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Crime, punishment and the force of photographic spectacle

Crime, punição e a força do espetáculo fotográfico

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Crime, punishment and the force of photographic spectacle

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PHIL CARNEY*

Abstract
This article is a study in Cultural Criminology, Criminology focused on Visual. What features are different aspects of the relationship between image and crime, in particular the use of comparative image associated with crime in its social effect at different times in history, in order to offer subsidies for the use as a cultural product in its varied social dimensions.
Keywords: Cultural criminology; Visual criminology; Crime; Spectacle; Photography.

Resumo
Este artigo é um estudo de Criminologia Cultural, criminologicamente focado no visual, com ênfase para diferentes aspectos da relação entre imagem e crime, em particular o uso de imagens comparativas associadas com o crime em seu efeito social em diferentes momentos da história, com o propósito de fornecer subsídios para tal uso como produto cultural em suas variadas dimensões sociais.
Palavras-chave: Criminologia cultural; Criminologia visual; Crime; Espetáculo; Fotografia.

> […] *the picture of a crime presented in the right stage conditions is something infinitely more dangerous to the mind than if the same crime were committed in real life*.
>
> ANTONIN ARTAUD (1970)

Introduction

When Susan Sontag first visited the Cathedral at Orvieto she was disappointed. It was not as rich as the images she had seen in the architecture books. Visitors to the Grand Canyon have been known to wonder why it falls short of the astonishing imagery available in the magazines and films. Daniel Boorstin imagined the response of a proud mother told her baby is beautiful: 'Oh that's nothing—you should see his photograph!" Boorstin, the first simulation theorist, was of course bemoaning our attachment to the distractions and falsities of the image.

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Such a view is conditioned by a long history of Western representation. Social and cultural theorists are accustomed to conceiving of the photograph as a *reproduction,* as an image of something from somewhere else. It is in this way that we risk being seduced by the problem of meaning and representation. We ask 'what does this photograph represent?' or 'what does it mean?', as if photographic practice in all its many social and cultural dimensions is reducible to a small, pale image on a surface. Is it any surprise that we might distrust what we see, that we might cede the field to the theorists of textual interpretation, semiotics and psychoanalysis? Here photography must always fail. It is never fully adequate to the object or meaning it seeks to convey. It is never as good as the real thing or it always hides the real meaning. The photograph falls short, its frame and focus amputate a material or symbolic reality. Jean Baudrillard, perhaps the last high priest of representation, went as far as to argue that the photograph had lost contact with reality altogether. It was just a simulation. Guy Debord and the Situationists urged us to turn away from the empty, illusory image in the spectacle and embrace instead a different politics.

However another perspective on photography is possible: it *produces* more than it reproduces. It is no longer a deficit but a surplus. Understood in this way, we are now obliged to abandon the logic of meaning and simulation and appreciate the social practice of photography as *production.* Instead of thinking of the photograph as a deficient image of something else, what if we think of it as a social process of producing images, whether images in the real, or images in fantasy?

One of the intentions of this chapter is to argue the importance of the photograph as a social practice of production, in this case the production of the modern *spectacle.* Photography is a social activity not just in the special events like births, marriages and holidays, but something more everyday in which we both take photographs and perform for the camera. More and more of us carry cameras *all the time* in the form of mobile phones. In another dimension of our everyday life, photography is encountered in newspapers, magazines, on advertising hoardings and product packaging: image practices everywhere. Television, cinema and DVD, though associated with sound recording and broadcast, are predominantly photographic experiences. In the wide new world of the internet, the photograph populates virtual space as much as it does our actual space. On television there are now shows in which control by CCTV is also an opportunity for entertainment in candid camera programmes as well as in the footage of strange happenings and crimes released to the mass media by the authorities. We are looking through a photographic medium to see more photography, and the same happens in cinema or TV drama in which photographs are frequently used as dramatic tools. Every major sporting event now has its photographic apparatus with dozens of camera angles, fixed and mobile. A 'big screen' is now part of large stadium architecture, showing the television view when the direct view is not good enough. Spectators catch themselves on the screen, and thus on television, and the television audience sees their smiles as they see themselves as we see them. Spectatorial performance is part of the event.

Thus the pluripotent force of the photographic spectacle is everywhere, whether in our personal lives, entertainment, the commodity, the news, the internet, or, indeed, as a power of control, on CCTV or identity documentation and archives. In this chapter I want to examine an important aspect of this force of spectacle through a brief history of its development in modernity, and in particular the spectacle of crime and punishment. I hope to give the reader a sense of the importance of the photographic spectacle and spectatorship to modernity: we now live in a photographic culture in which we are both actors and audience.

From the outset we should appreciate that the photographic spectacle is no mere image, backdrop, illustration or portrait *of* our lives. It flows through us as a part of our social being. It is not an image of our lives, it is part of our lives. What do we mean by this term 'spectacle'? In one sense we are talking about the mass media, but here the term spectacle will be used in order to focus on social practice extending well beyond

that of communication. In this way the aim is to show some of the links between mass-mediated practices and performances of everyday life. If, crudely put, the photographic spectacle involves the photograph in mass circulation, then we do not merely gawp at it, we participate in its forces. If we are spectators, we are *active.* We bring to the power of spectacle our own desires, our own social practices, our own practical spectatorship.

