is also the strongest version of embedded tagging, not only because of its prevalence, but also because of its position within the text. It is the final thought that the reader is provided, so as to guide their opinion-formation. As previously discussed, embedded tagging is distinguishable from the notion of the „counter-frame“, as it is a weaker version of creating a shift in framing patterns. However, simply because it is less powerful

than a counter-frame does not mean that the effect of this attempt is lost. The strength of this technique lies in providing textual support (reinforcement) for the trial by media to which Oscar Pistorius was subjected.

In addition to employing the „embedded tagging“ technique, and relying on the State’s assertions in order to conduct Pistorius’ trial by media, *News24* also depended on official sources.

Figure 7



¹⁵Figure 7 depicts provides a breakdown of the types of sources used by *News24* in order to advance their biased coverage of the trial. Moreover, the second hypothesis is most definitely supported. In line with the figures gathered from the data, 52% of the news articles made use of only official sources, whilst 16% of the articles used only unofficial sources. Only 15% of articles made use of both official and unofficial sources, and 17% of articles did not cite any sources. This finding is noteworthy as more than half of the sample employed sources high on the hierarchy of credibility (i.e. official sources). These sources are imbued with definitional power as they are viewed with greater levels of credibility than unofficial sources. Official sources included members of the defence and the state, Judge Masipa, legal experts, expert witnesses and other experts consulted for commentary (such as criminologists and psychologists). One of the key official sources consulted by *News24* for commentary on the trial was criminal lawyer William Booth. Booth provided commentary on a variety of aspects of the case and, like Nel, he also had many analyses to put forward regarding

¹⁵ In figure 7, n = 348.

Pistorius' personality and his defence(s). After Pistorius' testimony and cross-examination, many legal experts, such as Ulrich Roux, agreed that he "was getting himself into trouble with his answers to Nel" and that he was "[leading himself] into trouble" ("Oscar on the...", 2014). Booth said that Pistorius "has not done himself any favours under cross examination" and said that he "had the particular type of personality that is a lawyer's worst nightmare [...] a difficult person who believes that he says is right" (2014). Furthermore, he labelled Pistorius "a desperate man" in his description of Pistorius' testimony and cross-examination ("Oscar's expert accused...", 2014). "The more questions you ask somebody like Oscar, it could actually get worse" (2014). In a video interview about Pistorius' defence, Booth responds by saying:

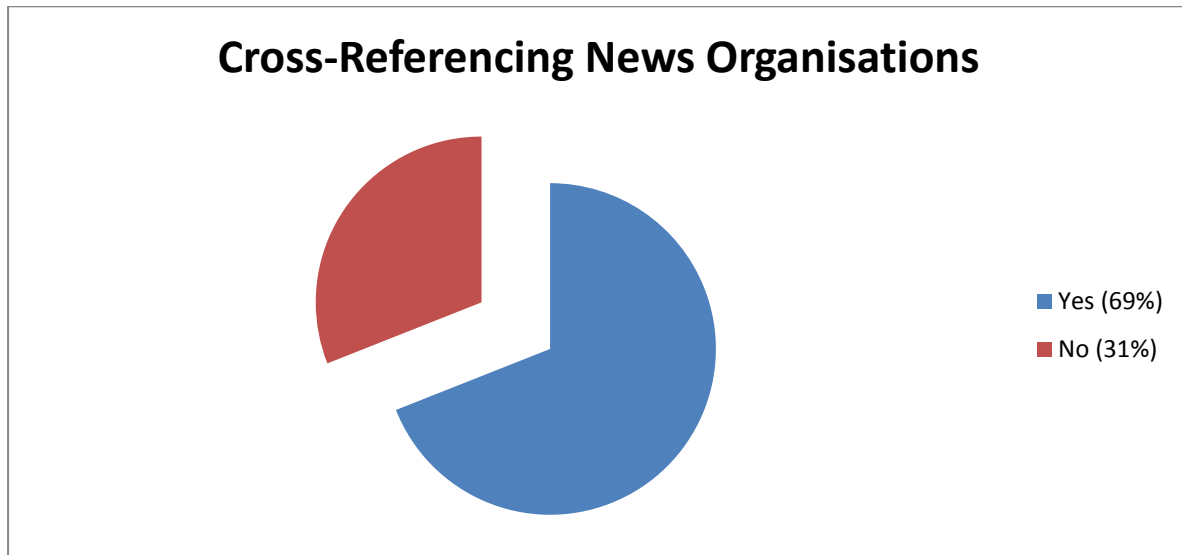
*I believe there are probably four defences [chuckling]... four different defences with the latest one [...] The first one is that he acted in self-defence so, in other words, he was aware of what he was doing. He... knew there was an intruder and he acted to kill the intruder.... Uhhh.... Because he thought he was in danger or imminent danger [...] Then we have the **issue** of it "san accident, so... that "sanother version. Then you have the evidence that Oscar also gave at one point that he wasn't aware he pulled the trigger [...] Now we have the possibility of a mental illness or defect which could indicate that at the time, because of this disorder, this possible mental defect or illness, he couldn't distinguish between right or wrong..." (**Bold, my emphasis; underlining, emphasis in original**).*

(“The differing defences...”, 2014)

This quote indicates that Booth doubts the validity of these defences, as he chuckles before listing the defences, and he emphasises particular words which suggest an element of doubt on his part. The fact that he labels a possible defence as an "issue" also serves to cast doubt on the veracity of what Pistorius said took place. This echoes what Nel says in his closing argument, namely that "the defences presented by the defence were that Pistorius did not have criminal capacity and if there was it was in self-defence [...] It's two defences that can never be reconciled" ("Pistorius refuses to...", 2014). The fact that such statements, uttered by official sources, who are given the majority of „air-time“, are published most definitely serves to guide the readers' interpretation of the trial, and promotes a biased point of view. This is quite precarious as it has been used to advance a very specific agenda. Whilst the

exact motivations to print such commentary are unknown to the researcher, it is likely that *News24* is vying to gain ideological and economic success through their coverage of the murder trial.

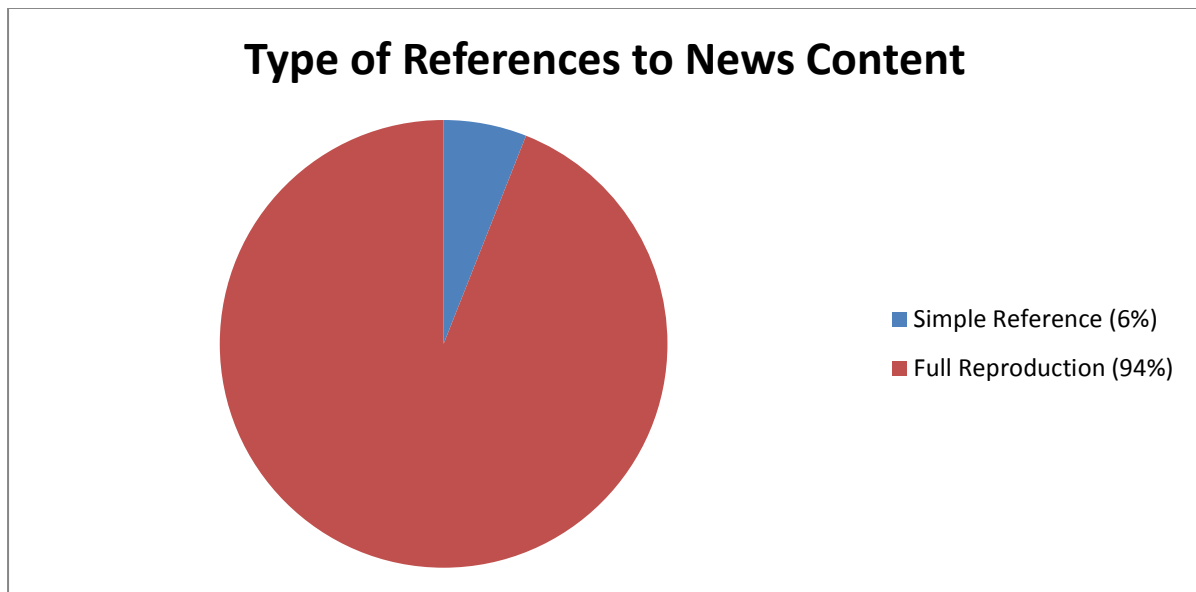
Figure 8



¹⁶Figure 8 refers to the fact that news organisations were often referenced as sources in the reportage of incidences that took place during the trial. Only 31% of the sample did not make use of content made available by other news outlets. This means that 69% of the sample cited their competitors as sources, hereby awarding credence to the third hypothesis (H3). There are a number of possible reasons for this, which will be dealt with after the discussion of figure 8.

¹⁶ For figure 8, n = 348.

Figure 9



Of the 240 stories that cross-referenced other news organisations, there were 247 instances thereof.¹⁷ Figure 9 depicts a breakdown of the types of references that the researcher identified: simple references and full article reproductions. „Simple references“ refers (as indicated in figure 10) to the attribution of quotes (from individuals, groups, other news outlets) to other news other news organisations. „Full reproductions“ refers to the complete reproduction of content from wire services such as *SAPA*, *AFP* and *AP*. As is indicated in figure 8, full reproductions of articles were evident in 94% of the sample. This means that only 6% of the news available on the *News24* website is original reportage, which usually manifested in the form of 3- to 5-minute trial update/discussion videos.

Figure 10

News Organisation	Frequency of ‘simple references’
Agence France-Presse (AFP)	1
Beeld	1
City Press	1
e – News Channel Africa (eNCA)	2
Eye Witness News (EWN)	4
Sky News	1
Sunday Times	2
The Sun	1
UK Mail on Sunday	1
Total	14

¹⁷ In figure 9, n = 247.

