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Université de Montréal

The images produced by *La Presse de Montréal* of the Black community and crime

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Université de Montréal
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Ce mémoire intitulé:
The images produced by *La Presse de Montréal* of the Black community and crime

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SUMMARY

This study presents the coverage of the Black community in one-hundred and twenty-five crime reports selected from *La Presse de Montréal* during two chosen periods (January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990 and July 31st, 2004 to July 31st, 2005).

The articles of both periods produce various codes of meanings and patterns. In 1990, our results demonstrate that *La Presse* tends to suppress negative and direct references to race. But, certain articles use Black stereotypes in order to associate violent behaviours with the Black community.

We have retained violence, mostly employed by young adults, as a primary theme of this first period. The police department is as well abundantly mentioned in the crime reports (1990). Police officers are either perceived, principally by the dominant population (the White community), as heroic (peace keepers, protectors or crime solvers). On the other hand, they are as well covered as a negative and destructive element to the Black community (racist, unfair, etc.). We can therefore notice the polarization of two social groups: the Black community and the White police.

As for the second period, the newspaper also strongly attempts to eliminate race issues and social panic or fear based on race. However, in 2004-2005, street gang issues are highly publicized. Street gangs are perceived as a major social problem and a threat to social order. Consequently, the fear of citizens is clearly identified. Moreover, in reports concerning street gangs, a specific community is pointed: the Haitian community. As in the first period, the theme of violence is also present in 2004-2005 but is linked to street gangs.

By comparing both periods, we found numerous similarities. Almost all of the reports are general news and printed in the first section (A) of the newspaper (popular and common news of the day). The majority of the corpus also incorporates violence in a variety of ways. Furthermore, in 1990 and 2004-2005, Black victims are rarely covered, Black actors are often negatively covered and Black sectors of Montreal are indicated as crime locators.

Although, the images produced in both periods can be quite different. In fact, fewer reports (half than 1990) were found in 2004-2005. The second period also less mentions the Black actors in the most read part of the stories (titles, conclusions, etc.). This surely eliminates racial allegations

concerning crime and Blacks. As a result, in the second period, the newspaper seems to further integrate Blacks as an equal part of society.

Both periods identify the Black actors in different ways (nationality, country or the color of the skin) and various roles (as victims, suspects or third parties or as simultaneously victims and wrongdoers) are associated to the Black community in crime news. Main geographic locations have also been indicated in the reports. The Black community is therefore associated to specific areas.

Key words : Black; crime; victim; suspect; newspaper; press; Montreal

SOMMAIRE

Cette recherche présente la couverture médiatique de cent vingt cinq articles de journaux concernant la communauté Noire de Montréal et le crime. Ces chroniques ont été retracées dans *La Presse de Montréal*. Deux périodes ont été choisies soit entre le 1er janvier 1990 et le 31 décembre 1990 et, entre le 31 juillet 2004 et le 31 juillet 2005.

Les articles de chaque période produisent diverses significations et modèles. En 1990, nos analyses permettent de constater que *La Presse* tente d'éviter les références directes et négatives reliées à la race. Mais, certains articles associent étroitement les comportements violents et la communauté noire, en faisant usage de stéréotypes à l'égard des Noirs.

La violence (principalement associée aux jeunes adultes) est un thème dominant en 1990. La police est également très présente dans les articles de cette première période. Elle fait parfois figure d'héroïne (en tant qu'agente de pacification, de protection et de résolution des crimes) mais elle est aussi construite comme une source négative et destructive (raciste, injuste, etc.) pour la communauté noire. Certains articles tendent à élaborer une polarisation entre la police «Blanche» et les Noirs.

Dans la deuxième période, la tendance à éviter l'association entre crime et race est également présente. *La Presse* essaie ainsi d'éliminer des débats et des peurs sociales reliés à la race et à réduire les catégorisations stéréotypantes des communautés noires à Montréal.

Par contre, en 2004-2005, la présence des gangs de rue à Montréal est très médiatisée. Les gangs de rue sont perçus comme un problème majeur et une menace dans la société. La crainte des citoyens à leur égard est clairement identifiée. De plus, une communauté est particulièrement ciblée dans la problématique des gangs de rue : la communauté haïtienne. Le thème de la violence, présent dans la première période de couverture de presse, se trouve reproduite dans cette deuxième période mais en étant associée au phénomène des gangs de rue.

Des convergences sont observables dans les deux périodes. La plupart des articles sont classés en tant que nouvelles générales et publiés dans la première section du journal (A) (comprend généralement les nouvelles populaires de la journée). La majorité du corpus incorpore, de façon variée, le thème de la violence. En 1990 et en 2004-2005, les Noirs sont rarement constitués en

victimes et ils sont souvent présentés de façon négative. De plus, la description des scènes de crime est souvent reliée aux « ghettos ».

Les images produites par les articles des deux périodes sont par moments différentes. D'ailleurs, en 2004-2005, moins d'articles ont été retracés et la race des acteurs Noirs est moins mentionnée dans les titres, introductions et conclusions. En fait, dans la seconde période, *La Presse*, semble davantage reproduire l'idée que les Noirs font (ou devraient) intégralement et équitablement partis de la société.

Dans les deux périodes, les Noirs sont identifiés de différentes manières (nationalité, pays, couleur de la peau) et divers rôles leurs sont attribués (en tant que victimes, suspects, tiers acteurs ou en tant que victimes et suspects dans le même évènement). Les lieux des crimes sont aussi grandement mentionnés dans les articles, contribuant ainsi à associer les Noirs à des quartiers spécifiques.

Mots clés : Noir; crime; victime; suspect; journal; presse écrite; Montréal

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I therefore dedicate this paper to my dearest and beloved family.

Introduction

The social role of mass communication has been the subject of many studies. Many scholars believe that the media are a victim of societal pressures and conflicts while others treat media as dominant forces that influence and shape individuals and society. For the purpose of this study, we will present the media as leading influences of our society. We acknowledge that there are two links to establish between the media and society: media reflecting society or media affecting society. This research will essentially utilize for study the messages created by a well-known newspaper printed in Montreal. In other words, we will determine the ways *La Presse* reproduces society's ideologies.

A great number of citizens do not have first-hand knowledge of crime and culture. Therefore, socialization agents such as media normally reflect the public's view of crime and communities. According to Rome (1998), the public relies enormously on media to inform them about crime, law and criminal justice. Hence, criminology must observe mass media in order to expose and attempt to understand the construction of crime images and agents (perpetrators, victims, third parties, etc.).

The integration of various nationalities and cultures in White dominated communities dominated have been largely studied. Moreover, in recent years, researchers have been interested in Black Studies. Thus, many experts have examined media images concerning Black communities. The majority of the studies in fact demonstrate that the Black community is depicted negatively in media's coverage. However, little research has been found concerning the coverage of the Black community in the Montreal press.

Therefore, the goal of our research is to analyse crime reports found in *La Presse de Montréal* during two distinct periods: January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990 and July 31st, 2004 to July 31st, 2005. We will explore the types of reporting and the various messages it produces about the Black community. In order to achieve our objective, this paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter details the body of literature of approximately the last twenty five years and organizes the acquired knowledge on the pertinent subjects. In fact, we first present the general properties of mass media (including the press) and various concepts related to culture and the Black community (ethnicity, stereotypes, etc.). We finally summarize the American, European and Canadian studies relating to crime, the Black community and the press. The second chapter

presents the methodology chosen for this research. The objectives, the methods used in order to analyse the material, and the newspaper and the periods that were selected are discussed in this section. The results and final conclusions will be presented in the final chapter.

CHAPTER I

Body of literature

In this following section, we will recapitulate the acquired knowledge concerning mass media, the press, crime news and the Black community. The world-wide literature of the last twenty-five years is summarized. We will refer mostly to American and European studies which represent the bulk but Canadian researchers will sometimes be cited. Indeed, less research was conducted by Canadian experts.

We divided this chapter into three major sections: properties of media, media in a multicultural society, the press and finally, the press, crime news and the Black community.

1. Properties of mass media

Mass communication would develop into a major societal institution and an important economic and political force. Even in the 1920's, Lippmann and Lasswell stated that media invaded all aspects of social life and became the most significant means of communication by which citizens learn about the world (cited in Perse, 2001, p. 3). Later, in 1964, Marshall McLuhan, a well-known mass media expert, explained that:

Les medias sont un milieu dans lequel nous baignons; ils nous enveloppent et nous imprègnent; ils sont hors de nous et en nous; ils font partie de notre être: être « privé » de journaux, de radio ou de télévision crée un manque et un malaise. Ils modèlent nos catégories mentales; ils modifient notre appréhension de l'espace et du temps; ils sont, plus que des moyens d'accroître notre information, des prolongements de notre système nerveux; ils démultiplient nos relations, créent un environnement et transforment l'échelle de notre activité (cited in Abastado, 1980, p. 39).

1.1. Penetration of mass media in our everyday lives

Inspired by the MacBride Report of 1981, Lorimier and McNulty (1991, pp. 17-23) summarized the eight spheres of activity that mass communication influence and invade:

- ❖ *The social dimension: communication fills a social need by providing information to which society can connect;*
- ❖ *The political dimension: communication can be a political instrument working in the interests of reform or in the interests of suppression of individuals and information;*
- ❖ *The economic dimension: media has potential economic benefit for groups and individuals;*
- ❖ *The educational dimension: communication has an educational potential;*

- ❖ *The cultural dimension: communication has the ability to distribute information or items of wide quality; thereby, it can be an impulse to culture. At the same time, it has the potential to threaten local culture;*
- ❖ *The technological dimension: communication represents a technological dilemma; society has a difficult time keeping up with technology;*
- ❖ *The familial or primary social group dimension: communication penetrates family life;*
- ❖ *The individual dimension: communication constrains the development of individual identity; written and other sources of communication open a wide-range of characters beyond our personal experience who can serve as role models.*

In 1948, Lasswell described the three major functions of communication (cited in Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao, 2003, p. 36 and Perse, 2001, p. 54). Perse (2001) believes that media are complicated systems of interconnected parts which perform specific activities (or functions) in order to maintain society's harmony and stability. These functions do not have any particular rank or order; they overlap with one another.

Firstly, according to the relevant literature on the subject, the surveillance of the environment is the first function of mass media (also known as the information function). Media would watch, collect, scan, define, describe, summarize reports and publish information, events and conditions about all aspects of society that seem the most important about people, groups and places (McQuail, 1983; Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995 and 2003; Perse, 2001). Media therefore become the "public's watchdog or gatekeeper". They would as well be a mirror to society and the main provider of information (Jeffres, 1986; McQuail, 1983 and 2003; Perse, 2003). According to several scholars (Jeffres, 1986; McQuail, 1983, Perse, 2003), media choose the issues that are made public by opening the gate to some stories and not to others. As a result, media would decide what is or not important, provide common information and culture and set public agenda and opinion. Although, rather than merely reflecting society, media would define and describe the different groups, shape our views of the world and values, demonstrate who has power, constitute realities (crime and justice, for example) and configure social relations (Ericson, 1991; Kellner, 1995; Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao, 2003). Consequently, scholars believe that the surveillance function of mass media exposes inappropriate and deviant behaviour and warns society about imminent threats or dangers. Nevertheless, Perse (2001), Henry and Tator (2001) and Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao (2003) believe that media often create public panics and fears. As well as molding, reflecting and following social change, McQuail (1983) speculates that media are also engines of change since they can be constructed in such ways as to bring about change.

Secondly, according to McQuail (1983) and Person (2001), media clarify, explain, interpret, analyse and comment selected information, and attempt to maintain social order (correlation or explanation function). They would therefore aid consumers to understand and comprehend what is happening and determine where each individual fits in society (McQuail, 1983; Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao, 2003). As explained by McQuail (1983) and Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao (2003), media construct individual and collective identity by furnishing social meanings, and they incidentally become a powerful agent of social control.

Thirdly, Perse (2001) and Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao (2003) stipulate that mass communication also defines and transmits social heritage, culture, norms and values from one generation to the next (socialization or cultural transmission function). Media would therefore reinforce the values of society and promote societal integration, cohesion and dominant views (Perse, 2001). In fact, Van Dijk (1988) believes that various elites play a central role in the reproduction of their own power. Additionally, Jeffres (1986), Ericson (1991) and McQuail (2003) demonstrate that media reinforce the practices, values, attitudes, norms, views, ideologies and interests of the dominant culture. Consequently, according to Quéré (1982), the modes of communication are as well the modes of domination. In this same vein, Underleider (1991) states that media pay more attention to the powerful than the powerless, give more credibility to the majority than to the minority and reinforce the existing popular culture. Underleider (1991) therefore suggests that media be named class media rather than mass media.

The entertainment function was identified in 1959 by Charles Wright (cited in Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao, 2003, 2003, p. 39 and Perse, 2001, p. 56). According to Charles Wright, this function would distract and entertain consumers, enable them to share common experiences and attempt to reduce social tension.

Schramm and Porter (1982) add the economic function of mass communication. They believe that “...*communication must meet the need of an economic map of the environment so that each individual and organization can form its own image of buying and selling opportunities at a given moment...*” (Schramm and Porter, 1982, p.27). Later, in 2003, McQuail (2003), a well-known writer who specializes in mass communication, believe that media do not have a social purpose but they rather incidentally exist by their primary task of earning profit. He proposes that media exercise several professions and provide means of public expression. Since media struggle to conquer the largest audience possible, they might reinforce a collective consciousness

by developing content that attracts the majority of its consumers. By doing so, media contribute to the economic system of our society.

By responding to these above mentioned functions, the mass media shape people's concerns, values, norms, politics and other aspects of their everyday life. Furthermore, Ericson (1991) supposes that media offer messages to their audiences and become an important source of public knowledge.

1.2. Creation of knowledge and social meaning by mass media

Knowledge can be an important part of our culture. Quéré (1982) considers that knowledge corresponds to the expression of the needs, interests and experiences of the masses and, satisfies curiosity, expectations and aspirations of individuals. According to Ericson, Baranek and Chan (1987), knowledge is a mechanism that helps to attain social control, social order, social cohesion and integration. The authors also believe that knowledge aids in the understanding of cultural groups, social classes, prohibited or accepted activities and behaviours.

We have established that mass media penetrate the homes of all members of society and that it is a substantial part of our everyday lives. Individuals are conditioned by the quality of the information they assimilate from the different means of communication. We interpret the world in terms of what we have learnt from mass media. The Lambrettas (1982) state that media do not dictate but rather determine the way language is produced in order for it to be meaningful. In other words, media consist of a repertoire of words, images, texts and explanations which are threaded together in order to produce an understanding of the world (The Lambrettas, 1982). Media can therefore be defined as a kind of social language and as a type of machinery that constructs meaning. As a result, media can be a responsible proponent of public knowledge. Thus, news should be constructed in such a way that the meaning can be available and understood by the average citizen, having no personal familiarity of the presented events.

Hall (1997a) defines the meanings of media messages as products of interactions. According to him, media messages are creative and active; they have no fixed meaning and are initially data and facts that are completely meaningless. Media would transfer data and events into stories by arranging the information in a particular sequence and by choosing specific language in order to describe them. The messages would although have to be read, seen or heard in order for them to

be meaningful. Hall (1997a) explains that consumers are active participants in defining the meanings of media messages and they are the creators and producers of media codes. Due to each individual's culture, values, experiences and personal attributes, Hall (1997a) states that media messages are not decoded in the same way by all and the interpretations might not coincide with the initial intentions of media makers. In fact, media images and texts are supposedly altered by the way we think and are related to the historical and cultural context in which they are constructed. They therefore have numerous meanings (also known as polysemy). For this reason, they would be open to debate. As Ericson (1991) clearly states:

Exposure to mass media is therefore not a source of distorted thoughts and bad behaviour, as the "evil causes evil" fallacy has it, but means of constituting and articulating attitudes to versions of crime, law and justice. In this same vein, people would therefore critically receive media information and produce their own meanings in various contexts. (p. 242)

As a result, as Leeming (1982) and Henry and Tator (2000, 2002) assume, news is not a newsworthy event itself or a pre-given reality but rather, the report or account of an incident that has been filtered by a number of social agents. They believe that media are a sort of power that is constructed in a commonsense reality and inserted in cultural and political life. Media might therefore contribute to the construction of this reality and are accepted as the ultimate truth (Fiske, 1989). But, "...media images are so much like the reality they represent..." (Allen, 2002, p. 12) Images produced by media would therefore "...mislead us into thinking they are reality...we are replacing the reality in our lives with illusions..." (Allen, 2002, p. 10). Ericson (1991) believes that "...mass media does not distort reality, but rather provides a discourse - an institutional mode of classifying and interpreting reality - that helps people to construct their own organizational realities." (p. 242).

We may conclude that media can reinforce our fundamental understanding of life and may hold a responsibility of educating residents about others (Manoff and Schudson, 1986). We spend abundant time consuming, processing and making sense of media messages. As Gandy (1997) mentions, the more time we spend in consuming mass media, the more we understand the world in their terms. As we all know, many forms of media exist; they each diffuse information in different ways and the representations intended will surely depend on the type of medium (Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991). As expressed by McLuhan (2000): "...the medium is the message..." (p. 38). We will introduce the type of medium studied in this project: the press.

2. The press

Nancoo and Nancoo (1997) present the print medium as the first influential form of mass media that has strongly contributed to human experience. Historians do not seem to agree with the first newspaper ever published (possibly in the early 1400s). But, according to Desbaretz (1990), one thing is sure: "...printing was regarded as a powerful means of strengthening political and religious authority ..." (p. 2). Consequently, at the time, copies would have been immediately suppressed and destroyed and the publishers were often arrested, for example, the *Publick Occurrence*, published in 1690, in Boston. Many papers later suffered the same consequences but by 1721, numerous newspapers emerged in America and they promoted various political and religious parties (Desbaretz, 1990). Moreover, Dominick (1978) and Davis and Baran (1981) explain that in 1833, the *Penny Press* was initiated in the United States by Benjamin Day and was the first to employ a police reporter in order to summarize the local crime news. In addition, the press would have then been known to represent all shades of political opinion during the First World War.

Due to their growing popularity, Nancoo and Nancoo (1997) consider newspapers as the first viable cultural institution in Canada. The authors divide the development of newspapers into five historical periods. In all of the phases, they allege that the press is influenced by the various social, cultural and political changes of the era (various commissions, laws, constitutions, elections, etc.).

The first period would have started in 1752. The *Halifax*, the *Gazette*, the *Royal Gazette*, the bilingual *Quebec Gazette*, the *Montreal Gazette du Commerce* and the *Littéraire* were apparently among the first papers to be published. Nancoo and Nancoo (1997) explain that during these early years, newspapers provided official information, foreign news, government announcements and advertisements. The format of newspapers apparently often varied from edition to edition, were dull in appearance and their front pages were largely devoted to advertising. The first newspapers were weeklies. Desbaretz (1995) believes that presses were, at the time, cheap, portable and, appeared and disappeared quickly. Newspapers were supposedly class oriented and printed for the wealthy and literate population.

Nancoo and Nancoo (1997) further expound that during the second period (1807-1858), there would have been a dramatic increase in population, resulting in the multiplication and thrive of newspapers. As a result, rival papers would have appeared. Although, in the third period (1858-1900), the authors assume that the papers grew in size, that there were more editions (bi-weekly) and that writing became more appealing. During this period, other well-known dailies were created (*Montreal Star, Toronto World, Montreal La Presse, Toronto Star, etc.*). These newspapers featured diversity in their contents and were appealing to a heterogeneous population of modern cities.

In the fourth period (1900-1952), the quality of newspapers becomes more important. According to Nancoo and Nancoo (1997), the increase of population and the creation of new technologies caused the industry of newspaper to expand significantly. Giant business enterprises, making healthy profits were therefore created (*Quebecor, for example*). Today, Nancoo and Nancoo (1997) suppose that we are in a fifth period. But, due to the expensive equipment needed to serve a larger mass of consumers, the production of newspapers has become more costly.

Obviously, print medium is strictly visual (color, pictures and headlines). Information is rapidly communicated by the press and to the public by means of print. Furthermore, the readers would set their own pace and they may reread missed or incomprehensive elements (Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991). Print medium has its own shapes, techniques, characteristics, fashions, illustrations and style of writing. According to Abastado (1980), print is also permanent and may not be erased. But, he believes that newspapers must distinguish themselves from each other and be innovative in order to increase and maintain the number of their consumers.

The various phases described above have attempted to demonstrate that different kinds of newspapers exist for different types of readers. In fact, by their demands and preferences, the readers may impose a style to each newspaper. Abastado (1980) mentions that newspapers create written texts and answer to the public's needs. In this same vein, De Bonville's (1995) content analysis of Montreal's popular newspapers reveals that in the past forty years, the representations and trends of newspapers vary in different periods.

The press produces various types of news. For the purpose of this project, the next section is devoted to the attributes of news, more specifically of crime news.

2.1. News in the press

Hartley (1982) declares that “...news values are neither natural nor neutral.” (p. 80). As seen above, news would report the situation of the world in particular ways. Additionally, Fiske (1989) explains that news is not necessary new, does not produce new knowledge but rather recognizes or reconstructs reality according to the norms and values of society. It actually follows social and cultural existing trends. Campbell (1995) believes that news becomes what the media says it is. In fact, in 1988, Dardenne describes news in the following matter:

News...is a way in which people create order out of disorder, transforming knowing into telling. News offers more than fact – it offers reassurance and familiarity in shared community experiences; it provides credible answers to baffling questions, and ready explanations of complex phenomena such as unemployment and inflation. (cited in Campbell, 1995, p. 15)

Similarly, “...news is taken seriously because of its moral power, not because it is the best available source of primary facts.” (Ericson, Baranek and Chan., 1991, p. 34).

In 1940, Robert Park (cited in McQuail, 1983, pp. 139-140) paid close attention to the properties of news. He suggested that:

- *News is timely – about recent or recurrent events;*
- *News is unsystematic – it deals with discrete events and happenings and the world seen through news alone consists of unrelated happenings, which it is not the primary task of news itself to interpret;*
- *News is perishable – it lives only when the events themselves are current and for purposes of record and later reference other forms of knowledge will replace news;*
- *Events reported as news should be unusual or at least unexpected, qualities which are more important than their “real significance”;*
- *Apart from unexpectedness, news events are characterized by other “news values” which are relative and involve judgments about likely audience interest;*
- *News is mainly for orientation and attention-direction and not a substitute for knowledge;*
- *News is predictable. The events that have made news in the past, as in the present, are actually the expected things.*

News would also be considered meaningful when it is about people (Linn, 2003). In fact, Russell (1994) believes that “...news is what interests people...news is what makes people talk...news is information that helps people to live a full life...” (p. 13).

Ericson, Baranek and Chan (1997) suppose that the production of news reports involves the work of many individuals. Moreover, as alleged by Van Dijk (1988a), news discourse is impersonal because it is produced by individuals and institutionalized organizations that have their own preferences and requirements. In fact, journalists would possibly unintentionally select and choose certain events and information to cover. Even though they follow specific rules or principle, they would create stories with hidden assumptions and judgments.

2.2. Journalistic ethics

Notwithstanding numerous laws and regulations (*Canadian Charter of Rights, Civil Code of Quebec, Canadian Criminal Code, Copyright Act, etc.*) that limit the freedom of expression of the press, Russell (1994) believes that few newspapers have their own formalized and written codes of ethics or of conduct. In fact, he supposes that the decisions made by news organizations would not be based on any book of rules but rather on instincts and on what the audience desires, needs and tolerates. In fact, journalistic ethics would be influenced by social, economic and political forces and evolve through time.

Journalistic ethics contain numerous principles. First, St-Jean (1996) believes that the search for truth is the ultimate goal of a journalist. Truth would be more than just a collection of facts. Truth is supposed to detail issues in a clear, sufficient, selective and concise way (Lorimier and McNulty, 1991). In choosing and ordering coherently the significant aspects of the data, the journalist must be objective at all times. In fact, as elaborated by Russel (1994) and Gordon and Kittross (1999), journalists must attempt to keep personal views or opinions out of news reports (personal detachment and neutrality) as well as furnish fair and full reports by using neutral vocabulary and presenting all sides of the story. The writer should as well balance all sides of the story, be open minded and impartial. In addition, if part of the material is clearly irrelevant, it must not be included in the story (Gordon and Kittross, 1999). However, objectivity would be an ideal that is difficult to attain and it may not always reflect reality (Hackett & Zhao, 1996).

Furthermore, McQuail (1992) explains that stories (including crime news) should be factual, that is, distinguished between fact and opinion, and the report must be an accurate and reliable version of reality (names, ages, addresses, places, etc.). Moreover, a storyline should be a complete and full account of an event or issue. Henry and Tator (2000) define crime news as one of the oldest news categories. Due to the fact that this study uniquely examines crime news, we will thoroughly describe its characteristics.

2.3. Crime news in the press

Surette (1998) declares that the media's depiction of crime-related topics permits the social construction of our crime and justice reality. In fact, "...*crime news answers to social functions by constructing common cultural awareness of crime, of victims and offenders and, of the administration of justice...*" (Barak, 1994, p. 6). Crime news would therefore inform the public, advise consumers of dangers in the environment, deter citizens from committing an offence, entertain (would provide a real-life drama and stir emotions) and reflect the nature of criminal justice. But, as stated by Chermak (1994) and Surette (1998), crime news is sometimes used to fill a gap in the newspaper.

According to Henry and Tator (2000), crime reports are either about ordinary people or well-known figures. These reports can also present events that took place in unusual circumstances or incidents that involve numerous victims or inter-racial events (Henry and Tator, 2000). Furthermore, Barak (1994) believes that crime news is oversimplified and reduced to stereotypes which socially identify criminals and victims alike. Thereof, "...*news stories on crime differ from day to day only in details about time, place and the identities about the victims and perpetrators...*" (Katz, 1995, p. 47). In fact, Katz (1995) supposes that all news stories are often similar.

According to Surette (1998), media do not automatically cover all forms of crimes and victimization. Newspapers apparently have become more sensational and more attentive to crime, violence, scandals involving stars due to the fact that they tend to sell newspapers (Chermak, 1994). In fact, Russell (1994) believes that bad news is considered to be more interesting. Since crimes of violence (especially street crime) would receive more attention than other types of crimes, Graber (1980) assumes that an exaggerated fear of crime and crime rates is created. Thus, news would emphasize some crimes and ignore others, while blaming specific groups. (Barak, 1994)

Considering the presence of several cultural groups in our modern society, news reports must certainly reflect this diversity. The next segment will introduce various features of a multicultural society and the media's position in the latter.

3. Media in a multicultural society

The multicultural declaration of 1971 recognizes immigrants as being a central part of Canadian history. In fact, Canada is presented as a mosaic character that has a diverse, multicultural, multi-racial, multi religious and pluralistic society which gives importance to all minority groups.

Due to its rapid changes in population and ethno-racial diversity, Canada, more particularly Montreal, would also be a post-modern society (Henry and Tator, 2000). Since the 1960s, Montreal and Toronto have become the most important agglomerations of Canada and in 1993, one third of the population would not have been of Canadian origin (Tasso, 1993). Consequently, Tasso (1993) suspects that society's traditional values were and would still be constantly challenged by the arrival of various cultural groups.

3.1. Ethnicity

Poutignat and Streiff-Fenard (1995) assume that ethnicity is a significant attribute of a culture, is transmitted at birth and is transferred from a generation to the next. Ethnicity would also be constituted of several traits (language, religion, cultural traditions, etc.) that are common for the presumed members. The same authors believe that ethnicity provides sentiments of belonging to a group that shares the same cultural attributes (heritage, traditions, clothing, folkloric, etc.) and biological traits (ancestors, blood, heredity, etc.). Ethnicity is allegedly transferred during socialization (family being the first agent) and would be defined through interactions with others.

Juteau-Lee (1983) presents an ethnic group as a collection of agents that naturally produces ethnicity and which creates primordial societal bonds. Ethnic groups may disappear, assimilate, survive, emerge or blossom; they are transformed and are constantly modified (Juteau-Lee, 1983). Their emergence would depend on their social, political and economical affairs as well as their relations with the dominant culture (Juteau-Lee, 1983). Said (1993) declares that "*...all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic...*" (cited in Juteau, 1999, p.175).

According to Juteau-Lee (1983), these groups are often seen as different, are taken advantage of, are dominated and they constantly battle against all forms of domination (economical, political

and cultural). The author believes that social classes appeared because of ethnic groups. In fact, the traits distinguishing these groups would be historically established in the social and class interactions between the majority and the minorities (relations of power). These relations would affect social structures, labour relations, economic and cultural affairs. Additionally, Juteau (1999) explains that the culture of a group constitutes an obstacle to its integration and possibly explains the inferior position it occupies in a given society. Thus, a group would become a minority because its physical or cultural characteristics are singled out from the others and it eventually experiences unequal treatment (Juteau, 1999). The integration of cultural groups in society would as well be influenced by the social reality and ideological codes constructed by media. The following section will therefore present the ideological codes that are produced by modern society.

3.2. Ideological codes

Media would form ideological codes that define the world in a particular way (The Lambrettas, 1982; Leeming; 1982). Hall (1997a) assumes that they are a collectively shared mental set of frameworks (beliefs, perceptions, assumptions and values) or collective codes of meaning and are a system of representations that social groups deploy in order to make sense of the world. Media would therefore sell products, ideas, personalities and worldviews (Croteau and Hoynes, 2003). Hall (1997a) also believes that media images are not static. Rather, they constantly evolve and adapt to the social and cultural context they are presented in.

Ideology would form pictures of our world, in ways that the majority perceives them and they are passed on to other classes, through media and other socialization vehicles. Consequently, these meanings and pictures of the world would be circulated by means of social power and the social group holding the power would attempt to fix a one true meaning by presenting homogenized images and representations (Wilson and Gutierrez, 1985). Therefore, ideology would serve to preserve the system of dominance and certain features of society, such as stereotypes and racism. Hall (2001) explains that this reproduction of hegemony is mostly invisible to consumers because it is strongly embedded in every day life and is known as common sense. In fact, we would accept these media images and they would shape our existence and dominate our world. They would influence people's interpretations of our social, cultural, political and economical systems. As a result, there would be a persuasive link between knowledge and power (Hall, 2001).

Ideological codes include many forms of stereotypes. Next, we will define these over-simplified images that are often attributed to minorities.

3.3. Stereotypes

Due to his book published in 1922 (*Public Opinion*), the expression stereotype would be historically attributed to Walter Lippmann (cited in Ashmore and Del Boca, 1981, p.2). He views stereotypes in functional terms, that is, as normal and as how people view others. The derivation of the word stereotype is Greek; stereos meaning solid and; typos, meaning the mark of an impression or model. The term was first used to describe a method of printing designed to duplicate pages of type and was associated with the idea of permanent duplication.

Various authors (Miller, 1982; Hall, 1997; Gandy, 1998) define stereotypes as over-simplified or generalized images and as representations or beliefs of people, groups or society. In fact, stereotypes would define and predict one's status, justify and explain people's behaviours (Miller, 1982; Walter and Rosenfield, 1982). Moreover, these same authors explain that stereotypes fix boundaries by dividing the normal and acceptable from the abnormal and unacceptable. They would be created in the socialization process. All members of the same group would be homogeneous and hold the same set of characteristics, attitudes and life conditions. In stereotyping, individuals are apparently depersonalized and lose their own individuality.

Stereotypes hold simple, vivid, memorable and widely recognized characteristics about a person or a community (often personality attributions such as lazy, stupid, etc.), reduce everything about the person/community to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development (Hall, 1997, p. 258).

Even if stereotypes might be inaccurate and based on preconceptions rather than on realities, they would aid in making sense of what is happening in the world. In fact, Ashmore and Del Boca (1981) specify that stereotypes facilitate and simplify our understanding of the environment, enable us to communicate easily and sufficiently with one another and allow us to transmit huge amounts of information or reduce the amount of information transmitted. With stereotypes, it appears we can process information about a complex social situation, clarify data by offering culturally accepted explanations for events and store the information in terms of relevant and known categories (Ashmore and Del Boca, 1981). According to Hall (1997), culture depends on

giving meaning to things by assigning them to different positions, by classifying them and by subsequently categorizing them. Thus, according to him, once we have classified groups into different categories, we exaggerate their differences and ignore their similarities. Jones (1982) demonstrates that groups or individuals, who are unlike the majority, will be more easily remembered.