In this chapter we will conduct a small history of spectacle with a set of purposes in mind. The primary aim is to bring out the importance of the photographic spectacle to an understanding of modernity, and thus to the project of cultural criminology. In order to understand the dynamics of spectacle we will emphasise the participatory and active spectator, thus the dependence of spectacle on *festival* in crime and punishment. The spectator brings festive desire to the spectacle. Thus we will also bring out the complex multiplicity of spectacle involving festive loops between image performance and spectators. We will also look at how the circulating photograph can *mark* bodies with the stigma of shame, a force used in the interacting fields of popular entertainment, celebrity and the punishment of criminal bodies. Finally we will embark on a conceptual and methodological detour in an attempt to deal with a central idea of *spectacular practice* in the context of the problem of method. Throughout there will be an awareness of the interlinked roles of power and desire in this photographic culture of crime and punishment, and hence the importance of a *critical* approach.

How we write about photography, of the photographic enterprise itself, as well as how we interpret it, is a practice that must be cultural, creative and sensitive to the dynamics of the image. Such an approach should also involve an awareness that the lines of force in and through an image are unruly. They do not follow straight lines. We should therefore be sensitive to the dangers of compressing the photograph and its social forces into simplistic, linear and logical narratives. When we describe a painting, for example, there is no 'beginning' or 'end', there is no straight line through the picture. Even more so for the photograph, because what we see in front of our eyes is never reducible to a set of linear principles, nor can it ever pretend to be 'objective'. In this chapter I will attempt to build a 'picture' of the photographic spectacle and its practices in the arena of crime and punishment.

FOCUS: Predation, punishment and paparazzi: a small history of modern spectacle

The birth of our modernity is associated with the rise of a public or mass culture of spectatorship. In our growing cities consumerism expanded alongside a keen desire to participate in collective forms of viewing pleasure. The apparent chaos of the new urban crowd in the 19th century belied the establishment of an organised *audience* (Schwartz 1998) and the construction of public fields in which spectacle was seen (Clark 1985). These fields of vision included the written and illustrated news, shopping avenues, arcades and department stores, the display of commodities, the new theatres, cafés and restaurants, parks and museums, novel forms of entertainment such as the panorama, diorama and the wax-work display, and the rapidly growing practices of commercial tourism (see also Hayward 2004, for a cultural criminological discussion of how some of these processes impacted on the urban experience).

Schwartz argues that the attitude of the *flâneur*—a concept emerging from Walter Benjamin's study of Baudelaire, wherein he describes a certain, leisured, mobile individual who delights in the sights of the modern city from a certain anonymous, detached, though far from hidden position—characterises the spectator in this period. Whether as tourist or *flâneur*, the modern spectator is a physically active, mobile figure who is part of the urban spectacle. Amid this spectacle, and contributing to its forms and forces, there arises the circulating photograph, ushering in a new image world. The urban crowd mixed in architectural space but also in the new spaces opened up by the photographic world.

After its invention in 1839, photography soon became, in Benjamin's words, an 'art of the fairground'. Indeed the name most associated with its invention in France, Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre, had been a showman working on the popular technologies of theatrical spectacle and the new diorama (Gernsheim and Gernsheim 1968). At the same time as Daguerre's innovation was announced in France, Fox Talbot in Britain invented the negative-positive process which allowed for the potentially infinite reproduction of the photograph and its circulation in mass markets. Photography moved in two directions at once: first, towards the astonishingly real, and, second, through the manipulation of image development towards the fantastic (Kracauer 1960). Both of these practices would contribute to the fascination and surprise of the photographic spectacle, the former in news, documentary and portraiture, the latter in cinema, advertising and packaging.

In this new spectacle the burgeoning middle classes not only collected images of the rich and famous, of politicians and royalty, prominent business figures, scientists, and entertainers, they also thronged to have photographs taken of themselves, thus gradually learning to perform in and through the image. At the same time imperial science acquired a taste for anthropologically exotic figures, whilst domestic governments sought to capture portraits of criminals. Both entered the general circulation of photographic images. If the spectacle of public punishment had rapidly declined in the early 19th century, the new spectacle was to open up different forms of spectatorship of crime and punishment. Thus the photographers who were hired to take images of the arrested in order to trace recidivism amidst the crowd of faces in the ever-expanding prison, found that they could supplement their income by selling the images to interested consumers.