Figure 11

News Organisation	Frequency of ‘full reproductions’
Agence France-Presse (AFP)	20
Associated Press (AP)	9
City Press	5
South African Press Association (SAPA)	195
Reuters	4
Total	233

To respond to the third hypothesis of the research, convergence is clearly evident in the trial coverage. This was expected given the scale and length of the trial and therefore the expense that media outlets had to shoulder, in addition to news coverage restrictions imposed by the court and the assertions in the literature (cf. Miller & Sack, 2010). However, the frequency and the extent to which this occurred was not anticipated. As depicted by figure 11, there was a total of 233 full reproductions in the sample, of which 195 were attributed to *SAPA*. This is the equivalent of 84% of the „full reproduction“ sample. The reproductions from other news organisations do not pose any opposition to the content taken from *SAPA*. This is significant as this drastically limits the prospect of diverse media coverage and, as has been presented in this discussion, there is very little competition in this regard. In addition to the financial burden of reporting on such a trial, there is also the issue of responsibility for the coverage. It is arguable that *News24* wanted to benefit from coverage that would interest and maintain a loyal readership, but without the burden of having to account for prejudicial coverage. By limiting original content, the organisation is able to distance itself from any wrong-doing as they were not directly involved in the reportage. This is quite a feeble argument, but it is an argument nonetheless. This position is put forward as *News24* places the following disclaimer on their *myNews24* opinion section where readers can discuss their thoughts in the form of journalistic articles (cf. citizen journalism):

All articles and letters published on MyNews24 have been independently written by members of News24’s community. The views of users published on News24 are therefore their own and do not necessarily represent the views of News24. News24 editors also reserve the right to edit or delete any and all comments received.

(*News24*, 2014)

Interestingly, *News24* did not delete many of the prejudicial opinions left in this section, many of which openly labelled the accused “a murderer”. Their lack of action is clearly a strong indication of their stance. Therefore, the researcher argues that this disclaimer is redundant and serves no purposes other than to further the façade of neutrality. It evidences the notion of distancing themselves from prejudicial content which, through their lack of moderation, is clearly endorsed by *News24*.

Based on the orientation of the media coverage, both qualitative and quantitative, there is no problem definition other than Oscar Pistorius being guilty of premeditated murder and should serve a lengthy custodial sentence. He was executed „in the society of the spectacle“ (Debord, 1967 in Greer & McLaughlin, 2011: 27).

4.3. The Megaspectacle and the News Narrative

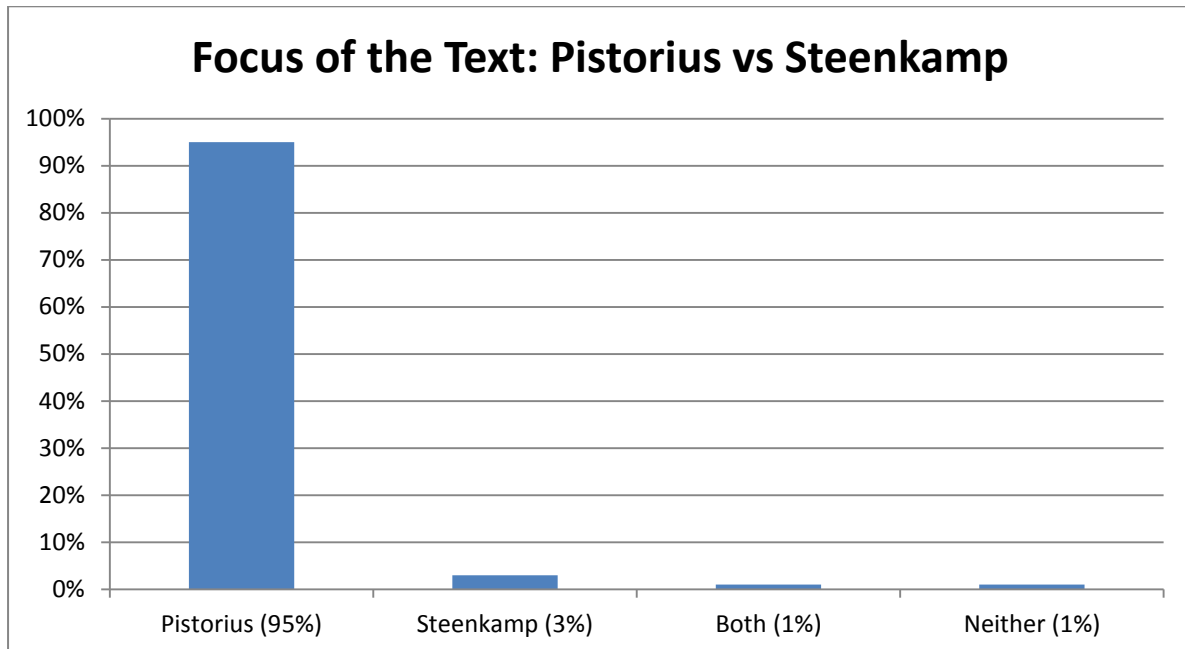
The foundation of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial spectacle lies in the (media) event of the bail application proceedings that took place from 19 to 22 February 2013. It was an unexpected occurrence that dominated public attention and interrupted daily life. From this point, it morphed into an incident (a spectacle) that did not need ample stimulus in order to sustain, as a celebrity, *The Oscar Pistorius*, an international Olympic and Paralympic hero, was at the centre of the controversy. The media built this icon, and was instrumental in the process of Pistorius“ „status degradation“ (Garfinkel, 1956 in Schneider, 2006: 3). As a result, the media coverage seemed to focus on Pistorius and little attention was paid to the victim.

In his work, Douglas Kellner (2003, 2008) presented 6 criteria by which the spectacle may be identified and examined. More specifically it: (a) produces copious amounts of public discourse, and as a result (b) commands public attention; (c) elevates the individual concerned to super-human status; (d) constructs celebrities; (e) employs Manichean discourse throughout its construction; and (f) highlights issues that were previously low on the public agenda. This section of the chapter will be written as a response to these criteria and will be evidenced through quantitative data and qualitative description in order to substantiate the fourth and fifth hypotheses.

The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial has been examined from almost every possible angle, both during the proceedings and after it had concluded. One thing that remained consistent in the *News24* coverage of the trial is that he was the focus throughout the majority of the reportage.

Even though the deceased was the reason Pistorius and the rest of the world found themselves wrapped up in what has been called „the trial of the century“, Steenkamp was low on the news agenda as is evidence by Figure 12.

Figure 12



¹⁸Figure 12 indicates that 95% of articles focused on the accused, whilst only 3% highlighted the importance of the deceased. It is clear that the spectacle is dependent on its exploitation of Pistorius' circumstance - he is still a viable commercial enterprise. This is also evidenced by the fact that Pistorius was mentioned 5790 times in the sample, at an average of 16 times per article, as is seen in figure 13. On the other hand, Steenkamp was only referenced 1789 times in 348 articles. This is an average of 5 references per article.

Figure 13

Name	Number of References	Average (per article)
Pistorius	5790	16.64
Steenkamp	1789	5.14

Pistorius' trial was written about from a variety of angles: from his fear of crime, why his fear of crime exists (in the South African context), his childhood, the effect his success had on his frame of mind, his disability and the ensuing vulnerability as a result thereof – to name but a

¹⁸ In figure 12, n = 348.

few topics of discussion. Steenkamp was rarely the focus of a trial that was actually about her, her relationship with the accused, and her death. Pistorius and his role in her death was the point of entry (and the focus) of the coverage.¹⁹ Figures 14 and 15 indicate the types of references used to refer to the accused and the deceased and will be used to discuss the status of these individuals.