Most authors that have discussed stereotypes believe that even though they can be modified, individuals would ignore new information and often tend to confirm and preserve already existing stereotypes. In fact, humans would filter, ignore and exaggerate certain information according to their personal, professional and cultural frames and so, stereotypes are intentionally produced. Ross (2003) establishes that stereotyping therefore becomes a human rather than a media fault since it is a product of an existing culture. Thus, historical patterns would continue to replicate themselves through these stereotypes and media would try to coincide with the nation's political, historical and social moods in order to maintain familiarity.

Jussim and Fleming (1996) suppose that when stereotypes are consensually shared within a society, they affect entire groups of people and become pictures filtered through the dominant culture. Stereotypes would usually aim at everything and everyone that does not fit and that are different than the popular culture (Hall, 1997). Consequently, in the process, others/outsideers are defined and consequently, a distinction between "Us" and "Them" is constructed. The out-groups would therefore become dangerous for the dominant group. Plus, Hall (1997) further affirms that by establishing normalcy as one ethnic or cultural point of view (ethnocentrism), negative feelings of hostility, resentment and aggression (racial prejudice, discrimination, etc.) towards the "Others" are formed. In fact, "...most *White Americans have developed feelings and thoughts about African Americans; a mixture of animosity and a desire for racial harmony.*" (Entman and Rojecki, 2000, p. 3). Stereotypes demonstrate the accurate perceptions of the ways in which people are naturally divided in reality, and they may create preconceived features and behavioural patterns of specific groups (Wetherell and Potter, 1992).

Consequently, stereotypes can injure a person and/or an entire community. In fact, Elliot (2003) alleges that media images may injure a community negatively, directly or indirectly. According to him, all articles that mention the race of a person are justified if, by doing so, the medium attempts to fulfill the organization's role of informing the public; moreover, the medium must attempt to accomplish its role without including images that injure the subject. Media may injure a community by either commission or omission and the image produced may be deliberately or

wilfully distorted through denial, exclusion, or exploitation, on the basis of race or ethnicity. As Fleras and Kunz (2001) detail, such images are often constructed by negative stereotypes (relating an activity with race or by reinforcing the normalness of Whites while demonizing others or by imposing double standards).

Important concepts such as ethnicity and stereotypes were defined above. Our modern society is composed of a variety of cultural groups and their integration has significantly affected the ways all populations act, behave and react. It was therefore essential to present the terms that are often connected to these groups. We may now examine how the Black community is attributed to specific stereotypes and the ways these are presented in media.

3.4. Crime and the Black community: a common stereotype

We will first attempt to briefly establish whether Black communities are negatively linked to crime. In fact, literature has demonstrated that Blacks have been, for numerous decades, stereotypically portrayed as poor, drug users and sellers and as criminals. These stereotypes would follow cultural patterns and would have been deeply ingrained in Anglo American culture for over four-hundred years or ever since they were brought into the United States as slaves. They were apparently perceived as child-like beings, dangerous and violent, that needed to be captured and owned. These perceptions or stereotypes would justify enslavement of Africans and have always reinforced the Anglo superiority over the African Americans.

Possibly as a result to the above mentioned cultural stereotypes, international case studies strongly connect race and crime, conclude that crime would be about race and that race would be the only attribute necessary in order to identify criminals (Mirchandani and Chan, 2002). Henry and Tator (2000) also introduce the racialization of crime in media coverage. Miles (1989) defines racialization as a “...*process of categorization through which social relations between people are structured by the signification of human biological characteristics in such a way as to define and construct differentiated social collectivities*” (p. 75). So, according to Henry and Tator (2000), criminal activity is routinely racialized as a Black activity. In fact, Pallone & Hennessy (2000) state that: “...*a phenomenology of fear anchored in stereotypes about Black-initiated violence likely inclines both Blacks and non-Blacks to construe any Black as a likely predator; the same stereotypes may incline some Blacks toward a phenomenology of menace.*” (p. 4).

Similarly, according to Mirchandani and Chan (2002), scholars in the United States and Europe note that Black people have been constructed as criminals by the general public.

Thus, many studies attempt to confirm the association between the Black community and crime. We will now specifically discuss the ways media integrate specific stereotypes concerning the Black community.

3.5. Stereotypes, the Black community and media

3.5.1. *Racial stereotypes*

A set of common stereotypes are usually repeatedly presented in media and would have been incorporated into journalistic routines. Mass communication theorists demonstrate that media continue to rely on racist stereotypes in order to emphasize negative aspects of behaviour and blame specific groups. Individuals will then assume that they are fact rather than fiction. Therefore, when world-wide media claim to represent reality by associating Blacks with crime, poverty and drugs, stereotypes would be automatically activated and transmitted. In the absence of alternative portrayals of Blacks, Martindale (1985) believe that news articles automatically become the reality in the minds of the readers. These stereotypes would actually prevent Whites in perceiving and accepting Blacks as a normal part of society and contribute to racial violence and oppression (Martindale, 1986).

Sensationalized media stories concerning Blacks surely contribute to the increase and usage of stereotypes. As assumed by Wilson and Gutierrez (1985) and Gandy (1997), media reinforce differences between social groups and tend to reduce reality to a confrontation between good/bad, presenting the author of the bad behaviour as an outsider, the "Other", or the enemy. Van Dijk (1988) also believes that media present minorities as generally less competent, less interesting, less newsworthy, helpless and without initiative. According to his research, the headlines of European newspapers mostly present minorities as foreigners, aliens or immigrants and they are hardly portrayed as citizens who are part of society. He also states that when minorities are featured as being active negative agents, they are mostly described negatively (demanding, protesting, resisting, perpetrators, etc.). In fact, according to Riggins (1997), media's way of approaching differences between people is dehumanizing and diminishing to minority groups, making it easier for the dominant group to exert control (cited in Henry &

Tator, 2000, pages are not numerated). Media would affect minorities negatively by representing the world in Black and White, with no grey in between (Henry & Tator, 2000). It would seem that the Black community would have to rely on negative behaviours in order to attract the attention of the media. Gandy (1997) states that:

...mass media have made us see the world as a mean and dangerous place; they have diminished the quality of our lives. And, to the extent that they have emphasized the ways in which the distribution of social and economic risks breaks down along racial lines, they have helped to tear us apart.(p. 37)

In 1990, Dates and Barlow summarized racial stereotypes concerning Blacks and media as follows:

Racial stereotypes help to mold public opinion, then hold it in place and set the agenda for public discourse on the race issue in the media and in society at large. Black media stereotypes are not natural, much less harmless, products of an idealized popular culture; rather, they are more commonly socially constructed images that are selective, partial, one-dimensional, and distorted in their portrayal of African-Americans. Moreover, stereotypes Black images most often are frozen, incapable of growth, change, innovation, or transformation. (cited in Campbell, 1995, p.30).

Media would be predisposed to purvey many myths about situations, behaviours and groups. In fact, over the past decades, there has been little significant change in media's coverage of people of color. They would be often neglected, misrepresented/distorted or stereotyped. Campbell alleges that the images produced by media have reinforced the myth of Black pathology¹.

We have established that crime images are often organized according to the dominant codes. These representations would be a one-sided process which governs how all events will be signified (Hall, 2000). Hence, the world of the press would not be the real world, rather a partial one, which is skewed and judged (Sheyholislami, 2001). Thus, a particular view of the world would be constructed and favoured by mass communication (the dominant view). Overall, media organizations would ultimately create bias, preferred values and ideologies, and distorted stories; prejudiced attitudes would hence be communicated to other individuals. Consequently, "...in the absence of alternative coverage, one-sided news articles could easily become the reality in the minds of audience." (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1995, p. 44) Furthermore, readers

¹ In Black pathology, people of color exist at the periphery of mainstream society and do not merit the attention granted to Whites.

would have a tendency to select and interpret the messages in order to reinforce their pre-existing beliefs (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1995; Perse, 2001). Entman (1994) also affirms that:

Reality is problematic not only because news stories inevitably select only some aspects of reality and leave out others. More important, over time, the specific realities depicted in single stories may accumulate to form a summary message that distorts social reality. (p. 509).

3.5.2. *Studies on Black stereotypes and media*

According to Martindale's (1986) study, media utilize, transmit and reproduce stereotypes in different ways. In fact, they may distort the real presence of a group by over-representing or misrepresenting it with one particular kind of activity (crime, for example). Secondly, media may partially portray the roles, behaviours or personal characteristics of a whole group of people (by linking criminal activity with young Black men, for example). And lastly, media may delegitimize a group by comparing it with idealized images of how people ought to behave. For example, a group may be represented in media only when they present abnormal or peculiar behaviours (criminals, alcoholics, drug addicts, etc.). Certain groups can be conveniently constituted as scapegoats because they are blamed for problems and leads them to be stereotyped as unreliable, incompetent and dangerous. With such representations, media are marking those who are different, designating them as the "Other" and distinguishing them from "Us".

In the United States, the *Hutchins Commission on the Freedom of the Press* (1947) claims that consumers are affected by the press' incorrect portrayals of social groups. The Commission as well believes that the press unconsciously reflected the biases and indifferences of the White society towards Blacks and that if consumers are exposed to the inner truth of the life of a group, they will gradually understand and respect it. Consequently, the Commission notes that the very nature of news reports can be related to racial attitudes, and can emphasize racial conflict and White fear. Finally, the articles create hostility towards Blacks and contribute to the promoting of racial stereotypes.

A second study in the United States, the *Kerner Commission* of 1968² "...warned that America was becoming two societies, one black, one white: separate and unequal." (Gissler, 1997, p.

² This Commission revealed the practices of large-circulation, resource-rich metropolitan dailies of the United States.

106). Race is, according to the Commission, a determining factor in the newsworthiness of an event. The Commission further establishes that media failed to tell stories about race in a proper context and did not represent the Black community as a normal part of American society. Instead, media's institutions distorted coverage by promoting stereotypes, by reinforcing prejudice, by failing to portray the severe problems facing Blacks, by focusing on racial conflicts, by ignoring local racial problems and by reflecting indifference and antipathy towards Blacks. According to the Kerner Report, "...the press has too long basked in a White world, looking out of it, if at all, with White men's eyes and a White perspective." (cited in Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao, 2003, p.119). Actually, Van Dijk (1985, 1988, 1991 and 1993) strongly believes that media has a central role in the reproduction of racism. Racism would be manifested in media's policies and ideologies and also reflected in the dominant culture and collective belief system (Fleras and Kunz, 2001).

More recently, Henry and Tator (2000) studied (by means of a critical discourse analysis at the micro-level approach) various Canadian cases and demonstrated that everyday practices of newspapers produce racial discourses of various communities. The authors present four conclusions in their research. First, people of color are underrepresented and largely invisible in media. Second, when people of color do appear in media coverage, they are often misrepresented, stereotyped and denounced as social problems and outsiders. Third, the corporate characteristics of media influence the kind of news that is produced and disseminated. And, lastly, despite the claims of objectivity and neutrality by journalists, the personal and professional values, norms and interests of media makers have a grand impact on the production of news discourse. As confirmed by the majority of the studies of the last decades, media's practitioners reconstruct reality based on professional and personal ideologies, corporate interests, norms, values and priorities.

Henry and Tator (2000) therefore believe that people of color are continuously portrayed as victims of the biases of media which are often deliberate but not systematic. Thus, stories are not objectively and neutrally reported. The authors conclude that media images are interpreted through the White, western male and middle class perspective, that they strengthen the values and perceptions of the dominant culture and reinforce racism in Canadian society. Likewise, Van Dijk (1988, 1991 and 1993) clearly states that media businesses are the managers of public opinion and they allocate abundant space to emphasize the dominant culture while silencing the

voices of the minorities. Consequently, the representations carry powerful and pre-existing meanings.

Henry and Tator (2000) quote studies concerning the coverage of various Canadian communities in print media. These studies (Rosenfeld and Spina, 1977; Ginzberg, 1985; Ducharme, 1986; Haroon Siddiqui, 1993; Miller and Prince, 1994; Goldfarb Consultants, 1995; Flears and Elliot, 1996; Riggins, 1997; Mosher, 1998; Mirchandani and Tastsoglou, 1998) demonstrate extensive evidence of the stereotyping of Blacks and other ethnic groups (Aboriginal, Arabic, Indo-Pakistan, etc.). The coverage of issues relating to ethnic communities by different newspapers (*Toronto Sun*: between 1978 and 1985; *Globe and Mail*: between 1980 and 1985, etc.) is examined and a considerable amount of racial bias, discrimination, stereotypes, clichés and distorted images is found. These studies establish the groups as being violent, immoral, savage, uncivilized, continuously in conflict and stereotypically “othered”. As a result, White hegemonic ideological views are systematically customary in print media. Moreover, in his studies of the European press, Van Dijk (1993) conclude that news stories are about people like “Us” or about news events that may interest readers like “Us”. Ethnic news is often about “Them” and they tend to be represented as different or deviant and threatening to “Us”. *“Minorities are excluded, marginalized, discredited or simply ignored.”* (Van Dijk, 1993, p.247).

Fleras and Kunz (2001) summarize numerous studies that have suggested patterns of representations evoked by the Canadian press relating to minorities. They propose five prototypes: minorities are invisible, minorities are stereotyped (steeped in unfounded generalizations), minorities are problem people and minorities are “whitewashed” (menacing images of danger) and/or abnormal.

Shah and Thornton (2004) analysed articles, columns and editorials of various newspapers (of Miami, Washington D.C. and Los Angeles), relating to interethnic interactions (among Blacks, Latinos, Asians and Americans).³ The newspapers produce three patterns of coverage. First, inappropriate values and bad behaviours of members of an ethnic group are demonstrated as causes of interracial conflicts and given much more attention. Second, interethnic conflicts are simplified in terms of heroes and villains and racial groups are often classified as disturbing

³ The years of coverage were not specified in the research but the authors used Nexis Lexus and other Internet databases.

villains. Third, Whites are never considered as Un-Americans but rather as being real Americans.

Clearly, world-wide literature on the subject confirm that the practices of media produce distort images of the Black community and present the latter in ways that damage their personal identity and social status (Henry and Tator, 2000). Hence, the characteristics of minorities are based on preconceptions rather than realities and are seen through the majorities' eyes, making media organizations preservers of racial status quo (Martindale, 1986). Past studies establish that media transmit inaccurate images about races and race relations, oversupply negative descriptions of minority groups and tend to focus on African American males as criminal, dangerous individuals causing conflicts. Newspapers would therefore incorrectly reflect reality and serve as imperfect mirrors (cited in Henry and Tator, 2002). Obviously, rarely are the activities of minorities covered in accordance to media's surveillance or correlation functions unless they are seen as a threat to social order and perceived as problem people. But, they may also be briefly covered during cultural festivals such as the carifesta parade.

Many scholars identify historical phases relating to the coverage of the Black community in newspapers. We will introduce these important studies that have revealed these stages.

3.6. Historical phases of media coverage on minorities in newspapers

Various researchers define various types of coverage adopted by the press in the past decades. These phases are mostly linked to the social and political characteristics of a certain era. In fact, to these phases are linked specific historical events and issues, more particularly the political struggle of African Americans. Due to the abundant explanatory literature found on the phases of coverage and elaborated upon by Clint C. Wilson II and Félix Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003), we will use their phases for the purpose of this project. The studies of these scholars have been done in American context. Unfortunately, the authors do not clearly state the precise years and the newspapers used in their research. But, they indicate some historical events in each period. Therefore, we are sometimes able to estimate the years.

Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003) identify five historical phases of media coverage concerning people of color in news media. The authors first elaborate the exclusionary phase (associated with the periods of the US Declaration of Independence that was finalized on July 4th,

1776 and the US Constitution, terminated in 1787). Despite the contribution of African Americans in the development of American life during the colonial era, mainstream media did not consider the importance of including and covering people of color. Even though they were, at the time, considered to be an important part of the well-being of society, the authors believe that African Americans were invisible or absent from daily news coverage. In fact, in the Declaration of Independence of the United States, it was stated that “...*all men are created equal*...” (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, p. 135) but deliberately excluded women, Native Americans and Blacks. Furthermore, the US Constitution specified that a State could not count a Native American and that each slave (usually Black) counted as three-fifths of a person. All of these government allegations asserted the lack of status of people of color. As a result, it seems that an important message was delivered: non-Whites and Whites were not alike. Ultimately, since news reflected society’s reality, the exclusion of minorities in media surely meant that they had to be barred from American society. From that moment on, a legacy appeared to have been infused in American news: minorities were not worth being covered by media.

Then, the threatening-issue phase (between the 1870s and the 1950s) included people of color in news, at times, especially when they were perceived as a threat to social order and to the well-being of society. Following the Native Americans’ arduous relationships with the European colonial settlers, they were the first to be considered as savages. News reports covered their acts of violence in their attempt to resist the colonial expansion. Consequently, Natives were perceived as the enemy and Europeans as heroes. Later, the Chinese and Mexican immigrants were alleged as threats to the White labour market and they were covered in the press but they were depicted as aliens and illegals. Thus, since the 1700s, the Black community, the Native Americans, the Chinese community and the Mexicans were described as monstrous in news reports. Furthermore, this one-sided news coverage of people of color disregarded and omitted purposely certain information in order to demonstrate their negative attributes. Media consequently contributed to racial division and racial conflicts, blamed these communities for national problems and encouraged the White community to detest them. These communities became stimulators of fear.

We then have the third phase or the confrontation phase. This phase represented the responses, often violent, of non-White communities regarding social injustices they have encountered. The Indian and Mexican wars are examples. Due to the fact that non-White communities were seen as outsiders, the distinction of the “Us” and the “Them” was emphasized in this era and the

actions of minorities were, once again, reported as adversarial and as being threats to social order. News reports encouraged conflict rather than appeasement. Such confrontations often evoked legislative actions (segregation laws, peace treaties, anti-immigration laws, the creation of agencies: Immigration and Naturalization Service, etc.).

In the fourth phase (the stereotypical selection phase), the newspapers demonstrated that the dominant class was attempting to neutralize the White apprehension of people of color while accommodating their presence. In fact, even though numerous racial conflicts, non-Whites had not disappeared from American society. Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 2003) describe this phase as being a post conflict period. Certain news stories appearing to be favourable to non-Whites were reported and illustrated society as being tolerable towards the integration of people of color. For example, success stories (such as the rise of a Black man from the ghetto) and other thematic stories involving minorities (cultural festivals, lack of job opportunities, etc.) were abundantly covered. This type of coverage attempted to demonstrate that non-Whites were still in their place (in the ghetto for example) and those that have escaped from their designated position were not a threat to society because they adopted similar dominant values. Non-Whites were therefore perceived as having overcome the discrepancies and deficits of their race. Thus, people of color were now seen, not only as people who cause problems but that have problems as well.

According to the authors, this last phase would still be largely promoted but media would be entering a so-called integrated or multiracial coverage phase. Due to the fact that media is acknowledging that the development of a racially diverse society cannot be avoided, all groups of society should be included equally in good and bad news, in order to achieve social equality and diminish unnecessary fears based on race. The "Us" should therefore represent all citizens. In fact, media has the right to gain profits but not at the expense of minorities and news has long been considered newsworthy according to the interests of the majority audience. This phase is implemented in news organizations but unevenly applied. According to Wilson and Gutiérrez (1995), in order to totally achieve this phase or ideal, major changes (training of journalists, increase of non-Whites in news media organizations, etc.) have to be constantly applied.

Martindale's (1986) examines the coverage of Black Americans in five newspapers⁴ (*Vindicator*⁵, *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Atlanta Constitution* and *the Chicago Tribune*),

⁴ The newspapers were drawn randomly from a stratified sample of months, weeks and days.

during a period of thirty years. The newspapers selected are located in cities that experienced serious race riots during the 1960s. The amount of coverage devoted to news about Black crime and stereotypical images of Blacks (Blacks as entertainers or athletes) varied widely among the five newspapers. She concludes the following:

- In the early 1950s (the pre-civil rights era), the newspapers provided very little coverage of Black Americans (in column inches and in the percentage of their available news space). When presented, the images were stereotypic and African Americans were portrayed as primitive, amusing, as violent and criminals, servants or athletes. This conclusion supported one of the *Kerner Commission*'s results: prior to 1954, many newspapers tended to ignore Blacks and promoted stereotypes.
- Coverage of Blacks increased (in inches) during the 1960s (the civil rights era); more specifically because of the abundance of newsworthy civil rights activities that occurred at that time. Blacks were consequently pictured as protestors and demonstrators and images which concerned criminal activities and social problems. Criminal news increased dramatically in this period. Newspapers therefore became more aware of Blacks and had a desire to cover them more extensively and realistically. In fact, Black citizens became more visible, participated in the everyday life of America and were recognized as having more of an equal role in society. But the Black community was rarely covered in certain sections of the newspapers (financial and obituary). Moreover, the designation "Negro" was less present in the columns of the papers studied.
- There were numerous changes and progress in the newspapers' coverage of Blacks. They seemed more aware of Black citizens during the 1970s. There was an increase of everyday life activities of Blacks in the newspapers; therefore representing a more accurate and complete picture of the community and showing Blacks as an ordinary part of society. Efforts in eliminating racial inequality were noticed as well. There was a more diverse blend of stories about the Black community (Black political candidates, for example). Although there was an increase in the stereotypical coverage (both in column and inches and in the total coverage percentage) during this period while providing more realistic coverage of Black Americans than they had during the 1950s and 1960s.

⁵ A previous study had analysed the Ohio Vindicator's coverage of Black Americans during the selected period and Martindale compared her own results with the previous study.

Overall, Martindale believes that media made some significant improvements in their coverage of Black Americans but that the “Us” and “Them” distinction was, at that time, still prevailing in newspapers. Stereotypical coverage of Blacks, especially by highlighting them as criminals, was found in abundance.

In his analysis of the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* (between 1937 and 1990), Lester (1994) concludes to similar results. He divides similar time periods: the pre-civil era (1937-1952), the civil rights era (1957-1972) and the modern era (1978-1990). According to the author, coverage of African-American would have been augmented over the years. The four newspapers demonstrated similar patterns; crime, sports and entertainment still remained the main categories in which African-Americans were covered. Overall, in the last period, African Americans are seen equally and as productive members of society. Although, according to Lester, the stereotypic representations of African Americans have increased over the years and possibly reveal the existence of modern or symbolic racism.⁶ Traditional racism would therefore be less present⁷.

Kellstedt's (2003) quantitative research of the *Newsweek*, during the same periods, has similar results. He realizes that the volume of coverage related to the Black community is not static and depends on historical events.

These patterns of representations mentioned above and evoked by the press are surely a major determining factor of our social, economic, political and cultural fabric. We have discussed all necessary terms relating to our project and the overall press coverage of the Black community. Below, we will present the studies relating to written crime news, more specifically, newspapers and the Black community.

4. The press, crime news and the Black community

Now that we are aware of media's roles and functions as well as the ways media represent Blacks, we may question how the press incorporates cultural groups, more particularly the Black community, in crime news. In fact, we have shown above that Blacks have become over-

⁶ The author described modern racism in the following way: society believes in equal rights for the Black community but society's behaviors and politics, infiltrated in everyday life, indicate anti-Black attitudes.

⁷ Traditional racism was described by the author as being an intolerance of the Black community by many White Americans.

represented in crime news, that media have been known to routinely downplay news of minority crime and have portrayed Blacks as a threat to society. Thus, the White understanding of issues would be favoured (Campbell, 1995). When news makers continually choose to include images of people of color as perpetrators of crimes and omit images of people of color as normal citizens, they obviously reinforce the idea that bad news is for and about people of color. We will now examine the existing American, European and Canadian studies relating to crime news, Black communities and the press⁸.

4.1. United States

Certain researchers compare the ways newspapers describe Black and White actors in crime stories. In fact, Miller and Levin (1998) analyse crime reports in several magazines (*Times, People*) and newspapers (*San Jose Mercury News*: a daily that ranks as one of the top ten newspapers in the United States and that has abundantly covered the agricultural community of the State). The authors notice that positive adjectives and phrases (collegiate, honour student, surprising and unusual behaviour) are used to describe White suspects, giving the impression that they are usually not capable of such acts of violence. They also conclude that White victims are portrayed as innocent, good and fragile but that little attention was given to stories involving Black victims. Other studies as well demonstrate that White victims are named in articles while Black victims are often depersonalized (Entman and Rojecki, 2000). By doing so, "...the identity of the individual is considered to be not important and not worthy of naming, that the person is part of an undifferentiated group; just another Black criminal" (Entman and Rojecki, 2000, p. 82). According to these authors, victims are White and represent the middle-class status, Black victims are presented as deserving their fate and Black-on-Black crimes are considered as being less newsworthy. Miller and Levin (1998) as well depict that journalists use harsher adjectives (for example: vicious, sadistic, savage, animals) when describing Black suspects in order to demonstrate the Black antisocial behaviour.

Many researchers notice that Black victims are less covered and differently presented than White victims. First, Miller and Levin (1998) analysed the case of two youths who had disappeared in Illinois; one 10 year old White boy and one 13 year old African American girl. The boy's case captivated the region for two weeks and there was enormous coverage. But, the girl's

⁸ We have researched most newspapers and presented some of their characteristics. The attributes of certain newspapers were although not found or they were written in another language.

disappearance did not even make the TV's news and the *Daily Journal* (Illinois) wrote only three brief stories about her death.

Similarly, Rome (1998) analysed reports of various rape cases in New York's and New Jersey's newspapers, in 1989. He also states that newspapers employ the myth of the Black male rapist and bias crime reports when the offender is African American and the victim is White. In fact, Rome (1998) found twelve rapes that occurred on the same day but only two were in the headlines. First, in 1989, a White New York investment banker was raped and beaten by six Black and Hispanic teenagers. The story made the front pages of many daily newspapers. Ironically, at least ten other rapes were known to have occurred in New York City on that same day. An African American woman was raped and murdered and a Hispanic woman was also raped and killed. Yet, these two cases received little media coverage.

Rome (1998) as well mentions that six weeks following these previous cases, a group of White boys raped and sodomized a retarded 17 year old female, in New Jersey. Not only did this case receive little coverage but different adjectives were used to describe the assailants of the above mentioned stories. For example, the Hispanic aggressors mentioned above are portrayed as "*vicious, sadistic terrorists*" and the White assailants are "*collegiate, former Captain of the football team and honour student*" (cited in Rome, 1998, p. 89). Moreover, the tones of the articles varied according to the rape that was covered. The youths in the Central Park assault of the White banker were described "*...as savagely beating a young investment banker as a result of vicious sprees that seemed to be normal for them...*" (cited in Rome, 1998, p. 90). However, the actions of the White aggressors of the New Jersey rape are surprising and unusual.

Miller and Levin (1998) examine the coverage of women, having different ethnic backgrounds and accused of their child's death (Susan Smith, Awilda Lopez and Hedda Nussbaum). The researchers realize that in the case of a Latina mother who was charged with murdering her child, media did not attempt to understand the causes of her actions. The articles in *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines more precisely evoke that she is a drug addict, who dwells in a homeless shelter and who demonstrates little emotion since her arrest. Although a White upper-class woman accused of killing her husband is reported as a cocaine addict and is described as a victim of her abusive husband. Less coverage is apparently given to the Hispanic mother but the White woman's story is abundantly covered. Miller and Levin (1998) are of the opinion that media

presented White suspects as not being capable of acts of violence. Therefore, their behaviours would have to be justified.

The younger generation would also be commonly seen as the source of problems (Solomos, 1988). Graber (1980) concludes that media identify young Black males as major criminals and the ghettos as the main crime locations. In fact, ghettos would be identified as sectors of modern cities principally occupied by Blacks or immigrants (Cashmore and Troyna, 1990). These regions usual have a high degree of homogeneity and they are often associated negatively with crime, disorders, poor quality housing, noise, etc. (Cashmore and Troyna, 1990). Moreover, such racialized boundaries would emphasize the dislodgement of Black communities from other city areas and reaffirm the salience of race as a principle of social exclusion (Smith, 1993).

In his analysis of ninety homicides covered by the Milwaukee County newspapers (*Sentinel* and *Journal*⁹) between 1981 and 1983, Pritchard (1985) as well discovers that race influences the ways the newspapers covered homicides. The race of the suspect (not of the victim) is more specifically the best forecaster of how a story is covered. The suspect's race is as well a significant predictor of how long, thorough and fair the story would be, principally in the *Journal*. In the *Sentinel*, the race of the suspect is noteworthy for the length of the story but it is insignificant for the fairness and thoroughness of the coverage. The suspect's prior record and the initial charge are also associated with the story length of the *Sentinel*'s articles. Stories of defendants with little or no prior record and having a first degree murder charge are longer. Longer stories involving a minority usually are less thorough and occupied less space. Cases having minority suspects (Blacks or Hispanics) are less likely than White suspects' cases to be covered thoroughly in the *Journal*. Pritchard (1985) explains that homicides of minorities are relatively more frequent so Milwaukee's newspapers may believe that they merit less space in the newspapers. The press seems to prefer to avoid news that reflects minorities negatively in order not to reinforce racism by covering minority homicides extensively.

The racial content of photographs has additionally been a subject of recent research. Accused Blacks are supposedly often pictured in mug shots or as being restrained and in police custody (Entman and Rojecki, 2000). Mug shots would as well make subjects look guilty and physical

⁹ In 1995 these two journals merged and became the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. It is considered as Wisconsin's largest and most influential newspapers and is an employee owned newspaper.

control demonstrates that the individual is a threat and dangerous to others. The studies do not mention whether White suspects are treated similarly.

The results of the researchers mentioned above are also demonstrated in Dorfman and Schiraldi's (2001) content analysis of crime news (from 1910 through 2001) in a range of American media (mostly in Missouri: twenty-six local television networks and fifty-three newspapers). They indicate that the problem is not the inaccuracy of the stories but rather the information that has been chosen to be included or not in the articles. Therefore, media would inaccurately reflect victims and perpetrators distort the images of crime and reinforce stereotypes. Likewise, following their study in the *Arizona Republic*¹⁰ (in 2001), Bramlett-Solomon and Hernandez (2003) conclude that the Black community are overwhelmingly presented as negative and the images contain unfavourable stereotypes (as people causing or having problems).

Consequently, media would tend to make crime coverage easy, cheap and available, and focus on the most serious crimes, leaving the public with an incomplete picture (Dorfman and Schiraldi, 2001). In fact, people of color appear more often as dangerous perpetrators instead of innocent victims; making Black victims less worthy of coverage. Once more according to Dorfman and Schiraldi (2001), Black criminals are more likely to be racially identified. They too notice that the proportion of crime committed by people of color is over-reported and that Black victims are under-represented.

But, similarly to Martindale's study (1986), Barlow's (1998) content analysis of crime cover stories in *Time* and *Newsweek* between 1946 and 1995 conclude that newspapers have recently made an effort to suppress negative and direct references to race in order to avoid reinforcement of racist ideologies. Between the end of World War II and the 1950s, most cover stories did not apparently represent crime as being an African American problem. From 1965 through 1968, however, the articles would have established Black political violence as a general problem of crime for the United States. Thus, the press more indirectly indicated principally Blacks as offenders. In 1965, *Newsweek* explicitly equated crime and "negro crime" as an important ideological message (Barlow, 1998, p. 159-160). This statement considers Blacks as having an "inborn racial trait" that causes crime (Barlow, 1998, p. 160). Later, between 1970 and 1995, the connection between Blacks and crime would have remained almost entirely within crime

¹⁰ Grand Canyon State's largest newspapers that was created to challenge the biased political beliefs of the established Arizona newspapers.

cover stories. During the summer of 1970, *Time* magazine even stated “...*though victims of black crime are overwhelmingly black, it is chiefly young black males who commit the most common interracial crime: armed robbery*” (cited in Barlow, 1998, p. 172). Barlow (1998) subsequently suggests that the images of cover stories involving Black criminals still remain, according to her analysis, as one of a dark and dangerous street criminal.