Paris, 'the capital of the nineteenth century', witnessed new desires for the real—simulated or otherwise—such as those of the waxwork museum and the Paris morgue (Schwartz 1998). Opening in 1882, the Musée Grevin's display of waxworks of the famous and infamous was an immediate popular attraction. Prominent among the waxwork tableaux were celebrated crimes, feeding a hunger for the kind of sensation now also found in the popular newspapers. In 1864 the police opened the Paris morgue to the public in the hope that they might aid the identification of dead bodies found in the streets and waterways. Of course most were driven by curiosity rather than any realistic chance of helping the authorities, making the morgue a great popular attraction. Along with the waxwork museum and the newspapers, the morgue betokened a growing passion to see criminal traces and events in a theatre of the real.

With new technology and increasing levels of literacy, the mass-circulated newspaper became progressively more profitable from the mid-19th century onwards. Its daily news developed an interest in what the French called *faits divers*, the variety of strange, unusual and fearful events in everyday life. In this spectatorial relationship with the news, images of crime added to the thrills. With the spread of photography, the audience were aware that illustrations no longer depended on the imagination of the engraver but on the startling reality of photographic production.

Amid this passionate reality of the image, Moreau-Christophe, the French Inspector General of Prisons writing in 1854, saw the photograph as a technology fit to replace the brand (Phéline 1985). He saw its value in identifying recidivists but the comparison to the brand was more than just fanciful. Declining rapidly at the beginning of the nineteenth century (along with other forms of spectacular punishment), branding for particular crimes had been both a punishment and a means of identification. It combined the pain of hot iron on flesh, the scar of shame and the mark of crime. Moreau-Christophe's nomination of the photograph as successor to the brand was prophetic. Not only did prisoners fear the power of the camera, it *marked* their bodies with a stigma that was more than just symbolic; for in the developing culture of photographic circulation, the spectacle of the 'brand' was extended and intensified. If Moreau-Christophe had thought of simple identification in the imagery of the brand, he also, wittingly or unwittingly, captured the power of the circulating photograph to

stigmatise the body of the criminal in front of a mass audience. It was in this way that modernity used the photographic archive not only to arrest, control and identify (Sekula 1989; Tagg 1988), but also to stigmatise through display in the photographic spectacle. Our own age of 'naming and shaming' in and through the image was born at this moment.

Meanwhile photography was also recruited by a typological science of criminal bodies. Supported by an atlas of photographs, Cesare Lombroso's theories of the visible criminal type built, first, on older associations between character and facial physiognomy and, second, on the use of the anthropological photograph in the scientific study of other races in the colonies (Edwards 1992). His criminal anthropology resonated with the power-driven construction of primitives in the far-off lands of the new imperialism. Lombroso's dangerous 'criminal classes' were a race apart. Such forms of power-knowledge were, at the same time, a spectacle in museums, travelling exhibitions, illustrations in the press and public discussion (Morrison 2004a). As the century closed, photographs of Lombroso's staring criminals, accompanied by the fantastic fictions of degeneration, were circulating in an international physiognomonic spectacle.

Inspired by the images of colonial anthropology, Alphonse Bertillon in Paris sought to turn his photography into a systematic science of identification. With the photograph in mind, he had observed with interest the 1871 uprising and defeat of the Communards in Paris during the Franco-Prussian war. Rather naively, as it turned out, but no doubt driven by the new sense of photographic festival, the rebels at the barricades had proudly posed for many collective and individual portraits. In the counter-insurgent terror that followed the collapse of the revolution, the streets of Paris ran red with the blood of thousands of suspected revolutionaries summarily shot by the authorities. Amidst the intelligence collected by the restored administration were the photographs, now turned from a portraiture of pride into an instrument of ruthless revenge. Bertillon watched and learned.

FIG. 1. Group of soldiers in front of a barricade.
Eugène Fabius. 1871,

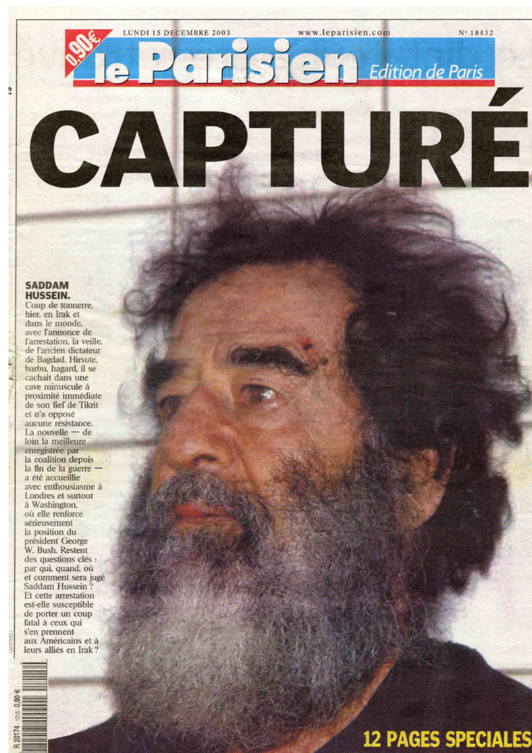
FIG. 2. Communards in their coffins.
A.-A.-E. Disdéri (attributed). 1871,

The image of dead communards has been attributed to André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri (1818-1889), one of the great entrepreneurs of the mid-century *carte-de-visite* craze. Perhaps he, more than anyone else, persuaded Parisians to pose in front of the camera to obtain cheap photo-portraits (the size of a visiting card) to place in their egalitarian albums, side by side with the famous of their day. No doubt such a culture influenced the photographic festival in the revolutionary carnival of the Commune. Disdéri was around to capture the bloody consequences.