Figure 14

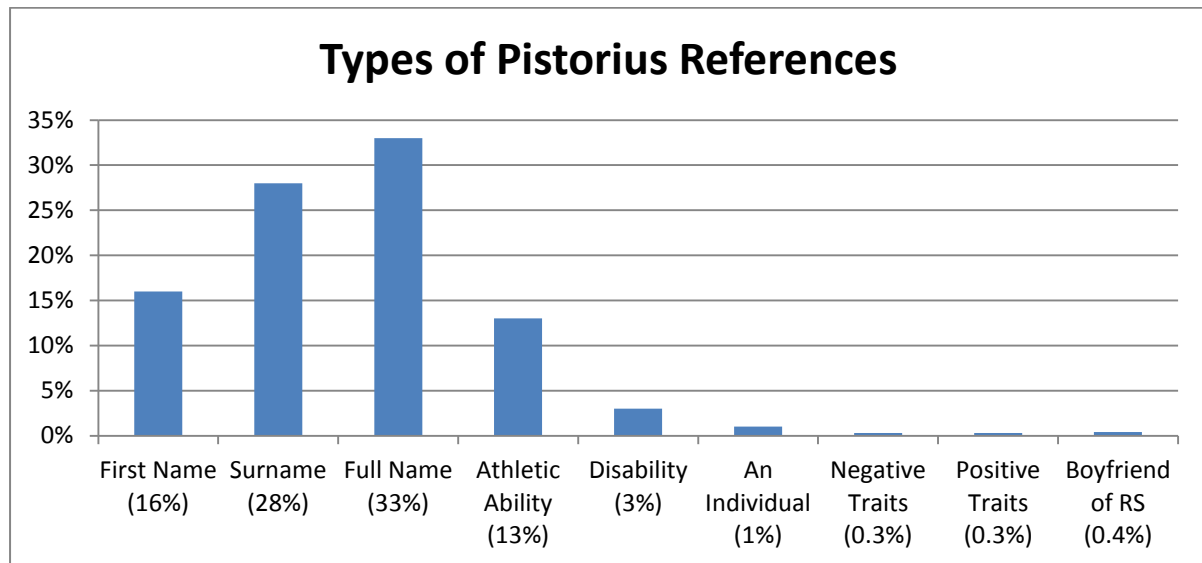
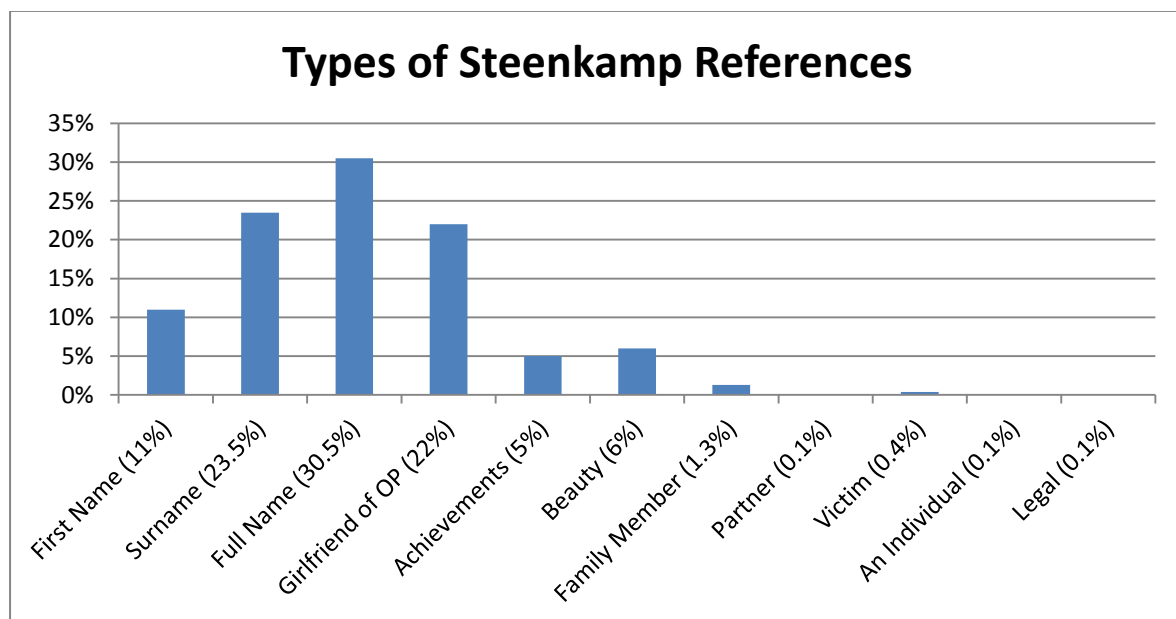


Figure 15



¹⁹ It is important to note that figures 14 and 15 do not depict the exact number of times that each reference occurred. Instead, it is a cumulative representation of the references. i.e. the number of times certain groupings of references occurred in the articles in the sample. Therefore, in figure 14 n= 1046 and in figure 15 n = 818.

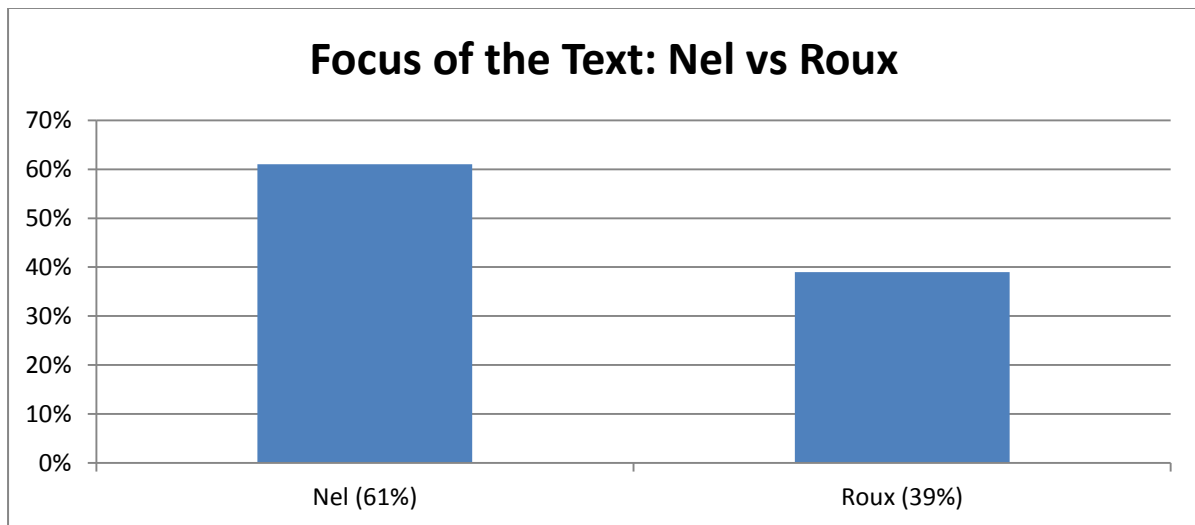
Figure 14 indicates that other than using Pistorius' surname and full name to identify him, his first name was used in 16% of instances. The trial was referred to as "The Oscar Trial", and the audience was given "Oscar Updates". Even expert commentators such as William Booth and criminologist Liza Grobler referred to him by his first name. For example, Grobler does this in the story titled *Oscar cries for himself, not Reeva – criminologist* (2014). It creates the sentiment that the public *knows* him. Therefore, feelings of deception are justified, which would lead to his trial, and conviction, in the court of public opinion. His athletic ability also played a significant role in how he was identified. He was still labelled an "Olympic and Paralympic star" even though that life was far behind him. Strangely enough, in contrast to his ability, his disability was also foregrounded, albeit to a lesser extent. Reeva Steenkamp, on the other hand, other than using her name to identify her, was reduced to "Oscar Pistorius" model girlfriend" or "the girlfriend of Oscar Pistorius" in 22% of instances in which she was referenced. As indicated by figure 15, in 6% of these instances she was identified via her beauty, as though this is the primary reason why there is so much public uproar about her death. Only 5% of the record depicts that she was referenced via her own accomplishments, such as having achieved a law degree. It is interesting to note that she was referred to by her first name far less than the accused. This accounted for 11% of references to the deceased. On a qualitative level, it seemed more emotionally-charged when she was referred to as "Reeva". Referring to her by her first name served to entrench the injustice even further as she is no longer „the deceased“ or „the girlfriend of a track star“. She is simply Reeva, a daughter, a sister, a cousin – an individual and a member of a family. Such references were to an emotive end, and served to facilitate the trial by media to which Pistorius was subjected. Referring to Steenkamp and Pistorius by their first names serves to close the gap between the „elusive“ incident and reality. It also permits members of the audience to speak on this matter, because it is as though there is a personal relationship between the public and these individuals. It is in this way that public discourse was encouraged and maintained for the duration of the trial.

Furthermore, Oscar Pistorius was not elevated to super-human status. In fact, it was exactly the opposite that contributed to the spectacle of the trial. Pistorius' behaviour and his emotional behaviour specifically, in other words conduct that brought him down to the level of the everyday, was emphasised in the trial coverage. It was also used to further entrench the notion of his guilt. One such example appears in the article titled *Witness cries at Pistorius murder trial* in which his behaviour is interrogated at the very beginning of proceedings: "His sometimes distraught behaviour... At one point... he covered his ears, but it wasn't clear

why” (2014). The use of emotive language to describe Pistorius during his testimony was also evident. His behaviour was described as “crying”, “sobbing”, and “gagging”. This would seemingly produce an emotional response towards the accused, but it was nearly always discussed in the context of him serving his own interests. In a feature by Siphon Hlongwane, the journalist referred to the accusations, made by author Jani Allan, that “Pistorius” great displays of emotion are insincere, and show that he “s been coached” (Hlongwane, 2014c). In a blog post, Allan wrote “I have it from a reliable source that you are taking acting lessons for your days in court” (Hlongwane, 2014c). Furthermore, a supporter of Reeva Steenkamp and her family was quoted as saying “... you reap what you sow. Oscar... you can actually stop acting now” (“Pink support for...”, 2014). The focus on his behaviour in the construction of the megaspectacle evidently supports his trial (and conviction) in the public domain. Even more so is the focus on his aggression towards Steenkamp’s friend Kim Myers (the sister of Gina Myers). The article titled *Oscar intimidated Reeva's friend – report* (2014) discusses an incident of intimidation that took place in the court room during an adjournment. In stark contrast to the literature, the destruction of Pistorius’ status and credibility is how the megaspectacle gains momentum.

With regard to the issue of status, the literature asserts that a spectacle creates celebrities out of individuals who would otherwise not have received media attention. This trend emerged in the sample under study. However, the term “personalities” will be used as these individuals garnered attention largely for their level of expertise in their line of work. This includes the legal experts who were consulted for comment on the trial, but refers specifically to Advocates Barry Roux and Gerrie Nel who were portrayed as „larger than life“ characters. Their popularity in the media coverage is evidenced by figure 16.

Figure 16



As is depicted in ²⁰figure 16, Nel dominated the focus in 61% of news articles, whereas Roux was only the primary focus in 39% of the sample. To extract further entertainment from the creation of these personalities, there are instances in which the media have created a type of conflict between them. This was accomplished by focusing on critiques of each other that were made in court. This is evidenced by the article titled *Nel is desperate – Roux* (2014). Even though Nel was often praised in media reports, he was also critiqued for being over-confident and far-reaching in his presentation of the State’s case against Oscar Pistorius.

Similarly it is these diverse „personalities“ of Oscar Pistorius, and narratives, which allow for Manichean discourse to prevail. Pistorius transformed from being a South African hero to being declared a murderer in the court of public opinion. His trial was both a divisive topic of discussion, and also a point of discussion that brought members of society together. Every spectator of the case, South African or not, had an opinion about the trial. For this reason it was an effective stimulus to public debate which is necessary in a functioning democratic society. The magnitude of the trial was such that it attracted the attention of many public figures such as Donald Trump and Trevor Noah. When Judge Masipa delivered her culpable homicide verdict, Donald Trump’s twitter account was referenced as he labelled Judge Masipa “a total moron. She said he didn’t act like a killer. This is another O.J. disaster!” (“Trump insults Oscar...”, 2014). Trevor Noah’s response to this verdict was “O.J. Pistorius” (2014).