These numerous studies described above prove that, as seen in the threatening-issue phase described by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003), people of color are alleged as threats to the well-being of society and are negatively attributed. It seems as well that one-sided news coverage predominates and certain information (race, personal attributes, etc.) are purposely integrated in the stories in order to emphasize the negative attributes of people of color. We may therefore not indicate that the press promotes multiracial coverage. Such biased coverage does not acknowledge that society is multicultural; it either diminishes fears based on race or equally covers all groups of society. Moreover, according to the studies mentioned above people of color cause problems but they as well experience difficulties such as drugs or poverty (for example, as seen in Miller and Levin’s study, 1998). Therefore, the stereotypical phase is also reflected in the studied coverage mentioned above.

Even though we are not familiar with the particularities of certain newspapers studied by various authors (Rome, 1998; Entman and Rojecki, 2000; Dorfman and Schiraldi, 2001), the United States did do thorough research on our studied subjects (Blacks, crime news and the press). In fact, besides specific case studies, we also found complete studies of various time spans (Dorfman and Schiraldi, 2001; Pritchard, 1985, etc.), of specific crimes (homicides, rapes) or of crime in general. Furthermore, some relevant items and actors found in crime news have as well been specifically analysed (photographs, victims). Some authors have furthermore compared the portrayals of Black victims or suspects with the ones of White victims or perpetrators.

We purposely attempted to limit our body of literature to the studies related uniquely to the press. In some cases, researchers combine their study with various types of written media: magazines and newspapers or with another medium: television. It would be meaningful to reveal the results found in the European press, as bases of comparison.

4.2. Europe

Tuen Van Dijk is commonly cited as a reference in numerous studies. He has extensively examined the most recent coverage (1980s and onwards) of the European press concerning Black and other ethnic communities, Tamils, Surinamese, Moluccans, Moroccans, Turks, etc. He also has detailed and used the critical discourse method of analysis. Although, in the 1970s, other authors such as Hartmann and Husband have also discussed the subjects of race, racism and media in Great Britain (cited in Van Dijk, 1988).

Generally in his studies, Van Dijk (1993) reveals that minority crime is assigned more importance and that crime news is prominent in most German regional newspapers. In fact, Surinameses would be portrayed as resisting authority, as people who do not get help, as individuals that experience problems, as deviants, criminals and as violent persons. Turkish communities would also be presented as difficult or deviant, as law breakers or as causing problems; Moroccans and Moluccans are especially shown to be deviant (illegals, drugs addicts and criminals) and; Tamils as resistant to laws (Van Dijk, 1988).

Van Dijk (1991) notices that when Blacks are accused, they are described by their color, whereas when they are cleared of accusations, they suddenly lose color and are identified by their names.

Van Dijk also examined the headlines of various European papers. In his study of various crime reports of 1985-1986, in Netherlands (*De Telegraaf, de Volkskrant, NRC-Handelsblad, Algemeen Dagblad, Trouw and De Waarheid*), Van Dijk (1988b) notices that when ethnic groups are secondary actors in news reports (especially in the *De Telegraaf*), they occur sometimes less in the headlines than as principal actors. Additionally, "...the association with crime in most crime headlines is more indirect and becomes explicit especially when minority involvement can be defensibly associated with cultural habits..." (Van Dijk, 1988, p. 190). For example, stating a member of a minority group "using arms" (Van Dijk, 1988b, p. 244).

Van Dijk (1988b) also examined the coverage of other nationalities installed in Germany such as the Turkish and Moroccans. For example, he studied articles relating to the behaviours of Turkish or Moroccan fathers towards their wives. The articles demonstrate that men isolate their wives and beat the children. In the same study, he notices the relevant link between Surinamese or Moluccans and drugs. These communities are in fact often described as being drug addicts or

dealers. Although according to the headlines, minority groups are also victims of violent crimes. For example, on August 10th, 1985, in *de Volkskrant*, the headline states that a Moroccan is stabbed to death. Only the victim is mentioned in this headline; leaving the murderer to be nobody and irrelevant, presupposing that the ethnic group is in conflict with one another.

Later, in 1991, Van Dijk as well examined a corpus of two-thousand-seven-hundred and fifty five headlines, all about race and crime, taken from the *Times* (576), the *Guardian* (670), the *Daily Telegraph* (705), the *Daily Mail* (524) and the *Sun* (280). Except for the *Sun*, all of European's national newspapers have more than five-hundred news reports published during a period of six months (from August 1st, 1985 to January 31st, 1986). The author calculates that since there are one-hundred and sixty-two weekdays during this period, an average of at least three items per day about minorities is covered. He concludes that it is more than the usual amount of press coverage about minorities. In fact, in 1989, the same newspapers had only nine-hundred and seventy-four news items. He attributes this increase to the violent race riots of October 1985 that is associated with minority groups.

The headline "*Blacks riot with the police*" (Van Dijk, 1991, p. 55) is often indicated in crime reports. Such titles seem to define the riot in terms of color or ethnic background. Van Dijk (1991) notices that the word police and others synonyms appear in three-hundred and eighty-eight titles; the word riot is mentioned in three-hundred and twenty headlines. The word riot is defined as a dramatic and negative term and the presence of the police, as a main actor in the news, multiplied the negative connotation of the term. Obviously, the third major concept (as an adjective or a noun) used is the word Black. Violence is additionally amply represented in hundreds of headlines (death, murder, terror, attack, violence, shot, etc.). Van Dijk (1991) states some examples: "*Hundreds of Police Clash with Mob in Birmingham Riot*" (*Times*, September 10th); "*West Indian Gang Invaded Pub in Revenge of Riot*" (*Telegraph*, August 23rd); "*Police Blame Riot on Drug Dealers*" (*Guardian*, September 16th); "*Black Youths in Demo as Mother Die*" (*Telegraph*, October 7th); "*Officer Stabbed to Death in Riot*" (*Telegraph*, October 7th) (pp. 55, 56, 62, 64). But, the titles did not detail whether Blacks were the victims or the initiators of the violence.

In this previous study, Van Dijk (1991) discovers that most headlines suggest that ethnic groups or "foreigners" are trouble and that they are often the responsible agents of negative acts. The Black community is compared to the mob and is represented as irrational and lacking control.

The association between Blacks and crime is amply emphasized. In such stories, White European communities are often represented as tolerant and peaceful but immigrants are portrayed as aggressive, tyrannical, criminals and intolerant.

Van Dijk (1991) believes that Blacks are quoted less often and less extensively and when they are quoted, they speak as victims rather than as critics or professionals. Moreover, according to Van Dijk (1991), rarely would Blacks be represented as victims.

According to Van Dijk (1988), his results can as well be applied to all Northwestern, White-dominated countries, such as Canada and the United States. The cultural and social context of Europe is dissimilar to that of Northwestern countries. In fact, we notice that a diversity of nationalities (Tamils, Surinamese, Moluccans, Moroccans, Turks, etc.) are examined in Van Dijk's studies and are considered as Europe's Black communities. But, as we will explain in the next chapter, these nationalities are not necessarily considered as Blacks in the Northwestern countries.

In the 1990s, the confrontation phase detailed by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003) is still present in Europe. The distinction of "Us" and "Them" seems to be emphasized and the actions of minorities are reported as being threats to social order. Reports appear to be one-sided and mostly about violent confrontations. Furthermore, the so-called integrated coverage phase presented in the American context by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1985 and 2003) may not be applied in the European context. The headlines of the European press do not seem to diminish fears based on race and do not treat all groups equally. Thus, certain titles did not mention the race of the actors but did indicate the presence of an ongoing riot that was already attributed to race in previous articles.

Van Dijk thoroughly details his studies. They in fact reveal specific grammar and syntax style that is used in news reports and he examines particular parts of stories such as headlines and leads. He selects various periods to study and his studies are rarely about one particular event. Moreover, he uses many different newspapers.

Lastly, a comparison of the two contexts, United States and Europe, will be made with the Canadian studies.

4.3. Canada

McCormick (1995) focuses on two specific ethnic incidents, involving the Black community of Nova Scotia. First, on June 8, 1985, a Weymouth Falls Black man died from a gunshot wound. The suspect of the crime is accused of manslaughter and is subsequently acquitted. Nova Scotia's print media barely covers the event and the author relates this lack of coverage to the race of the victim.

McCormick (1995) discusses the press coverage of the 1991 Halifax Riot (in the *Chronicle-Herald* and the *Halifax-Herald*¹¹). He demonstrates that media can reinforce a slanted view of the events in the world. The Halifax Riot concerns a group of Black men who were refused in a bar and who subsequently assault White bystanders, vandalize stores and confront the authorities. The riot is quickly identified with emotionally charged words as a racial conflict: "war zone", "rampage", "chaos", "devastation", "destruction", "disorder", "outrage", etc. McCormick (1995) considers these words to be ethnocentric. At the beginning of most press articles, racial tensions are named as the cause of the riot thus influencing the reader's comprehension of the rest of the report. McCormick (1995) also explains that police officers are quoted in news reports and they mention that the violence used by the rioters is not surprising and represent behaviours of the Black community. Race is therefore highlighted as the root of the problem in various ways: racism in bars, racism by the police, racism and poverty, and so on (McCormick, 1995). The stories strongly emphasize the violence relating to the riot and the articles allege that the perpetrators are Blacks.

The coverage of this above event appears to be overwhelming and is covered for months but the quantity of the articles diminishes over time. For readers that did not experience the event, they surely experience it through media. The event is sensationalized, exaggerated and created social panic. McCormick (1995) realizes that the same event can be interpreted differently by various newspapers; hence, he questions whether similar actions committed by Whites would be covered in comparable ways. Furthermore, the *Toronto Star* has similar versions of the riot but several facts are wrong, including the night of the riot. The lead paragraph reads: "*A crowd of angry blacks – estimated as at least 30 – attacked a group of whites in a north-end housing project last*

¹¹ The *Halifax Herald Limited* published two daily newspapers until March 1st, 2004 and has become a rarity in Canadian journalism due to the fact it is a daily newspaper operation free of chain ownership. The two newspapers were then combined into one product: The *Chronicle Herald*. The *Chronicle Herald* was the older of the two (started in 1875).

night, breaking an uneasy calm after two nights of racial violence.”(cited in McCormick, 1995, p. 125). A week later, a White man is assaulted in a small Nova Scotian town and the *Globe and Mail* immediately links this incident with the earlier racial riot. In fact, in an article printed July 29th, 1991 (*Globe and Mail*), this fight is automatically described as “racially motivated” by a “17-year-old black youth” (cited in McCormick, 1995, p. 126).

McCormick (1995) confirms that the coverage of the riot includes intolerable carelessness, the articles concerning the Halifax riot reproduce a dominant and discriminatory point of view, and readers come to understand that the lives of the Black individuals are “messy” and “ill organized”. Consequently, according to the author, media recreate various myths and ethnic prejudices that have long existed in Canadian history.

The reports relating to the Halifax race riots seem to reveal the confrontation phase explained by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003). The distinction between Black (“Them”) and White (“Us”) groups appear to be extremely highlighted. The Black community are furthermore seen as causing conflict and confrontation rather than appeasement. In fact, Blacks appear to be negatively and consistently described as angry and violent individuals.

Later, Miller (1997) examines the news reports of a murder involving three Black perpetrators and a White victim, printed in the *Globe and Mail* which specifically offers national, international and business reporting and commentaries; the *Toronto Star*, one of Canada’s largest daily newspapers published in Toronto since 1892 and the *Toronto Sun* which later appeared in 1971. In the mid 1990s, three Black robbers had stormed in a downtown Toronto eatery and “slaughtered” a twenty three years old hairdresser. The perpetrators are described as “barbarians” and “monsters”. In fact, a columnist of the *Globe and Mail* wrote: “*The barbarians are inside the gate.*” (cited in Miller, 1997, p. 134). Furthermore, the *Toronto Star* and the *Toronto Sun* printed security-camera photographs of the suspects across their front pages and urged citizens to cut them out so that a driver might be able to recognize them. An editorial explains that the pictures are fuzzy and that the young Black man can not be distinguished. When two Black men surrendered to the police, the *Sun* wrote: “*GOT HIM*” and “*TWO DOWN*” (cited in Miller, 1997, p. 134). Miller (1997) believes that White fear of the Black community was raised in Toronto and Black crime served to stereotype this tragedy. In fact, when media do focus on street crime, Blacks would be held responsible, making “White street thugs” invisible and people of color as criminals by nature (Miller, 1997).

Furthermore, Miller (1997) notices that minorities are negatively portrayed that is, as criminals or in stereotypic ways, in forty nine percent of 895 news stories. The reports are randomly chosen in the *Vancouver Sun*, a broadsheet published daily since 1912 but not on Sundays and selected holidays, in the *Calgary Herald*, *Winnipeg Free Press* (largest newspaper of Manitoba that is printed since 1872), *Toronto Sun* and *Montreal Gazette*, one of the oldest newspapers of North America that is printed since 1778. According to the author, media also imply that Whites who do commit violent crimes are unique, not common, and such articles tend to be empathetic towards their actions.

Henry and Tator (2000) completed a critical linguistic analysis which surveyed about two-hundred and one news reports of the *Just Desserts* case in the *Toronto Press* (*Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Sun* and *Toronto Star*), printed between 1994-1997. On the evening of April 5th, 1994, three young Black men entered the *Just Desserts Café* in downtown Toronto demanding money and jewellery from the people present. Approximately twenty people were held at gunpoint and when several of them resisted, one of the perpetrators randomly shot a customer. The victim, a young White woman, died in the hospital shortly after. The robbers fled in a runaway car, driven by a fourth man. About five years later, in December 1999, two of the men were found guilty and one not guilty. This case would have been abundantly covered in articles, features, editorials and photographs. The event would have raised a general public panic and led to numerous public discourses and debates about social issues (gun control, young offenders, immigration and deportation of alleged criminals).

Nevertheless due to the fact that the victim is White and the assailants are of Jamaican origin, the event raised a race issue. While the aggressors are obviously considered to be the wrongdoers, the victim is portrayed as follows: "*T.O. Innocence Lost*" (*Toronto Sun*, April 7th, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated); "...never seen a more senseless or wanton murder of an innocent victim." (*Toronto Sun*, April 7th, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated). In fact, Christie Blatchford's column, printed in the *Toronto Sun* on April 7th, 1994, considers the *Just Desserts* case as "...an epic contest between forces of good and evil." (cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated). Therefore, the White victims would have been imaged as "good", "pure", "young", "attractive" and "innocent" while the assailants were "evil" or "antagonists", "savage", "animalistic" and "unremorseful".

Despite, following the coverage of this event, we may not confirm that media is entering a multiracial coverage phase proposed by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003). In 1994, crime events seemed to still raise race issues and social panic or fear based on race. As we will detail below, people of color would be abundantly seen as a threat to the well being of society and depicted negatively (the threatening-issue phase).

Referring to the same study of Henry and Tator (2000), thirty-seven articles are printed in the *Globe and Mail*; eighty-eight in the *Toronto Sun* and seventy-six in the *Toronto Star*. The authors reveal that the crime is being automatically described as “unethical through Canadian eyes”, “unCanadian” and as being an “imported deviant practice”, even before the suspects were identified. For example, on April 7th, 2004, the *Globe and Mail* printed: “*Getting robbed in an Annex restaurant is alien enough.*” (cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated). On April 15th, 1994, the *Toronto Sun* as well printed the following statement: “*White Canadians are understandably fed up with people they see as outsiders coming into their country and beating and killing them.*” (cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated). In 1998, Mosher had even found that early Canadian newspapers routinely described the race of offenders, serving to identify Blacks as aliens. For example in November 1900 the *Globe and Mail*'s headline printed “*The Black Burglar*” (cited in Henry and Tator, 2002, p. 41).

The identification of the suspects as young Black males explicitly associates crime and Blacks and acknowledges ethnicity as being a cause of crime: “...*all the robbers are Black....*” (*Toronto Star*, April 6th and 7th, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated); “*Unfortunately, these days most of the murderers seem to be Black...*” (*Toronto Sun*, April 15th, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated). In fact, the *Globe and Mail* mentions “...*a growing involvement of young Black men in violent robberies...*” (April 8th, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated), later adds “...*particularly among young Black people of Jamaican origin...*” (April 12th, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated) and “*Young Black men are responsible for a disproportionate amount of violent crime in Toronto...*” (April 12, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated). Consequently, fourteen of the thirty seven articles printed in the *Globe and Mail* explicitly associate crime with Blacks, more specifically Jamaicans. In addition, racial indicators are abundantly mentioned in the articles and assert street gangs as being a race problem and part of a culture: “*If there is a culture of violence among Jamaican-Canadian youths, why is it so?*”

Why...are their dress, patois and behaviour being imitated by young Canadians... ” (Globe and Mail, April 12, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated).

During the first weeks of reporting, almost one-third of the articles in the *Globe and Mail* and about twenty articles in the *Toronto Star* relating to the Just Desserts case and youth crime refer to the *Young Offenders’ Act* (YOA). Stories allege that the YOA is not harsh enough: “...*unjust system with YOA, and armed punks who laugh at security cameras....*”(Toronto Sun, April 16, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated). As well, many journalists would have strongly associated guns with racial youth gangs. On April 9th, 1994, an article features interviews with young Black males and links racial gangs with gun possession: “*You do not see them but you know they probably have guns...*” (cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated). In the first three weeks, forty-eight percent of the articles published in the *Globe and Mail* raise the issue of gun control.

About three articles in the *Toronto Star* as well focus on the failures of the Immigration and Refugee board panel: *Two decades of choosing too many of the wrong immigrants...*(Toronto Sun, April 8th, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated); “*Whose responsibility is Mr. Grant? Canada’s or Jamaica’s...Very few crimes are more repulsive to Canadian values...*” (May 3, 1994, cited in Henry and Tator, 2000, pages are not enumerated);

Therefore, the researchers prove that guns, crimes and criminals are symbolically “othered”, are perceived as deviating from social norms and as foreign to our social Canadian fabric. More particularly, the *Globe and Mail* would have specifically focused on unique cultural features (Henry and Tator, 2002). In doing so, the journalists seem to have purposely disregarded certain information in order to demonstrate and link negative actions and attributes to people of color. The acts of violence committed by the Black community seem to be profusely covered and this population is consequently automatically blamed for crime gestures. We therefore notice that the threatening-issue phase underlined by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003) seems to shockingly stand out in the news reports mentioned above. Furthermore, as in the confrontation phase, the Black community and its actions are outstandingly “othered”.

In a more random research, Henry and Tator (2002) selected specific periods in which social issues (crime and justice, immigration and deportation) relating to Jamaicans are questioned in Canadian metropolitan newspapers (more specifically Toronto). They found that two percent of

the stories are positive. They conclude that “...media have constructed the Jamaicans as people from a crime-ridden and poverty-stricken country who are good at sports and entertainment but who consistently present Canadian society with myriad social problems...” (cited in Henry and Tator, 2002, p. 168).

In the same research, Henry and Tator (2002) also found thirty-seven percent of the articles concerning the Vietnamese community fell into the social problem category. Here again, this community would have been presented as criminals, though to a lesser extent than the Jamaicans. They also notice that newspapers racially identify crime suspects or victims and that the term Black is often encountered (at least twice as often as White). In fact, forty-six percent of all crime articles in the *Globe and Mail* that indicate a racial descriptor involve Blacks (or an individual of Caribbean origin); in the *Star*, it is thirty-eight and half percent and in the *Sun*, almost twenty-six percent. Additionally, one-third of the photographs printed in crime stories portray people of color and more than half of the crime reports have pictures (in the *Sun*).

Notwithstanding the thorough investigation that has been done in order to locate the recent (1990s and onwards) body of literature relating to Canadian and more particularly, to Montreal’s coverage of the Black community in crime news, little extended research has been found. Furthermore, the few studies completed describe specific case studies that mostly took place in Toronto (Halifax Riot, Just Dessert Case, etc.). Miller (1998) is the sole author that examines a newspaper printed in Montreal (the *Gazette*). Therefore, compared to the United States and Europe, Canada has less researched our topics.

As for the phases described by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003), we may notice that following the studies mentioned above, the multiracial phase does not seem to prevail. Rather, Canada seems to principally practice the threatening-issue and confrontation phases of coverage.

5. Preliminary comments

It is important to state that the crime news coverage of other nationalities (Hispanics, for example) has also been studied. Other mediums (network television, for example) have, as well, largely been a subject of research. We found certain studies relating to the Black press. For the purpose of our study, we intentionally decided to present the research relating to the Black community, the press and crime news.

The majority of the research done (Canadian, American and European) on the specific topics studied (the press, crime news and the Black community) were summarized previously and evidenced similar results. In fact, whether relating to the Canadian, American or European context, they all, in different ways, have established that print media seem to portray negatively the Black community in crime reports and that specific types of information (race, for example) are deliberately integrated in the stories in order to emphasize the negative attributes of Blacks (Van Dijk, 1991; Miller, 1997; Barlow, 1998; Henry and Tator, 2000). Furthermore, the race of the perpetrators would denote the tone of the story (Pritchard, 1985). Overall, the Black community appears to have been depicted with negative connotation and harsher adjectives in the world-wide press (Miller and Levin, 1998; Rome 1998; Henry and Tator, 2000; Van Dijk, 1988a, 1991, etc.). Moreover, as shown by Van Dijk (1991) and Miller and Levin (1998), Blacks are less covered as victims.

We must as well question whether media promote and attempt to enter the so-called integrated or multiracial coverage phase of coverage described by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003). With the body of literature detailed above, we can speculate that media expose news, more specifically crime reports, at the expense of minorities (the Black community in our case). Although, due to the fact that our project does not compare various types of news relating to different groups, we may not determine whether the research of certain authors (such as Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995 and 2003; Martindale, 1986, etc.) is precise in stating that all groups of society are equally included in good and bad news. Therefore, we may not confirm that the newspapers studied have promoted racial equality. Since we have chosen to uniquely analyse crime news, we may not illustrate a complete picture of the images concerning crime and the Black community. We will rather be able to affirm if one-sided news coverage is predominant in crime stories involving the Black community and whether specific stereotypes are revealed.

6. Problematic

The ways media (network television, newspapers, etc.) represent the Black community in relation to crime have long been an issue of world-wide studies. Even though we have exhaustively constructed a body of literature with various related subjects (different types of media, various nationalities, organizational mechanisms, etc.), we purposely decided to elaborate

our study on the Black community of Montreal and the Montreal press. We will be able to compare our results with literature and past studies.

Various gaps are noticed that require up to date research. In fact, our subjects (the press, crime news and the Black community) have been an interest to many American researchers. We found no thorough study done on Montreal's newspapers (except for the *Montreal Gazette* that was briefly analysed by Miller, in 1997). Furthermore, previous Canadian studies have analysed precise events (the Halifax Riot by McCormick, 1995; the Just Deserts case by Henry and Tator, 2000, etc.). Moreover, more research has been done relating to the general representations of the press relating to the Black community, for example, relating to stereotypes but not specifically to crime.

Therefore, in order to fill one important neglected gap, we will attempt to reveal the ways a well-known French newspaper published in Montreal (*La Presse*) tends to represent Montreal's Black community in crime news. The research will not be limited to particular events or crimes but rather, will include all of the articles found on crime and Blacks during our two studied periods. We believe that such a study will benefit other researchers. It must be recognized that Montreal's cultural, political and social contexts are different from the United States and Europe. Thus, specific research must be elaborated. Even though this study does not intend to criticize news organizations, it will ultimately open debates and allow discussion concerning the press and journalistic routines.

In the next chapter, we will detail the objectives of our research, the methodology used in order to complete our study and the methods of analysis.

CHAPTER II

Methodology

1. Goal of the research

Our study will present crime reports relating to the Black community of Montreal during two periods (January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990 and July 31st, 2004 to July 31st, 2005), in *La Presse de Montréal*. We will more specifically clarify the ways *La Presse de Montréal* writes (order of thoughts, selection of terminology, etc.), translates and shapes the reality of crime concerning the Black community of Montreal during both periods studied and detailed below. Furthermore, once the ideas and meanings of the reports of each period are categorized, analysed and interpreted (vertical analysis), we will qualitatively and quantitatively compare their differences and/or similarities (horizontal analysis). This study is therefore both a descriptive and analytic research.

We will more specifically verify whether *La Presse de Montreal* objectively and neutrally prints crime stories relating to Black suspects and victims, whether the images of *La Presse de Montreal* reproduce existing stereotypes about the Black community and crime and finally, whether the images injure the Black community of Montreal.

We believe that most news reports state facts but *La Presse* molds and styles them in their own ways. In our body of literature, we have clearly demonstrated that writers possibly unintentionally select the information covered. They would consequently create stories with hidden assumptions and their personal judgments would often be difficult to detect. But, this study will not analyse each writer's specific style of writing but rather the overall representations reproduced by the newspaper.

We have previously demonstrated that the majority of the research done by Canada, the United States and Europe on the specific topics studied (the press, crime news and the Black community) has similar results. In fact, whether relating to the Canadian, American or European context, all past studies establish that the print medium negatively portrays the Black community in crime reports and emphasizes racial stereotypes, for example, crime is associated with Blacks. This present analysis will determine whether *La Presse de Montréal* does have or does not have comparable outcomes.

As cited previously, Wilson and Gut rriez (1985, 1995 and 2003) believe that the press is gradually entering a multiracial phase of coverage. No study has associated Wilson and

Gutiérrez' phases with the Canadian press. Even though their research is done in the American context, we will attempt to establish if the periods elaborated by the authors are applicable to *La Presse*. In fact, we will determine whether *La Presse*'s crime news is or is not entering the multiracial phase of coverage as described by Wilson and Gutierrez (1985, 1995 and 2003).

In order to demonstrate the importance and significance of the Black community in our Montreal context, we will now present a brief history of this group and explain the integration of Blacks in Montreal.

2. Context of research: The Black community of Montreal

2.1. Defining the term "Black"

"Black" would have for long been a denigrating word, corresponding to impurity, evil and darkness. Many expressions such as "black list", "black magic" and "blackmail" would have always been negatively perceived (Mann and Zatz, 1998). As Rome (1998) indicates, the African American male has consistently been depicted as primitive and barbaric and earlier beliefs of Black slaves, inferior to Whites, shape the ways African Americans are portrayed today. In our modern society, the Black community would still be familiarly known as being lazy, slow-witted, fond of alcoholic beverages and violent (Oliver, 1998). In the 1960's, the skin color Black gained recognition with the slogan "Black is beautiful" and in 1991, Jean Doré (Montreal's mayor at the time) declared February as the Black History Month (Williams, 1997). Later, the phrase "people of color" was supposedly used by the White community in order to avoid the words "minority" and "non-White" but this new term was still racially naming the "other" (Gandy, 1997). On the contrary, the color white, known as the antagonist of black, would represent things that are pure, clean and good. With these preconceptions, we can assume that white is meant to be superior to black.

In the European context, Van Dijk (1991) explains that people from the West Indies are sometimes called "Blacks" or "Afro-Caribbeans". Hence, the use of these expressions has different insinuations and depends on the social position of the user. The word "Black" is generally used, according to the author, to depict Afro-Caribbeans, West Indians, individuals with European backgrounds or people who have African ancestors (except the Arab countries of Northern Africa).

Williams (1997) specifies that Blacks have been a part of the Canadian experience since the sixteenth century and Montreal has been particularly affected by the development of a distinct Black community. She also demonstrates that Black migration patterns of Montreal differ from the ones in the United States. Furthermore, the history of the Black community of Montreal would have closely followed and was influenced by various models, movements, trends, styles and events that occurred in the United States (the “Black is beautiful” movement of the 1960s, the Black Panthers’ movement, the Los Angeles racial assaults of 1992, Black leaders such as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, the culture of Rap and Hip Hop, etc.).

2.2. Immigration patterns

Williams (1997) describes the history of the Black community of Montreal. She explains that the immigration of Blacks into Montreal increased in the mid-sixties and contributed to the new cultural mosaic of Canada. In fact, the West Indians and Africans were apparently well-educated, middle-class and professional or skilled immigrants. Thus, Canada would have gained educated citizens without paying for their education. Then, between 1973 and 1974, Trinidadian immigration reached a peak (Williams, 1997). According to Williams (1997), there was a movement of poor and working-class English speaking Blacks in the early seventies who installed in Little Burgundy, Pointe St-Charles and St-Henri. But later, other English Black communities would have moved to Côte-des-Neiges and Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, creating a rivalry between the uptown and downtown youths.

Williams (1997) additionally details the history of the Haitian community of Montreal. They would have started to immigrate to Quebec in the 1960s but by the early 1970s, their requests would have increased. Their cultural patterns would differ from the English-speaking Black communities. Most Haitians had turned away from the dictatorial regime installed in their country by Duvalier. Due to the “Operation My Country” which permitted Haitians to arrive as students or visitors regularizing their status, numerous Haitians moved to Montreal between the years 1967-1977. But a few years later, many Haitians were allegedly sent back to Haiti without any recourse and were declared as non political refugees. Between 1961 and 1976 and following the *Immigration Act* of 1967 which permitted anyone entering Canada on a tourist visa to apply for a resident visa or landed immigrant status, approximately ten-thousand-eight-hundred Haitians would have immigrated to Quebec. A few years later (between 1978 and 1986), “l’Entente Couture-Cullen” encouraged Haitians to immigrate to Canada and became the fastest

growing Black cultural group in Montreal locating, in order of importance, in Saint-Michel, Montreal-North, Saint-Leonard and Rivière-des-Prairies.

According to Williams (1997), Haitians enriched Quebec's society with numerous professions; many were engineers, doctors, teachers, lawyers, writers, musicians and artists. Notwithstanding their professional success, Haitians were among the poorest population in Quebec. Williams (1997) believe that the working population mostly found themselves in the manufacturing business which is low-salaried and nevertheless, they filled gaps in the Montreal labour market.

Williams (1997) as well clarifies that in the 1970s, young and violent delinquent gangs expanded, principally in the Montreal-North region, where a predominance of young Haitians was established. The Black population on the West-Island and the South-Shore has grown within the past ten years. Numerous racial tensions between adolescents were in fact present at the time and each culture would have defended the interests of their turf. Consequently, citizens feared these young fellows. It is as well interesting to state that during the 2001 census, almost forty-seven percent of the Black population would have been under twenty-five years old and sixty-three percent were under thirty-five (Direction générale des relations interculturelles, 2005).

Later, in the 1990s, Williams (1997) states that many young Black adults rebelled against society, especially the justice system that they perceived as being filled with inequalities and injustices. They apparently felt excluded and banned from the dominant culture. Teenagers and young adults also started to identify themselves with the gangster image that defies the White law. Thus, the White community would have become the enemy as the Black society displayed their exasperation. The Black community that attempted to integrate conveniently into society would believe that the inappropriate actions of their young population denigrated their reputation and encouraged stereotypes. Police violence and injustice against Blacks would also have become an issue in Montreal (the death of Anthony Griffin in 1987 and Marcellus François in 1991). In fact, young Blacks complained that they were being categorized as a problem group by the police. According to these youngsters, they were therefore more likely to be questioned or arrested. Furthermore, they alleged that the police used excessive physical violence towards Black suspects, fuelling stereotypes about the involvement of young Blacks in crime (Solomos, 1988).

During the 2001 census, there were one hundred-fifty-two-thousand Blacks in Quebec or two percent of the total population (Direction générale des relations interculturelles, 2005). As Tasso

(1993), Juteau (1999) and principally McNicoll (1993) explain, Blacks changed Quebec's culture, principally in religious and linguistic aspects. The movement of Blacks in Canada forced the government to consider them in the adoption and modification of laws (Charter of Rights), programs and ministers (Minister of Cultural Affairs and Immigration of 1981).

The Province of Quebec is well known for its linguistic political battle but would be now approving and favouring cultural diversity. In fact, studies have recognized that the arrival of large numbers of Black residents into mostly White districts created friction in Montreal. The integration of the Black community in Quebec was allegedly part of the political debate that intended to preserve the French culture and language. Hence, the recognition of the French and English language by the *Official Languages Law* of 1969 would have indirectly created multiculturalism in Quebec. Furthermore, Williams (1997) believes that by 1972 many Black organizations and activities facilitated their integration (la Maison d'Haïti, specialized classes for newly arrived immigrants, la Maison Internationale de la Rive-Sud, etc.)

By the 1970's, Montreal would have been composed of three main cultural/linguistic groups: French/Creole-speaking Haitians; English speaking West Indians and Black Canadians and trilingual Africans (French, English and another language) (Williams, 1997).