Initially using photography as part of the systematic measurement of criminal bodies, he soon turned to the problem of individual identification, developing the canonical mug shot familiar to us today as the double photograph combining full-face and profile shots of the head and shoulders. A patchy and unsystematic practice of prison portraiture was transformed into a regularised policing technology of identification and control that would progressively expand in the course of the 20th century. Today we know that a mug shot in the spectacle is no mere instrument of identification. It also involves the capture of a suspect, the enactment of a power of arrest and, in its release to the mass media, not only an indication of policing power in general but also, as Moreau-Christophe might have hoped, its capacity to brand a detained body with shame.

Michel Foucault (1981) famously argued in *Discipline and Punish* that the beginning of modernity marked the transition from a society of spectacle to one of surveillance. Much criticised in this regard, he was, in fact, addressing the thesis of Debord's *The Society of Spectacle*, whose unitary notion of power ignored the expansion of disciplinary and surveillant techniques. Elsewhere, much more like Nietzsche (1967) in *The Genealogy of Morals*, Foucault (2000) spoke of an array of punitive tactics, classifiable into four main types: exile, compensation, marking and confinement. They were all found in the pre-modern 'classical' period and, though confinement is the 'privileged' form in our own time, he by no means excludes, despite the rhetoric of *Discipline and Punish*, the other kinds of tactic. Marking could 'expose, mark, wound, amputate, make a scar, stamp a sign on the face or the shoulder, impose an artificial and visible handicap, torture' in a process that would 'seize hold of the body and inscribe upon it the marks of power'. We have seen that photographs of criminals, whether as types or individuals, were sought after commodities in the image spectacle and it was precisely by dint of this that mug shots released into circulation could act as a new form of brand or mark, a mode of punitive exposure in the image.

Saddam Hussein was captured by coalition forces and photographed for the world. This front page tells us both about his detention and performs his photographic capture in a clinical scene of humiliation.



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CAPTURÉ

SADDAM HUSSEIN. Coup de tonnerre, hier, en Irak et dans le monde, avec l'annonce de l'arrestation, la veille, de l'ancien dictateur de Bagdad. Hirsute, barbu, hagard, il se cachait dans une cave minuscule à proximité immédiate de son fief de Tikrit et n'a opposé aucune résistance. La nouvelle — de loin la meilleure enregistrée par la coalition depuis la fin de la guerre — a été accueillie avec enthousiasme à Londres et surtout à Washington, où elle renforce sérieusement la position du président George W. Bush. Restent des questions clés : par qui, quand, où et comment sera jugé Saddam Hussein ? Et cette arrestation est-elle susceptible de porter un coup fatal à ceux qui s'en prennent aux Américains et à leurs alliés en Irak ?

(AFP/HO)

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FIG. 3. '*Capturé*' *Le Parisien* December 15, 2003.

At the end of the 19th century the British popular press was revolutionised by Harmsworth's *Daily Mail,* aimed at the rapidly expanding lower middle class. Reaching a circulation of a million within five years of its launch in 1896, it sought to distance itself from the crude sensation of the 'yellow press' but it nonetheless revelled in its duty to report crime. Harmsworth had urged his journalists to 'get me a murder a day' (Williams 1998). As the 19th turned into the 20th century, half-tone technology allowed photographs

to be directly reproduced in newspapers and magazines, a process that would feed and further stimulate the spectatorial appetite for crime and punishment.

The period between 1890 and 1914 witnessed the invention of cinema, the early appearance of photographs reproduced in mass-market publications, the expansion of the postcard industry, and the proliferation of popular snapshot photography, the latter enabled by the mass production of cheaper, more portable cameras and an accompanying photo-processing industry. In this photographic culture there was a close relationship between popular photography and popular spectatorship: many spectators of cinema, for example, were increasingly aware, directly or indirectly, of how pictures were taken. The aftermath of the First World War saw not only the golden age of cinema but serious investment by the publication houses in the half-tone process, with an ensuing expansion of news, documentary and fashion photo-magazines. In this period further technological development brought smaller and lighter professional cameras together with faster films and lenses, enabling more candid, spontaneous forms of photo-reportage. In the US a covert photograph of Ruth Snyder in her execution chair appeared in *The New York Daily News* in 1928 and an avid public drove its circulation up by 750,000 (Valier 2004).

The inter-war period was also associated with extraordinary technological innovations in radio broadcasting and 'talkies'. In this photographic culture festival mixed with spectacle. While a new mass audience may have sat passively in the dark of the movie theatres, their appetites fed the production of magazines and newspapers and drove the cinema fantasy and fame machine. An *active* relationship with the image was also more clearly expressed in postcards and expanding snapshot photography.