²⁰ In figure 16, n = 989. „n“ was determined by counting the number of times Nel and Roux were mentioned in the sample of texts.

Comparisons to the O.J. Simpson trial were prevalent from the day that the news broke of Oscar Pistorius' involvement in the death of Reeva Steenkamp (14 February 2013). These comparisons are not only to the magnitude of the trial, but also to the fact that it is a widely held opinion of the public that Simpson „got away with murder“. The same can be said for the many parallels drawn with the Dewani Trial. Once again, it is arguable that the public holds an unfavourable opinion of Dewani considering the significant amount of time he spent fighting extradition to South Africa where he was due to face charges of murder amongst other charges.

It is important to note that the news narrative is an integral part of the construction of this megaspectacle as it directs public attention to the fundamental debates raised by the media, and it highlights issues that were previously low on the news agenda. Conversely, as in this case scenario, it also echoed issues that were consistently discussed in the public domain. During the trial period, The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial was the primary focus of many news outlets, including *News24*. With regard to the competition of different news narratives (in response to H5), there are two central narratives to the trial coverage: „Guilty“ and „Not Guilty“²¹. The specific sub-narratives informing these dominant narratives are detailed in figure 17, and indicate the competition between these arguments:

²¹ These narratives are in response to the premeditated murder charge.

Figure 17

Narrative	Guilty	Not Guilty
1	Pistorius is a gun-happy, egotist.	He is vulnerable and concerned about safety.
2	Pistorius does not care about others, only himself.	He is a charitable individual.
3	His relationship with Steenkamp was all about him.	He wanted to share his life with Steenkamp.
4	He is argumentative.	He is simply trying to protect himself.
5	Pistorius evades answering questions.	Nel is flamboyant in his cross-examination of Pistorius.
6	He covers up for lies.	Witnesses are providing prejudicial testimony.
7	He planned to kill Steenkamp.	It was an accident, and he tried to save her life.

Unfortunately for the accused, the arguments reinforcing the State’s case, as reported by *News24*, were incomparable in terms of the framing of news items. Negative and exciting reportage, predominantly about a celebrity, holds particular appeal in rousing public enthusiasm for crime coverage. Besides the overall narrative of the trial, there were many societal issues that were associated with, and elucidate by, The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial. The issues that will be elucidated in the remainder of this discussion are the fear of crime and racialization; domestic violence; as well as politicisation and the notion of justice. The discussion thereafter, gives credence to the fourth hypothesis (H4).

Crime coverage, the fear of crime, and the racialization thereof, are closely associated in South African public discourse owing to the country’s apartheid history. This notion is also

acknowledged by Altbeker (2007) in his book *A Country at War with Itself: South Africa's Crisis of Crime* and, as Tay also argued (2014), the issue of race has been the subtext of the trial that is rarely acknowledged. Consider the following extract:

In a way, it is the country itself that is on trial, and the attitudes we hold to, and against, each other. These are buried in witness testimonies, statements and the defence explanation for what happened that night. [...] "Now whether this judge is willing to give credence to the fact that a white person living in a white area would be in fear for his life, hearing somebody crawling through his bathroom window, fearing black intruders... whether or not this judge is willing to find that, I don't know. But that's what this case will come down to. It's racial, that's factual - it's got nothing to do with the law," he [Alan Dershowitz]²² said.

(Hlongwane, 2014d)

One of the key elements of the trial was that Pistorius' fear is what led him to arm himself and to shoot 4 times into a locked, confined space. At the beginning of his testimony, he said that he and his siblings were raised this way by his late mother, Sheila Pistorius, who slept with a firearm under her pillow as she feared for her family's safety as they did not live in a safe area ("Oscar's mom kept...", 2014). The question was posed whether or not Pistorius would have been so openly condemned if it had in fact been a [black male] intruder who was behind the door, and not Reeva Steenkamp. The position of the researcher is that, in all probability, this would have furthered his hero status as he had protected the life of his (beautiful) girlfriend. And so, in this way, the Oscar Pistorius fairy-tale would have continued. He would have been even more lauded than before, as he fought the struggles of the everyday South African and came out „victorious“. These assertions are based on the researcher's examinations of crime coverage which influence the opinion-formation of news consumers. The media in South Africa portray crime as a phenomenon unique to males of colour (cf. Johnson, 2012).

Furthermore, the articles have also interrogated the fact that of 34 witnesses called only [4] were black ("Oscar's options are...", 2014). "Why, Masipa aside, were nearly all the leading protagonists white in a nation where whites are just 10% of the population?" (2014). The

²² Alan Dershowitz is an American criminal lawyer.

researcher argues that this is largely to do with the racial divisions within society - both physical and attitudinal. The incident took place at Pistorius's home in Silver Woods Estate in Pretoria. This is an area where homes are priced at millions of Rands, rendering such expensive properties inaccessible to many previously disadvantaged members of society. Since the State's case was based on ear-witness testimony, it could only have been members of this particular economic bracket that were eligible to be called as witnesses. This, however, does not explain the limited number of expert witnesses of colour. Except for Captain Chris Mangena, there were no other expert witnesses of colour. Pieter Baba, a member of the security team at Silver Woods Estate and who testified for the State, saw Pistorius carrying Steenkamp's body down the stairs. Michael Nhlengetwa (a civil engineer) and his wife Eontle Nhlengetwa were also called as witnesses (for the defence). Significantly, *The Telegraph* in the UK reported that Pistorius employed a housekeeper from Malawi named Frank Chiziwani who "was staying at Oscar Pistorius's house on the night Reeva Steenkamp was killed but "heard nothing" and will not be called by either the State or the defence team to give evidence" (Laing, 2014). What we are seeing in public discourse is a competing assessment of the value of witnesses of colour. Not only were witnesses of colour few in number, but there is also a hierarchy that prevails. Witnesses of colour are imbued with agency provided that they are sufficient economic and social capital, as is demonstrated by the exclusion of *the* closest ear-witness to the incident - Frank Chiziwani.

Observably, the theme of domestic violence (violence against women) led the news narrative and dramatization of the megaspectacle of the trial. The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial was used, in public discourse, as the primary example of the abuse of women. There is a paradox in doing so, as it is true and false; advantageous and disadvantageous. In the introduction of this chapter, the researcher stated that certain issues were linked to The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial out of the desire to be promoted to a higher position on the public agenda. This is not to say that violence against women is not an important issue that is discussed in public discourse. It is quite the opposite. However, the issue of domestic violence being linked to the trial was valuable in terms of the awareness that it created – even if it built via the deception of framing devices. This is arguable as this link to the trial was only formed via the pre-judging of Oscar Pistorius's guilt (i.e. trial by media). The foundation and attachment of this issue to the trial (informed by his trial by media), was strong at face value. However, analytically speaking, the attachment was rickety at best. It was negligent to label this incident an example of domestic violence, as it had not yet been ruled as such in court. For all

members of the public (and the media) knew, the incident really could have been a tragic mistake. The judgement of the public is neither here nor there, as it is not for the public (or the media) to decide on the validity of legal arguments. It is not the position of the researcher that this issue is unimportant. Rather, it is how the issue of domestic violence advanced in the public domain (specifically via *News24*) that is contentious.

Additionally, Reeva Steenkamp was used as the figurehead for domestic violence victims, and the question of why still remains. Putting aside the fact that she gained celebrity status around the world owing to Oscar Pistorius' involvement in her death, there really was no other reason to support the elevation of Steenkamp to that of a representative for the struggle of many South African women. Other women, such as Anene Booysen²³ who was raped and disembowelled, were not awarded the same status. There was no media gag issued by the court to prevent such gruesome details from being published by the press in the case of Booysen. Every detail was made known. Why was this order granted for Steenkamp specifically? The *News24* coverage does not address this issue.

However, the researcher proposes that it is linked to the concept of „missing white woman syndrome“ or „missing white girl syndrome“ – a further illustration of the racialization evident in the trial coverage. According to Stillman (2007: 491) the media “position[s] certain sub-groups of women – often white, wealthy and conventionally attractive – as deserving of our collective resources, while making the marginalisation and victimisation of other groups of women, such as low-income women of colour, seem natural.” Moreover, she presents the question of “when it comes to body counts, which bodies „count“? (2007: 491). This notion has become more and more associated with crime coverage in South Africa given the focus on what became the high profile murders of white women, namely Leigh Matthews (2004); Inge Lotz (2005); Erin van Rensburg (2009) and Jayde Panayiotou (2015). It would seem that this concept is evidenced by the coverage of *News24*, given the tendency to focus on Steenkamp's beauty and the fact that she was a model.

The practice of politicisation was largely noted as being carried out by the ANC Women's League who provided June Steenkamp with financial (and emotional) support so that she was able to attend the trial. Again, this assistance is not offered to all families who cannot afford

²³ In the early hours of 3 February 2013, Anene Booysen was raped and murdered whilst walking home from a pub in Bredasdorp (September, 2013).

to be in court to represent the child that they have lost. This move was strategic, especially as there was a national and provincial election during the trial (on 7 May 2014).