As seen with Haitians and English speaking Black communities, cultural groups would tend to cram into specific districts and develop their own values and distinct cultural styles, putting up invisible walls around the segregated ghetto. This can be seen as a way to preserve ethnic exclusivity (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). Thus, in 1966, Ardrey stated that "...in the city, humans who possess common racial characteristics define their territories and exclude those with whom they wish no contact..." (cited in Cashmore and Troyna, 1990, p. 105). Such residential locations would therefore be produced on the basis of racial identity. Areas would have been completely changed in character and culture. This involuntary segregation or special separation of distinctive groups would often be perceived as a means by which Whites are able to prevent Blacks to spread by keeping them under surveillance and control (Cashmore and Troyna, 1990). On the other hand, racial segregation would be defined as a problem caused by immigration and would constitute a threat to social order and quality of urban life (Smith, 1993).

3. Choice of the corpus

3.1. Newspaper studied

We have chosen to analyse a newspaper due to the fact that the press is presented in literature as being one of the principal tools for the expression of public opinion and would have become the first practical cultural institution (Nancoo and Nancoo, 1997). The press would as well be easily manageable and accessible for study. We personally chose to explore Montreal's newspapers in order to develop the research concerning our specific field that is the press, the Black community and crime news.

We have reviewed numerous French newspapers printed in Montreal. For example, we have eliminated *Allô Police* due to the fact it uniquely specializes in crime and sexual events. *Le Voir* has also been excluded because it specifically prints articles relating to cultural life and activities. *Le Journal de Montreal* has not been considered since the articles are not yet computerized. This flaw may have caused many discrepancies; the collection of data would have become quickly unappealing and have taken twice the time and effort.

We first tested our method of collecting data in *La Presse* and we quickly noticed that the material found was largely impressive in quantity. Due to the time limit, we are not able to analyse a second newspaper. Although we first intended to compare a French newspaper with an English one, we kept *La Presse* as being the only newspaper used in this study.

3.2. Brief history of *La Presse de Montréal*

According to LeBlanc (2003), *La Presse* is an informative journal that was first founded in 1884. Thus, in 1889, Trefflé Berthiaume would have taken over the business. During its beginnings, this newspaper would have printed sixty-five-thousand copies that were mostly sold to the working class. In 1893, the newspaper apparently used linotypes machinery in order to facilitate their printing. Later, in the mid 1900s, *La Presse*, became the greatest popular daily of Quebec.

LeBlanc (2003) mentions that *La Presse* supported numerous cases such the docker's strike of 1903. During the 70's and 80's, the paper experienced several strikes and temporary closures of the business. In 1979, Philippe de Gaspé Beaubien controlled most of the newspaper business but

in 2000, Group Gesca took possession of many daily papers including *La Presse de Montréal*. Today, ninety-six percent of the written press is owned by the two major owners: Quebecor and Gesca. However, this highly publicized newspaper has, according to De Bonville (1995), been dominating the market for numerous decades; nevertheless, it would have often struggled for first place with *Le Journal de Montréal*.

La Presse de Montreal would not be specialized in a specific field. It would rather present local, national and international news of all categories. This chosen newspaper is published daily and is printed on large format paper. It presents an assortment of articles and columns (*actualités, monde, arts & spectacles, sports, la presse affaires, santé, voyages, opinions*, etc.). Similar sections are printed daily. For example, the first section (A) presents the popular and common news of the day. Ongoing stories (the 9-11 event, for example), local and international news such as crimes and the *forum* (editorials) are usually part of section A. The front page would present the most newsworthy stories of the day either in sports, local news and international news. Other sections such as *sports, actuel* (society's current topics) and *affaires* (the *petites annonces, mots croisés, mot mystère, astrologie, décès* and *bandes dessinées* are often included in this section) are part of the daily paper. The Saturday paper has more sections (*cinéma, vacances voyage, mon toit, carrières, les petites annonces, arts et spectacles*) and is thicker. The Sunday copy (considerably slimmer than the Saturday paper) has two additional sections called *lecture* (also includes the television guide) and *plus* (often related to the *actuel* section). Except for the A section, the newspaper is no longer uniquely divided in alphabetical sections (A or B sections, for example). But, during our two periods, most sections are categorized with a letter.

Since the popularity of the Internet, *La Presse*, along with other newspapers (*Le Soleil, La Tribune*, etc.) are available on *Cyberpresse* (internet site).

3.3. Periods chosen

The following periods have been chosen: January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990 and July 31st, 2004 to July 31st, 2005. The last period corresponds to the most recent time span made possible to study due to the fact that collection of data ended in mid August 2005. We have noted important political events during 2004 and 2005 that have surely affected the entire Black community of Montreal. First, in January 2005, Haiti celebrated its 200th anniversary of

independence. At the end of the summer 2005, Michaëlle Jean was also the first Black woman to be named governor general of Canada.

The first period was chosen due to the particular social, political and cultural context of the Black community that commenced at the end of the 80s and the beginning of the 90's. For example, following the multicultural policy of 1971, the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* was adopted in 1988. Canada was in fact the first country in the world to pass a multiculturalism law. Canada refers to multiculturalism as the presence and persistence of diverse racial and ethnic minorities who define themselves as different and who wish to remain so. The 90s has well marked Montreal's Black history due to important events and factors, including the deaths of Black men (Marcellus François, Leslie Presley, Anthony Griffin) during police interventions. We must not forget the liberation of Nelson Mandela, the president and leader of the *South Africa's National Liberation Movement*, on February 11th, 1990, and the riots following the presidential elections naming Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti. The beginning of the 90's also marked the Black community with the reign of the gangster image such as street gangs and the expansion of the *Hip Hop* culture. In fact, numerous gangster movies featuring Black youth were produced during the first part of the 1990's such as *Boys in the Hood* (1991), *Juice* (1992), *Menace to Society* (1993) and many more.

The chosen periods are constituted of a reasonable amount of articles. As indicated above, due to our time limit, we may not evaluate additional periods. The interval of fifteen years will permit a comparison of the articles in time. In fact, the social, political and cultural contexts of each period differ and may influence the newspaper's coverage.

3.4. Selection of the articles

A Boolean search in an electronic data base called *Eureka* (articles of numerous newspapers since 1985 can be found) was done for the studied periods. The stories of 1990 found in the *Eureka* database are not the original articles. The database includes the original and exact scanned reproduction of the entire page of the article only after the year 2000. Thus, in order to utilize the same method as the first period, we did not choose our articles according to the photographs but rather with the words. All of the standard properties mentioned above are noted in each article (page, author, presence and brief description of the photograph, etc.).

We have exhaustively elaborated a list of approximately one-hundred and sixty-four key words (Annexe 1). Various forms of the words were searched for example, the verbs were conjugated. We first chose to generally search the data base (*noir et crime*) and ended with specific alternatives (for example: *haïtien et vol*). We believe that our key words have to convey all possible related topics, themes, issues and subjects in order not to neglect possible articles. If not, the corpus can be incomplete and affect the final results of this paper. In order to reduce the margin of error and to exhaustively research the articles, all articles pertaining to a crime or related matter, for example, an investigation or a trial, and an individual part of the Black community of Montreal (French/Creole Haitians, English speaking West Indians and Black Canadians or Africans) were systematically retained and analysed.

All types (editorial, cover story, series, etc.) of articles, in all categories (*actualités, sports, etc.*), were held. Many unrelated stories fitted the search. These were eliminated by manually examining them individually. The corpus was empirically saturated once the articles already found were repeatedly selected by the electronic data base and no new article was detected. All articles are therefore used in our research and the corpus is as complete and representative as possible. In fact, our corpus is sufficiently wide but easily manageable in order for the results to be significant.

We have retained one-hundred and twenty-five articles; eighty-four reports for the first period and forty-one for the second. The following features of news framing will be analysed in each article.

4. News framing

In 1993, Entman defined the technique of framing as follows: “...select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation...” (cited in Perse, 2001, p. 105). Frames would highlight and link selected data in order to tell coherent stories that define problems, causes, judgments and remedies (Entman and Rojecki, 2000). McQuail (1983) considers that news reporting therefore becomes a linear elaboration of an event with the addition of information and illustration. Abastado (1980) indicates that frames embody the format, the disposition of the article, the use of colors and pictures, the typology the

surface occupied by the story, the size of the titles, the size and placement of details, the affective tone of the presentation and much more.

The pages' layout is, according to Russell (1994), a calculated decision made by the owner, is often made under deadline pressure and is based on experience, feelings, education and peer pressure. Decisions would be made according to the supply of news, the space available, the importance of the article, the inclusion of advertisements and last minute sensational news.

News stories are usually formed in a narrative structure, are shaped with a beginning, middle and end, they have dramatic turns and a familiar plot. They would therefore answer the five W's : who, what, when, where and why (Ericson, 1991; McQuail, 1983). News accounts would also include newscasts such as villains, victims and minor actors. Ericson (1991) describes certain actors as follows:

Heroes, traditionally representing white, middle-class society, use violence against villains, who represent the contrasting segment of society and use violence unsuccessfully. The hero/villain opposition and its dramatization through violence provide metaphors for power relations in society.

The violence of villains is presented as a shock, a threat, and a sign of declining social order rather than as a perpetual and evitable feature of social order and a historical constant. (p. 235)

And, as described below, news discourse would be formulated in a specific formal style.

4.1. Macro level approach

The macro level approach of semantics would refer to the overall organization of a text (lay outs, fonts utilized, themes or topics) and would allow the description of the meanings of whole paragraphs, sections or chapters (Van Dijk, 1988a).

News does not apparently present events in a chronological order and does not start at the beginning or end of the sequence. Rather, important information would come first. In fact, the inverted pyramid technique used by most writers would allow the facts to be written in an orderly manner: the most important ones in the first paragraph and the least significant in the last paragraph (Lorimier & McNulty, 1991; Lotz, 1991). Important news actors would as well tend to occupy first positions. This method would affect the sorting of the sentences in paragraphs and the ordering within the sentences themselves.

Ericson, Baranek and Chan (1991) explain that lead statements are found in the opening paragraph and will communicate the essence of the story in order to attract the reader to it. In 1958, Swope revealed the lead as an important element of the story due to the fact that many readers only read the first and last sentence of the report (cited in Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991, p. 266).

Breaking stories usually are the cover story of the newspaper. They would be deemed and judged to be the most important or interesting story of the day and may be covered on a couple of pages (Gans, 1979). The story may be considered central if it has an enormous impact on the nation, on national interests or on a large number of people (Gans, 1979).

Next, we will also detail the characteristics of important parts of a news report: headlines and photographs.

4.1.1. *Headlines*

Headlines are said to serve as teasers to arouse the interest of the reader, to influence the readers processing of the story and to determine which article is actually read by the consumers (Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991). The size, font and content of the headline will supposedly attract the consumers.

According to Van Dijk (1991), headlines are often incomplete sentences and may sometimes lead to vagueness or ambiguity. The information mentioned in the headline can surely as well be easily recalled by the reader. But, he moreover suggested that most headlines are unspecific and cannot be considered as a summary of the event.

Van Dijk (1991) also points out that the examination of the words in the headlines, their lexical style and the order of the words manifest the underlying semantic concepts used in the definition of the situation. Additionally, the use of quotes and references would intentionally focus on the words themselves. The relations between the words in the headlines would describe the roles and relationships between the actors involved in the event (Van Dijk, 1991). We may examine if such roles are associated with positive, neutral, or negative actions.

As Gandy (1998) stated:

Structural analysis of units as small as the headline can also reveal something about the ways in which racial perspectives are being shaped. The positioning of actors within the

headline is telling. When minorities are mentioned first, they are more often perpetrators or agents of negative action. (p. 169)

Writers will either promote or downgrade the issues of the story. Abastado (1980) states that the title of an article furnishes the direction and color of the event and also summarizes the most important aspect of the story.

4.1.2. *Photographs*

Pictorial imagery is known to be powerful and constitutes an important factor of news articles. Generally, most pictures may be published even if they stereotype or harm directly or indirectly the subjects (Elliott, 2003). Photojournalists would operate within a conceptual framework and institutional context that determine the framing, composition, lighting and color of the image (Schwartz, 1992). Joly (1993) believes that pictures are followed by text, text is followed by pictures and they are affected by each other. Pictorial imagery should reveal the remarkable, the noteworthy, and the singularity of subjects (Elliott, 2003). Picturing would be a tool for expression, replace words, a direct reproduction of what is shown and is supposed to look like things they represent (Joly, 1994; Elliott, 2003). "*The photograph has a transparent window on the world, capturing the reality in front of the camera lens.*" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 96) Hence, pictures would be more closely linked to reality than words and so, they supposedly are closer to the truth (Messaris and Abraham, 2001). In fact, due to the fact that photographs are mute, the photojournalist tells the story through imagery. The consumers therefore make sense of the pictures. Readers would most likely obtain their first impression about a story by looking at the photograph. A picture would consequently leave a great deal of interpretation for the consumer.

4.2. Micro level approach

In his studies, Van Dijk (1988a and 1991) thoroughly describes and utilizes the micro level approach of semantics. He examines words, sentence patterns and their meanings (relations between propositions, coherence relations of causality, consequences, syntactic and lexical characteristics of newspaper style). He explains that the properties of the sentences, including the choice of words (or lexical style) and their order may depend on the properties of other sentences in the discourse. It appears that the words used have different implications and depend on the social position or beliefs of the writer and of her/his employer. The ways that sentences are combined and sequenced in a coherent matter with each other would also be relevant in analyzing the underlying meaning in a text. Grammatical analysis of language used in the press may also,

according to Van Dijk (1988a) reveal the perspective of the journalist or the newspaper. The verb tense would affect the tone of the story.

Language strategies such as propositions may imply an implication, a specification, a generalization, or a contrast; implicitness and indirectness usually suggests previous knowledge and beliefs; presuppositions are suppose to be known; over completeness which details particular particularities may attempt to describe an event as a whole or convey a negative picture of an actor (Van Dijk; 1988a; 1991). Hyperboles (exaggerations), mockeries (in order to discredit one's opponent), ironies (a literary device that may distort an event), attributions and reversals (blaming the victim), comparisons (between different ethnic groups), contrasts and divisions (between good and bad) and, admissions would also be commonly used strategies in news reports (Van Dijk, 1991). The use of parenthesis, quotes and exclamations marks may as well be noted (Abastado, 1980).

These above mentioned attributes will all be considered in the examination of the news reports. Certain strategies mentioned below will also be used in coding the content of the articles.

5. Strategies for coding

In respect to this research paper, news reports were read and coded with a number of standard properties, such as the date, the page, the author, the category of the report, the type of crime, the area covered and the presence or not of photographs. We then used Van Dijk's (1983) presentational structure in order to note the pertinent information. In his format, he includes the summary of the report such as the headline, the lead, the location and time. A description of the actual episode and the consequences/reactions (speech acts, for example) are also part of this outline. Lastly, Van Dijk (1983) incorporates the comments or beliefs of the journalist. In short texts, not all categories are necessary filled. The ordering of the text as a whole, from left to right and from top to bottom was as well noted (the hierarchical schema). Annexe 2 presents the conventional superstructure of news discourse developed by Van Dijk (1983, p.37).

In order to answer to our goal of research, we slightly modified Van Dijk's (1983) matrice (Annexe 3). We first added the description of all of the newscasts presented in each article (victims, perpetrators, heroes, sources, minor actors and third parties). Second, we incorporated the concluding remark in the first part of the matrice. We as well noted the position of the sentence in the entire text, the strategic ploys and the verb tense utilized.

6. Strategies of analysis

In order to study the various forms of discourses, ideological codes (life models, standards conducts, values, opinion, etc.), narrative strategies and image constructions of media texts, a multidimensional textual analysis would be required. Discourse would in fact be a complex communicative event that embodies a social context, features participants (and their properties) and is involved in a production and reception process (Van Dijk, 1988). Each discourse type would divulge principles of functionality (both surface structures and meanings are produced and understood as indications about characteristics of the speaker, the relations between the speaker and bearer and the type of social situation), of meaningfulness (sequence sentences have meanings and are about something) and of goal-directedness (all texts are geared toward a communicative goal) (Van Dijk, 1983). This scholar also believes that all discourses are associated with different possible surface structure (style) and thus, with various meanings.

Some news reports seem to be understood as the truth because they seem natural and incorporated in a ritualized code of a certain history and tradition (Dellinger, 1995). Dellinger (1995) states that each culture has its own way of classifying the events of the world and applying meaning to them. The meaning of reality would therefore depend on the way a particular society defines it. So, various interpretations of the same event would prevail and the right interpretation would not exist. *"Texts are therefore not simple and discourse is the language used in representing a given social practice from a particular point of view."* (Fairclough, 2000, pp. 55-56)

In order to answer to the multiple aspects of this research, a multifaceted methodology was employed and divided into three major steps. First, we applied a quantitative approach and gradually integrated a qualitative method of research. We obviously commenced the analysis by noting the number of articles for each year, the amount of articles for each type of crime, etc. The underlying meanings of the texts (by looking at the semantics and micro-level meanings of words, organization and structure of the text, vocabulary, sentences, etc.) were afterwards revealed. The study terminated in a subjective manner by interpreting at the macro level the core of ideas exposed in the content of the reports.

For the last step, we used critical discourse analysis (CDA). According to Van Dijk (1988, 1988a, 1991, 1993) and Fairclough (2000, 1995a), CDA does not only examine and critically interpret the underlying meanings of media texts but as well explains how they produce cultural meanings and perceive social relations. CDA would as well allow the study of the articles build

power, knowledge, regulation and normalization of behaviours and lifestyles. It would analyse the usage of language and communication, attempt to explain the way newsmakers understand the world and how these understandings shape the news texts they produce. In fact, the reports would apparently be created in specific historical, social and political conditions. It is crucial to explore how a particular news event is integrated into the ideological system and articulated in a specific discourse. According to Hall (1997), discourse is always historical, fluctuates within a culture and is connected with other communicative past or present events.

In order to locate stereotypes in mass media, the description of how something, someone or a group is covered, portrayed or represented would be essential (Krippendorff, 2004). Cultural stereotypes and the relations between the use of language and the exercise of power may be located through critical discourse analysis. Discourse and language can be misleading and embrace us in a dominant worldview by unbalancing power relations. Consequently, portrayals of social groups appear to be normal and commonsense when in fact the reality produced is prejudices, injustices and inequities. The key feature is to understand how media forms the “truth” with the use of language and according to already existing ideological codes.

With CDA we were therefore able to search the underlying meanings and patterns of the articles printed during our two periods. We described and clarified how the crime events are placed in context and what frames and discourses are being represented. Our approach involves, by an inductive method of research, the examination of the codes of meaning in order to uncover and critically examine what is being written about the Black community of Montreal and the concomitant crime. Consequently, the degree of uniformity, the similarities and differences, the common themes and unique cases were discovered and the so-called realities produced by the newspaper during both periods were defined. Please take note that the results were first analysed vertically that is within the period itself, and then horizontally, between both periods. This method simultaneously permitted a thorough study of each period as well as a comparative analysis. However, we believe that CDA is rather a perspective than a method of research. In fact, no specific steps or indications for users of critical discourse analysis have been found.

7. Limits of the research

Due to the fact that the images discovered are solely the findings of *La Presse de Montréal*, our corpus is not representative and may not be generalized to other newspapers or other media

sources. Furthermore, due to the time limit associated with this research, the articles retained do not cover a continuous time period.

The database Eureka does not offer the original articles printed before 1999. Therefore, for the period of January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990, we do not have the pictures and the actual layout, although a description is given. As for the articles of the second period, we may print the authentic article as seen in the newspaper. This lack limited our comparative analysis of both periods.

In order to select the articles for this study, we recalled the association of the term Black to crime. We believe that this link is a rationalized categorization that is stereotypic in nature because it automatically associates Black with crime. But, this criterion is obligatory in realizing our research. Therefore, this study will identify the ways *La Presse* presents the Black community of Montreal in relation to crime. We will not be able to compare our results with articles relating to the White community.

Another constraint of this study is the possibility of overlooking certain related articles that did not specifically identify the race of the actors even if a Black individual was part of the story; for example, a photograph of a Black man is printed but the race is not specifically mentioned in the text. With the Boolean electronic search, we had no means to prevent this and doubtlessly failed to examine some relevant stories.

Fairlough (1995a) and numerous other colleagues believe that different readers and audiences may interpret texts differently due to their various backgrounds, knowledge and power positions. Hall (1997a) believes that media messages have no static meaning. As a result, critical discourse analysts examine a text in a specific way by drawing their conclusions on their own interpretations and imposing their own biases and prejudices. The right interpretation does not exist but a plausible one is likely to prevail. Ironically, according to Hall (1997a), texts have no meanings on their own, without the readers' interpretations. Therefore, reading would be a product of an interface between the properties of the text and the interpretative practices of the reader.

We have in fact chosen our subject due to personal interests. Hence, our individual knowledge and opinions favoured bias (Poupart, 1997). Our personal values, characteristics and experiences

surely tinted the interpretations and results of this project. We are aware of these risks of presuppositions and we therefore attempted to reduce the influence that such bias would have on the research.

Additionally, our study does not consider the matters of distribution, the political economy of the newspaper, the conditions of the production of texts and the managerial resources of *La Presse*. As indicated previously, managerial constraints and norms do affect the outcome of the reports. But, the objectives of our research do not elaborate these aspects.

Chapter III is composed of three basic sections. We first analysed our first period (January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990) and then the second corpus (July 31st, 2004 to July 31st 2005). We terminated the next chapter by comparing both of our studied periods. We sometimes retained several articles on the same date. We therefore distinguished them by numbering each of the reports. For example, if on December 31st, 1990 several articles are printed and saved for our corpus, we indicated December 31st, 1990-1, December 31st, 1990-2, etc.

CHAPTER III

Analysis of the results

First period: January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990

As mentioned in our methodology, we traced the crime reports relating to the Black community with an assortment of terms. For example, we alluded to various nationalities (*haïtien, jamaïcain, africain*, etc.), countries (*Haïti, Caraïbes, Bermudes*, etc.) and expressions (*peau noire, race noire, noir, homme ou femme de couleur, victime et noir, suspect et noir*, etc.). As well, we accompanied most of these words with different crimes (*noir et meurtre, noir et homicide*, etc.) and/or relevant objects, names, verbs and adjectives (*arme et noir, gang de rue et noir, blessé et noir*, etc.). We also recalled the actors' names (if mentioned) in order to exhaust the possible articles relating to a precise incident (for example: Leslie Presley, Remy Mercier, etc.).

Eighty-four articles are retained in this first period. Our results are quantitatively and qualitatively analysed and regrouped in various sections such as the types of articles and the forms of reporting. We then regroup the reports in two themes. First, violence is emphasized in the articles studied. Second, the police are additionally presented as a main topic during this period.

1. General description of the corpus

The material found respond well to the objects studied. We notice that a few articles did not fit the search. First, the articles that indirectly hint the race of the actors are not saved. For example, two articles (March 24th, 1990 and December 5th, 1990) relating to the street gang *Family* did not directly mention the race of the actors. Readers may believe that the members of *Family* are Haitians but the race is not precisely mentioned in the stories. We also found an article (October 30th, 1990) relating to a Caribbean festivity but, once again, the race of the performers is not clearly identified. Due to the fact that one of our conditions of research is that the race of the actors be expressly mentioned in the articles, such reports are eliminated by examining them individually.

Following certain events such as the killings of Anthony Griffin and Leslie Presley by police officers on duty, many social reactions have emerged. Consequently, during the year 1990, five articles are found concerning police officers' gun control and one report discusses Gosset's (police officer who shot Griffin) civil penalties and reassignment in the police force. These articles systematically recall the names of the actors of the initial event but not necessary their nationality. We therefore did not analyse these articles that did not specifically recall the

nationalities of the parties. Furthermore, two reports of the Lashley case and three of the Presley case did not mention the race of the participants. They were also removed from the studied corpus.

The months of September (eleven reports) and October (fourteen reports) contain the greatest number of articles. The other months have between three (January, February and March) and nine reports (April and May). It is interesting to notice that the Presley shooting happened in April 1990 and that month is not retained for the most articles. We notice that eight articles pertaining to particular districts (Côte-des-Neiges and Little Burgundy, for example) and the police department's relationship with the Black community are printed in October 1990.

More than one-third (thirty-five articles) of the corpus include photographs. Most photographs (fourteen) are of the main actors: victims (seven, one of a White victim) and perpetrators (eight, one of a White suspect). There are almost as many pictures of Black victims. Furthermore, seven photographs are of spokespeople or of third parties. For example, a crime report (December 10th, 1990-3) discussing crack trafficking by Jamaicans printed a photograph of the president of the Jamaican Association of Montreal and on November 20th, 1990, a taxi driver was assaulted during an armed robbery and we find a picture of the secretary of the *Ligue de taxi de Montreal*. Furthermore, seized objects are reproduced on January 6th, 1990; a crime scene is photographed on October 29th, 1990, and four pictures are reproductions of specific districts of Montreal. The rest of the pictures are not specifically described.

2. Forms of reporting¹²

With the exception of Marcel Laroche who wrote fifteen articles, we notice that a diversity of journalists have written the remaining crime reports. In fact, fourteen articles do not mention the author and the other fifty-five reports are written by various individuals (Boisvert, Pelchat, Héту, Bellemare, etc.). It is therefore difficult to attribute certain characteristics to specific authors.

All general news reports (whether printed on weekdays or weekends) detail facts by describing the event in the first paragraph, the actors involved, the type of crime committed and the date and/or the location in which the crime occurred. :

¹² Please take note that this section does not discuss the ways race is presented in the articles.

- ❖ *Recherché par la Sûreté du Québec pour une affaire de meurtre, Albert Dutervil était encore en possession de son arme lorsqu'il s'est livré, à 6h50 hier matin, aux policiers de la Communauté urbaine de Montréal. (April 19th, 1990);*
- ❖ *Un père de famille haïtienne a été trouvé coupable, hier, au Palais justice de Longueuil, d'avoir agressé sexuellement sa fille de quinze ans et d'avoir commis l'inceste entre le 28 septembre 1987 et le 7 mars 1988. (September 11th, 1990);*
- ❖ *Un chauffeur de taxi de Montréal a été poignardé lundi soir à deux reprises par trois individus qui l'ont menotté et détroussé de tout son argent avant de prendre la fuite avec son véhicule. (October 17th, 1990).*

The core of the reports is highly descriptive and further details the event. They mostly end the story by advising the readers of upcoming procedures or of details concerning the suspects and the crime:

- ❖ *Rappelant les causes pendantes de Rémy, ses antécédents judiciaires, le sérieux des accusations et le raffut qu'elles ont créé, le juge Millette a maintenu l'emprisonnement de Rémy. (May 9th, 1990);*
- ❖ *Le juge Jerry Zigman, de la Cour supérieure, donnera ses directives au jury demain et lundi. (November 8th, 1990);*
- ❖ *Le voleur blanc n'est toutefois pas le seul suspect dans cette dernière affaire puisque ce sont trois hommes de race noire, qui, suivant le camion à bord d'une automobile, ont fait appel à la dépanneuse. (December 15th, 1990).*

We observe that the articles of more than seven hundred words seem to reveal additional data and information such as illustrations or statistics. Moreover, many long articles as well include quotes of interested parties. As observed in our body of literature, researchers such as Van Dijk (1991) examines the content of the speech acts of Black individuals, printed in Dutch newspapers. In fact, Van Dijk (1991) believes that Blacks are hardly quoted and when they are, their verbal quotes are mostly printed when they speak as critics representing Black associations. Moreover, Van Dijk's study is similar to our corpus as in eleven articles, Blacks are rarely quoted. The speeches are mostly printed in highly publicized stories such as the Presley and Mercier cases, reports about districts and drug trafficking, etc.¹³. The articles quote various types of individuals (victims, police officers, etc.). But, mostly professionals working for Black associations or organisations are cited in the reports. Contrary to Van Dijk's belief, Blacks do not speak as critics but rather as victims of society. Even though Blacks are not often quoted, the newspaper allows them to speak and be heard. For example:

¹³ These cases will later be detailed.

- ❖ "Je considère plusieurs de nos jeunes des victimes de la loi 101", dit M. Scotland, qui travaille auprès de la communauté noire du quartier depuis plus de dix ans." (October 24th, 1990-1);
- ❖ "Dans l'espoir de donner aux Montréalais d'origine jamaïcaine qui sont honnêtes la chance de survivre dans une société qui leur est souvent hostile à cause de leur race, je crois qu'il serait préférable que la police garde pour elle ce genre d'information au lieu de la publiciser de façon sensationnaliste," déclare Noël Alexander, le président de l'Association jamaïcaine de Montréal. (December 10th, 1990-3).

In another article, Dan Philips of la *Ligue des Noirs du Québec* is quoted on a few occasions. He similarly does not criticize, but he rather appears to be cautious in his allegations and presents different possibilities:

"On va attendre les résultats de l'enquête avant de dénoncer l'attitude des policiers... On a dit que Presley était armé et qu'il avait tiré sur un policier. Si c'est vrai, on ne peut pas blâmer la police. Mais si c'est faux, il va falloir dire la vérité." (April 10th, 1990-1).

3. Disposition of the articles

Astonishingly, *La Presse* printed two crime reports on the page of the *annonces classées* and one is incorporated in the *consommation* page (section D). First, the article "*Un téléviseur a disparu de l'appartement où a été tué Mark Beckford*", dated November 24th, 1990, describes the facts of a homicide case of a young Black victim. Even if the article elaborates on an unsolved murder case of a Black victim unknown to the police, it is printed on the page of the public notices, near the end of the newspaper. Second, an article printed in the *annonces classées* section ("*Sauvé par l'absence de photo*": September 7th, 1990) thoroughly describes the circumstances surrounding the police's arduous task of identifying a Black individual. The police had in fact omitted to photograph this dangerous suspect during prior arrests. This article is a bit longer than the prior article but it details past crimes possibly committed by the suspect and the ways in which he was finally identified. Lastly, a report dated March 14th, 1990, is printed in section D (*consommation*) of the newspaper. It relates the story of a Black man who was wrongfully identified and arrested by the police and imprisoned during the Christmas holidays. The article further explains that the immigrant of Jamaican background later sued the police.

We may easily assume that the first story of an unsolved crime investigation was given little space and worth. Hence, other events involving Black victims (except for another article printed on August 18th, 1990) are also unsolved but are printed in Section A, with other crime stories.

And, unlike the other Black victims, Mark Beckford was enrolled in sports, he had no criminal record and he was unknown to the authorities. Can we presume that this story did not fit or follow the cultural and social trends of usual crimes concerning Black victims mostly involved in criminal activities? But the press had the obligation to inform the public and therefore it had to print this crime chronicle. So did the newspaper purposely print the story in Section H (*annonces classées*) to demonstrate the lack of importance of a Black victim, who had no past criminal history? On the other hand, the Black man's positive traits were identified and printed in the newspaper. Printing such information may demonstrate the good intentions of the writer.

Can we suppose that the authorities' mistakes mentioned in the second *annonces classées* are considered of less importance to the public and so, printed later in the newspaper (page C14)? Furthermore, the day before (September 6th, 1990), an article about the same individual is printed (on page A13) but there is no mention of the police's negligence.

We also question if the event included in the article "*Sauvé par l'absence de photo*" justifies the fact that the article is printed in the *consommation* section. Can we once more assume that the police's wrongful act is considered of less importance to the public or is the event printed in a section that is widely read by the consumer?

The *annonces classées* and *consommation* sections are known to be greatly read by the consumers. Consequently, we may question whether the newspaper wished that both events be made visible to the readers and that the articles be eagerly read. So, by printing the events in these sections (*annonces classées* and *consommation*), *La Presse* either intended them to be almost invisible or extremely noticeable. We must as well consider the organizational decisions taken for that specific day. In fact, other events may have been considered more significant and the remaining space for the rest of the daily news could have been limited. The articles may also have served to fill an empty gap.

Two articles are printed on the page of *informations nationales* (February 14th, 1990 and September 20th, 1990) or Canadian news. These events occurred in Montreal or the South Shore. The first report explains an incest committed by a Haitian father who affirmed that his cultural values permit him to verify whether his daughter is a virgin. The second article (September 20th, 1990) presents violent ethnic conflicts that took place at the Émile-Legault School. This article

finishes by stating that Emile-Legault School is composed of twenty-five percent of students born outside of Quebec.