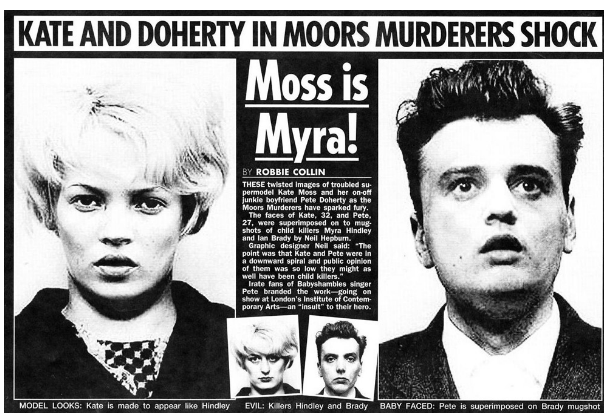
But it was also in this interwar crucible of spectacle that fascism was forged, deploying all the new technologies of sound and light, including news reel and photographic stills in mass circulation newspapers. As with all modern spectacle, there was also a festive dynamic. Building on Browning's important study of Reserve Police Batallion 101 (one of the WW2 Nazi death squads in Poland), Wayne Morrison (2004b) has shown how these 'ordinary men' used their own festive form of photography. Like tourists on holiday, and without a trace of the kind of frenzied evil that we seem to require in order to understand genocide, they smiled as they casually posed by their frightened and humiliated victims. Thus they anticipated in many ways, first, the attitudes of the soldiers who used photogenic torture in the Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad and, second, the structural relationship between the apparent informalities of festival and the organised formalities of political and martial spectacle (see also Hamm 2007).

In the course of the forties a jobbing news photographer in New York, Arthur Fellig, illicitly tuned into police radio frequencies and often arrived at the scenes of crimes before the police themselves. Capturing photographs of casual murders and mob assassination, as well as motor accidents and fires, he developed his naturalistic images in the boot of his car and delivered them to surprised but grateful editors in time for the morning editions. Attributing to him an almost supernatural power to sniff out death and disaster, the press and police wondered if he used a ouija board. In any case a nickname, "Weegee", stuck.

Weegee not only fed the profits of the tabloids but he helped establish a special relationship between the police, the spectacular image and an avid viewing public. Good crime images, then as now, were a valuable source of police PR. But Weegee's photography also enacted a new practice of the image. With its use of the terms 'shot' or 'capture', for example, photography is replete with metaphors of hunting and seizure, and Sontag (1979) sees this violence as inherent to its operation. Here the image hunter roams in a kind of wild, natural world. Weegee was perhaps the first photographer to stalk and ensnare his prey with stealth and speed, a practice that would be highly influential in the coming decades.

After the Second World War, television, like the magazine, inserted a powerful public form of imagery into the midst of private domestic space. Among the novelties of the mass consumer society were the famous bodies of the film, pop and fashion industries, relayed in photographic posters, packaging, advertising, magazines and news, and nourished by demand from a new cohort of young consumers. Youth culture arrived in and contributed to the consumer world, a culture combining an insolence, opposition and transgression that was commercialised and fed in loops through photographic and phonographic space. As the images of famous film stars and popular musicians further penetrated domestic space, photographic exaltation found itself side-by-side with intimate proximity. This photographic combination of fame and possessive familiarity, also producing the dialectic of spectacular distance and emotional closeness, would become an important characteristic of celebrity. Anyone surprised (or appalled) by the mass outpouring of emotion following the violent death of Princess Diana should re-examine her life in the photograph. In the spectacle she combined the 'girl-next-door' with Disney princess, the touching of the sick with red-carpet posing, real intimacy with fantastic exaltation. Hers was a life and a death also crucially marked by an ambivalent relationship to the image, and thus to the audience, which she both courted and fled, with the predatory paparazzi playing a central role on our behalf.

For Marshall McLuhan (1964), writing in the early days of post-war photographic celebrity, the photograph commodified the bodies of the famous, multiplying them into 'mass-produced merchandise'. Indeed in *Understanding Media* he went as far as to call the photograph 'the Brothel-Without-Walls'. For McLuhan the photographic image of fame delivered darker desires. The expansion of celebrity into new fields after the Second World War gave this meretricious commodification another twist in the birth of the paparazzi. Until this point the images of the stars were confined to staged film stills or portrait-studio publicity, though from time to time the stars might pose in the street for a polite photographer. But in an age of declining deference, photographic familiarity and the urgent desire to possess the latest commodities, photographic politesse would be left behind. The paparazzo—a predator capturing candid and *natural* images of the famous, where the spectator rather than the star now commanded the photograph—was another factor in the construction of the celebrity image. Such photography, where an attempt is made by the consumer to wrest power away from the famous person—when celebrity is literally *consumed*—inevitably also provoked and captured scenes of embarrassment, shame or humiliation in which adulation and *schadenfreude* mixed in equal measure. The Brothel-Without-Walls became a kind of cage in which the occupant was painfully prodded for the delectation of the spectator. Indeed it is in this punitive arena where the paparazzi and the police join hands in the capture of the celebrity mug shot.