Moreover, the ANC Women's League was at the forefront of the public cry for „Justice for Reeva“. This is evident to the extent that the entire notion of justice was skewed particularly in the coverage of the trial. „Justice“ transformed from being a notion that serves both society and the accused, to being a form of retribution. Demanding „Justice for Reeva“ was a call for a murder conviction (and a life sentence), to the extent that any other judgement and sentence would fall short. In a way, the public was set up to be outraged by the culpable homicide conviction that was handed down to Pistorius. June Steenkamp was quoted as saying “I trust that God will prevail and justice will be done. All we want is the truth,” she said.” (“I don’t hate...”, 2014). “The ANC Women’s League said it expected justice to prevail. “We expect that justice should be done,” said ANCWL Gauteng spokesperson Jacqui Mofokeng. “All of us want closure on the matter. We just need justice to prevail.” (“Oscar Pistorius arrives...”, 2014). This was taken even further by the ANC Women’s League by their request that the NPA launch an appeal of the Pistorius’ culpable homicide conviction. The League intends to register as „friends of the court“ so that their position is heard during the appeals proceedings (“ANCWL pre-empting Oscar...”, 2014). The ANCWL also intends to join support with other organisations such as the Progressive Womens’ Movement and the ANC Youth League in order to make sure that “justice” is served (2014). Once again, the agenda behind this action must be questioned, the effects of placing greater value on the life of Steenkamp, as well as *News24*’s role in the discursive construction of this spectacle, need to be measured.

Through the expression and strengthening of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial in every available channel of *News24*’s trial coverage, the spectacle has transformed into the megaspectacle. This is particularly in light of the fact that the trial became the donor media stimulus to issues so that it could rise in the ranks the public agenda faster than it would have, had the trial not being in motion. Additionally, the magnitude of this trial on both a national and international scale demanded - and received - the attention of the audience, regardless of whether or not the public consented to this. Such was the distinction of this trial.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the symbiotic relationship between the „trial by media“, the „megaspectacle“ and news narratives in relation to *News24*‘s coverage of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial. It was determined, via quantitative and qualitative analysis, that Pistorius was subjected to a trial (and conviction) parallel to the legal proceedings with which he was faced. Specifically, Pistorius was convicted (and sentenced) in the court of public opinion. The orientation of such coverage gave rise to the megaspectacle owing to the societal issues that were prioritised on the news agenda, namely the fear of crime and racialization; domestic violence; as well as politicisation and the notion of justice. Contributing even further to the construction of the megaspectacle, from a theoretical point of view, is the proliferation of an alternate form of influence within media framing. The researcher has termed this technique „embedded tagging“. The spectacle that was created out of Pistorius‘ trial by media also gave rise to another phenomenon that the researcher terms „false logic“ in order to produce “a particular problem definition, causal interpretation [and] moral evaluation” (Entman, 1993: 52). Moreover, prioritising key themes presented by the news narrative were fundamental in maintaining the megaspectacle.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This research endeavour has examined the framing of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial and has produced substantial evidence to assert that the trial was staged by *News24* as a megaspectacle, advanced by way of the news narrative which was informed by Pistorius' trial and conviction in the court of public opinion. Or, as Debord (1967) puts it, a trial by media amounts to a public execution in the „society of the spectacle“ (cited in Greer & McLaughlin, 2011: 27). Even though Pistorius was not legally convicted of premeditated murder by the judiciary, a parallel form of justice – media justice – was achieved via the numerous stories published by *News24* in which his guilt is declared. To be specific, 50% of the trial coverage was framed negatively (i.e. against the accused), and served to substantiate the first hypothesis (H1).

This declaration of guilt manifested in the form of overt assertions such as labelling him “a murderer”, but also via more subtle methods. Such techniques included embedded tagging (i.e. the introduction of doubt); the privileged status of official sources high in the hierarchy of credibility (H2) and trends of media convergence. The observed tendency of *News24* to reproduce (complete) articles of competitors in 94% of the sample supports the argument of a lack of pluralism in their trial coverage. Of this sample, 84% of the content belonged to the *South African Press Association (SAPA)*. This finding supported the third hypothesis (H3). The extent of the convergence, however, was unanticipated as *News24* is one of the most highly regarded news organisations in South Africa. „Convergence“ necessitates co-operation with, and not complete dependence on, the competition. The sharing of resources limits diversity, but dependence restricts any opportunity for competing ideas to prevail.

To encounter such a lack of diverse points of view being disseminated into the public domain is a cause for concern given the high esteem in which this news organisation is held, and consequently the effect this will have on the problem definition of the audience. Shaffer (1986: 158) asserts that „attention decrement“, in other words a reduction in focus on the nuances of a narrative/case, is a result of saturation reportage. As saturation reportage is observable in the trial coverage, this lends support to the researcher's argument that the audience would largely consider striking news coverage in their evaluation of guilt or innocence of an accused.

There were two principal narratives presented by the *News24* coverage of the trial: „Guilty“ and „Not Guilty“. This creates the façade of neutrality, for a legal case (as with any narrative) should have two primary arguments. This is labelled a “façade” as the argument for a guilty verdict superseded any argument to the contrary. A singular construction of the trial was presented to the audience, with few counter-arguments to this argument being presented in the news narrative. In cases where this was observable, the counter-argument was weak in terms of number and effect. In contrast to this, the argument supporting a guilty verdict was more entertaining and relied on an emotive and sensationalised style of reportage which catered to the public enthusiasm for dramatic news content (Kellner, 2004; Cockley, 2009) . Pessimism appears to entice an audience. If it did not, the framing of the trial would have been altered so as to appeal to the news consumers who, ultimately, are the ones who dictate the (financial) success of an organisation’s construction of a trial (or any issue, for that matter). In this, the researcher asserts that the financial incentive took precedence in the motivations behind such a prejudicial news construction of the trial. The megaspectacle of this trial was able to exploit the misfortune of everyone involved in the tragedy, but particularly that of the accused as his involvement (as a celebrity) played a key role in attracting the audience. Even though his public profile was deconstructed by way of „attention decrement“ (Shaffer 1986: 158), and was no longer of importance, his star-power was used to great commercial rewards by *News24*. Oscar Pistorius is still a viable commercial commodity. From this, it is concluded that the fifth hypothesis (H5) is strengthened.

Kellner defines a “commodity superstar” (2003b: 63) as a “media extravaganza of the highest order” (2003b: 64). This definition absolutely applies to Oscar Pistorius through the construction of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial megaspectacle. The trial served as a donor media event from which other news stories, through their attachment to Pistorius and his trial, could gain prominence in the public domain. Such issues include the notion of justice, domestic violence, racialization and the problem of crime in South Africa. Even more noticeable in the *News24* coverage is the politicisation of this event, particularly by the ANC Women’s League. Such evidence corroborates the fourth hypothesis (H4).

With all the data and analyses presented in this thesis, the question of its wider relevance is raised but, before this is dealt with, a limitation of the study needs to be discussed. Although

the researcher took every precaution to safeguard the reliability and validity of the study, the research endeavour is limited in that it only focused on textual coverage, or coverage that was guided by a textual component. A more descriptive and detailed examination would require a multimodal analysis of the trial coverage. However, owing to the scope of the research, this was not a viable research avenue. The sample had to be limited in order to keep in line with the requirements imposed on the study, as well as the ability of a single researcher. It is clear that The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial is a significant spectacle that needs to be examined, but a multimodal exploration of the coverage is better suited to a larger study owing to the large corpus of data it produced.

Furthermore, this case highlights several broader issues which are relevant beyond the parameters of the trial. Based on the findings of the research, the law and the media should not intersect, and should remain distinct. This is a departure from the literature that asserts that the media can assist the judicial process and can maintain the fairness of a trial (Innes, 1999; Geragos, 2006; Lim, 2012). These assertions are wholly inaccurate. The media cannot safeguard the fairness of a trial, or the administration of justice, if it fails to publish unbiased content. Such coverage does not serve the judicial process in any manner. Instead, it adds unwarranted pressure on the system to produce findings (judgements) deemed appropriate by society (who has taken subjective cues from media coverage in their problem definition). This could result in the miscarriage of justice. For the moment, the media and the law must remain distinct until a balance between freedom of speech and the right of an accused to a fair trial can be reached.

Furthermore, there needs to be more legal-journalistic education made available to practicing journalists, as well as to students of journalism. In particular, the law of *sub judice* must be clearly understood so as to avoid the pervasive prejudicial news coverage that occurs in the coverage of crime, and specifically in trial coverage. Furthermore, the media need to engage in practices of self-regulation before it reaches the point where legal mechanisms of censorship are introduced. This assertion is in line with the recommendation of Geragos (2006). There are already forms of censorship that are available to the courts, such as gag orders. For example, a media gag was issued during the testimony of Prof Saayman – the pathologist who examined Reeva Steenkamp’s body. It is undesirable for certain types of censorship to be introduced, as it is open the door to potential abuse which was evidenced by the Apartheid government’s censorship laws.

One of the arguments invoked by Judge Dunstan Mlambo's in his decision to authorise the broadcast of The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial is the notion of open justice. In other words, justice must be done, but it must also be *seen* to be done. Open justice is, of course, a well-intentioned notion in the pursuit of justice on the behalf of society. However, with regard to the news coverage of this trial, it was perhaps far too "open". To what extent should the media assist with this notion of transparency? Does it mean that rules of privacy no longer apply to an accused? Does the public really *need* to know every piece of information uncovered by legal professionals and media practitioners? The position of the researcher is that the media's interpretation of the notion of open justice is disproportionate to the right to privacy of an accused and the deceased. It is unnecessary to reproduce images of the corpse of the deceased (as occurred in the wider media coverage of the trial, but not in the coverage of *News24*). It is also unnecessary to reproduce private content from an accused's/deceased's mobile phone. Indeed, such information was presented in court, but is it ethical to publish (reproduce) this content? The answer is "no". This necessitates a re-evaluation of journalistic ethics.

Nevertheless, the construction of megaspectacles, such as The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial, encourages participation in public debate predominantly in the form of „the politics of the everyday“ (Wasserman, 2010). This term refers to the association created between the news consumer and an issue raised by the spectacle, hereby attracting their interest. As in the trial under study, the trial itself is not political, but the issues attached to the trial are indeed political. Nonetheless, however public debate is stimulated, active engagement is evident. This is one of the requirements of a functioning democracy.