Both of these articles discuss deviance (sexual abuse and violence) and culture. They are, in fact, about cultural confrontations or conflicts. The first report questions the values of a minority community (Haitian) in a dominant White society. As for the second incident, intercultural conflicts are detailed. Thus, societal debates and questions may be instigated by these events. The events occurred in the Montreal region and so, we are surprised to find them in the *informations nationales* section. But, they might have been categorized as national information and printed in section B of the newspaper due to the fact that these reports present cultural values or events. Since these two articles are printed in the *informations nationales* section, we believe that *La Presse* considered them as relevant and important to the entire nation.

In conclusion to this section, we have outlined possible reasons justifying the newspaper's decisions concerning the location of the reports, for example, the lack of importance given to an unsolved murder of a Black man. Most of all, we have noticed that general news reports (*faits divers*) are placed differently according to the importance given by the newspaper. First, the articles printed on the *annonces classées* and *consummation* pages are mainly brief but have been placed in sections that attract many readers. Similarly, we have judged that both articles printed in the *informations nationales* section are deemed to be of national importance. Thus, the five events stated above seem to be more prominently placed and hence, more noticeable to the readers due to the importance and popularity of the sections (*annonces classées*, *consummation*, *informations nationales*).

4. Types of articles

The majority (seven-nine of the eighty-four) of the articles consists of general news (*nouvelles générales*) and they are mostly of average length, twenty-eight articles are short: between twenty-eight and two-hundred and ninety-seven words; forty-two reports are average: between three-hundred and six-hundred and thirty-five words and only nine are long: between seven-hundred and twenty-six and one-thousand-one-hundred and twenty-two words. They are also all printed in the first part of the newspaper (between page A1 and A21), also known as the A section. This section normally presents the stories deemed to be the most important of the day.

Thirteen of the eighty-four reports are more exhaustive or thorough. First, six of the eighty-four articles are dossiers and/or interviews (April 10th, 1990-3; May 2nd, 1990; October 24th, 1990-1; December 10th, 1990: 3 articles). One article (April 10th 1990-1) discusses the Presley case and includes a long interview with a client of the Thunderdome Club, the location of the crime. A second article (May 2nd, 1990) is also a cover story about the conspiracy to kidnap the son of the well-known businessman, Charles Bronfman. This dossier includes a mini biography of one of the suspects (Anghel) and of Charles Bronfman (the father of the victim). As for the last four dossiers, one presents the situation of the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce area (prostitution, drugs, etc.), two discusses the participation of Jamaicans in drug trafficking (“*La Bible et...le crack*”, December 10th, 1990-2) and one presents the Black community’s response and opinion concerning their social difficulties (“*Malaise au sein de la communauté noire de Montréal: Faites quelque chose pour notre communauté: La drogue n’est qu’un de nos problèmes*”, December 10th, 1990-3). These articles therefore comprise a dossier on a specific subject, drug trafficking by Blacks. We as well notice that the writer, Richard Héту, has further researched his topic and his texts do not uniquely cover one particular event. For example, in his article “*La Bible et...le crack*”, Héту explains the “*rastas*” beliefs concerning narcotics:

Mais plusieurs rastas ont eu du mal à concilier le trafic et la consommation de la cocaïne et, plus tard, du crack avec des préceptes de leur religion. Une religion qui rejette toutes les drogues sauf la marijuana. Pour reprendre les paroles d’une chanson de feu Peter Tosh, un des plus populaires chanteurs de la culture rasta, la marijuana – et le reggae, “c’est le remède (“healing”) de la nation”. (December 10th, 1990-2).

There are five covers stories or *La Une* (April 10th, 1990-2, April 27th, 1990-1; May 2nd, 1990; July 1st, 1990; September 30th, 1990-2). All of these cover stories are accompanied with pictures. The cover story printed on May 2nd, 1990, is the dossier mentioned above: the conspiracy to kidnap the son of Charles Bronfman. The other *La Une* printed on July 1st, 1990 discusses incidents that occurred during the Caribbean parade. In this article, the journalist details this festivity:

La Carifête est organisée annuellement par la communauté antillaise de Montréal. Cette année, il s’agissait de la 17e édition et du plus important défilé auquel ont assisté près de 35000 personnes. Le défilé d’hier était composé de 23 groupes de musiciens antillais qui diffusaient une musique souvent assourdissante à partir des fardiens.

The two cover stories, printed in April, 1990 are about the Presley and Mercier cases. The last *La Une* is about the Batman and Robin story that will be discussed below. In brief, the two police

officers who would harass Blacks in Little Burgundy were named Batman and Robin. This cover story is the first article printed on the subject.

As believed by Gans (1979), a cover story should be deemed and judged to be the most important or interesting story of the day and would be considered central if it has an enormous impact on the nation, on national interests or on a large number of people. We can therefore consider an event relating to a well-reputed social figure (Bronfman) judged to be of national interest and importance. Furthermore, many people participate and travel in order to see the Caribbean parade. This parade also monopolizes the whole downtown area of Montreal. Once again, this event is an annual and central event of the day and has an impact on numerous individuals. The two cover stories relating to the Mercier and Presley cases and the one relating to the police officers Batman and Robin, are the first reports printed on the subjects. In fact, we notice that subsequent to these two cover stories, *La Presse* continues to publicize these incidents in breadth. In these stories, police officers are the principal actors. The police constitute an important factor of society and its role is extremely essential, for example, protection of citizens. Thus, incidents relating to the authorities are necessary and concern all citizens.

There are also one editorial (*opinion*) and one *chronique*. The editorial, printed on page B3, is about “skinheads”¹⁴. Stephane Chalifour discusses the violent racist altercations that have occurred between “skinheads” and Black groups. In fact, the author believes that: “*Cette violence raciste exige par ailleurs que nous nous penchions sur l’impact de l’immigration et sur les liens entre les différentes communautés.*” (May 25th, 1990).

In the long chronicle, also classified by *La Presse* as general news and printed on page A3, the journalist demonstrates the reputation of cops and the tensions between them and citizens. We will later examine this article in the section discussing the police.

In summary to this section, general news reports are the most popular (seventy-nine of eighty-four reports), they are generally quite factual in the journalist’s point of view, but the longer ones include additional relevant information. All editorials, dossiers and cover stories seem thoroughly researched by the writers; the facts mentioned exceed the actual event. Furthermore,

¹⁴ **Skinheads**, named after their shaven heads, are members of a working class subculture that originated in Britain in the 1960s, where they were heavily influenced by the rude boys of the West Indies and the mods of the UK. In subsequent decades, the skinhead subculture spread to other parts of Europe, North America and other continents. Politically, they range from far-right racist to far-left anti-fascist — and everything in between (including apolitical). Fashion-wise, they range from the more cleancut mod-influenced 1960s image to the less-strict punk- and hardcore-influenced styles.

particular Black communities (Jamaicans, for example), neighbourhoods (Notre-de-Dame-de-Grâce, Côte-des-Neiges, etc.) and activities (drug trafficking and Carifesta) are identified as the root of the problems.

We believe that by integrating certain events in dossiers, cover stories and editorials, *La Presse* seem to give an enormous importance to them.

5. Content of the articles

In 1990, *La Presse* identifies the Black actors in different ways. First, we will review the main geographic locations indicated in the reports. We will then detail the various roles associated with the Black community in crime news. Lastly, we will examine the ways that the Black actors are or are not racialized in various parts of the stories and how they are directly linked or not linked to crime.

5.1. Location

All of the events described in the stories occurred in Montreal and the environs (Laval and North Shore: one; St-Jean: one; St-Jérôme: one; Longueuil area: four). In fact, the Montreal area is one of our criteria of research. Although, with the exception of seven articles (two incest stories, three of the Remy case, a story relating to a wrongful arrest of a Black individual and an article discussing the dismantling of a drug network), all reports specifically mention the location of the crime in three different ways. Due to the fact that the majority of the stories do state the location of the crime, we presume that this information is given importance. First, many articles indicate the exact address or setting (for example: the name of the Bar in which the crime took place, the civic address where the body was found, the name of the subway station, etc.). By doing so, the neighbourhood is indirectly mentioned. Second, numerous reports, more particularly stories pertaining to gang related activities and drug trafficking (for example, the three articles of December 10th, 1990 revealing crack trafficking by Jamaicans) name the specific area (Nôtre-Dame-de-Grace, Côte-des-Neiges, etc.). But, more importantly, the majority of the corpus expressly notes the street intersections of the crime. Once more, the sector is therefore indirectly indicated. Certain articles also add the area in which these streets are found.

In close to half of the articles, the south west part of Montreal such as Little Burgundy, LaSalle and Notre-de-Dame-de-Grace as well as the west sector (Côte-des-Neiges and Ville St-Laurent) are cited.

Cashmore and Troyna (1990) believe that Blacks would involuntary segregate in areas that become to be known as ghettos. These districts would symbolize all negative aspects of a city's life, such as high crime rates and disorders and are seen as a threat to social order. Hence, racial segregation suggests that problems experienced by Blacks are bounded in particular spaces and linked specifically to certain areas. As Williams (1997) demonstrates, most districts of Montreal (Little Burgundy, Côte-des-Neiges, etc.) mentioned in the studied articles are considered as Black residential areas. In fact, she states that there was a movement of poor and working-class English speaking Blacks in the early seventies and they were installed in Little Burgundy, Pointe-St-Charles, Côte-des-Neiges, Nôtre-Dame-de-Grâce and St-Henri. Therefore, Black populations would socially identify themselves with the district in which they have lived in over the years.

Certain articles describing districts of Montreal cover the Black occupants as adopting criminal habits but also as experiencing extreme poverty. Hence, the Black actors are once more both wrongdoers and victims of society's deficiencies. These reports are about the entire Black community and not about a specific individual.

La population aisée de Cartierville a eu un choc l'an passé quand une spectaculaire opération policière a fait connaître à toute la région montréalaise et au reste de la province les problèmes de drogue et de grande pauvreté que vit leur quartier. Cartierville était soudainement devenu le Bronx de Montréal! (October 30th, 1990-2);

The neighbourhoods mentioned in our reports are therefore associated with social problems such as crime and drugs. As Graber (1980) believed, *La Presse* would identify these areas as the main crime locations of the Montreal region. For example, on October 22nd, 1990, Richard Héту writes that in Côte-des-Neiges: "*Le district est particulièrement affecté par le phénomène des bandes (jamaïcaine, latino-américaine et autres) et par le commerce de la drogue.*" We first exposed that such sectors are directly associated to Blacks. But, we also suppose that they are linked to crime. Thus, we may assume that ethnicity is consequently associated to crime.

5.2. Characteristics of the Black actors

More than one-third or twenty-four of the eighty-four articles confirm that the suspect is exclusively of Black origin. Sixteen of the eighty-four reports note the victim as being a Black individual. We also classified thirty-nine articles as being hybrid. Hybrid reports present the Black actors as being the victims and the suspects, in the same story. We have found five articles relating to Blacks acting as third-parties as well.

Ten of the sixteen articles concerning Black victims present an imaginary victim as follows: “...Remy avait menacé d’abattre le prochain policier **qui tuerait un Noir.**” (June 28th, 2006). A particular person or victim is not specifically identified. The suspect (Remy Mercier) is not racialized but the eventual victim is assumed to be Black.

The majority of the hybrid reports (twenty-nine) present the same Black actor(s) as simultaneously being a suspect(s)/perpetrator(s) and a victim(s). For example, an article (August 7th, 1990) about the Presley case presents the victim as also being the initial suspect.

Leslie Presley, ce jeune Noir abattu par les policiers au bar Thunderdome, le 9 avril dernier, a bel et bien tiré le premier et dans une direction qui pouvait être perçue par les policiers comme étant dans leur direction. (August 7th, 1990).

Similarly, another report explains the wrongful arrest of a Black man. He was, at first, a primary suspect, but he became a victim of a policeman’s mistake.

Un immigrant d’origine jamaïcaine qui a passé le temps des Fêtes en prison à cause d’une bévue policière entend bien obtenir réparation...les policiers Alain Veillette et Paul Vyboh, qui l’ont arrêté erronément le 23 décembre dernier. (March 14th, 1990);

Lastly, ten of the thirty-nine hybrid articles concern Black-on-Black crimes. For example:

L’homme blessé, d’origine jamaïcaine, a réussi à courir, avant de s’effondrer sur un banc situé près de la porte de sortie, perdant beaucoup de sang. Il a été transporté à l’hôpital Jewish Général.... Le suspect, également de race noire, a réussi à s’enfuir. (December 5th, 1990).

The first article concerning a Black third-actor is printed on February 7th, 1990. An individual was wrongfully assaulted by a young man. The assailant had mistaken the victim for a drug dealer, originally of Black origin: “Thériault, un individu de 24 ans, aurait expliqué son geste en affirmant avoir agi dans le seul but d’effacer la dette qu’il avait contractée envers un trafiquant

de drogue de race noire.” The Black person is therefore not one of the principal actors (suspect or victim) of the story but rather a third party. Second, an article is printed on June 8th, 1990 and presents a Black individual who was a witness of the Presley shooting. Once again, the Black person is not a primary actor of the event. Lastly, three articles recall the incidents relating to the death of Anthony Griffin. The reports are solely about Gosset (the policeman who killed Griffin) but they briefly recall the past incidents. For example, “*L’agent Allan Gosset, responsable de la mort violente d’un jeune noir, il y a deux ans, a commencé une nouvelle carrière au sein de la police de la CUM, hier matin.*” (January 23rd, 1990). Even if the young Black man is the initial victim, he does not occupy a major role in these stories.

We notice that there are probably more articles concerning Black suspects, that is, sixty-three reports including the hybrid (thirty-nine) and suspect stories (twenty-four). There are few articles (sixteen) relating to Black victims and their story lines are also shorter (nine are short, between forty-five and two-hundred-fifty-six words). The majority of the entire corpus of eighty-four reports presents the Black actors as being criminals. Hence, with this corpus, we may already confirm that, as mentioned in literature (Van Dijk, 1991; Miller and Levin, 1998; Dorfman and Schiraldi, 2001), the proportion of crime committed by people of color is over-reported and that Black victims are under-represented. As Pritchard (1985), homicides of minorities are possibly relatively more frequent, so newspapers believe that they merit less space on their pages. Moreover, ten articles included in the hybrid category concern Black-on-Black crime. Entman and Rojecki (2000) concluded that Black-on-Black crimes are considered as being less newsworthy and news organizations pay less attention to them. But, most hybrid stories declare Blacks as criminals but as well declare them to be victims of their social economic status such as their poor living conditions. We therefore believe that *La Presse* does cover Blacks as fomenting trouble but as well they are beset by problems.

5.3. Racialization of the Black actors

The nationality (*d’origine jamaïcaine, les jamaïcains, haïtiens*), the community (*communauté antillaise, peuple noir, Noir anglophone, les gens des Caraïbes*), the country (*Jamaïque. Port-au-Prince*), the color of the skin (*race noir, un Noir*), the cultural group (*rastafarianisme, rastas*) or the immigration status (*immigrant*) are used to describe the Black actor. Additionally, the majority of articles that mention the nationality, country, community or cultural group qualify the actors’ rapport with Quebec (as an immigrant in Quebec or as a born Quebecer of another origin

or nationality): “...citoyens d’origine jamaïcaine...” (July 3rd, 1990); “...des immigrants de fraîche date et des réfugiés en attente de statut...” (October 30th, 1990-2); “Québécois d’origine jamaïcaine” (November 10th and 24th 1990). A couple of reports as well indicate the amount of years the Black actor has been in Canada (for example: “...arrivé au Canada en 1988...”, March 15th, 1990). By using such racial indicators, the writers demonstrate the Black actors’ integration in Canadian culture but they simultaneously “other” them by indicating their racial background.

In our corpus, we notice that the Black actors are identified in two different ways, either by their names or by their race. Entman and Rojecki’s (2000) study confirms that Black victims are often unnamed. But, in our corpus, Black victims are generally identified by their exact names. As for the Black suspects, they are not named but rather linked to their race (for example: *individus de race noire*), illicit activity (*trafiquants, voleurs, suspects, agresseurs*) or street gang (*Family*). By doing so, “...the identity of the individual is considered to be not important and not worthy of naming, that the person is part of an undifferentiated group; just another Black criminal...” (Entman and Rojecki, 2000, p. 82).

The race of the Black actors is placed in different parts of the texts. The race is more often mentioned in the leading and/or concluding paragraphs (thirty-three) than in the titles (fifteen). The race of the remaining thirty-six stories is eventually mentioned in the story. Even though, the race of the actors is not mentioned in sixty-nine titles, the race, mostly of the suspects, is often repeated at the beginning and the end of the same report. Thus, the association race/crime is not eliminated and it is, at other times, accentuated.

In fact, according to Ericson, Baranek and Chan (1991), lead statements are found in the opening paragraph and will communicate the essence of the story in order to attract the reader to it. Furthermore, in 1958, Swope reveals the lead as an important element of the story due to the fact that many readers only read the first and last sentence of the story (cited in Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991, p. 266). If we consider the authors’ explanation, consumers that do read only part of the article will systematically know the race of the suspects. But, we must not neglect that in more than half of the reports (fifty-one), the race is not mentioned at the beginning and end of the stories. Furthermore, numerous other articles relating to the Mercier (Black individual that threatened the police department), Griffin (Black victim shot by police in 1987), Lashley (Black victim found in the St-Lawrence River), Dutervil (Black suspect accused of murder) and Rosemond (Black suspect accused of infant homicide) cases were found but the race is not

necessarily mentioned in all of the reports. Consequently, we notice that authors do not methodically indicate the race of the actors and that the first story printed on the specific incident does not automatically racialize the Black actor. So, similarly to Martindale's (1986) and Barlow's (1998) content analysis, it seems that in 1990, *La Presse* made an effort to suppress negative and direct references to race in order to avoid reinforcement of racist ideologies and diminish unnecessary fears based on race. Therefore, the newspaper would be integrating the multiracial phase of coverage suggested by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995, 2003).

But, in more than half (fifty-seven) of our studied articles, race and crime are closely associated in same sentence:

- ❖ *Rosemond, un Haïtien de 34 ans nouvellement installé dans la métropole, est accusé d'avoir provoqué la mort de Johanne Saint-Éloi, une fillette qui aurait célébré lundi prochain son 4ième anniversaire de naissance.* (March 15th, 1990);
- ❖ *...Atkinson, 16 ans, d'origine jamaïcaine, soupçonné d'avoir participé à une quarantaine de vols qualifiés...* (September 6th, 1990);
- ❖ *Un père de famille haïtien a été trouvé coupable, hier, au Palais de justice de Longueuil, d'avoir agressé sexuellement sa fille de quinze ans...* (September 11th, 1990);
- ❖ *Condamné l'an dernier à une lourde peine de pénitencier pour hold-up, ce Noir n'a toujours pas été inculpé de meurtre de l'avocat Shoofey...* (October 16th, 1990);
- ❖ *C'est à partir de cette époque que les trafiquants antillais ont décidé, parfois avec réticence, de se lancer dans la vente de cocaïne.* (December 10th, 1990-2).

Van Dijk (1988a and 1991) explains that the properties of the sentences (including the choice of words and their order; the sequence of sentences, etc.) may reveal the newspaper's or writer's intentions. Hence, the physical proximity of the race and crime emphasize the link between them.

Furthermore, forty-nine articles, present the Black actor in relation to his or her criminal background:

- *Il était connu de la police depuis 1983...Selon elle, il s'agirait d'une coutume en Jamaïque, pays dont Presley était originaire.* (April 11th, 1990);
- *Une pauvreté s'installe depuis dix ans, la délinquance, la criminalité le crack.* (October 30th, 1990-2, the article previously stated the presence of Blacks in this region).

An article dated August 7th, 1990 as well presents the Black victim (Presley) as the initial perpetrator: "*Leslie Presley, ce jeune Noir abattu par les policiers au bar Thunderdome, le 9 avril*

dernier, a bel et bien tiré le premier dans une direction qui pouvait être perçue par les policiers comme étant dans leur direction...quatre témoins civils, qui affirment tous que Presley avait un revolver à la main et a tiré avec cette arme.” This report did allege Presley not as an innocent victim but rather as a dangerous violent Black criminal who was rightfully shot by the officer. In fact, Dorfman and Schiraldi (2001) mention that people of color appear more often as dangerous perpetrators instead of innocent victims. As seen above, many other reports do not allow the Black victim to remain innocent but they are rather portrayed as another Black criminal, addressing his/her destiny. In addition, the authors often automatically explain the Black victims' death with their participation to criminal activities. For example, the article dated June 12th, 1990 states that the assault of the Black individual might be linked to drug activities: “...*Un homme de 34 ans de race noire a été blessé d'un coup de feu...il pourrait s'agir d'un crime relié au commerce de la drogue.*”

Before entering the next section, we will summarize the types of coverage analysed in the first period. Overall, we notice that, in 1990, the articles create various types of meanings. First, the coverage seems to racialize crime with the Black actors. For instance, more than three-thirds of the corpus (sixty-eight of the eighty-four articles) directly presents Blacks as being offenders. *La Presse* also more discretely connects Blacks to crime in various ways. For example, crime and Blacks are closely linked, in the same sentence in fifty-seven articles and many stories explain the criminal history of the actors.

But, in part of the coverage, the coverage seems to diminish the association between Blacks and crime: In fact, only fifteen titles racialize the Black actors, more than half of the reports do not mention the race in the lead or concluding remarks. Also, in certain articles, Blacks are quoted and so, their opinions and views are not neglected.

As discussed above, the place given to the articles may be analysed in two different ways. Certain articles were short, printed in sections of the newspapers that are commonly read by consumers (such as the classifieds). Either the newspaper wanted these articles to be read or less importance was given to them.

It therefore remains difficult to attribute one specific phase of coverage to the corpus. We may sometimes confirm that, in 1990, *La Presse* was attempting to equitably integrate minorities in the media by entering the multiracial coverage phase proposed by Wilson and Gutiérrez's (1985,

1995 and 2003). But, other reports do not confirm that *La Presse* constantly practiced this phase in 1990. In fact, the newspaper might be attempting to integrate Blacks as part of Canada's mosaic country (multiracial phase). But, on the other hand, *La Presse* is also adopting the stereotypical selection phase of coverage. The newspaper is stereotyping Blacks and their areas with crime in order to accommodate their presence. Blacks are considered to be part of society but still remain in their positions: as criminals, living in the ghettos.

How can we explain this variance in the coverage? First, the variety of the writers may justify the different representations. Additionally, the socio-political status of this period (1990) may be a valid explanation. As seen in the previous section, Blacks were at that time positively evolving in various fields (films, music, etc.) but they were simultaneously rebelling against several injustices (police violence, for example). They were therefore concurrently achieving certain positive positions (artists, for example) but they were still perceived as individuals potentially dangerous and violent.

Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003) associated specific historical periods and years to each of the phases. Thus, following the above mentioned results, we must question whether the phases elaborated by the authors can be transposed to the present study. We may not allocate once particular phase to the coverage of the year 1990. We must consider that our research uniquely studies crime reports relating to Blacks. Thus, we may not confirm whether the coverage of the Black community is uniform in all types of reports and if news concerning the White community is similar or not.

6. Subjects and themes

At the end of each article, *La Presse* indicates the principal subjects of the text. Sixty-nine articles have criminality and justice as their principal topics. Other subjects such as *accident/catastrophe* (June 8th, 1990), *société et sciences sociales* (May 14th, 1990; September 30th, 1990-2; October 23rd, 1990, October 24th, 1990-1, October 30th, 1990-2; November 28th, 1990; December 10th, 1990-3), *politique et government* (October 22nd and 23rd, 1990) and *arts et lettres/culture* (July 1st, 1990) are also mentioned.

The articles stating *société et sciences sociales* discuss altercations between Blacks and skinheads; Montreal's districts are viewed as presenting numerous problems such as prostitution,

drugs, poverty, etc. and include major criminal behaviours relating to the Black community (drug trafficking, prostitution and violence). In fact, all these articles can be considered as covering social problems. Moreover, we have noticed other articles possibly being part of this category but have not been categorized as such; for example, other articles concerning drug trafficking by Jamaicans: *La Bible et ...le crack*: December 10th, 1990-2 and an article concerning an altercation between Blacks and skinheads: May 23rd, 1990.

The article having *arts et lettres/culture* as subjects discusses the arrests of individuals participating in the Caribbean parade. As mentioned in the first section of this paper, this event responds to the cultural transmission function of media and is therefore a cultural or art event. The article, nevertheless, discusses criminal activities and it indicates crime and justice as the subjects. But, do these two subjects (arts/culture; criminal/justice) systematically relate the parade with crime? The association may in fact give the reader the impression that a cultural event, such as the Carifesta, is associated with violence. Once more, crime is linked to a specific culture or community.

The two articles indicating *politique et government* as subjects are mostly about the cultural composition of Côte-des-Neiges and Parc-Extension. They report the various difficulties of these districts, that is, the presence of gangs, arduous interracial relationships, etc. We notice that these articles do involve politics and government.

Finally, the article categorized as *accident/catastrophe* details the discovery of a witness of the Presley shooting. We question the reasons why this article is considered as an accident or disaster.

Overall, crime and justice are the most popular subjects (sixty-nine of the eighty-four articles). Moreover, notwithstanding that all of the articles concern a crime or justice matter; some have been categorized otherwise. It is therefore difficult to relate specific events or incidents to particular topics.

We believe that *La Presse* constantly refers to two major themes. As indicated by the newspaper, crime and justice are common subjects. Likewise, the analysis of the reports printed in 1990 has permitted us to retain two major themes: violence and the police. These two subjects will be discussed now.

6.1. Violence

Violent behaviours are covered in almost all of the reports (eighty-one). The other three articles dated January 6th, 1990 (“*Démantèlement d’un réseau d’importation de cocaïne*”), October 22nd, 1990 (“*Montréal et ses quartiers: Côte-des-Neiges: une lutte serrée à surveiller le soir du scrutin*”) and October 23rd, 1990 (“*Montréal et ses quartiers: Parc-extension; entre anciens et nouveaux immigrants, le choc*”) discuss drug activities that are not accompanied with violence.

Harsh words such as “*oblige*”, “*force*” and “*emparer*” were chosen to describe the violence used. Writers as well add adjectives that exaggerate and amplify the word following it. For example, “*...des coups de feu sont souvent tirés...*” (September 20th, 1990); “*...très violents...*” (December 10th, 1990-2); “*...les voleurs étaient lourdement armés...*” (December 15th, 1990). Once more, the choices of these specific words, “*souvent*”, “*lourdement*” and “*très*”, infer the intentions of the writer or newspaper. In fact, the Black community apparently has long been depicted with negative connotation and harsher adjectives in the world-wide press (Miller and Levin, 1998; Rome 1998; Henry and Tator, 2000; Van Dijk, 1988a, 1991, etc.).

First, the use of physical violence is present in the majority of the eighty one articles (sixty-two). Twenty-eight report murders (including conjugal, police and child homicide) and thirty-three describe assaults: attempted murders, armed robberies, physical abuse of a child, etc. Even the three articles (dated December 10th, 1990) relating to drug trafficking, mention violent events and behaviours. In these stories, the Black actors are considered as “*...très efficaces et très violents...*”, as initiators of violent drug wars and violent shootings:

- *...guerres entre trafiquants de crack jamaïcains...*
- *ces trafiquants du dérive de la cocaïne, qui sont en grand majorité d’origine jamaïcaine...une fusillade faisant sept blessés dans un sous-sol d’église de Côte-des-Neiges sensibilisait (sic) Montréal à la violence qui entoure le commerce du crack dans l’ouest de la ville”).*

As seen in the following examples, the reports presenting acts of physical violence all mention the circumstances (before, during and after), the context (location and/or date) and the modus operandi with the exception of the Lashley case. Hence, the violent methods used in committing the crime are abundantly detailed in the articles.

- *...meurtre de Nollis Boyd, un Jamaïcain de 21 ans....Plusieurs de ces témoins se trouvaient à l’intérieur du bar La Façade, situé au 7200, boul. Newman, dans le cadre*

d'une soirée spécialement consacrée à la musique "reggae", lorsque Boyd s'est présenté dans cet établissement, vers 2h35 hier matin. Sans se préoccuper d'une trentaine de clients qui s'y trouvaient toujours cette heure tardive de la nuit, le jeune homme s'est dirigé vers un groupe d'individus attablés dans un coin sombre du bar. À l'issue d'une brève discussion, Boyd a brandi une arme et a fait feu à deux reprises. ...Il semble que c'est au cours de cette chasse à l'homme qui s'est poursuivie à l'extérieur du bar, dans le stationnement arrière, que plusieurs coups de feu ont fusé de part et d'autre. (September 25th, 1990);

- *Confronté à deux jeunes bandits armés qui voulaient dévaliser son établissement, un bijoutier a abattu d'un coup de feu l'un de ses assaillants et a maîtrisé son complice à la pointe du fusil...Les deux jeunes voleurs de race noire avaient tout d'abord fait irruption dans ce petit commerce, vers 12h25, en braquant leurs armes en direction du propriétaire... (November 9th, 1990).*
- *...des gars dans la vingtaine, de race noire... l'un des passagers assis à l'arrière l'étranglait avec un cordon et que l'autre le menaçait d'une carabine à canon tronqué, celui qui prenait place à l'avant le martelait de coups de machette...sous les coups qui continuaient de pleuvoir (November 30th, 1990);*
- *Des voleurs en possession d'un camion volé transportant une valeur de 225000\$ en cigarettes ont éprouvé des ennuis mécaniques pendant leur fuite hier midi, dans le quartier de Notre-Dame-de-Grâce...Ils ont quand même pu mener bien leur opération en faisant tout simplement appel...à une dépanneuse. Vers 14h30...a forcé le conducteur à lui remettre les clés...ce sont trois suspects de race noire. (December 15th, 1990).*

The consequences of the crime are elaborated in forty-eight reports. In fact, except for fourteen articles, mostly of drug trafficking, incest and unsuccessful crimes, the stories include a description of the victim's (Black or not) physical and psychological state: "...dans un état qui ne mettrait plus sa vie en danger..." (February 7th, 1990); "L'homme, toujours conscient, semblait souffrir terriblement..." (June 12th, 1990); "...le corps était dans un tel état, au moment où il a été repêché, qu'il était impossible de déterminer la cause exacte du décès..." (October 31st, 1990); "...l'un des voleurs ayant de toute vraisemblance succombé à ses blessures..." (November 9th, 1990).

Furthermore, the majority of the articles indicate the victims' (Black or not) injuries: "...La victime a été atteinte à la tête et la balle a suivi une trajectoire horizontale..." (July 5th, 1990); "...L'un d'eux a été touché aux oreilles, un autre à l'abdomen, et un troisième au cou..." (October 29th, 1990); "...des multiples lacérations à un bras et à une jambe. Il a aussi subi une profonde coupure à la tête et à une main..." (November 20th, 1990); "...il a été traité pour une blessure ne mettant pas sa vie en danger..." (December 11th, 1990). These descriptions once more emphasize the brutal violence used by the criminals which are purported to be mostly of Black origin.

Eight of these forty-eight reports appear to indicate the psychological state of an entire community. Five of these eight articles state that citizens are worried and terrified of the presence of violence and drugs in their neighbourhoods. The other three articles mention that the Black community of Little Burgundy is frightened of the police: “...*Le père Francis estime que les Noirs de la Petite-Bourgogne ne se plaignent pas du travail des policiers du poste 24 parce qu'ils ont peur.*” (September 30th, 1990-1).

By reproducing in detail the events, their context, circumstances, modus operandi, violence utilized and consequences of the crime, journalists reconstruct the story in such a way that the readers feel and relive the actual event. The story gives the impression to the readers that the story is reality since the articles are mostly all descriptive or factual in nature. But, we must consider that the writers construct the facts according to their own personal and professional attributes. And, as Van Dijk (1988a) believes, journalists possibly unintentionally, select and choose certain events and information to cover. In fact, we have demonstrated above that certain phrases or words alter the sense or tone of the article. We therefore maintain that although being descriptive, the articles are also subjective.

Certain articles contain biases which create the belief that various illicit activities and behaviours are part of a culture. By doing so, the crime or conduct is closely linked to cultural practices. For example, the following articles declare sexual behaviours to be part of the Haitian culture and drugs or violence to be common for Jamaicans.