KATE AND DOHERTY IN MOORS MURDERERS SHOCK

Moss is Myra!

BY ROBBIE COLLIN

THESE twisted images of troubled supermodel Kate Moss and her on-off junkie boyfriend Pete Doherty as the Moors Murderers have sparked fury.

The faces of Kate, 32, and Pete, 27, were superimposed on to mugshots of child killers Myra Hindley and Ian Brady by Neil Hepburn.

Graphic designer Neil said: "The point was that Kate and Pete were in a downward spiral and public opinion of them was so low they might as well have been child killers."

Irate fans of Babyshambles singer Pete branded the work—going on show at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts—an "insult" to their hero.

MODEL LOOKS: Kate is made to appear like Hindley

EVIL: Killers Hindley and Brady

BABY FACED: Pete is superimposed on Brady mugshot

FIG. 4. *News of the World* May 7, 2006, featuring the work of viral artist Neil Hepburn.

FIG. 5. Russell Young, Kate Moss and Pete Doherty, based on Hepburn's work. Screen print. 2007.

'Nowadays if you're a crook you're still considered up-there. You can write books, go on TV, give interviews—you're a big celebrity and nobody even looks down on you because you're a crook. You're still up there. This is because more than anything people just want stars' Andy Warhol (1975).

Artists since Andy Warhol, who scandalously painted the mug shots of 'Most Wanted Men' in 1964, have commented on the relationship between celebrity and desire in the criminal identification photograph. What happens when a criminal becomes infamous through a mug shot? Marcus Harvey's monumental painting of the Myra Hindley mug shot—shown in 1997 at the appropriately named *Sensation* exhibition of paintings from the Saatchi collection—excited a storm of controversy.

When photographs of Kate Moss and Pete Doherty using cocaine were first published and used to vilify them in the press in 2005, the viral artist Neil Hepburn produced a work entitled *Cliché 49*, amalgamating their photographic images with the child killers Hindley and Brady and posted it on the web site B3TA.com. His intention was to comment on the way in which the media had turned them into folk devils, lending them a notoriety akin to the infamous murderers. Later this image was used to publicise an exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in 2006 and when it was picked up by the popular newspapers it became yet another shocking story.

Russell Young used Hepburn's work and produced a Warholesque screen print that provoked a similar scandal in January 2008.

It is only a small step from these practices to an array of late-modern entertainments including so-called reality television, game shows featuring shame and suffering (Hallsworth 2009), and 'happy slapping' mobile photography distributed on the internet, where a warped version of Warhol's prediction comes true and everyone may at last have their fifteen minutes in a cruel festival (see also Ferrell, Hayward and Young 2008: 9). Paparazzi are not so much the parasites as the inaugurators of this age.

Recalling Nietzsche's (1967) characterisation of punishment as essentially 'festive', these entertainment values invest our fascination with crime and desires for punishment. We have seen that the photographic spectacle is also a festival and that this has taken an increasingly predatory and punitive turn in the post-war period. Indeed it has been suggested that our recent 'punitive turn' is making more use of visual punishment (Pratt et al. 2005). Perhaps the rise of paparazzi culture demonstrates that this is not so much a return to less civilised times but a march forward into the modernity of the photographic image.

Having conducted our short history of the modern photographic spectacle, we now embark on a double detour: first through the concept of spectacular practice and, second, through a set of methodological reflections. Along the way we will gather a set of critical tools.

Spectacular practices

The word spectacle might conjure up an elevated screen or stage commanding a quiet, perhaps even docile audience, with a clear line of demarcation between what is performed and the mass of spectators, between activity on the stage and passivity in the auditorium. Indeed this conception finds particular, critical expression in the influential work of Adorno and Horkheimer (1979) as well as Debord (1994), where the deceived or distracted audience of mass-mediated entertainment is rendered inert in its passive consumption of the products of a monopolistic culture industry. However, without losing its critical thrust, the term spectacle is used in a less monolithic way in recent literature (e.g. Kellner 2003, Giroux 2006), and in the field of media studies where the audience is now regarded as much more *active* in its relationship to mass culture (e.g. Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998). Pop and fashion culture, for example, is increasingly theorised as something to be used and transformed as material in the performance of everyday leisure activities, which, in turn, is fed back into wider

society (e.g. Willis 1990). In this case, audiences not only exercise agency and entrain desire in the way that they receive the performances of culture, but they also actively transform them in their own performances of everyday life. For example photographic performance plays a central role in so-called 'gangsta rap' in which the complex loops that connect the phenomena of the street with those in the mass media cannot be reduced to the dynamic of 'active' media and 'passive' audience (Ferrell, Hayward and Young 2008). Another example is the complex loop of football 'hooliganism' running between the news spectacle (as well as celebratory pulp literature) and its subjects who are also a key component of its audience. Such loops may now function as much in virtual as actual space (see Zaitch and de Leeuw, this volume). Even the everyday news of crime and punishment feeds into culture in a way that involves an active audience commenting, conversing, debating, fearing, loathing and and desiring. We view images of crime with an eye prepared to judge, but also one that actively consumes and transforms the products of crime infotainment. To posit an active audience is not, however, to forget power. This time, however, the desiring audience is not a passive victim of power but is actively complicit, whether wittingly or unwittingly, in its operation.