The Oscar Pistorius Murder Trial can be used as a point of entry to an interrogation of democracy, but this is another research endeavour altogether. However, at face value, what it indicates is that there are modes of coverage that inspire a response from the public. There are topics that are so emotionally-charged that they demand the attention and response of the public. All that is required is a transference of these techniques to other political debates in order inspire active citizenship. It is not the argument of the researcher that news outlets should engage in prejudicial political coverage with the express purpose of attracting audience interest (as was seen in the coverage of this trial). From this research endeavour, it is deduced that „the politics of the everyday“ (Wasserman, 2010) is a successful mode of coverage so as to attract and maintain public interest. Furthermore creating a relation

between different spheres of political debates (as is accomplished with media events and the construction of the spectacle) will be more effective. If members of the audience are presented the broader picture, with issues placed in relation to each other; as opposed to presenting isolated media events that run their course until they eventually reoccur; this is likely to be a more effective means by which active participation in democracy can be encouraged.

References

- Altbeker, A. 2007. *A Country At War With Itself: South Africa's Crisis of Crime*. Johannesburg and Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers.
- ANCWL pre-empting Oscar appeal. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 14 October. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/ANCWL-We-want-to-be-a-friend-of-the-court-20141014>. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].
- Aoun, S. 2005. Trial By Media: Corby Versus Korp. *Metro Magazine: Media and Education Magazine*. Spring/Summer. 146/147: 188-195. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=8c71d2cb-919b-4f6c-b04b-ff5c3175827e%40sessionmgr110&hid=116>. [Date Accessed: 2 August 2014].
- Becker, H.S. 1967. Whose Side Are We On? *Social Problems*. 14 (3): 239-247. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/stable/pdf/799147.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 1 December 2014].
- Benford, R.D. & Snow, D.A. 2000. Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 26: 611-639. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/223459>. [Date Accessed: 13 October 2013].
- Bradley, J. 1993. Methodological Issues and Practices in Qualitative Research. *The Library Quarterly*. 63 (4): 431-449. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4308865>. [Date Accessed: 22 March 2012].
- Brown, W.J., Duane, J.J. & Fraser, B.P. 1997. Media Coverage and Public Opinion of the O.J. Simpson Trial: Implications for the Criminal Justice System. *Communication Law and Policy*. 2 (2): 261-287. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/doi/pdf/10.1080/10811689709368625>. [Date Accessed: 14 November 2014].
- Carl Pistorius makes „miraculous recovery“. 2014. *Agence France-Presse*. 19 August. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Carl-Pistorius-makes-miraculous-recovery-20140819>. [Date accessed: 30 August 2015].
- Carroll, J.S., Kerr, N.L., Alfini, J.J., Weaver, F.M., MacCoun, R.J. & Feldman, V. 1986. Free Press and Fair Trial: The Role of Behavioral Research. *Law and Human Behaviour*. 10 (3): 187-201. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=44afd3b3-5cc5-4f69-9b57-d1ed0eeaf780%40sessionmgr12&hid=28>. [Date Accessed: 25 April 2013].

- Chesebro, J.W. & Borisoff, D.J. 2007. What Makes Qualitative Research Qualitative?. *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*. 8 (1): 3-14. [Online]. Available at: <http://blsciblogs.baruch.cuny.edu/com9640/files/2010/08/QRRWhat-is-Qual-Research1.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 3 March 2012].
- Chong, D. & Druckman, J.N. 2007. Framing Theory. *Annual Review of Political Science*. 10: 103-126. [Online]. Available at: <http://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/~jnd260/pub/Chong%20Druckman%20Annual%20Review%202007.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 25 April 2013].
- Cochran, D.S. & Dolan, J.A. 1984. Qualitative Research: An Alternative to Quantitative Research in Communication. *The Journal of Business Communication*. 21 (4): 25-32. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=de9721be-22d6-43d5-8e83-0c21472d278a%40sessionmgr11&vid=2&hid=1>. [Date Accessed: 19 March 2012].
- Cockley, D. 2009. Lynn Sharon Schwartz's *The Writing on the Wall*: Responding to the Media Spectacle. *Studies in American Jewish Literature*. 28: 14-27. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/stable/pdf/41206111.pdf?acceptTC=true>. [Date accessed: 23 January 2015].
- Dayan, D. & Katz, E. 1992. Defining Media Events: High Holidays of Mass Communication. *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. pp. 1-24.
- Deacon, D., Pickering, M., Golding, P. & Murdock, G. 1999. *Researching Communications*. London : Arnold; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Debord, G. 1967. *The Society of the Spectacle*. New York: Zone Books. [Online]. Available at: http://www.antiworld.se/project/references/texts/The_Society%20_Of%20_The%20_Spectacle.pdf. [Date Accessed: 25 April 2013].
- De Vreese, C.H. 2005. News Framing: Theory and Typology. *Information Design Journal + Document Design*. 13 (1): 51-62. [Online]. Available at: http://www.jcmcr.com/upload/Studies_file/1233468300.pdf. [Date Accessed: 9 February 2015].
- Dewani back in UK after honeymoon murder acquittal. 2014. *News24*. 10 December. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/World/News/Dewani-back-in-UK-after-honeymoon-murder-acquittal-20141210>. [Date accessed: 24 August 2015].
- Dolley, C. 2013. New Inge Lotz Info Comes to Light. *IOL News*. 22 February. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/new-inge-lotz-info-comes-to-light-1.1475568#.VZla7fmqqko>. [Date accessed: 5 July 2015].

Dreschel, R.E. 1989. An Alternative View of Media-Judiciary Relations: What the Non-Legal Evidence Suggests About the Fair Trial-Free Press Issue. *Hofstra Law Review*. 18 (1): 1-36. [Online]. Available at: http://scholarlycommons.law.hofstra.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1651&context=hlr&sei-redir=1&referer=https%3A%2F%2Fscholar-google-co-za.ezproxy.uct.ac.za%2Fscholar%3Fq%3DAn%2BAlternative%2BView%2Bof%2BMedia-Judiciary%2BRelations%253A%2BWhat%2Bthe%2BNon-Legal%2BEvidence%2BSuggests%2BAbout%2Bthe%2BFair%2BTrial-Free%2BPress%2BIssue%26btnG%3D%26hl%3Den%26as_sdt%3D0%252C5#search=%22An%20Alternative%20View%20Media-Judiciary%20Relations%3A%20What%20Non-Legal%20Evidence%20Suggests%20About%20Fair%20Trial-Free%20Press%20Issue%22. [Date Accessed: 31 July 2014].

Eliseev, A. 2005. How Leigh Matthews Was Murdered. *Mail & Guardian*. 25 July. [Online]. Available at: <http://mg.co.za/article/2005-07-25-how-leigh-matthews-was-murdered>. [Date Accessed: 5 July 2015].

Entman, R.M. 1993. Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication*. 43 (4): 51-58. [Online]. Available at: http://sotomove.geo.uzh.ch/sotomo/pps/lit/entman_93.pdf. [Date Accessed: 13 October 2013].

Entman, R.M. 2007. Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power. *Journal of Communication*. 57 (1): 163-173. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=24&sid=2522bba9-b3f5-414c-aff8-23f39338ff74%40sessionmgr12>. [Date Accessed: 13 October 2013].

Ex: Oscar doesn't scream like a woman. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 7 March. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Ex-Oscar-doesnt-scream-like-a-woman-20140307. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Ferreira, T. 2014. Oscar Pistorius „the Devil“ – June Steenkamp. *City Press*. 10 April. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.citypress.co.za/news/oscar-pistorius-devil-june-steenkamp/>. [Date Accessed: 10 June 2014].

Fulton, H. 2005. Print News as Narrative. *Narrative and the Media*. Fulton, H.; Huisman, R.; Murphet, J.; Dunn, A., eds. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 218-244.

Furno-Lamude, D. 1999. The Media Spectacle and the O.J. Simpson Case. *The O.J. Simpson Trials: Rhetoric, Media, and the Law*. Schuetz, J. & Lilley, L.S., eds. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. pp.19-35.

Geragos, M.J. 2006. The Thirteenth Juror: Media Coverage of Supersized Trials. *Loyola of Los Angeles Law Review*. 39 (2): 1167-1195. [Online]. Available at: http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2540&context=llr&sei-redir=1&referer=https%3A%2F%2Fscholar-google-co-za.ezproxy.uct.ac.za%2Fscholar%3Fq%3DThe%2BThirteenth%2BJuror%253A%2BMedia%2BCoverage%2Bof%2BSupersized%2BTrials%26btnG%3D%26hl%3Den%26as_sdt%3D0%252C5#search=%22Thirteenth%20Juror%3A%20Media%20Coverage%20Supersized%20Trials%22. [Date Accessed: 11 April 2014].

Gildersleeve, S. 2009. The Struggle for Justice: How the Media Convicted and Freed the “Scottsboro Boys” 1931-1937. *The Atlanta Review of Journalism History*. 8: 90-113. [Online]. Available at: <http://cime.gsu.edu/files/2014/04/ARJHVolumne8.pdf#page=98>. [Date Accessed: 31 July 2014].

Goldstuck, A. 2014. A Tale of Two Internet Connections. *Mail & Guardian*. 24 June. [Online]. Available at: <http://mg.co.za/article/2014-06-24-a-tale-of-two-internet-connections>. [Date Accessed: 10 April 2015].

Govender, M. 2013. The Paradox of Crime Perceptions: SAPS Crime Statistics, Victims of Crime Surveys and the Media. *SA Crime Quarterly*. 46: 49-60. [Online]. Available at: http://www.issafrica.org/uploads/CQ46_Govender.pdf. [Date Accessed: 15 August 2014].