“Dans notre pays la tradition veut qu'un père de famille vérifie lui-même si ses filles sont vierges avant le mariage.”...C'est ce qu'a déclaré hier, au Palais de justice de Longueuil, un Québécois d'origine haïtienne de 39 ans, accusé d'inceste sur sa fille, maintenant âgée de 17 ans. ...Il aurait eu des relations avec elle entre septembre 1987 et mars 1988... (February 14th, 1990);

Une femme avait déclaré lundi à un quotidien montréalais que Presley, enthousiasmé par la musique, avait tiré des coups de feu au plafond pour manifester son enthousiasme. Selon elle, il s'agirait d'une coutume en Jamaïque, pays dont Presley était originaire (April 11th, 1990);

Comme plusieurs trafiquants jamaïcains, les vendeurs de la rue Grand sont rastas. Ils ne consomment jamais de cocaïne, mais beaucoup de marijuana, une drogue qui joue un rôle primordial dans leur mouvement mystique et culturel, au même titre que le reggae. (December 10th-1, 1990).

Other stories (twelve) report Blacks as violent protesters. First, the articles concerning the Remy Mercier case well demonstrates this idea. He was the spokesperson of a Black group that had decided to assault a future policeman who would kill a Black man.

M. Dowd a déclaré que Rémy l'avait appelé pour lui donner "la position des Noirs" au sujet de la mort de Leslie Presley, un individu de race noire abattu par un policier du SPCUM au début du mois d'avril dans un bar du centre-ville...M. Dowd, accompagné d'un photographe, est allé rencontrer Rémy. Ce dernier lui a déclaré qu'il était le porte-parole d'un groupe de Noirs récemment formé qui a décidé d'abattre le prochain policier blanc qui abattrait un Noir. (May 9th, 1990)

As seen above, violence is a subject that is omnipresent in the articles but it is more particularly linked to young adults. In more than half of the total articles (forty-eight), the authors specifically mention the age category (in numbers or using the word *jeune*) of the Black actors (mostly suspects): "*des jeunes Haïtiens...*" (March 20th, 1990); "...*Therlegrand Faustin, 19 ans, d'origine haïtienne...*" (May 2nd, 1990); "...*le jeune Mark Beckford, 19 ans...un Québécois d'origine jamaïcaine*" (November 24th, 1990); "*Trois jeunes voleurs...Trois jeunes gens armés...des gars dans la vingtaine, de race noire*" (November 30th, 1990); "...*deux Anglophones de race noire âgés d'une vingtaine d'années...jeune voyou...*" (December 11th, 1990).

Overall, we observe that eighty-one reports highlight the use of violence and that forty-eight of them indicate the actors to be young Black adults. Clearly, violence has taken an important place in the reports printed about the Black community in 1990, and moreover, emotionally charged words are used in order to amplify the violent behaviours. The violent events and the consequences or impacts of the crime are thoroughly detailed. Such meticulous stories allow the reader to experience the event as if they were part of it but as well reveal the degree of the violence.

And so, as seen in the threatening-issue phase, the Black community is mostly reported when it is perceived as a threat to social order. In fact, as shown above, Blacks are directly involved with violence in eighty-one reports. Additionally, in certain reports, particular deviant behaviours such as drug trafficking and incest are considered as cultural practices by the newspaper. Also, Blacks are sometimes presented as protesters (for example, the Remy case). Thus, negative images of Black actors are often produced by the press' coverage. During this first period, crime events were still raising race issues and creating social panic or fear based on race. Hence, since all of the articles mention the race (Black origin) of the actors and establish that they have

employed violence, the reports surely connect these two attributes (Black individuals and violence) with the actors' young age. As seen in our corpus, young Black individuals are therefore often seen as the source of the problem, that is, crime. In fact, as noted by Graber (1980) and Henry and Tator (2000), *La Presse* would seem to consistently identify young Black males as major criminals.

6.2. The Police

The authorities are mentioned as actors in most reports (sixty-six) printed in 1990. At times they are positively covered as effective protectors of society or as heroes. On other occasions, their methods and roles are questioned and criticized.

In an article about the Presley case, printed on August 9th, 1990, the police are perceived as having saved the lives of others:

Presley a d'abord été maîtrisé, mais est ensuite sorti du coin où il avait été placé en retrait... Deux policiers ont tiré, craignant pour leur propre vie après que Presley eut tiré avec son arme. Un troisième policier a tiré, craignant pour la vie de son collègue qui ne tenait pas son arme, alors qu'il retenait par le coude Presley, armé, et qui venait de tirer.

According to this statement, the policeman that shot Presley was therefore protecting himself and society from a dangerous individual. In fact, as Shah and Thornton (2004) believe, interethnic conflicts are simplified in terms of heroes (the police in this case) and racial groups are often classified as disturbing villains (Presley, for example).

In various articles, the police also prevent and cease physical altercations. For example, in the following articles, the police prevented a fight between skinheads and Blacks: "*Les policiers de l'escouade tactique sont rapidement intervenus en soirée hier à la station de métro Pie-IX pour empêcher un affrontement appréhendé entre jeunes Noirs et skinheads.*" (May 19th, 1990). In this storyline, the police are once more depicted as heroes and protectors of society.

Additionally, the police's efforts in investigating and solving important crimes are revealed in many stories: "*La police de la Communauté urbaine de Montréal a tué dans l'oeuf un projet d'enlèvement d'un fils du milliardaire...*" (May 2nd, 1990) and; "...*les deux enquêteurs des homicides de la police de la CUM qui pilotent cet épineux dossier depuis 1986...*" (October 16th, 1990).

On the other hand, according to certain events printed in 1990, the police department seems in conflict with the Black community. In fact, growing tensions between Blacks and police officers are covered. First, five reports about Leslie Presley (Black man shot by a policeman on duty) are printed. This incident strongly reminded the Black community of a similar incident that occurred in 1987 (Griffin-Gosset case): “...*la police blanche tue les Noirs! Encore Anthony Griffin...*” (April 10th, 1990-1); “*Rappelons qu’un homme qui disait avoir 19 ans...affirmait qu’on se trouvait devant une nouvelle affaire Griffin-Gosset*” (April 11th, 1990). In response to these events, Remy Mercier, in April 1990, threatened to kill the next police officer that would kill a Black man. Twelve stories discuss this case and all of the developments were printed.

In the same vein, three articles, printed in September and October 1990, discuss the strained relationships between the Black community of Little Burgundy and police officers of the district. The article dated September 30th, 1990-1 states that:

“Les relations ne sont pas bonnes”, déclare le père Francis. Une réunion doit d’ailleurs avoir lieu le 5 octobre au cours de laquelle un avocat sera invité à expliquer aux citoyens de la Petite-Bourgogne quels sont leurs droits et leurs obligations quand ils sont interpellés par la police...Il hésite toutefois à ne blâmer que la police pour les relations tendues que celle-ci entretiendrait avec les Noirs. “Les gens doivent réaliser qu’ils ont aussi des responsabilités à l’égard de la police...”

The two other reports particularly present the unjustified acts of specific police officers in regard to the Black community of Little Burgundy:

Dans la Petite-Bourgogne, où vit la plus vieille communauté noire de Montréal, Batman et Robin n’inspirent pas la confiance et l’admiration, mais plutôt la peur et l’indignation. D’une façon hautement ironique et sarcastique, le nom des justiciers de la télévision américaine a été donné par des Noirs du quartier à deux policiers de la CUM dont les méthodes sont très contestées. À l’aide de témoignages parfois troublants, une dizaine de Noirs de la Petite-Bourgogne ont confié à La Presse la semaine dernière leur nette impression d’être traités en citoyens de deuxième classe par “Batman” et “Robin”. (September 30th, 1990-2).

Une enquête interne a été instituée par la police de la CUM concernant les “graves allégations” d’un agent du poste 24 à propos du “harcèlement” auquel se livreraient ses collègues à l’endroit des Noirs de la Petite-Bourgogne, un quartier défavorisé du sud-ouest de Montréal. (October 31st, 1990-3).

We also found three other reports (in September and October 1990) that illustrate the problematic relationships between the police force and the Black community of Little Burgundy. In fact, the latter would not feel protected by the police department of their district and believe that the

officers act arrogantly, lack respect and engage in stereotypical thinking. Hence, due to the fact that no crime is discussed in these articles, they are eliminated from the studied corpus.

Moreover, three reports explain wrongful arrests of Black individuals by police officers (*“Écroué par erreur, un immigrant poursuit des policiers de St-Hubert”*: March 14th, 1990 and *“Un jeune homme poursuit la CUM pour 15 500\$; il dit avoir été arrêté illégalement et harcelé”*: August 21st, 1990). In one of these three articles, the Black suspect is presented as a victim of racial discrimination: *“Le policier lui a répondu: On ne hait pas seulement les anglais, on hait les Noirs aussi...”* (August 21st, 1990). Once again, these incidents demonstrate conflicts between the authorities and Blacks as well as the racial division of social groups.

From the above citations, we can either conclude that the police department is racist or that the Black community has an unjust image of racism. In 1990, *La Presse* demonstrated that discrimination and racism were still a social reality. Thus, the Black community might consider themselves as victims of discrimination in unjustified situations. For example, the following report demonstrates that Blacks might expose racism in irrelevant events: *“...au moment de l’arrestation d’une pute anglo, noire et travestie...elle s’est mise à hurler aux Droits de l’Homme quand on l’a épinglée. « You’re on me cause’am black! »* (August 5th, 1990). The Black individual was surely arrested for her illegal behaviour.

The articles found in 1990 amplify the division of two specific social groups: the Black community and the “White police”. By this coverage, social groups therefore became polarized and defined the dissimilarity of “Us” (White policemen) and “Them” (Blacks). The cause of this racial distinction might be due to the fact that Blacks are covered as threats to society even to police officers. And, by having to maintain social order, the police systematically and indirectly became antagonists to the Black community that, according to the reports, seemed to adopt deviant behaviours. Thus, Blacks would be in conflict with actors representing social order: police officers. This assumption would therefore reinforce the association of violence and crime with Blacks. But, even so, the police may as well have directly acted in an unfair, unjust or racist manner (as seen in the Batman and Robin case explained above). The reports reveal that Blacks believe they were victims of discrimination. In fact, the Presley and Griffin shootings initiated many negative reactions and emotions for the Black community, more particularly, towards the authorities. Certain events, such as the Remy case, may reveal the confrontation phase of Wilson and Gutiérrez’s (1985, 1995 and 2003). The reports cover the actions of Mercier as a violent,

although verbal, response regarding injustices experienced by Black individuals (the shooting of Presley).

In summary, the reports reflect a slanted view of the police department. They are either perceived, principally by the dominant population (the White community), as heroic (peace keeping, protecting and solving crimes) or as a negative and destructive element to the Black community (racist, unfair, etc.).

7. Synopsis

We found eighty-four reports (mostly of average length and printed generally in the A section of the newspaper) racializing the Black actors. General news reports are the most popular (seventy-nine of eighty-four reports) and seem quite factual and descriptive in nature. But, editorials, dossiers and cover stories seem to be more detailed.

We notice that general news reports (*faits divers*) are placed differently according to the importance given by the newspaper. Even though certain articles found in the *annonces classées*, *consommation* or *informations nationales* are brief; they have been printed in sections that attract many readers.

In many of our reports, the neighbourhoods occupied mostly by Blacks are identified as the main crime locations of the Montreal region. Thus, we may assume that ethnicity is consequently associated to crime in the reporting events.

A high amount of articles (sixty-three) present Blacks as wrongdoers in various ways. They are either closely linked with criminal events in the same sentence and in fifty-seven articles the criminal history of the actors is given. Hence, the proportion of crime committed by people of color is clearly over-reported by the newspaper. But, certain stories demonstrate that Blacks are victims of their poor social status. By doing so, Blacks are sometimes quoted and their opinions are considered as valid and relevant.

On other occasions, the reports emphasize less the association between Blacks and crime. Only fifteen titles racialize the Black actors and more than half of the reports do not mention the race in the lead or concluding remarks.

Two major themes are discussed and retained in this section: violence and the police. Almost the entire corpus (eighty-one reports) includes violence gestures, one way or another. Moreover, violence is mostly attributed to young Black males. Particular criminal behaviours such as drug trafficking and incest are considered as cultural practices and Blacks are sometimes presented as protestors of what they consider injustices. By such representations, negative images of Black actors are often created. As for the police, they are either perceived as heroic (peace keeping, protecting and solving crimes) or as a negative aspect to the Black community (racist, unfair, etc.).

At times, we can believe that *La Presse* seems to equally include minorities in the media by entering the multiracial coverage phase proposed by Wilson and Gutiérrez's (1985, 1995 and 2003). But, in 1990, *La Presse* also seems to practice the stereotypical selection phase of coverage. In this first period, the newspaper is stereotyping Blacks and their areas with crime in order to accommodate their presence. If so, Blacks would be considered to be part of society but would still be criminals, living in Black neighbourhoods. Furthermore, the threatening-issue phase is also noticed in the coverage. The Black community is mostly exposed when it is perceived as a threat to social order (as criminals, drug consumers or sellers). Many crime reports do seem to raise race issues and encourage social panic towards the Black community but, during that same year, the newspaper also seems to eliminate race indicators. Various types of coverage are therefore considered: the threatening issue phase, the stereotypical selection phase and the multiracial phase of coverage. So, we may not link this first period to one particular phase. Moreover, we must absolutely consider that our study examines only crime reports concerning Blacks. We may not therefore confirm whether articles relating to other communities such as the Whites are similar because this would not be within the limits of this research.

As stated in an article dated December 10th, 1990-3, media and the police can possibly amplify the negative reputation of Jamaicans:

La police et les médias font-ils preuve d'insensibilité raciale lorsqu'ils claironnent le rôle des trafiquants d'origine jamaïcaine dans le commerce du crack à Montréal? Pour plusieurs leaders de la communauté noire de Montréal, de même que pour certains experts en toxicomanie, poser la question, c'est un peu y répondre. Ceux-ci digèrent très mal les manchettes de certains journaux, dont La Presse, et les déclarations des policiers du SPCUM concernant "les guerres entre trafiquants de crack jamaïcains" dans certains quartiers de l'ouest montréalais. "Dans l'espoir de donner aux Montréalais d'origine jamaïcaine qui sont honnêtes la chance de survivre dans une société qui leur est souvent hostile à cause de leur race, je crois qu'il serait préférable que la police garde pour elle

ce genre de d'informations au lieu de la publiciser de façon sensationnaliste", déclare Noël Alexander, le président de l'Association jamaïcaine de Montréal. La police devrait travailler de manière plus discrète afin de déraciner le mal.

Even though this report relates more particularly to Jamaicans, we can surely assume that the media, as well as the police, sensationalize information. Even though the goal of our research is not to analyse the effects of media and the police department, we must consider their role in amplifying the presence of Blacks in media coverage of crime.

In the following section we will thoroughly study the reports of our second period: July 31st, 2004 to July 31st, 2005. We will then be able to compare the possible similarities and dissimilarities of each period.

Second period: July 31st, 2004 to July 31st, 2005

We will study forty-one articles in this last period. Similarly to the first time span, we will describe and analyse the types of articles and forms of reporting. We will detail two relevant themes that are present throughout the corpus: street gangs and the sources of fear relating to the Black community.

1. General description of the corpus

The material found respond well to the objects studied. We have once more eliminated a couple of reports. First, articles pertaining to the Caribbean parade of July, 2005, were found but the authors did not mention the race of the actors. The race must be present in order for them to be retained.

As briefly indicated above, street gangs are of major importance in this period. In fact, there are about twenty-two reports relating to street gangs that are not kept for study due to the fact they do not mention the race of the members. But, the majority does reveal the name of the gang and/or the districts in which they operate. Many of these articles discuss the strategies adopted by the government and/or the authorities in order to prevent, intervene, deal or combat these street gangs. For example, according to *La Presse*, in November 2004, the government invested one million dollars for the prevention of gangs and one month later, the Montreal Police Department joined forces with New York in order to combat them. Overall, during this second period, the police department wished to adopt new strategies in order to reply to this new phenomenon.

Lastly, an article explains the discovery of a human skull in Ste-Madeleine (Lanaudière region) that was analysed in Fredericton. The human debris belonged to a Black man. The body was found outside of the Montreal region and the research took place in another province. Plus, the article exclusively discusses the reconstitution of the man's skull rather than the crime itself. We therefore did not further analyse this article.

Summer 2005, more particularly the months of June, 2005 (nine reports) and August, 2004 (seven reports) have the most articles. The month of January 2006 as well has seven reports. The rest of the months contain between one (October 2004 and April 2005 and May 2005) and six (November 2005) reports.

Sixteen of the forty-one articles have photographs (ten are in black and white) and one article printed a diagram of the territories belonging to various street gangs. The pictures are crime scenes, third parties, victims' family and friends, etc. No pictures of suspects or victims are printed.

2. Forms of reporting

Eighteen different authors have written the articles of our corpus. Caroline Touzin (seven reports) and Christiane Desjardins (five stories) are the most frequent. Except for two articles relating to the Gregory Wooley case (a Black biker), all of Touzin's articles discuss issues concerning street gangs. We also notice that Éric Clément wrote all of the articles pertaining to Youth Protection, including the series "*Les Enfants de la DPJ*." Can we therefore conclude that several authors have specialities?

Almost half of the reports (all printed on weekdays except for one article) seem purely descriptive. They in fact describe the actors involved, the type of crime committed, the date and location of the crime. However, in order for news reports to be solely descriptive, the journalists are supposed to write in an objective manner. Even though writers should not include in their news reports personal views or opinions and they have the mandate to furnish the fairest and fullest report, Hackett and Zhao (1996) believe that objectivity is an ideal that is difficult to attain. In addition, Van Dijk (1988a) declares that journalists select and choose certain events and information to cover. Certain material might seem irrelevant for some writers but necessary for others. Journalists consequently create stories with hidden assumptions and judgments that are barely detectable. The following segment may seem purely descriptive but we may notice that the words outlined in bold create the tone of the story.

*L'homme de 64 ans a raconté qu'il avait été **sauvagement** battu, mardi en fin d'après-midi, avec sa propre canne et que ses **assaillants** avaient volé son portefeuille. La **présumée** victime avait même identifié ses **agresseurs** comme étant quatre Noirs âgés de 13 à 18 ans, accompagnés d'une jeune fille. (January 28th, 2005)*

By declaring that the victim was brutally beaten, the journalist amplifies the gestures and offers to the readers a visual picture of the crime. Furthermore, with the words "*présumée victime*", we question the accuracy of the facts. Also, we may wonder the reasons the author first uses the word "*assaillants*" to describe the Black actors and then he writes "*agresseurs*." These two words have different connotation. We must as well consider that each reader's culture, values,

experiences and personal attributes allow media messages do be decoded in different ways. Therefore, as Hall (1997) clearly states, media reports surely have numerous meanings.

We also notice that twenty-one of the forty-one articles (four printed in the Saturday paper) go beyond the basic facts (who, when, how and why) and furnish statistics, verbal quotes of interested parties, interviews or other related data.

Twelve of the forty-one reports include speeches. These quotes corroborate Van Dijk's (1991) allegation: Blacks are rarely quoted and when they are, they criticize the system and justify the Black actors' acts. Moreover, in these speeches, young Blacks are presented as victims of crimes, poverty, stereotypes and, injustices. But, we may also consider that Blacks are considered and their statements are printed.

3. Disposition of the articles

Except for the stories published in the *Plus* section of the Sunday paper, all articles are printed in the first section of the newspaper or Section A (between page A1 and A33). Pages A1, A3, A8 and A15 are the most popular pages and two articles are printed on page A31 and A33. In fact, most reports are found between pages A1 and A15.

On August 15th, 2004, an article is printed in the *Plus* booklet (section reserved for the Sunday paper) and concerns the affiliation and prevention of street gangs: "*Briser l'omerta*". Pierreson Vaval, director of the RDP basketball team shares his beliefs and knowledge of street gangs.

Two articles concern Youth Protection. They both are part of a series of reports: "*Les enfants de la DPJ*" and printed in the Saturday or Sunday paper. But, the second report dated June 5th, 2005 is printed on a Sunday, in the *Plus* section of *la Presse*. It presents several Youth Protection cases and one concerns a Haitian father who contested Quebec's legislation in regard to physical correction of children.

The two preceding articles are printed in the Sunday booklet. They are relatively longer and they include more details. They either discuss a common subject of the years 2004 and 2005 (street gangs) or present stories pertaining to Youth Protection. Due to the fact that these articles are

printed in separate booklets that are surely read a lot, readers might therefore conclude that these subjects (gangs and Youth Protection) are important matters to consider.

4. Types of articles

Mostly all of the articles (forty) are general news/actuality (*nouvelles générales/actualités*). Most (twenty-three) of these forty articles are either short (sixteen are between sixty-four and two-hundred and ninety-six words) or average in length (seventeen are between three-hundred and one and six-hundred and seventy-one words). Eight articles are long (between seven-hundred and forty and one-thousand-eight-hundred and forty-three words).

Three cover stories are directly related to street gangs. In the cover story dated August 10th, 2004-1, the journalist presents several recent assaults and the police's struggle against street gangs. In doing so, the writer states certain facts (the members' age, nationality and the districts they control). For example: "*...les Bo Gars dont la majorité des membres font partie de la communauté haïtienne... En plus de ces 10 gangs de rue composés de 10 à 15 membres chacun, plusieurs autres gangs émergent, ayant en leur rangs une majorité de jeunes âgés de 10, 11 ou 12 ans.*"

The following day (August 11th, 2004-1), another cover story is printed. It explains more violent events connected to street gangs that took place in the downtown area. Once more, this report informs the public of several aspects concerning street gangs:

Les membres des Bo-Gars (le clan des rouges aussi connu comme les Bloods) et les membres des CDP (le clan des bleus aussi connu comme les Crips)...proviennent en majorité de la communauté haïtienne. Depuis une quinzaine d'années, les premiers règnent dans Montréal-Nord et les seconds, dans le quartier Saint-Michel. Les CDP sont aussi présents dans Saint-Henri, LaSalle et Pointe-Saint-Charles.

During a weekend of November, 2004, a few journalists wandered the streets of Montreal and Nicolas Berubé recites a cover story. He more specifically details one specific incident that is an initiation of a street gang recruit:

Le jeune s'est libéré de son emprise, l'a rué de coups de poing au thorax et dans le ventre. Quelques secondes ou quelques minutes plus tard..., les jeunes Noirs ont pris leurs jambes à leur cou... Les enquêteurs qui s'occupent du dossier ont émis l'hypothèse qu'il a été victime d'un rituel d'initiation d'un gang de rue. Le fait que les jeunes se

soient rassemblés en un nombre aussi important, et qu'ils aient pris la fuite dès le premier coup de couteau, semble indiquer qu'ils n'étaient pas là pour se battre, mais pour trouver une victime. (November 5th, 2004).

The final cover story, printed on July 4th, 2005, presents violent events that occurred during the Caribbean parade. As well as explaining the events of the day, the author added relevant information. For example:

- 1993: Un Haïtien de 15 ans ouvre le feu dans la foule et blesse quatre personnes.

-1994: La Ville refuse de délivrer un permis pour la Carifête.

-1996: Une fusillade éclate à l'angle du boulevard Saint-Laurent et de la rue Sainte-Catherine: un mort et un blessé.

-2002: Six personnes sont arrêtées à la suite de bagarres près de l'hôtel de ville de Montréal. Quatre autres sont poignardées rue Saint-Antoine, alors que deux bousculades surviennent au métro Champ-de-Mars.

-2004: La police fait sept arrestations, dont trois pour voies de fait. Une quinzaine de fêtards se servent dans une épicerie du boulevard Saint-Laurent.

This additional information that is included in the report links the Carifesta to violence. Thus, the parade is presented as a cause of trouble and so, in 1994, the city refused to deliver a permit. But, between 1996 and 2002, no incidents are mentioned.

As seen previously, a cover story must be deemed and judged to be the most important or interesting story of the day and is considered central if it has an enormous impact on a large number of people (Gans, 1979). In fact, these front page events mentioned above do concern the entire population and the government or authorities are involved. Furthermore, the articles inform the public of recent events and state supplementary data. Street gangs are also broadly covered and presented as a phenomenon, thus, deemed to be of importance to the public's knowledge. Moreover, a cultural parade, such as the Carifesta which monopolizes the whole downtown area of Montreal, is an annual and central event of the day and has an impact on numerous individuals. So, the story of July 4th, 2004, would be worthy of a cover story.

There are also five *brefs*, two articles belonging to a specific series, one report printed in the *société et tendances* section and one *éditorial*.

The five *brefs* are all assaults and the events are reported in a few words. One report dated January 6th, 2005, mentions an assault committed by a Black man but also denounces *La Ligue des Noirs* opinion: "*Toutefois, le président Dan Philip qualifie d'inacceptable le fait que certains*

médias aient mentionné que les quatre jeunes suspects sont de race noire". The *brefs* do not mention the names of the victims or suspects and the police have little or no leads in order to progress in these investigations. These events are barely noticeable on the pages. We must consider the organizational decisions taken for that specific day. In fact, other stories may have been judged more significant and the remaining space for the rest of the daily news could have been limited. Or, even if few details are available, the newspaper might have believed that these stories were important and needed to be given space.

The two articles concerning Youth Protection are part of a sequence of reports called "*Les enfants de la DPJ*". Obviously, the newspaper believed that this subject was relatively important and it needed to be discussed on several occasions.

On April 7th, 2005, an article concerning gang related drug activities dismantled by the police is printed. This report explains this operation but is categorized as *société et tendances*. In fact, as seen above, *La Presse* constructs street gangs as an important phenomenon and represent part of the trends of society (*société et tendances*) of 2004-2005.

On August 11th, 2005, an *éditorial* is written by Michèle Ouimet ("*Montréal n'est pas le Far West*"). By presenting the following related facts, she demonstrates that Montreal has not become a war zone as declared in the cover story discussed above and printed on the same day:

Les médias se sont énervés avec cette histoire de gangs de rue qui se tirent dessus en plein centre-ville...L'accumulation d'incidents violents en un temps si court impressionne, mais si on regarde les chiffres froidement, la ballonne du Far West se dégonfle...Montréal n'a pas perdu le contrôle, affirme la police qui a formé une unité spéciale responsable de ce dossier...

We therefore discern two types of articles. First, despite the concept of objectivity mentioned above, nineteen articles, including the article categorized as *société et tendances* and the five *brefs*, can be perceived as descriptive in nature. But, certain reports (twenty-one), including the cover stories, the *éditorial* and the series) are thoroughly researched by the journalist. They therefore exceed the factual and informative level. They are generally longer than ordinary general news. So, we notice that the newspaper focuses on certain the subjects such as Youth Protection and street gangs. By doing so, *La Presse* reinforces, emphasizes and creates the issues of society that should be deemed the most important. The cover stories, the *editorial*, the *société et tendances* and the serie were printed during the summer 2004 or 2005.

5. Content of the articles

Similarly as during the first period, between July 31st, 2004 and July 31st, 2005, *La Presse* identifies the Black actors in different ways. We will once again present the main geographic locations indicated in the reports. We will then specify the various roles associated with the Black community in crime news and examine the coverage of the Black actors. We will also comment on the ways Blacks are or are not associated with crime.

5.1. Location

The majority specifies the location of the event. But, nine of the forty-one articles, mainly presenting ongoing trials, do not specifically mention the area. Only one article (concerning a sexual assault) indicates the exact civil address of the crime. The street intersections are rarely mentioned.

Four reports expressly mention certain subways as crime scènes (Villa-Maria, Henri-Bourassa, Côte-des-Neiges, etc.) and so, the area is implicitly named. Many articles, more particularly concerning street gangs, mention several neighbourhoods in the same text. For example, on August 7th, 2004, the journalist mentions:

“... Des coups de feu ont été tirés en pleine rue dans les quartiers de Saint-Henri, Saint-Michel et Pointe-Saint-Charles jeudi soir...« Moi, je ne suis pas raciste, mais partout on voit partout des Noirs qui se mettent debout sur les voitures stationnées dans la rue... » ”

And on October 29th, 2004, the journalist writes that two clans “...composés majoritairement de jeunes de la communauté jamaïcaine, se disputant la Petite-Bourgogne, Pointe-Saint-Charles et Côte-des-Neiges...” The author of a report dated April. 7th, 2005, also states that:

Selon les policiers, il s'agit d'une bande de trafiquants d'origine haïtienne qui sévissaient avec la bénédiction des principaux gangs de rue du nord de la ville... C'en était rendu que les passants préféreraient changer de trottoir quand ils arrivaient à leur hauteur, a relaté le commandant Bélair, responsable du poste de quartier (PDQ) 39 à Montréal-Nord, secteur le plus touché par les activités du gang. Celles-ci avaient aussi cours dans le secteur Rivière-des-Prairies.

The downtown and old Montreal area are frequently indicated in the articles and once again principally for street gangs' activities or Caribbean festivities: “...de gangs de rue qui se tirent

dessus en plein centre-ville...Leurs members se recrutent essentiellement chez les Haïtiens et les Jamaïcains” (August 11th, 2004-2); *“Des bousculades ont opposé quelques fêtards...de la fête antillaise...Des altercations se sont ensuite produites rue Notre-Dame, sur le boulevard Saint-Laurent, rue Saint-Antoine et rue Gosford, face à la Cour municipale.”* (July 4th, 2005).

Consequently, the same areas are repeatedly mentioned (St-Michel, Montreal-North, etc.) and they have long been considered as Black residential neighbourhoods of Montreal. They are associated as the main crime locations and thus, linked to Blacks.

5.2. Characteristics of the Black actors

As in the first period, we have classified the reports found in 2004-2005 in three different categories: victims, suspects and hybrid articles. First, only one article (*“Viol et disparition d’une fillette à Laval”*: June 6th, 2005) concerns a Black victim. The article does not identify the victim due to the fact that the police ignored her name. Second, the majority of the corpus (thirty-one articles) presents Blacks as wrongdoers. Third, nine articles are hybrid. For example:

- ❖ *“Les rouges, les bleus et les autres”* (August 11th, 2004-3): Black young male stabbed by a group of Blacks;
- ❖ *“J’ai placé mes enfants”* (June 5th, 2005): A Haitian father is accused of being physically abusive towards his child.

In these two previous articles, the actors (victims and perpetrators) are both of Black origin. But, seven reports allege the same Black actors as simultaneously being a suspect and a victim. For example:

- ❖ *“Gangs de rue: Briser l’omerta”* (August 15th, 2004); *“Des jeunes condamnent l’agression”* (January 11th, 2005); *“Noir à Montréal”* (January 17th, 2005): Young black males are presented as being perpetrators but also as victims of their social and economic difficulties (lack of social adaptation, poverty, etc.);
- ❖ *“Montréal la nuit”* (November 6th, 2004): A Black individual is involved in a fight;
- ❖ *“La Ligue des Noirs veut que les policiers racistes soient punis”* (December 20th, 2004); *“Agression dans le métro: un coup monté”* (January 28th, 2005) and *“Un*

mulâtre se plaint de violence policière” (July 28th, 2005): Black or mulatto suspects are wrongfully arrested or accused;

- ❖ “*Un enfant, sa mère et un pédophile*” (June 4th, 2005): A child of Haitian background (a victim) is sexually abused by his neighbour. This child also adopts violent behaviors towards his mother (the aggressor);
- ❖ “*Une histoire montréalaise*” (June 27th, 2005): A Black woman was accused of arson in 1734 but the author mentions she was wrongfully accused.

In this second period, except for one article previously mentioned, Blacks are negatively portrayed as wrongdoers, perpetrators, criminals or suspects. Hence, this population is automatically injured and blamed for crime gestures. Therefore, others may fear the Black community. Furthermore, we observe that victims are hardly represented in the newspaper during the year 2004-2005 and the unique article is short. Therefore, we may confirm Van Dijk’s (1991), Miller and Levin’s (1998) and Dorfman and Schiraldi’s (2001) conclusions: crime committed by people of color is over-reported and Black victims are under-represented in media.