Thus the photographic spectacle is a form of social practice or performance that we should approach in a way that takes seriously *both* the macrosociological *and* microsociological levels. It is a multiplicity that produces flows of forces working in the registers of the cultural, the social, the inter-individual and the unconscious. When the word spectacle is used here it also embraces those important *festive* dynamics in which the audience is both an active receiver of spectacle and, at the same time, engages in social practices that feed back into its forces of performance. That said, we cannot reduce these social practices to individual performance, even if this also undoubtedly plays its role. Nor, from a political viewpoint, should we use this model as an excuse for imagining that festivity is a micropolitical phenomenon reducible to individual, conscious, liberal agency, negotiation or simple counter-hegemony. Instead a fully critical approach to the spectacle-festival must also realise that the festive audience of modernity may act as a crowd pulsing with barely-conscious desires.

It is in this way that this chapter takes a visual cultural rather than a media studies perspective. Media studies and the use of the term 'mass media' often examines the continuities between media and communications in the practice of sending and receiving messages (evident in the histories of, for example, Winston 1998, Williams 1998, Briggs and Burke 2002). Here, I am more interested in the continuities between the cultural phenomena of the spectacle and the mass media. In this way *practice and performance* rather than *messages* take centre stage. Hence the photograph is regarded here not so much as a communications technology but as both scene and means of performance and social practice.

The photographic spectacle is part of that aspect of the mass media that is *practical* or *performative* rather than *communicative.* Most, if not all, photographic images we encounter are performances or, to put it another way, forms of social practice, including, in special cases, the sending of messages. If we recall the great photographic events of our time we are witnessing forms of practice or performance. Many of these events might not have occurred without the presence of cameras: they are *photographic* performances. Beginning with Boorstin (1963) and argued more recently by Baudrillard (e.g. 1983), there is an unfortunate tendency to regard events performed for the camera as 'unreal' or 'simulated' in some way. Boorstin called an event that would not have happened but for the presence of the camera a 'pseudo-event', while Baudrillard felt that the world of the photographic spectacle was detached from the real. Both took an approach dominated by the logic of representation or meaning. Both also chose to ignore the reality of social practice in the photographic spectacle.

In short it matters less what the photographic spectacle 'means', what it 'represents', what it symbolises, and more what it *does* in the real. To illustrate this we might choose imagery from the recent global 'war on

terror', such as the spectacle of September 11th 2001, or the chain reaction of photographic events it set in train; for example, the punitive performance at Camp X-Ray, Guantánamo Bay, or the moment of 'Shock and Awe' in the bombing of Baghdad; the photogenic torture at Abu Ghraib, or the photographed and photographic *capture* of Saddam Hussein. All these events possessed an important feature performed *in and by* the photograph, occasions in which photography played a central role, not merely because it captured an image of an important event, but because the photographic was itself *part* of the event.

Methodological reflections

It is strange to think that some might strive for an objective 'methodology' of the photograph or of photographic spectacle. Perhaps it betokens a nihilistic hankering for the hygiene of white coats and the cold distance of clipboards in a world devoid of value. If it is more plausible to maintain such pretence of disinterest when peering at a distant star, it is entirely implausible when we, as both cultural products and producers, seek to investigate cultural production. We bring to any cultural inquiry a culturally inflected propensity to interact with the material of study. Culture as part of culture. Moreover, culture enters the critical: in the service of which sort of struggle, with what kinds of pleasure, with which desires, do we conduct our research? Value, creativity, polemic and interpretive policy all have an important role to play in the response to images.

Method must also be contingent, sensitive to circumstance and cannot follow rigid, pre-conceived dictates (Phillips 1973). Method must always be a creative enterprise; indeed we might go as far as striving towards creativity and play as desirable in themselves. It is well known that even as 'rational' and 'empirical' a field of study as the natural sciences tends to make its important discoveries by creative leaps of a playful imagination rather than following the iron rules of orthodox logic and method. Though I am not advocating an entirely free play of interpretation, it is in the service of a broader wisdom that we should still take a cue from Feyerabend who pushes the idea of play and creativity to the limit, *encouraging* rather than discouraging a *proliferating* creativity (Feyerabend 1970).