Greer, C. & McLaughlin, E. 2011. „Trial by Media“: Policing the 24-7 News Mediasphere and the „Politics of Outrage“. *Theoretical Criminology*. 15 (1): 23-46. [Online]. Available at: <http://tcr.sagepub.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/content/15/1/23.full.pdf+html>. [Date Accessed: 29 April 2013].

Greer, C. & McLaughlin, E. 2012. Media Justice: Madeleine McCann, Intermediatization and „Trial By Media“ in the British Press. *Theoretical Criminology*. 16 (4): 395-416. [Online]. Available at: <http://tcr.sagepub.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/content/16/4/395.full.pdf+html>. [Date Accessed: 26 April 2013].

Hansen, A., Cottle, S., Negrine, R. & Newbold, C. 1998. Content Analysis. *Mass Communication Research Methods*. New York: New York University Press. 91-129.

Hlongwane, S. 2014a. Oscar’s trial – day 7 report. *News24*. 11 March. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/Live/SouthAfrica/OscarPistorius/STUDIO-Oscars-trial-day-7-report-20140311>. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Hlongwane, S. 2014b. Oscar’s paper trail comes back to haunt him. *News24*. 24 March. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscars-paper-trail-comes-back-to-haunt-him-20140324. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Hlongwane, S. 2014c. To call a witness – or not. *News24*. 8 May. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/To-call-a-witness-or-not-20140508. [Date accessed: 30 August 2015].

Hlongwane, S. 2014d. Demystifying Oscar trial. *News24*. 7 March. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Demystifying-Oscar-trial-20140307. [Date accessed: 30 August 2015].

I don't hate Oscar – Reeva's mom. 2014. *Agence France-Presse*. 7 July. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/I-dont-hate-Oscar-Reevas-mom-20140707. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

I'm scared of you sometimes - Reeva. 2014. *Agence France-Presse*. 24 March. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Im-scared-of-you-sometimes-Reeva-20140324-3. [Date accessed: 30 August 2015].

Innes, M. 1999. The Media as an Investigative Resource in Murder Enquiries. *British Journal of Criminology*. 39 (2): 269-286. [Online]. Available at: <http://bjc.oxfordjournals.org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/content/39/2/269.full.pdf+html>. [Date Accessed: 30 April 2013].

Jick, T.D. 1979. Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 24 (4): 602-611. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2392366>. [Date Accessed: 19 March 2012].

Johnson, KA. 2012. *The Ubiquity of Racialized and Gendered Frames in Crime Coverage: A Comparative Analysis of the Cape Argus and the Daily Voice*. (Unpublished).

Johnson, K.A. 2013. *Trial By Media: The Framing of Oscar Pistorius as the Media Spectacle*. (Unpublished).

Johnson-Cartee, K.S. 2005. News as Narrative. *News Narratives and News Framing: Constructing Political Reality*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. pp.147-181.

Kassarjian, H.H. 1977. Content Analysis in Consumer Research. *Journal of Consumer Research*. 4 (1): 8-18. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/stable/pdf/2488631.pdf?acceptTC=true>. [Date Accessed: 11 March 2015].

Katz, E. & Liebes, T. 2007. „No More Peace!": How Disaster, Terror and War Have Upstaged Media Events. *International Journal of Communication*. 1: 157-166. [Online]. Available at: <http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/44/23>. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].

Kellner, D. 2003a. Media Culture and the Triumph of the Spectacle. *Media Spectacle*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. pp. 1-30. [Online]. Available at: http://eclass.uoa.gr/modules/document/file.php/MEDIA118/celebrity%20culture/Book_media%20spectacle_douglas%20kellner.pdf. [Date Accessed: 25 April 2013].

Kellner, D. 2003b. The Sports Spectacle, Michael Jordan, and Nike. *Media Spectacle*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. pp. 63-92. [Online]. Available at: http://eclass.uoa.gr/modules/document/file.php/MEDIA118/celebrity%20culture/Book_media%20spectacle_douglas%20kellner.pdf. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].

Kellner, D. 2003c. Megaspectacle: The O.J. Simpson Murder Trial. *Media Spectacle*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. pp. 93-125. [Online]. Available at: http://eclass.uoa.gr/modules/document/file.php/MEDIA118/celebrity%20culture/Book_media%20spectacle_douglas%20kellner.pdf. [Date Accessed: 25 April 2013].

Kellner, D. 2004. 9/11, Spectacles of Terror, and Media Manipulation: A Critique of Jihadist and Bush Media. *Critical Discourse Studies*. 1 (1): 41-64. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/doi/pdf/10.1080/17405900410001674515>. [Date Accessed: 25 April 2013].

Kellner, D. 2005. *Hurricane Spectacles and the Crisis of the Bush Presidency*. [Online]. Available at: http://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/essays/2007_Kellner_Katrina2.pdf. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].

Kellner, D. 2007. Media Spectacle, Fear and Terrorism. *Media Development*. 54 (3): 11-14. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=0e776e9a-b49c-4505-9fd2-8e194af82205%40sessionmgr112&vid=1&hid=112>. [Date Accessed: 25 April 2013].

Kellner, D. 2008. Media Spectacle and the 2008 Presidential Election: Some Pre-Election Reflections. *UCLA's Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*. 1-19. [Online]. Available at: http://clients.jordanjennings.com/Mediascape/HTML/Fall08_Kellner.pdf. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].

Kellner, D. 2009. *Media Spectacle and Media Events: Some Critical Reflections*. [Online]. Available at: http://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/essays/2009_Kellner_MediaEventsJulyFINAL.pdf. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].

Kellner, D. 2010. Celebrity Diplomacy, Spectacle and Barack Obama. *Celebrity Studies*. 1 (1): 121-123. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/doi/pdf/10.1080/19392390903519156>. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].

Krippendorff, K. 2004. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Krippendorff, K. 2013. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*. 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Laing, A. 2014. Oscar Pistorius trial: Malawian housekeeper 'was at Pistorius home on night of shooting'. *The Telegraph*. 5 May. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/oscar-pistorius/10809123/Oscar-Pistorius-trial-Malawian-housekeeper-was-at-Pistorius-home-on-night-of-shooting.html>. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

Lilley, L.S. 1999. The Trial of the Century in Retrospect. *The O.J. Simpson Trials: Rhetoric, Media, and the Law*. Schuetz, J. & Lilley, L.S., eds. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. pp. 161-173.

Lim, C.S.H. 2012. Media Influence on Courts: Evidence from Civil Case Adjudication. [Online]. Available at: <https://lim.economics.cornell.edu/civilpaper.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 14 March 2014].

Lombard, M., Snyder-Duch, J. & Bracken, C. 2002. Content Analysis in Mass Communication: Assessment and Reporting of Intercoder Reliability. *Human Communication Research*. 28 (4): 587-604. [Online]. Available at: http://atar.mscc.huji.ac.il/~mb/analyzing_CA.pdf. [Date Accessed: 12 April 2013].

Machado, H. & Santos, F. 2009. The Disappearance of Madeleine McCann: Public Drama and Trial By Media in the Portuguese Press. *Crime, Media, Culture*. 5: 146-167. [Online]. Available at: <http://cmc.sagepub.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/content/5/2/146.full.pdf+html>. [Date Accessed: 17 November 2014].

Miller, J. & Sack, C. 2010. The Toronto-18 Terror Case: Trial by Media? How Newspaper Opinion Framed Canada's Biggest Terrorism Case. *The International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations*. 10 (1): 279-295. [Online]. Available at: <http://storage.ubertor.com/cl7021/content/document/47.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 25 April 2013].

Nel is desperate – Roux. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 8 August. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Nel-is-desperate-Roux-20140808. [Date accessed: 30 August 2015].

Nelson, T.E., Oxley, Z.M. & Clawson, R.A. 1997. Toward a Psychology of Framing Effects. *Political Behaviour*. 19 (3): 221-246. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/586517>. [Date Accessed: 13 October 2013].

Neuendorf, K.A. 2011. Content Analysis – A Methodological Primer for Gender Research. *Sex Roles*. 64: 276-289. [Online]. Available at: <http://link.springer.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/article/10.1007/s11199-010-9893-0/fulltext.html>. [Date Accessed: 26 June 2014].

News24. 2014. *Disclaimer*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/MyNews24/The-Oscar-Pistorius-Trial-defining-roles-20140324>. [Date accessed: 30 August 2015].

Oney, S. 2004. *Murder Trials and Media Sensationalism: The Press Frenzy of a Century Ago Echoes in the Coverage of Trials Today*, *Nieman Reports*, Spring update. [Online]. Available at: <http://niemanreports.org/articles/murder-trials-and-media-sensationalism/>. [Date Accessed: 31 July 2014].

Orford, M. 2014. Heart of Oscar's Defence: Imagined Threat of a Black Stranger. *Daily Maverick*. 3 March. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2014-03-03-heart-of-oscar-defence-imagined-threat-of-a-black-stranger/#.VPR8ffmUf00>. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].

Oscar an egotistical liar – Nel. 2014. *Associated Press*. 10 April. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscar-an-egotistical-liar-Nel-20140410. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

Oscar cries for himself, not Reeva – criminologist. 2014. *News24*. 10 April. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/Live/SouthAfrica/OscarPistorius/Oscar-cries-for-himself-not-Reeva-criminologist-20140328>. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Oscar Faces Murder Rap: Gunned Down: Reeva Steenkamp Was Shot Four Times „Through Bathroom Door“. 2013. *Cape Argus* (Cape Town). 15 February :1

Oscar intimidated Reeva's friend – report. 2014. *News24*. 6 May. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscar-intimidated-Reevas-friend-report-20140506. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

Oscar on the couch. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 13 April. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscar-on-the-couch-20140413. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Oscar Pistorius arrives in court for judgement. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 11 September. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscar-Pistorius-arrives-in-court-for-judgment-20140911. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

Oscar's browser history revealed. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 19 March. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscars-browser-history-revealed-20140319. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

Oscar's expert accused of being unqualified. 2014. *Agence France-Presse*. 16 April. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscars-expert-accused-of-being-unqualified-20140416. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Oscar's mom kept pistol under pillow, court hears. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 7 April. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscars-mom-kept-pistol-under-pillow-court-hears-20140407. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Oscar's options are stark on judgement day. 2014. *Reuters*. 11 September. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscars-options-are-stark-on-judgment-day-20140911. [Date: 31 August 2015].