5.3. Racialization of the Black actors

In a same article, the Black actors may be identified in several ways. The Haitian origin (*origine haïtienne, communauté haïtienne, haïtiens, Haïti*) is specifically mentioned in almost half of the articles (seventeen of the forty-one reports). Two articles refer to the Caribbean community (*communauté Antillaise*); one, to the Jamaican population (*communauté jamaïcainne*) and one article is about an African individual (*origine Africainne*). Lastly, the actors are racialized by their skin color in twenty-five articles. For example: *jeunes Noirs, race noire, communauté noire, Noir, etc.*

Except for an article dated March 15th, 2005 (“...*Estelle, qui n’a pas sa citoyenneté canadienne, sera expulsé en Haïti, son pays d’origine...*”), journalists never seem to refer to the Black actor’s Canadian status.

The actors are racialized in only one title: “*Un mulâtre se plaint de violence policière*” (July 28th, 2005). In this second period, various articles have sub-titles. In fact, the sub-title of an article dated January 11th, 2005, racializes a non existing actor: “*Si la dame battue avait été une mère haïtienne, ça aurait reviré en guerre de gangs, affirme un intervenant*”. Another sub-title of a

report dated January 17th, 2005, indicates “*Un moule pour les Blacks.*” The readers therefore immediately become aware that the actors of the story are Blacks. Moreover, less than half of the articles (seventeen) hint, in the title or sub-title, that the actors of the story are minorities. For example, the following two titles indicate notions referring to minorities: “*Un juge acquitte un homme en raison d’un profilage racial*” (February 3rd, 2005) and “*Pauvreté, racisme, toxicomanie: la vie à Saint-Pierre n’est pas de tout repos*”, the sub-title in the article dated February 21st, 2005. The rest of the fifteen titles suggest the Black community’s involvement by naming street gangs, well-known Black criminals such as Gregory Wooley and Tommy Kane or a Black cultural event (the Carifesta),. Here are some examples:

- ❖ “*Les rouges, les bleus et les autres*” (August 11th, 2004-3)
- ❖ “*Les Crips et les Bloods rodent autour des stations*” (sub title on March 3rd, 2005)
- ❖ “*Le motard Gregory Wooley écope 13 ans*” (June 28th, 2005)
- ❖ “*Défilé de la Carifesta*” (July 4th, 2005).

The Black actor is racialized in only three leads and in seven concluding remarks. The titles, leads and concluding remarks tend to attract the readers and the lead statements will communicate the essence of the story (Ericson, Baranek and Chan, 1991). But, during this period of study, the principal actors are rarely racialized in these sections and thus, the writers may not believe the race to be of importance in the story. In addition, even though certain titles do hint the involvement of Black actors, the race is not directly alleged. We can certainly acknowledge the efforts of the press in suppressing negative attributions to the Black community. This can be an indication that *La Presse* has policies in order to practice the multiracial phase of coverage.

In most reports (thirty), the actors’ race is often eventually stated in the middle of text. Except for three reports, the race is only indicated on one or two occasions in the story. The race is at times strongly hinted but not directly written. For example, a report (September 23rd, 2004) incorporates the race of the suspect, in the following way: “*En échange, il lui promettait de l’amener avec lui en Haïti, où ils vivraient une vie de pacha*”.

Generally, the race is rarely systematically attributed in the same sentence or paragraph to criminal or violent activities. Exceptionally, the following phrases do closely link the race and the crime:

- ✓ *La bagarre, c'était un Noir contre un latino, dit-il. C'est des vendeurs de drogue...* (November 6th, 2004);
- ✓ *Il y a deux semaines, trois jeunes d'origine haïtienne ont poignardé une sexagénaire...* (January 17th, 2005);
- ✓ *Wooley, 33 ans, seul Noir de l'organisation (qui avait de surcroît accède au rang de Rocker), a plaidé couple à des accusations de complot pour meurtre, de trafic de stupéfiants et de gangstérisme.* (June 28th, 2005).

We also notice that certain articles incorporate citizens' comments about the Black community. As a result, this form of racialization does not seem to be directly created by the journalist. In fact, we detect two articles, written by different journalists, which state xenophobic remarks:

"Je ne suis pas raciste, mais il y a trop de Noirs à Saint-Pierre." À l'aréna, au dépanneur, dans les rues, plusieurs résidents de Saint-Pierre ont prononcé la même phrase xénophobe lorsque La Presse a voulu connaître leurs réactions au vol d'une violence extrême survenu il y a un peu plus d'une semaine dans ce quartier pauvre de l'arrondissement de Lachine... Quand ce n'était pas le mot "nègres" qui remplaçait le mot "Noirs". (February 21st, 2005)

La tension a grimpé d'un cran quand l'un des avocats des accusés, Me Gilbert Frigon, a soutenu que Sébastien Lacasse ne s'était pas aidé en traitant son client et ses amis de "maudits nègres". Après avoir entendu cette affirmation, la mère de la victime a quitté la salle en pleurs. (June 28th, 2005)

What were the intentions of the writers? Did they wish to remind the readers that racism is still present in our modern society? Were the journalists declaring their own xenophobia? In fact, as Van Dijk (1988a) believed, news discourses are produced with the individuals and organizations' preferences and requirements. These two reports may consequently contain concealed assumptions and judgments. Nevertheless, the intentions of the journalists are not easily identified.

In conclusion to this section, only seven articles refer to the Black actor's official or supposed criminal antecedents and/or participation in illegal activities. However, thirty-one articles of the entire corpus directly allege Black individuals as perpetrators or negative actors. Nineteen of these thirty-one reports blame specific individuals and eleven of them are named. But, in twelve of the thirty-one reports, an entire group of Black individuals (for example Haitians) is pointed as violent assailants and/or criminals: *"Leurs membres se recrutent essentiellement chez les Haïtiens ou les Jamaïcains".* (August 11th, 2004-2); *"Ils proviennent en majorité de la*

communauté haïtienne”. (October 29th, 2004); “*Même si les gangs de rue regroupent presque essentiellement des gens issus de la communauté noire...*”. (May 2nd, 2005).

Before discussing the major themes of this corpus, we will briefly summarize this section. First, as seen above, the Haitian nationality is mentioned in more than one third of the corpus (seventeen reports) and more than half of the corpus indicates the skin color. Therefore, since all of the reports are about crime, a specific community can be pointed as criminals (Haitians or the Black community). Only ten articles racialize the Black actors in the fundamental features of an article such as the titles, leads or concluding remarks and crime is rarely associated with the Black actor, in the same sentence. By these findings, we can notice the newspaper's efforts in suppressing negative attributes to the Black actors. Thus, in 2004-2005, was *La Presse* adopting certain strategies in order to exercise the multi-racial phase of coverage (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995 and 2003)? In fact, in 2004-2005, it appears that the newspaper strongly attempted to eliminate race issues and social panic or fear based on race.

6. Subjects and themes

Before we enter the major themes determined in this specific period, we will detail the subjects that *La Presse* has chosen for each of their articles. In fact, except for sixteen short articles, all of the forty-one reports indicate their principal subjects. These topics selected by *La Presse* are written at the end of each article. Due to the fact that they are numerous, we have regrouped them in four major groups:

- ❖ Violence (*arrestations, opérations et brutalité: 4; crime organisé: 6; meurtres et homicides involontaires: 3; agressions, voies de fait et violence: 1*);
- ❖ Administration and justice (*procès: 3; cours et administration de la justice: 4; lois et règlements: 1; policiers et services de police: 1*);
- ❖ Youth and society (*adolescents et jeunes adultes: 7; problèmes sociaux: 2; bébés et enfants: 1*);
- ❖ Others (*transports en commun: 1; relations de travail: (1); services de divertissements et de loisirs: 1; architecture et urbanisme: 1; sports et loisirs: 2; météo: 1; musique: 1; sexualité et moeurs: 1*).

We believe that all of the subjects well represent the actual content of each report. For example, the articles having the topics trial, court, administration of justice or murders and involuntary homicides do elaborate a murder case or trial: “18 ans de prison pour l'ex-vedette du football Tommy Kane”: November 6th, 2004; “Une juge acquitte un homme en raison d'un profilage racial”: February 3rd, 2005; “Mineur au moment des faits, un homme risque la prison à vie”: June 7th, 2005; “Une histoire montréalaise”: June 27th, 2005, etc. Moreover, all articles relating to adolescents and young adults either present a teen's experience or the activities of young gang members: “Gangs de rue: Briser l'omerta”: August 15th, 2004; “Ces temps-ci, ça brasse! Les Crips et les Bloods rodent autour des stations”: March 3rd, 2005; “J'ai placé mes enfants”: June 5th, 2005. The subjects arrests, operations, brutality, aggressions, assaults and violence are in fact associated to different violent events: “Lendemain des fusillades dans trois quartiers de Montréal”: August 7th, 2004; “Le centre-ville devenu champ de bataille”: August 11th, 2004; “Nouvelle agression de sexagénaire dans le métro. Les craintes des personnes âgées ravivées”: January 27th, 2005, etc.

It is interesting to notice that the six articles, for example, “Guerre de gangs de rue à Émard”: October 29th, 2004 and “La police confirme la lutte des gangs de rue”: August 10th, 2004-1, which relate to street gangs have organized crime as a primary subject. Moreover, as demonstrated above, various terms relating to violence are indicated in the reports of street gangs and, attached to them, are the subjects *adolescents et jeunes adultes*. By this, the newspaper connects street gangs, violence and young adults. Also, the main subjects of the editorial dated August 11th, 2004-2 (“Montréal n'est pas le Far West”) are *problèmes sociaux*. Street gangs composed of young adolescents are therefore considered as a social problem.

We also found two texts about the Carifesta that (“Défilé de la Carifesta. Des lendemains qui déchantent”: July 4th, 2005, and “Montréal veut déplacer la Carifesta dans l'île Notre-Dame”: July 6th, 2005) indicate *policiers et services de police* as well as *agressions, voies de fait et violence* as subjects. Readers can therefore rapidly refer to the Caribbean festivities as a violent nuisance which require police intervention.

As seen above, twenty-five articles indicate the specific subjects chosen by the newspapers. In fact, violence is the most common category (fourteen of these twenty-five articles). Moreover, the subject *adolescents et jeunes adultes* is indicated in seven of the twenty-five reports. Some

articles have more than one subject. Certain subjects are not related to our studied article but rather to another story printed on the same page (for example: *météo*).

Next, we will elaborate on our two chosen themes, street gangs and public's fear of the Black community that we have retained for this period.

6.1. Street gangs

In this section, we will illustrate that the reports concerning street gangs form two different perspectives. First, the newspaper dramatically informs and alerts the public of street gangs. But, by doing so, *La Presse* generates a public awareness. Second, in various articles, *La Presse* attempts to ease the public's fear.

Street gangs are discussed in more than one third of the corpus (fifteen of the original focus). Nine of these fifteen reports are general news; three are cover stories; one is an editorial; one is printed in the "*Plus*" Sunday booklet and; one is a *société et tendances*. Moreover, as discussed above, the newspaper identifies street gangs as being a social problem. Seven articles are printed in August 2004. In fact, as indicated in many articles, members are mostly young adolescents (usually in high school). Therefore, the increase of coverage can be due to the summer school break. In fact, Michel Sarrazin, Director of the Montreal Municipal Police at the time, declared that:

Les gangs de rue commettent ce genre de crimes par vagues. On assiste présentement à l'une de ces vagues, explique Michel Sarrazin, directeur du SPVM. Il assure qu'il n'y a pas de recrudescence du phénomène. Les gangs sont seulement plus actifs l'été. Leurs activités de vente de drogue et de prostitution s'intensifient avec l'arrivée du beau temps. (August 10th, 2004-1).

Mr. Sarrazin's comment therefore challenges previous allegations that attempted to demonstrate gangs as an important social problem. We can notice that Mr. Sarrazin properly weighs the subject and is able to posit his opinions.

Six reports name various districts of Montreal in which street gangs operate. In fact, particular street gangs are attributed to various areas. For example, members of *Crack Down Posse* are principally linked to Saint-Michel and individuals part of *Bo-Gars* are associated with Montreal-North. Hence, these districts are perceived as dangerous and unsafe. As a result and as

demonstrated in the following accounts, gangs are presented as causing the deterioration of the districts.

...les suspects des trois fusillades étaient tous de race noire...La fusillade dans Saint-Henri a particulièrement frappé l'imagination quand une femme dans la trentaine qui faisait des emplettes chez Jean-Coutu, rue Notre-Dame, a été victime d'une balle perdue. (August 7th, 2004);

En saisissant de l'argent, de la drogue et des armes, et en arrêtant 22 individus liés à des gangs de rue, la police espère avoir ramené un peu de tranquillité dans l'arrondissement de Montréal-Nord et ses environs...Selon les policiers, il s'agit d'une bande de trafiquants d'origine haïtienne... (April 7th, 2005).

Furthermore, the journalists reveal that certain subways (Henri Bourassa, for example) are hang-abouts for street gang members as well as the primary locations for their activities: *"Ils font du recrutement aux stations de métro. Il y a de plus en plus de taxage...majoritairement de jeunes de la communauté jamaïcaine..."* (October 29th, 2004); *"... les jeunes rencontrés hier dans quelques stations de métro reconnaissent la présence de gangs dans le réseau souterrain...Selon lui, les gangs se donnent surtout rendez-vous dans le métro...le jeune Noir croit que plusieurs jeunes sont souvent faussement reliés aux gangs de rue".* (March 3rd, 2005) This article also continues by stating that the members are seen as a threat to the security of the subways.

À la station Villa-Maria, quelques employés de la Société de transport de Montréal (STM) affirment que l'endroit est infesté de jeunes, dont plusieurs membres de gangs de rue, dès la sortie des classes". (March 3rd, 2005)

In fact, in this previous segment, youths are unfavourably described and they are presented as an obvious burden to society (*...l'endroit est infesté de jeunes...*).

The authors refer to street gangs as a trend or a phenomenon: *"Le phénomène des gangs n'est pas aussi grave qu'on le dit dans Montréal-Nord...les gangs de rue regroupent presque essentiellement des gens issus de la communauté noire..."* (May 2nd, 2005); *"Michel Sarrazin explique que le phénomène touche désormais toutes les grandes villes américaines et canadiennes".* (August 10th, 2004-2). This occurrence evolves and is perceived as inevitable: *"Si en 1983, 80% des membres de gangs de rue étaient mineurs, aujourd'hui c'est 80% de membres qui sont majeurs".* (August 10th, 2004-1); *"Tous les jeunes sont un jour mis en contact direct ou indirect avec un gang de rue..."* (August 11th, 2004-3). Actually, *"Le phénomène n'est pas nouveau, mais difficile à contrôler, selon la police"* (August 10th, 2004-1).

Furthermore, the member's actions are presented as being dangerous, violent and impulsive: *"Une guerre violente et imprévisible vient d'être déclenchée dans le centre-ville de Montréal"* (August 11th, 2004-1); *"C'est sans compter des délits commis pour se procurer de la drogue: cambriolages, vols à l'esbroufe et autres crimes violents"*; *"Chaque crime n'est pas commis par des gangs de rue, mais ceux qui le sont très violents et spectaculaires"*. (May 2nd, 2005).

We notice that *La Presse* differently presents members of street gangs. In fact, street gang members are constructed in such a way that they are different than other individuals or citizens: *"Les gangs de rue sont plus dangereux pour le citoyen ordinaire parce que leurs membres sont prêts à tuer n'importe qui."* (August 10th, 2004-2). In this statement, street gang members lose their civilian status. They are in fact categorized in a distinct group apart from so-called ordinary citizens. By doing so, the normal and abnormal is defined. Thus, gang members are considered as abnormal. Also, in the following phrase, members of street gangs are compared with organized crime: *"Les motards sont des criminels organisés, structurés et hiérarchisés alors que les gangs de rue sont composés de voyous, de grands ados pauvres, désœuvrés violents et en mal de sensations fortes"* (August 11th, 2004-2). Street gang members are once more regarded differently than bikers and they are discredited or dishonoured. Therefore, in these two sentences, Black members are "othered", declared inconsequential and alienated.

The majority of the reports (eleven of the fifteen articles) presents general information (statistics, relevant facts, etc.) concerning the street gang trend. They do not discuss one specific event but they rather present a general subject such as street gangs. For example:

Dans le cas des Bo-Gars et des CDP, ce sont des cellules d'individus en moyenne âgés de 15 à 25 ans qui se battent pour le secteur des bars de la rue Sainte-Catherine près du boulevard Saint-Laurent jusqu'à Peel....les membres des CDP...proviennent en majorité de la communauté haïtienne... (August 11th, 2004-1);

Only four following articles detail a specific violent event relating to street gangs. For example:

Quelques secondes ou quelques minutes plus tard...les jeunes Noirs ont pris leurs jambes à leur cou...Les enquêteurs qui s'occupent du dossier ont émis l'hypothèse qu'il a été victime d'un rituel d'initiation d'un gang de rue. Le fait que les jeunes se soient rassemblés en un nombre aussi important, et qu'ils aient pris la fuite dès le premier coup de couteau, semble indiquer qu'ils n'étaient pas là pour se battre, mais pour trouver une victime. (November 5th, 2004);

By collecting, defining, describing and summarizing information about street gangs, *La Presse* assumes that they are an important aspect of society. Also, by doing so, the newspaper answers to its surveillance function (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995 and 2003; Perse, 2001; McQuail, 1983). And, *La Presse* also responds to its correlation or explanation function. It, in fact, clarifies, explains, interprets, examines and comments on the selected information (Perse, 2001; McQuail, 1983). It therefore aids consumers to understand, comprehend and determine what is happening and where each group (Blacks, for example) or culture fits in society (Wilson, Gutiérrez and Chao, 2003; McQuail, 1983). In our case, the paper presents events relating to street gangs and determines Black youths as being violent individuals, living in specific districts such as Montreal-North and St-Michel, known as Black ghettos.

Street gangs are generally defined as omnipresent, dangerous, different, and unavoidable. The topic has been abundantly covered by the newspaper and the articles are generally of average length. They are quite explanatory and include much additional data. In fact, similarly to this studied period (2004-2005), Williams (1997) explains that in the 1970s, young and violent delinquent gangs expanded, principally in the Montreal North region where a predominance of young Haitians was established. The Black population of the West Island and the South Shore had as well grown within the past ten years. In 2004-2005, numerous racial tensions between adolescents occurred and each culture was fighting in the interests of his race. Consequently, citizens feared these young fellows. Thus, by thoroughly covering this topic, street gangs are perceived as a major social problem. But, as explained above, the views of certain professionals such as the chief of the Montreal police department disagree with the fact that street gangs are expanding. We will now demonstrate various reactions and opinions relating to street gangs. .

6.1.1. *Views relating to street gangs*

The majority of the fifteen articles relating to street gangs discuss the reactions and opinions of victims, citizens and/or intervention workers.

First, citizens believe that street gangs have invaded society. But, most individuals experience incidents through others, with the help of media. Therefore as stated in Lachapelle and Touzin's report (August 10th, 2004-2):

On sait que les jeunes issus des communautés culturelles récemment installées et en très grande difficulté financière sont des jeunes plus vulnérables...Mais les gangs de rue d'aujourd'hui sont de plus en plus multiethniques...les jeunes, en se regroupant ainsi, cherchent d'abord une façon de combler leurs besoins fondamentaux. Qu'on soit haïtien ou québécois, les besoins fondamentaux demeurent les mêmes. Mais on s'attend jamais à quelque chose comme ça, ça crée un sentiment de panique, d'insécurité dans la population, un sentiment qui est normal...

As a result of this general panic and fear regarding gang members, the following statements demonstrate that people generalize and anticipate their behaviours:

Moi, je ne suis pas raciste, mais partout on voit des Noirs qui se mettent debout sur les voitures stationnées dans la rue, raconte une sexagénaire. On dirait qu'ils attendent juste que l'on réagisse pour mieux pouvoir nous traiter de racistes. (August 7th, 2004)

...les jeunes Noirs ont pris leurs jambes à leur cou...Avec ces gars-là, tu ne peux pas discuter pour essayer de régler les choses. Tes repères habituels ne comptent plus. Il n'y a rien d'autre à faire que de partir à courir sans se retourner. (November 5th, 2004)

Second, members of the Black community, professionals or not, express their views. They mostly reveal the complexity of the situation. In fact, in two articles (August 15th, 2004 and January 11th, 2005), Pierreson Vaval, supervisor of the RDP basketball team, informs the press that:

Les quelque 70 000 Haïtiens d'origine ou d'adoption qui vivent à Montréal sont aujourd'hui davantage sensibilisés à la violence et la délinquance dans leur communauté. Reste désormais à apprendre à la combattre "...les récents événements liés aux gangs de rue nous rappellent qu'il y a quelqu'un, quelque part, qui n'a pas fait son travail."

And, "L'agression gratuite contre une sexagénaire par au moins trois jeunes Noirs survenue la semaine dernière... Un drame comme celui-là va se répéter tant que les minorités dont sont issus nos jeunes seront aux prises avec des problèmes socioéconomiques et d'intégration..." Most Black individuals quoted defend Blacks or state that the Black community are victims of society.

Furthermore, a report dated May 2nd, 2004 and an editorial printed on August 11th, 2004-2, explicitly express the media's role in amplifying the presence of street gangs:

Rarement point de presse a été aussi couru à l'hôtel de ville de Montréal. Les journalistes se marchaient sur les pieds dans le petit salon où le maire, Gérald Tremblay, et le chef de police, Michel Sarrazin, essayaient de calmer le jeu et de passer leur message : Montréal n'est pas le Far West.

Les médias se sont énervés avec cette histoire de gangs de rue qui se tirent dessus en plein centre-ville. (August 11th, 2004-2).

Certes, personne ne nie l'existence de groupes criminels dans ce quartier de 85 000 habitants. "Les gangs de rue existent, mais les médias jouent un rôle amplificateur, croit P-Lee, un jeune homme de 22 ans qui a grandi à Montréal-Nord... Un autre qui aimerait corriger un peu l'étiquette de violence qui colle au quartier est le commandant du poste de police de quartier, Éric Godin. Aux premières loges dans la lutte contre les gangs de rue, le commandant estime à une centaine le nombre de personnes faisant partie d'un tel groupe... "Chaque crime n'est pas commis par des gangs de rue, mais ceux qui le sont très violents et spectaculaires..." "Même si les gangs de rue regroupent presque essentiellement des gens issus de la communauté noire, il faut éviter les associations", nuance M. Godin. (May 2nd, 2005).

The articles therefore present different types of reactions and opinions. They either reveal fears based on race, disclose possible factors augmenting the affiliation of Blacks to street gangs (for example: poor socioeconomic living conditions) or demonstrate how media amplifies the attribution of violence to street gangs. By reporting these opinions and reactions, *La Presse* acknowledges that the presence of street gangs is possibly amplified by media. Therefore, certain views serve to reduce the social panic that the newspaper has surely created. In the next section, we will discuss the efforts and strategies in defying street gangs, published by our studied newspaper.

6.1.2. *Efforts and strategies used in combating street gangs*

The efforts and strategies adopted by the authorities (the police departments, for example) are underlined in almost half of the articles (seven of the fifteen reports). Society is therefore informed that the proper bodies are attempting to prevent and lessen the impacts of street gangs. By covering these tactics, the public's fear of street gangs is eased. In fact, an editorial dated August 11th, 2004-2 states that "*Montréal n'a pas perdu le contrôle, affirme le police qui a formé une unité spéciale responsable de ce dossier classé top priorité.*" Another report mentions that: "*Cette opération est l'aboutissement de la première grande enquête menée par le Groupe sans frontière (GSF), créé en 2003 pour faire la lutte contre les gangs de rue...*" (April 7th, 2005). As stated in Lachapelle's (August 15th, 2004), Champagne's (October 29th, 2004) and Touzins's (January 5th, 2005) reports, even resources in the community such as schools have attempted to control street gangs on their own premises.

As seen above, many reports allege young Black adolescents as being victims of their socioeconomic status. Thus, as recommended by a police officer in an article dated February 21st,

2005, intercultural relations have to be improved as well and other reports encourage proper support and help in the community. In fact, the prevention of gangs is generally indicated as essential in diminishing street crime. Although, “*À l’heure actuelle, l’Équipe RDP a de la difficulté à avoir l’argent nécessaire pour s’attaquer au fléau à Rivière-des-Prairies, alors que son expertise est sollicitée par les policiers et les écoles...*” (January 11th, 2005). Hence, the absence of monetary resources is often mentioned as an important impasse to the prevention of street gangs.

6.1.3. *Haitians as street gang members*

More than half of the articles (eight of the fifteen reports) link street gangs members with the Haitian community. Here are some examples:

- *Les membres des Bo-Gars et des CDP...proviennent en majorité de la communauté haïtienne.* (August 11th, 2004-1);
- *...les gangs de rue...recrutent essentiellement chez les Haïtiens et les Jamaïcains.* (August 11th, 2004-2);
- *...la plupart de ces gangs regroupent des jeunes d’origine haïtienne.* (August 15th, 2004)
- *...Crack Down Posse (CDP)...proviennent en majorité de la communauté haïtienne.* (October 29th, 2004).

As detailed above, street gangs are presented as violent and impulsive. The newspaper has shown that gang members are principally Haitians and that they are violent. *La Presse* therefore emphasizes the topic of violent street crimes while blaming the Haitian community. Haitians are over-representing one particular kind of activity (street gangs). And so, the behaviours of this whole group are generalized. As stated by Hall (1997), all members of the same group will hold the same set of characteristics; individuals are depersonalized and lose their own individuality through stereotypes.

But, it seems that professionals believe that the association of Haitians with gangs has to be eliminated. In fact, according to the article printed on May 2nd, 2005, Eric Godin, commandant of the Montreal North police station, believes the following:

Un autre qui aimerait corriger un peu l'étiquette de violence qui colle au quartier est le commandant du poste de police de quartier, Éric Godin. Aux premières loges dans la lutte contre les gangs de rue, le commandant estime à une centaine le nombre de personnes faisant partie d'un tel groupe. "Du noyau dur aux sympathisants, 150 c'est beau!" ... "Même si les gangs de rue regroupent presque essentiellement des gens issus de la communauté noire, il faut éviter les associations," nuance M. Godin. (May 2nd, 2005).

Thus, this statement tends to eliminate generalizations attributed to street gangs and Haitians but simultaneously indicates that their members essentially issue from this community. Hence, individuals representing the police department tend to contrast their opinions concerning the phenomenon of gangs. They do not adopt one specific view but they rather remain open to various explanations and interpretations. We must not forget that in 2004-2005, financial aid was solicited and thus, professionals needed to acquire better knowledge of the subject and remain objective in their decisions and views.

Young Black males as well express being automatically linked to street gangs:

- *"...même si je répète jusqu'à ma mort que je n'ai rien à voir dans les gangs de rue, on ne me croira pas. Pourquoi? Parce que je suis noir." (August 11th, 2004-3);*
- *"L'homme de 32 ans a alors dû apaiser la colère de ces jeunes qu'il côtoie quotidiennement, don't une majorité de la communauté haïtienne. Les adolescents lui ont également exprimé leur crainte de voir la population québécoise associer cet acte de violence à l'ensemble de leur communauté." (January 11th, 2005);*
- *"...le jeune Noir croit que plusieurs jeunes sont souvent faussement reliés aux gangs de rue..." (March 3rd, 2005).*

These comments reveal that Blacks experience racial profiling in regard to street gangs.

The corpus demonstrates that acts of violence relating to street gangs and committed by the Black community are thoroughly covered and so, as seen in the threatening-issue phase (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995 and 2003), this population is seen as a threat to social order. Moreover, street gangs are seen as negatively affecting a society in various ways. By insisting on the violent acts, negative images are the product of the Black actors. And, as the stereotypical phase of coverage (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995. 2003) indicates, the Black community is presented as overwhelmingly negative and the images contain unfavourable stereotypes (as people causing

or having problems or that street gang members are mostly Haitians). However, we consider that twenty-two articles about street gangs do not mention the race. Are the seven reports sufficient in order to influence the public's views on street crime and Haitians?

As Miller (1998) proposes, Black crime serves to stereotype tragedies such as street crime. In fact, when media do focus on street crime, people of color are presented as criminals by nature and so, White street thugs become invisible (Miller, 1998). Furthermore, as Henry and Tator (2000) affirm, racial indicators are abundantly mentioned in the articles in order to assert street gangs as being a race problem and part of a culture. Thus, in 2004-2005, crime events are raising race issues and social panic or fear based on race.

6.2. Sources of fear relating to the Black community

The public's fear relating to the Black community is discussed in eleven articles. The apprehensions either concern non-Blacks or the Black community itself. First, Blacks fear street gang members but also dread being associated and stigmatized with crime and street gangs. For example, an innocent Black victim assaulted by street gangs members mentions being afraid of divulging information: "*Si je connaissais ces gars-là, je n'aurais pas peur de parler*". Moreover, in her report dated August 15th, 2004, Lachapelle illustrates the Haitian community's fear towards the young generation: "*Démunie et apeurée, la communauté haïtienne de Montréal, la plus grosse minorité visible de la ville, a longtemps gardé le silence devant le phénomène des gangs de rue qui sévit parmi ses jeunes*".

Second, non-Blacks are frightened of Blacks but more particularly of becoming their victims. For example, we note that female teenagers are victims of intimidation. The article dated March 3rd, 2005 relates these apprehensions:

Même si les gangs de rue laissent la plupart des gens tranquilles, les jeunes, en particulier les filles, se disent victimes d'intimidation. C'est ce qu'affirment trois adolescentes qui empruntent souvent le métro....Même ensemble, elles n'oseraient jamais s'aventurer dans le métro à la tombée de la nuit.

Following recent violent events committed by street gang members, three articles (August 7th, 2004, February 7th, 2005 and April 7th, 2005) discuss the fear of certain residents. For example, in Montreal-North and Rivière-des-Prairies: "*...il s'agit d'une bande de trafiquants d'origine haïtienne qui sévissaient avec la bénédiction des principaux gangs de rue du nord de la*

ville...C'en était rendu que les passants préféraient changer de trottoir quand ils arrivaient à leur hauteur..." (April 7th, 2005). Additionally, due to violent crimes committed by Black individuals in Ville St-Pierre, a report dated February 21st, 2004 mentions that the habitants' insecurity has augmented: "...la perception de sécurité diminue...les Pierrois se disent très préoccupés par les gangs de rue...c'est trop dangereux...Cette mère de famille a peur pour son adolescent...Ça ne prend pas beaucoup de Noirs qui circulent dans les rues pour que les gens disent se sentir envahis..." More generally, Chantal Frédette, specialist in street gangs, states (August 10th, 2004-2) that: "...ça crée un sentiment de panique, d'insécurité dans la population, un sentiment qui est normal."

Lastly, two articles present fears relating towards specific events. First, Lacasse's mother (teenager murdered by Black individuals, during a house party, in Laval) expresses her personal insecurities and fears concerning her son's murder. She states:

Lorsque Sébastien a été tué, j'aurais voulu les attacher. J'avais peur qu'ils s'en prennent à eux.. Cette crainte est encore en moi, mais je ne peux pas les étouffer parce que maman a peur. Il faut qu'ils vivent leur vie, ils sont dans la fleur de l'âge. Plus le temps avance, plus je ressens son départ. J'ai souvent des cauchemars...Line Lacasse, qui a craqué lorsqu'elle s'est mise à parler de ses deux autres enfants, ce qui a nécessité un ajournement...Ils ont poursuivi Sébastien Lacasse parce qu'il s'en était pris à quelques-uns d'entre eux qui sont de race noire. (June 8th, 2004).

Secondly, following a series of assaults of senior citizens, a seventy-eight year old woman communicated her fear in the following way:

Mme Murphy a commencé à craindre pour sa sécurité il y a trois semaines, quand une femme handicapée de 64 ans a été poignardée par trois adolescents dans un stationnement en se rendant à sa voiture, à Montréal-Nord...Selon la victime, il s'agit de quatre Noirs... (January 27th, 2005)

In the same article, Daniela Sartor (supervisor at *Jeunesse au Soleil*, crime prevention section) declares that: "*Les gens sont très craintifs, il ne veulent pas sortir.*"

With this type of coverage, we can hardly confirm that *La Presse* is attempting to enter the multiracial coverage phase proposed by Wilson and Gutiérrez's (1985, 1995 and 2003). Rather, in 2004-2005, the reports create social panic or fear based on race. As Pallone & Hennessy (2000) believe:

...a phenomenology of fear anchored in stereotypes about Black-initiated violence likely inclines both Blacks and non-Blacks to construe any Black as a likely predator; the same stereotypes may incline some Blacks toward a phenomenology of menace. (p. 4).