Thus, to summarise the theoretical thrust of this 'method': photographic spectacle is also a *festival*, and is not merely the illustrative backcloth on the stage of our culture, but part of its material, everyday reality. Not reducible to a representation, the photograph is part of the very stuff of our social life: it *presents* more than it represents, *produces* more than it reproduces, *performs* more than it signifies. In this way the photographic spectacle cannot be reduced to code, symbol, illustration, wallpaper, scenographic backdrop, distraction, illusion, hallucination or simulation. It is not primarily a semiotic spectacle. It is not a static picture, but a dynamic power. As a social force the photograph performs in a field where the material realities of cultural practices in the field of power and desire are at stake.

With its commitment to understanding the roles of emotion, seduction and desire, its resistance to despotic positivism, its commitment to creativity and the ludic, and its approach to the critical analysis of present-day cultural production in all its complexity, cultural criminology is well positioned to take up the implications of this perspective. In its desire *not* to reduce the world to a truth of objective and rational schemata, cultural criminology has the best chance of appreciating this social reality—both inside and outside the image—in transgression, violence, crime, control and punishment (Ferrrell 2008; Ferrell, Hayward and Young, 2008).

Furthermore what we see in all but the most confected, highly coded photographs 'has occurred only once' (Barthes 1981), it is a singularity, a particularity, a single event that is too unruly for codes or laws. Could there ever be a 'method' of the single event? Of course in social research we must take account of the historical, social and cultural contexts of the image event. But this does not bring us any closer to a regulated science. The historical and social context of the photographic event is also a singularity, and thus, following the

language of Dilthey, it must be treated idiographically on its own terms. This, as we have seen, still involves us as cultural products, critically interacting with cultural production.

I have tried to emphasise the role of the photographic spectacle in social practice and performance, rather than as a realm of representation, true or false. In his aphorisms on Feuerbach, Marx (1975) criticised the philosopher for dwelling on the correct interpretation of a symbolic world rather than focusing on social practice. In other words he counselled the reader to appreciate the world less as a realm of representation and more as an arena of social practice. Quite simply he argued that 'all social life is essentially practical'. It is this radical pragmatism of Marx's *On Feuerbach* that should form the focus of our "methodological" approach to the photographic spectacle. Of course *part of* the social practice of the photographic spectacle is, at certain key moments, a practice of representation where the critical theorist is obliged to *read* codes and symbols. But this must not be done at the expense of a critical awareness of the way its power often *exceeds* the representational regime.

Conclusion

From its very beginnings modern *s*pectatorship has been active, mobile and hungry to see, and, as the scaffold and other public punishments declined, a new theatre of crime and punishment took their place in the expanding image cultures of the nineteenth century spectacle. A photographic culture soon developed and was accelerated in the twentieth century as various forms and forces interacted: at the same time as spectators consumed the images of cinema, magazines, newspapers and television, they produced images in a growing snapshot society. After the Second World War, a new kind of photographer, the paparazzo, initiated an age of more active festive cruelty in the image. A predator in the shade and an agent of newspapers and magazines, the paparazzo is also the agent of our desires. It is in this festive theatre of crime and punishment—from which carnival is liable to break out at any time (Presdee 2000)—that the values of entertainment, vengeful 'naming and shaming' by the authorities, 'happy slapping' and the paparazzi all interact promiscuously. In mass circulation, the photograph applies a mark to the body that shames, humiliates *and* fascinates, whether in the course of police and judicial proceedings or for the purposes of entertainment. Here we return to the original meaning of the word stigma, a brand on the body in a field of vision: a scar more than a symbol.

To emphasise the performative force of the photograph and its festive dynamics of desire is also to engage with power, something of particular importance in the present-day theatre of crime and punishment. It is one of the purposes of this chapter to emphasise the role of social practice as urged by Marx in his reflections on Feuerbach. In highlighting photographic culture as social practice, we are thus obliged to take up, in the most general terms, a *critical* position where we make judgements on the exercise of power, the production of power relations and the play of forces that affect our conduct, including barely-conscious forces of desire.

In this story of the eye drawn into a flux of power and desire, we might decide, for example, to undertake a fully cultural critique of fascism, taking account of the various forces of desire in the fetishism of populist authoritarianism, militarism and war. This is not merely incidental to the aims of this chapter but really rather central since, as in Bertold Brecht's play *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (where the central character was a burlesque amalgam of Al Capone and Adolf Hitler), fascism is a potent mixture of politics becoming gangsterism, and gangsterism becoming politics, both enjoying a relationship with spectacle. As a form of organised political criminality, fascism was at the forefront of 1930s modernity in its appeal to power and desire in the developing mass media. The womb of fascism is still with us today in the photographic spectacle, whether it manifests itself in the habits and tics of consumerism, the sound and light of war, the ceremonials of national and international politics, or the many arenas and theatres of transgression, crime and punishment.

As a toxic miasma of war, security and risk management envelops our politics, a kind of fascism or microfascism flows through the late-modern theatres of cruelty amid the glittering neverlands of consumerism. It is the task of cultural criminology to take a critical stance and enable practices of resistance amid the flux of power and desire in these arenas. Here we should seek to understand, play with and resist the forces that bring together the agents of control and commodification with the wills, wants and wishes at the heart of the spectacle of crime and punishment.

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