Oscar's version not true – Nel. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 10 April. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Oscars-version-not-true-Nel-20140410. [Date Accessed: 29 August].

Peterson, R.D. & Krivo, L.J. 2005. Macrostructural Analysis of Race, Ethnicity, and Violent Crime: Recent Lessons and New Directions for Research. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 31: 331-356. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29737723>. [Date Accessed: 13 October 2012].

Pink support for Steenkamp family. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 11 September. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Pink-support-for-Steenkamp-family-20140911. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

Pistorius planned to buy more guns – dealer. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 17 March. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Pistorius-planned-to-buy-more-guns-dealer-20140317. [Date accessed: 30 August 2015].

Pistorius refuses to take responsibility – Nel. 2014. *South African Press Association*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Pistorius-refuses-to-take-responsibility-Nel-20140807. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Pistorius trial: Pathologist to continue testimony. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 11 March. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Pistorius-trial-Pathologist-to-continue-testimony-20140311. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Pistorius used phone hour before Reeva's death. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 25 March. [Online]. Available: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Pistorius-used-phone-hour-before-Reevas-death-20140325. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

Potter, M. 2011. *Do the Media Influence the Judiciary?*, *The Foundation for Law, Justice and Society*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.fljs.org/sites/www.fljs.org/files/publications/Potter_PB.pdf. [Date Accessed: 1 August 2014].

Reich, Z. 2011. Source Credibility and Journalism. *Journalism Practice*. 5 (1): 51-67. [Online]. Available at:

<http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/doi/pdf/10.1080/17512781003760519>. [Date Accessed: 1 December 2014].

Resta, G. 2008. Trying Cases in the Media: A Comparative Overview. *Law and Contemporary Problems*. 71: 31-66. [Online]. Available at: <http://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1493&context=lcp>. [Date Accessed: 12 August 2014].

Sacco, V.E. 1995. Media Constructions of Crime. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 539: 141-154. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1048402>. [Date Accessed: 9 October 2013].

Scheufele, D.A. & Tewksbury, D. 2007. Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models. *Journal of Communication*. 57: 9-20. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.davidryfe.com/here/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/scheufele.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 9 February 2015].

Schilling, J. 2006. On the Pragmatics of Qualitative Assessment: Designing the Process for Content Analysis. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*. 22 (1): 28-37. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.wompt.com.au/lecturing/materials/schilling2006.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 28 February 2012].

Schneider, C.J. 2006. *Media Trials: Media Justice or Just Media? Media Depictions of Martha Stewart and Kimberly Jones*. [Online]. Available at: http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p101464_index.html. [Date Accessed: 14 November 2014].

Schroeder, F. & Kinnear, J. 2012. „Mental Disorders“ Drove Erin’s Killer. *IOL News*. 6 March. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/mental-disorders-drove-erin-s-killer-1.1249948#.VZlc6fmqqko>. [Date Accessed: 5 July 2015].

September, C. 2013. The Anene Booyesen Story. *Eyewitness News*. 1 November. [Online]. Available at: <http://ewn.co.za/2013/10/31/The-Anene-Booyesen-Story>. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].

Sesant, S. 2015. JAYDE PANAYIOTOU MURDER: DETAILS REVEALED. *Eyewitness News*. 21 May. [Online]. Available at: <http://ewn.co.za/2015/05/21/Gruesome-details-revealed-from-Jayde-Panayiotou-murder>. [Date accessed: 5 July 2015].

Shaffer, R.A. 1986. Pretrial Publicity: Media Coverage and Guilt Attribution. *Communication Quarterly*. 34 (2): 154-169. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=00b00737-bc75-4577-9e64-68fd5479130c%40sessionmgr4002&vid=1&hid=4109>. [Date Accessed: 14 March 2014].

- Sheley, J.F. & Ashkins, C.D. 1981. Crime, Crime News, and Crime Views. *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 45 (4): 492-506. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&hid=24&sid=2522bba9-b3f5-414c-aff8-23f39338ff74%40sessionmgr12>. [Date Accessed: 9 October 2012].
- Simon, A. & Xenos, M. 2000. Media Framing and Effective Public Deliberation. *Political Communication*. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=108&sid=d1ddd93b-c15e-452a-ac1f-4333ae8c1fdc%40sessionmgr110>. [Date Accessed: 1 October 2013].
- Smolej, M. & Kivivuori, J. 2006. The Relation Between Crime News and Fear of Violence. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*. 7 (2): 211-227. [Online]. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14043850601002429>. [Date Accessed: 2 March 2014].
- Smolkin, R. 2007. Justice Delayed. *American Journalism Review*. August/September, 29 (4): 18-29. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=8c71d2cb-919b-4f6c-b04b-ff5c3175827e%40sessionmgr110&vid=6&hid=116>. [Date Accessed: 2 August 2014].
- South African Police Service. 2014. *RSA: April to March 2004 - 2014: Crime Categories Figures and Ratios*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.saps.gov.za/resource_centre/publications/statistics/crimestats/2014/crime_stats.php. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].
- State wraps up Pistorius cross-examination. 2014. *South African Press Association*. 15 April. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/State-wraps-up-Pistorius-cross-examination-20140415. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].
- Statistics South Africa. 2014. *General Household Survey 2013*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0318/P03182013.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 10 April 2015].
- Stillman, S. 2007. „The Missing White Girl Syndrome“: Disappeared Women and Media Activism. *Gender & Development*. 15 (3): 491-502. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13552070701630665>. [Date accessed: 31 August 2015].
- Tay, N. 2014. Oscar Pistorius Trial: The Invisible Witness. *Yahoo Sports*. 2 April. [Online]. Available at: <http://sports.yahoo.com/news/oscar-pistorius-trial--the-invisible-witness-141058347.html>. [Date Accessed: 23 January 2015].
- Terre Blanche, M., Durheim, K. & Painter, D. Eds. 2008. *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social Sciences*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Tewksbury, R. 2009. Qualitative versus Quantitative Methods: Understanding Why Qualitative Methods are Superior for Criminology and Criminal Justice. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Criminology*. 1 (1): 38-58. [Online]. Available at: http://jtpcrim.org/January_Articles/Qualitative_Vs_Quantitave_Richard_Tewksbury.pdf. [Date Accessed: 21 February 2012].

The differing defences for Oscar Pistorius. 2014. *News24*. 7 August. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/Live/SouthAfrica/OscarPistorius/The-differing-defences-for-Oscar-Pistorius-20140514>. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Trump insults Oscar judge. 2014. *News24*. 12 September. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.channel24.co.za/Gossip/News/Donald-Trump-calls-Oscar-judge-a-total-moron-20140912>. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Van Rooyen, K. 2014. Challenges to the Sub Judice Rule in South Africa. *HST Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies*. 70 (1): 1-9.

Vermaak, M., Areff, A. & Evans, J. 2013. „I Tried to Save Reeva But She Died In My Arms“: Oscar Pistorius Explains that Fatal Shooting Was Nothing More Than A Terrible Accident. *Cape Argus* (Cape Town). 20 February: 4.

Vinson, C.D. & Ertter, J.S. 2002. Entertainment or Education: How Do Media Cover the Courts?. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*. [Online]. Available at: <http://hij.sagepub.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/content/7/4/80.full.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 1 November 2014].

Wasserman, H. 2010. *Tabloid Journalism in South Africa*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. 2009. Playing Defence in Sexual Assault „Trial By Media“: The Male Footballer’s Imaginary Body. *Australian Feminist Law Journal*. 30 (1): 109-129. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/doi/pdf/10.1080/13200968.2009.10854418>. [Date Accessed: 17 November 2014].

Weinberg, T. 2012. Media Burn: What’s in a Name?. *Journal of Film and Video*. 64 (1): 51-556. [Online]. Available at: <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=0718a8fa-6ae9-4791-a34e-91f37bf4a957%40sessionmgr4005&vid=1&hid=4101>. [Date Accessed: 12 June 2014].

Wiener, M. & Bateman, B. 2014. *Behind the Door: The Oscar Pistorius and Reeva Steenkamp Story*. Johannesburg: Pan Macmillan.

Wigston, D. 2009. Chapter One: Quantitative Content Analysis. *Media Studies: Media Content and Media Audiences*. Fourie, P.J., ed. Cape Town: Juta & Co.

Wimmer, R.D. & Dominick, J.R. 2010. *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. California: Wadsworth.

Witness cries at Pistorius murder trial. 2014. *Associated Press*. 4 March. [Online]. Available at: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Oscar_Pistorius/Witness-cries-at-Pistorius-murder-trial-20140304. [Date accessed: 29 August 2015].

Wright, J.P.; Cullen, F.T. & Blankenship, M.B. 1995. The Social Construction of Corporate Violence: Media Coverage of the Imperial Food Products Fire. *Crime & Delinquency*. 41 (1): 20-36.

Wright II, J.W. & Dente Ross, S. 1997. Trial By Media? Media Reliance, Knowledge of Crime and Perception of Criminal Defendants. *Communication Law and Policy*. 2 (4): 397-416. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/doi/pdf/10.1080/10811689709368632>. [Date Accessed: 31 July 2014].

Zhang, Y. & Wildemuth, B.M. 2009. *Qualitative Analysis of Content*. [Online]. Available at: <http://7702-f12.design4complexity.com/qualitative-research/content-analysis.pdf>. [Date Accessed: 1 October 2012].