Therefore, as seen in the threatening-issue phase, people of color are still abundantly perceived as a threat to the well being of society.

7. Synopsis

We examined forty-one reports, written by eighteen different authors. Two types of articles are printed. First, the journalists either describe the facts in their own perspective (twenty-five reports) or thoroughly research the topic (sixteen reports).

Moreover, during this period, we discern various tendencies. First, Blacks are viewed as negative actors and/or criminals in forty reports. Nineteen articles specifically blame the entire Black community, more particularly the Haitians (seventeen of the forty-one reports). We must not neglect that only one story is written about a Black victim. Furthermore, street crime is highly covered in this period and gang members are perceived as dangerous, violent and impulsive. But, professionals vary their opinions and remain open to different interpretations.

Following the fifteen reports that alert and inform society of the presence of street gangs, a general public awareness is created. Moreover, the public's fear is discussed in eleven reports. As Graber (1980) demonstrates, crimes of violence (especially street crime) receive more attention than other types of crimes thus, creating an exaggerated fear of crime and crime rates. Hence, by producing this fear, particularly directed towards the Black community, *La Presse*, as seen in the threatening-issue phase, covers Blacks as a threat to social order, blames them for social problems (such as street gangs) and presents them as dangerous. We must, however, consider that about twenty-two reports do not mention the race of the gang members.

In response to the public's fear, certain articles demonstrate the professionals' efforts in defeating the phenomenon of street gangs. The newspaper tends to advise, inform and warn the public of the danger of street gangs' but simultaneously reassures the public by demonstrating that the problem is exaggerated.

We note as well that *La Presse* might be leaning towards a stereotypical phase of coverage. In fact, certain reports also present thematic stories involving Blacks (poverty, for example). Therefore, the newspaper indicates that the Black community, as well, experiences problems. The districts, known as Black ghettos (Montreal North, St-Michel, etc.) are amply mentioned. Consequently, as indicated in this phase, the newspaper demonstrates that Blacks are still in “their place” (poor and living in the ghettos).

The Black actors are rarely racialized in the titles, leads and concluding remarks; crime is hardly associated to the Black community in the same sentence and; the criminal antecedents of the Black actors are not often mentioned. So, during 2004-2005, *La Presse*, is not systematically connecting crime to a race problem. The newspaper is therefore also implementing the multiracial phase of coverage.

In conclusion, we may not conclude that between July 31st, 2004 and July 31st, 2005, *La Presse* is practicing one specific phase of coverage. In fact, according to the various facets detailed above, different codes of meanings are discerned. The Black community is constantly maintained in stereotypes but certain efforts, in favour of the Black community, are noted.

Comparisons of the results of both periods

In the previous section, we described the ways (frames and discourse) *La Presse* portrays the Black community in crime stories in two distinct periods. Possible codes of meanings, various patterns and possible realities have also been suggested. We will now compare both periods and define the degree of uniformity, the similarities and differences, the common themes and unique cases.

1. General remarks

There are half as more articles in the first period (eighty-four in 1990 and forty-one in 2004-2005). We believe that this difference in the volume of articles is relatively significant. We may consider that approximately fifteen years separated them. Hence, the events and history of both periods differ. In fact, as Hall (1997) believes, media texts depend on the historical and cultural context they are created in. First, as mentioned in the methodology, the 90s were marked with important Black events including the liberation of Nelson Mandela on February 11th, 1990 and the riots following the presidential elections naming Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti. Two stories relating to the deaths of Black men (Marcellus François, Leslie Presley, Anthony Griffin) during police interventions were heavily publicised in the 90s. Moreover, numerous gangster movies featuring Black youth were produced during the first part of the 1990's such as *Boys in the Hood* (1991), *Juice* (1992), *Menace to Society* (1993) and many more. Therefore, during that time and in the stereotypical selection phase of Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003), we believe that society was attempting to integrate the Black community, but was concurrently leaving them in their places: in the ghetto and as criminals. Thus, Blacks were still seen as not equal to Whites (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995 and 2003). In fact, as indicated by Williams (1997) in the 1990s, young Black adults rebelled against injustices in that they felt excluded and banned from the dominant culture. Blacks were then perceived as resisting White laws and an apprehension towards the entire Black community (also displayed as the enemy) was created. We should therefore not be astonished that the year 1990 has twice as much reports printed on Blacks and crime.

Almost all reports of the studied corpus are general news (119 of the 125 articles), written similarly and printed in the first section (A) of the newspaper. In both periods, the length of the articles are similar, either short or average, but they are rarely long. The few cover stories (nine of

the one-hundred and twenty-five articles) are relatively longer than the ordinary articles. The longer reports written in 1990 and more than half of the reports printed in 2004-2005 (notwithstanding the type of article) include additional information (statistics, quotes, résumé of past events, etc.). This reality raises two issues. By furnishing all possible information to their readers, the journalists of the second period are either being more objective and credible or they have more knowledge of and sources relating to the subject written about. We discern that in 2004-2005, Blacks are covered as being overwhelmed with difficulties (poverty, for example) and also as being the cause of problems. Even so, the articles still seem to link Blacks with problems. In the reports, they are either blamed for various social problems (crime, drugs, etc.) or they are overwhelmed by these difficulties. In fact, in the stories, Blacks are presented as individuals that experience poverty and social injustices. Hence, according to the newspaper, Blacks would therefore turn to crime.

Blacks are quoted in twenty-three of the one-hundred and twenty-five reports and their quotes mostly criticize the Quebec system and explain the behaviours of Black actors. By incorporating these quotes in the articles, Blacks are given the opportunity of expressing their views.

Black victims are rarely covered (twenty-seven of the one hundred and twenty-five articles, including ten hypothetical victims), especially in 2004-2005 (one article) and the articles are generally short. In fact, in almost the entire corpus (one-hundred and twenty-five reports), Blacks are negatively covered as either suspects or wrongdoers in one-hundred and three reports. But, we consider that forty-eight reports cover Blacks simultaneously as victims and suspects (hybrid cases and Black-on-Black crimes). Readers may therefore believe that Blacks can be victims as well. In these hybrid cases, we must wonder whether the readers will preserve the image of the Black individual as a victim, as a suspect or as both. Moreover, in seventeen reports (twelve reports were found in 2004-2005) an entire Black community is blamed rather than one specific person. For example, in stories relating to street gangs, the suspects are not named but the articles rather state that the individuals are part of the Haitian community. Thus, the entire Haitian population is held responsible rather than the suspects.

Black victims are surely underrepresented while Black perpetrators are over-reported. Blacks are therefore more covered when they are considered as a threat to the well being of society instead of innocent victims. Hence, the negative attributes of people of color are emphasized.

Additionally, violence is the principal subject of most reports (eighty-three of one-hundred and twenty-five) and a variety of fifty-one photographs accompany them (main actors, crime locations, third parties, etc.). For example, in 1990, eighty-one reports associate Blacks with violence and in the second period, at least fifteen reports concerning street gangs detail the brutality utilized by the members.

We must, nevertheless, consider the main differences between the two periods. For example, in 1990, fifty-seven articles link crime and Blacks in the same sentence and thirty-five stories report the Black actors' past involvement in crime. But, in 2004-2005, only five articles associate crime and Blacks in the same sentence. This surely eliminates racial allegations associating crime with Blacks. As a result, the newspaper attempts to integrate Blacks as an equal part of society and practices, in some small degree, the multi racial phase of coverage (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995 and 2003).

In both periods, several neighbourhoods are noted and linked to the Black community. We will discover the significance of presenting these districts in the reports.

2. Districts associated with the Black community

In both periods, known Black districts of Montreal (Côte-des-Neiges, Montreal-North, etc.) are frequently mentioned as crime scenes. These sectors are presented as being dangerous and unsafe. Hence, involuntary segregation of Blacks described by Cashmore and Troyna (1990) is amplified and Blacks are identified and isolated in these neighbourhoods. Due to the fact that Blacks are covered as violent and dangerous individuals, it is considered safer for society to separate the Black community (Them) from the rest of the city (Us). As a result, the newspaper accommodates and acknowledges the presence of Blacks but they are othered and segregated in specific districts. Thus, this surely indicates the presence of the stereotypical phase of coverage (Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985, 1995 and 2003).

Certain reports of both periods cover conflicts encountered in various areas of Montreal. The police department and the Black community are implicated in some of these stories. In the following section, we will present the tensions the parties experienced.

3. Apprehensions between the Black community and the police

In both periods we indicated relational difficulties between Blacks and the police. In fact, the police are a major theme of the first period. Three major events implicating police officers and Blacks are covered in 1990: the Griffin, Presley and Mercier cases. As for 2004-2005, the police occupied different roles. Authorities were by times presented as essential actors for society (protectors, crime stoppers, etc.). But, in various stories, the police were considered as a threat to the Black community. In fact, during both periods, police officers were either blamed for the shootings of Black individuals (1990), for harassing Blacks (1990) or considered as a nuisance to street gangs (2004-2005).

Following these numerous interethnic accounts, the Black community is presented as the cause of these conflicts and is given much attention. Furthermore, as Shah and Thornton's (2004) study reveals, Black actors are often categorized as either villains or heroes. We can notice that Blacks are often perceived as criminals or as trouble makers for the White population. And, police officers are also considered as wrongdoers but principally in the eyes of the Black community. In certain segments, we notice a polarization of various social roles and groups; i.e., Blacks and the "White police".

The Blacks actors are racialized in various ways in both periods. There are many differences in the coverage and few similarities. Thus, we will discuss the different representations that are reproduced.

4. Racialization of the Black actors

As indicated in the first chapter, the inverted pyramid technique includes the most important information at the beginning of the story such as the title or lead (McNulty, 1991; Lotz, 1991). In 1990, more than half of the reports (forty-eight) mention the race of the main actors in the titles, leads and concluding remarks. Therefore, we can conclude that the journalists of 1990 believed that race was an important aspect of the story. But, during the second period, only thirteen reports explicitly racialize the actors in titles, subtitles, leads and concluding remarks. Instead, the race of the actors is eventually stated in the story. Therefore, in the second period, *La Presse* especially seems to believe that race is no longer a significant and essential fact to mention. Furthermore, as Swope supposed in 1958, many consumers only read the beginning and end of

the news reports. Thus, these readers would not be aware of the race of the actors. Nevertheless, seventeen reports hint the implication of minorities in the stories by indicating relevant notions (*profilage racial, racism, etc.*).

In both periods, the Black community is identified in various ways: nationality, country or the color of the skin. We believe that in 1990, no specific Black community is continuously blamed for criminal gestures except for the Jamaicans in the drug trafficking stories. But, in 2004-2005, the Haitian community is named in more than one-third of the articles, associating crime with the members of this nationality.

In 1990, the journalists emphasize the Black actors' residential status (Canadians, Quebecers, etc.). In the second period, only one article does the same. These indicators create two possible codes of meanings. First, by indicating that several Black individuals have their Canadian citizenship, journalists imply that they are part of Canada. But, by mentioning their nationality in the same phrase, they declare that they are "unborn Canadians" or "unCanadians". So, secondly, Blacks are "othered" and crime is linked to the nationality. In 2004-2005, *La Presse* only mentions the race or nationality of the actors without their citizen status.

Clearly, in both periods, many articles (more than twenty five) have been eliminated due the fact that the actors are not racialized. Some of these stories concern cases or subjects that we examined in our study (the Griffin and Mercier case, street gangs, etc.). Consequently, *La Presse* does not automatically note the race of the actors.

No xenophobic statements were noted in the first period. Fifteen years later, two reports included racist allegations. Do these few articles have an impact on an entire corpus of forty-one stories? According to us, the journalists wanted to denounce the existence of racism in modern society or their own individual xenophobia. Either way and even if there are only two direct racist allegations of the sort, we may speculate that racism is still part of our modern society. But, we will never be sure of the actual intentions of the writers.

We have already outlined possible phases of coverage exposed in the reports but, in addition, we will detail each phase of coverage proposed by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003) and relate them to our studied corpus.

5. Phases of coverage

We must eliminate the first phase described by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003). The exclusionary phase begins in the 1700s. People of color were then excluded from media and they were not deemed worthy and important enough in order to be covered. Due to the fact that we found one-hundred and twenty-five articles directly naming Blacks as actors in crime stories, this phase is eliminated.

Since all reports racialize the Black actors and present a crime story, all of the articles found systematically allege that crime can be a race problem. Furthermore, as mentioned above, the majority of these articles abundantly cover violent acts committed by Black individuals and so, Blacks are often negative actors. Hence, fear of crime based on race is easily created. We must remember as well that Blacks have long been blamed for social problems such as crime. This stereotype will consequently stay in one's mind for a long period. We may therefore simply confirm that the entire corpus corresponds to Wilson and Gutiérrez's (1985, 1995 and 2003) threatening-issue phase. In fact, we have demonstrated above that people of color are perceived as a threat to social order and that dominant White parties (the police, for example) have been represented, especially in 1990, as heroes (protectors of society, problem solvers, etc.) in the Whites' eyes. This type of coverage produces racial conflicts and apprehension towards Blacks. Certain reports indeed cover conflicts between the police and Blacks (1990) or White citizens and Blacks (in 2004-2005).

Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003) link the confrontation phase with the violent responses of non Whites to social injustices they encountered. Only one case can be categorized as such: the Remy Mercier case (1990). Blacks have often verbalized their opinions as well as acts of discrimination they have experienced but rarely did the reports cover violent riots or responses. Thus, this phase is hardly present in the corpus.

In both periods, news reports tend to demonstrate that the presence of Blacks is tolerated but that they remain in their designated positions and locations. For example, in 1990, Blacks are perceived as not entirely Canadians but as Jamaican citizens. Furthermore, in the second period, the presence of Blacks seems to be acknowledged but the reports still demonstrate that they remain in their places (Black sectors) and social status (poverty). Hence, Blacks are not only the cause of troubles (crime for example) but they suffer as well from problems and injustices such as

poverty and discrimination. According to Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003), in the stereotypical selection phase of coverage, favourable news stories are also reported (success stories). Unfortunately, with this research we may not corroborate this allegation. But, we can confirm that the corpus does recognize Blacks as part of society but not sharing the same equality as Whites. They are segregated in specific sectors, are the cause of certain problems (crime, street gangs, etc.) and are beset by society's flaws (poverty, lack of employment, etc.).

We note that in both periods, numerous articles concerning crime stories and Black actors are found but they do not mention their race. Even in 1990, *La Presse* was attempting to diminish fear of crime based on race. For example, few titles racialize the actors. However, the first period includes half as more articles, racialize the actors in more headlines, leads and concluding remarks, frequently link the Black actors and crime in the same sentence and repeatedly refer to the Black actors' past criminal involvement. Fifteen years later, race indicators are less present. *La Presse* is commencing to acknowledge the development of a racially diverse society. Consequently, the newspaper seems to promote the multiracial phase of coverage. Although, as seen above and as believed by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003), this phase is unequally applied. In fact, it is not the unique phase of coverage retained in the corpus.

The aim of this chapter was to furnish an overall view of the press' coverage of Blacks in the crime reports which were found in a well-known French newspaper published in Montreal (*La Presse de Montréal*), during the two chosen periods: January 31st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990 and July 31st, 2004 to July 31st, 2005. We confronted the material in various ways. The types of articles, forms of reporting and the ways the Black actors were covered were analysed. We then discussed the major themes outlined in each period 1990: violence and the police; 2004-2005: street gangs and the public's fear of the Black community. We lastly compared the various codes of meanings evoked by both periods. Throughout the whole chapter, we have suggested possible phases of coverage adopted by *La Presse*. We believe that no specific phase of coverage is evenly implemented in both periods. Rather, as detailed above, different phases are unequally represented throughout the entire corpus.

Conclusion

This paper studied crime reports concerning Black actors. The articles were printed in *La Presse de Montreal* during two distinct periods: January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990 and July 31st, 2004 to July 31st, 2005. With these reports, we wished to:

- Clarify the ways *La Presse* writes, translates and shapes the reality of crime concerning the Black community of Montreal during both periods studied;
- Categorise, analyse and interpret the ideas and meanings of the reports relating to the Black community and crime of each period;
- Compare the similarities and differences of the images involving the Black community in crime news of both periods.

We believe that we did attain the preceding objectives. However, we can confirm various difficulties and limits encountered during our analysis. First, as mentioned on several occasions, we strongly believe that the terms chosen for this research (the Black community and crime) are a rationalized categorization that is stereotypic in nature because it automatically associates Blacks with crime. But this criterion was obligatory in realizing our research. Therefore, this study uniquely identified the ways *La Presse* presented the Black community of Montreal in relation to crime. It is not therefore possible to compare whether our results relating to crime and the Black community are similar or dissimilar than the portrayals of other communities. With no such comparisons, we may not actually determine whether the crime reports printed by *La Presse* include stereotypic images of the Black community and crime. In fact, crime images of other communities such as the White population might or might not be similar to the coverage of Blacks. Also, we are aware that this study does not analyse other types of reports involving Blacks (in sports, for example). Therefore, we are not able to confirm whether people of color are negatively portrayed in the entire newspaper and in all types of news. But, these types of studies can surely be of further use for the research community. It would permit the comparison of the coverage of Blacks and Whites, in the press. In doing so, we would be able to confirm whether or not Blacks are actually differently covered than Whites.

We found text analysis quite difficult to complete. Van Dijk (1988) believes that media texts are complex. Therefore, content analysis is lengthy and many facets must be constantly considered. First and as detailed in Van Dijk's (1983) presentational structure (Annexe 2), several parts of the texts must be analysed. This grid was useful for outlining, summarizing and commenting upon

important sections, sentences and words. Once more, this task took time but this effort simplified and classified the information needed for the analyses. We had to organize the material on numerous occasions according to the items studied (districts, headlines, etc.). We could have simplified this task by arranging, in computerized tables, our data.

Second, we did not have the actual pictures and layout of the articles printed between January 1st, 1990 to December 31st, 1990. But the articles of the second period were authentically reproduced in the Eureka database as printed in the newspaper. This divergence limited our comparative analysis of both periods in various ways. For example, it was not possible to precisely observe the location of the articles printed in 1990 on the page. Two periods having the entire page of the article reproduced in the database could have been chosen. This option would have simplified the comparisons of the periods and allowed further discussions.

Lastly, we mentioned in the section *Methodology* that we were extremely interested in the chosen subjects. Hence, we noticed that our personal knowledge and opinions of the studied object, more particularly of the Black community did, by times, draw us to conclude preconceived results. In fact, Fairclough (1995a) believes that readers interpret texts differently due to their various backgrounds, knowledge and power positions. Therefore, analysts examine texts in a specific way by drawing their conclusions on their own interpretations and by imposing their own biases and prejudices. We had to constantly remember our preconceptions in order to reduce the influence of such bias and to avoid the possibility that the interpretations of this project be tinted. This personal task was quite laborious and added complications to this project. Moreover, as indicated by Hall (1997a), media messages have no static meaning and no right interpretation would exist. Due to the culture, values and experiences of each individual, news reports may be read and understood differently. Therefore, other researchers may obtain different outcomes.

We believe that critical discourse analysis aided the achievement of our objectives. In fact, as stated by Van Dijk (1988, 1988a, 1991, 1993) and Fairclough (2000, 1995a), CDA does not only examine and critically interpret the underlying meanings of media texts but also explain how they produce cultural meanings and perceive social relations. CDA allow the study of how the articles build power, knowledge, regulation and normalization of behaviours and lifestyles as well. We were in fact able to describe the ways *La Presse* presents the Black community in relation to crime and the ways this population socially relates with others (the police, for example). But, we did not thoroughly examine how power and knowledge are constructed in the news reports. With

the use of CDA, we should have been able to explain the way newsmakers understand the world and how these understandings shape the news texts they produce. We will although later explain that we were not able to precisely comprehend the ways newsmakers comprehend the world. Due to the fact that CDA supposes that discourse and language are embraced in a dominant worldview, this method automatically presumes that a minority group such as the Black community experiences prejudices, injustices and inequities. Once more, we embarked in a stereotypic view. We although chose specific topics to elaborate within the scope of this paper and the ways the *La Presse* incorporates the dominant worldview was not thoroughly examined.

Even though we were able to clarify, categorise, analyse and interpret, we observed that *La Presse* constructs our studied subjects in several ways. In fact, due to this diversity of patterns within the same newspaper, the methods used became complicated and complex. We attempted to clarify the reasons for these different tendencies. But before explaining the possible hypotheses, we will briefly summarize the results of our project.

Eighty-four reports racializing the Black actors were found in the first period (1990). The neighbourhoods occupied mostly by Blacks are identified as the main crime locations of the Montreal region. Sixty-three articles present Blacks as wrongdoers in various ways. They are either closely linked with criminal events in the same sentence and/or the criminal history of the actors is given. Hence, the proportion of crime committed by people of color is clearly over-reported by the newspaper. But, on the other hand, certain stories demonstrate that Blacks are victims of their poor social status and Blacks' opinions are sometimes quoted. Only fifteen titles racialize the Black actors and more than half of the reports do not mention the race in the lead or concluding remarks.

Violence and the police are the two major themes discussed in the first period. In fact, eighty-one reports include violent gestures, one way or another. Moreover, according to the reports, violence is mostly attributed to the young Black male, specific criminal behaviours such as drug trafficking and incest are considered as cultural practices and Blacks are sometimes presented as protestors of what they consider injustices. Therefore, negative images of Black actors are often created. As for the police, they are either perceived as heroic or as a negative aspect to the Black community.

Forty-one were printed during the second period (between July 31st, 2004 and July 31st, 2005). The districts, known as Black ghettos (Montreal North, St-Michel, etc.) are amply mentioned. Blacks are viewed as negative actors and/or criminals in forty reports. Nineteen articles specifically blame the entire Black community, more particularly the Haitians. Furthermore, street crime is highly covered in this period and Black gang members are perceived as dangerous, violent and impulsive. But, professionals vary their opinions and remain open to different interpretations. The Black actors are rarely racialized in the titles, leads and concluding remarks. Crime is hardly associated to the Black community in the same sentence and the criminal antecedents of the Black actors are not often mentioned.

There are twice as many articles in the first period (eighty-four in 1990 and forty-one in 2004-2005). Black victims are rarely covered, especially in 2004-2005 (one article) and, in both periods, several neighbourhoods are noted and linked to the Black community. In almost the entire corpus, Blacks are negatively covered in one-hundred and three reports. But, we consider that forty-eight reports cover Blacks simultaneously as victims and suspects (hybrid cases and Black-on-Black crimes). Additionally, violence is the principal subject of most reports of the entire corpus studied. In both periods we indicated relational difficulties between Blacks and the police department. During both periods, police officers are either blamed for the shootings of Black individuals (1990), for harassing Blacks (1990) or considered as a nuisance to street gangs (2004-2005). In certain segments, we noticed a polarization of various social roles and groups (for example, Blacks and the “White police”).

But, compared to 1990, fewer reports printed in 2004-2005 mention the race of the main actors in the titles, leads and concluding remarks and associate crime and Blacks in the same sentence. Furthermore, only in 1990 do the journalists emphasize the Black actors’ residential status (Canadians, Quebecers, etc.) and uniquely in 2004-2005 is one specific Black community blamed for crime gestures (Haitians).

The representations of both periods are not homogeneous. The articles did create a variety of patterns and so-called realities relating to the Black community and crime. The diversity of journalists may certainly be a cause of this polysemy. In fact, according to Van Dijk (1988a), journalists would possibly unintentionally select, choose certain events and information to cover. Thus, they would create stories with hidden assumptions and judgments. Hence, we believe that the stories are surely tinted by the journalists’ various preconceptions, values, opinions and

personal background. Consequently, this variety can be the source of the diversity of the media images.

Second, we assume that a popular crime event involving Black perpetrators can have an impact and influence stories later printed. For example, stories relating to Black street gang members present young Black teenagers as violent and impulsive individuals. Also, the same can occur if Blacks are portrayed as victims of their poor social status. These types of stories can and will surely influence all news accounts relating to Blacks.

But, how can we explain the similarities and dissimilarities of the results of both periods? We must consider that approximately fifteen years separated them. Hence, the events and history of both periods differ. In this same vein, Hall (1997) believes that media texts alter according to the historical and cultural context they are constructed in. The authors are also different and they vary enormously. Therefore, as explained above, journalists all have their own culture and preconceptions that influence the creation of media texts.

Our various results and interpretations may not conclude that *La Presse* is practicing one specific phase of coverage. In fact, different codes of meanings are discerned. For example, in the same period, the Black community is maintained in stereotypes but sometimes certain efforts, in favour of the Black community, are noted. The results represent different phrases simultaneously. We believe that the phases elaborated by Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003) are too predetermined in time and in context. In fact, the phases do not seem open for debate or permit latitude. Hence, we assume that we may not adapt these phases to our study. As stated in our project, we must also consider that Canada's, and more specifically, Quebec's political and social context (linguistic battle, Quebec's attempts to separate from Canada, etc.) are relatively different than other countries such as the United States. But, Wilson and Gutiérrez (1985, 1995 and 2003) compared and elaborated their phases with historical events that occurred in the United States rather than in Canada.

In our first chapter, we presented the past studies relating to our topics. We believe that the authors generally concluded similar results. Whether relating to the Canadian, American or European context, they all, in different ways, have established that print media seem to portray negatively the Black community in crime reports (Van Dijk, 1991; Miller, 1997; Barlow, 1998; Henry and Tator, 2000). Furthermore, the race of the perpetrators would denote the tone of the story (Pritchard, 1985). Overall, the Black community appears to have been depicted with

negative connotation and harsher adjectives in the world-wide press (Miller and Levin, 1998; Rome 1998; Henry and Tator, 2000; Van Dijk, 1988a, 1991, etc.). As also shown in certain studies (Van Dijk, 1991 and Miller and Levin, 1998), Blacks are less covered as victims. Rarely do the past studies contrast their conclusions with other possible results or open further debates on the subject. The conclusions of these analyses are in fact quite stagnant. The lack of possible interpretations and theories made our task arduous and complicated. As a result, more research is needed in order to expand and contribute to the research community with richer and larger hypotheses relating to the Black community and the Press. We suggest that further and more recent theories on the print media are required. We noticed that the same theories have been used and repeated since Harold Lasswell in 1948. Perhaps the primary functions of the press have been altered since 1948. In fact, literature has demonstrated that the press reproduces homogenised representations. But our research has shown that the newspaper portrays different shades of meanings of the Black community and crime. Innovative and refreshing ideas and theories are needed in order for the research community to experiment new avenues.

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Video

Hall, Stuart (1997a), *Representations and the Media*, The Media Education Foundation: 55 minutes;

ANNEXE 1

Key words used for our collection of data¹⁵

-A-

Accusation/accuser et noir
Acquittement/acquitter et noir
Afrique/africain
Afro-américain
Agression/agresser et noir
Alcool et noir
Antigua
Antilles/Antillais
Appel/appeler et noir
Arme/armer et noir
Arrestation ou arrêter et noir
Atkinson, Linnel (1990)

-B-

Balmir, Valentine
Bande criminelle
Bandit et noir
Barbade/Barbadien
Bataille/battre/battu et noir
Batman et Robin (1990)
Blessier/blessure et noir
Boisson et noir
Boyd, Nollis (1990)
Bronfman, Charles (1990)

-C-

Campbell, Alexer (2004-2005)
Caraïbes
Carifête/carifesta
Communauté noire
Comparution/comparu et noir
Complot/comploter et noir
Condamnation/condamner et noir
Contrefaçon et noir
Contrevenant/contrevenir et noir
Côte Ivoire

¹⁵ Please take note that all words (including nouns, verbs and adjectives) were conjugated in the feminine and plural tense.

Cour et noir
Coupable/culpabilité/culpabiliser et noir
Crime et noir
Crime organisé et noir
Criminel et noir
Cultivateur/cultiver et noir

-D-

Défense/défendeur/défenderesse/défendu et noir
Délateur et noir
Délinquant et noir
Détention/détenu et noir
Drogue et noir
Droit et noir
Dutervil, Albert (1990)

-E-

Ellis, Howard (1990)
Enlèvement/enlever et noir
Estelle, Jean-Bernard (2004-2005)
Ethnicité/ethnie/ethnique
Exhibition/exhiber et noir
Exportation/exporter et noir

-F-G-H-

Facultés affaiblies et noir
Faustin, Therlegrand (1990)
Femme de couleur
Fête et noir
Fraude/frauder et noir
François, Marcellus (1990)
Fusil et noir
Fusillade et noir
Gang de rue
Georges, Gérald Joseph (2004-2005)
Gosset, Allan (1990)
Gregory, Allen (1990)
Griffin, Anthony (1990)
Guadeloupe/Guadeloupéen
Haïti/Haïtien
Homme de couleur
Homicide et noir

-I-J-K-

Île Maurice
Illégal/illégalité/illégitime et noir
Incarcération/incarcérer et noir
Incendie et noir
Indécence et noir
Individu de couleur
Individu et noir
Infraction et noir
Importation/importer et noir
Informateur et noir
Intimidation/intimider et noir
Introduction/introduire par effraction et noir
Jamaïque/Jamaïcain
Jeune de couleur
Jugement/juger/juge et noir
Kairnes, James (1990)
Kane, Tommy (2004-2005)
Kennedy, Gérard (2004-2005)

-L-

Lacasse, Lyne (2004-2005)
Lacasse, Sébastien (2004-2005)
Lashley, Antoinette (1990)
Levy, Mark (1990)
Libération/libérer et noir
Locke, Allan (1990)
Loi et noir

-M-N-O-

Mafia
Maison de débauche
Mandat et noir
Margossian, David (1990)
Martinique
Menace/menacer et noir
Mercier, Remy (1990)
Meurtre/meurtrier et noir
Mitchell, Harald (1990)
Mort/mourir et noir
Motard et noir
Murphy, Mary (2004-2005)
Négligence criminelle et noir

Nègre/nègresse
Noir et Longueuil/Rive Sud/Montréal/Laval/Rive Nord
Nuisance/nuire et noir
Obscène/obscénité et noir
Otage et noir
Ordonnance/ordonner et noir

-P-Q-

Party et noir
Peau noire
Peine et noir
Pénitencier et noir
Philip, Dan
Pistolet et noir
Poignarder et noir
Pornographie et noir
Presley, Leslie (1990)
Prévention/prévenu et noir
Prévost, Jean-Vanel
Prison et noir
Probation et noir
Procès/procéder et noir
Proxénète et noir
Prostitution/prostituer et noir

-R-

Race noire
Receler/recel et noir
Récidiver/récidive et noir
Règlement/régler et noir
Règlement de compte et noir
Réseau et noir
Revanche et noir
Rosemond, Yves (1990)
Rwanda/Ruanda/Rouanda

-S-

Saint (St)-Martin
Saint (St)-Vincent
Sainte (Ste)-Lucie
Saisi/saisir et noir
Séquestration/séquestrer et noir
Sentence/sentencier et noir

Sexe et noir
Shoofey, Frank (1990)
Stupéfiant et noir
Suspect/suspecter et noir

-T-

Témoin/témoigner et noir
Thunderdome (1990)
Tobago/Tabago
Tribunal et noir
Trinidad
Tuer et noir

-U-V-W-X-Y-Z-

Vagabond/vagabondage et noir
Vaval, Pierreson (2004-2005)
Véhicule/auto/automobile/moto/motocyclette et noir
Vengeance/venger et noir
Victime et noir
Viol/violer et noir
Violence/violent et noir
Voie de faits et noir
Vol/voler et noir
Vulgarité et noir
Wooley, Gregory (2004-2005)

ANNEXE 2

- 1.- Summary/introduction
 - 1.1. Headlines (with super-, main-, and sub-headlines, and captions)
 - 1.2. Lead

- 2.- Episode(s)
 - 2.1. Events
 - 2.1.1. Previous information
 - 2.1.2. Antecedents
 - 2.1.3. Actual events
 - 2.1.4. Explanation
 - 2.1.4.1 Context
 - 2.1.4.2 Background
 - 2.2. Consequences/reactions
 - 2.2.1. Events
 - 2.2.2. Speech acts

- 3.- Comments
 - 3.1. Expectations
 - 3.2. Evaluation