Connecting community and education: Mediated discourses and community-based education spaces in Surrey, British Columbia

by

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Abstract

This research examines how social issues facing youth crime and prevention are represented and outlines the solutions presented by community programs in Surrey, British Columbia. The media acts as a powerful force, responsible for widely communicating and shaping the construction of identities and social issues for public consumption (Jiwani, 2006). This research analyzes how discursive practices situate and connect students in Surrey to wider societal narratives about youth. Through a media discourse and website analysis of an education department called Surrey Safe Schools, I argue that the media and policy are responsive to one another. Particularly, when it comes to discussions of youth violence in Surrey through the similar use of discourses of responsibility and empowerment. Simultaneously, non-profits and youth programs are a part of an industry like no other. As a result, I argue that community programs like Safe Schools use distinct racialized narratives, also deployed by the media, to justify their existence. Finally, through interviews with youth workers this thesis simultaneously highlights how these programs act as critical spaces in which staff are actively questioning the intentionality behind their initiatives to mentor and engage young people in Surrey.

Keywords: racialized youth; critical discourse analysis; moral panics; community-based education spaces

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List of Acronyms

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
SSL	Safe School Liaison
YBYG	Yo Bro Yo Girl

Preface

I was born and raised in Surrey, British Columbia on the unceded traditional territories of the Semiahmoo, Katzie, Kwikwetlem, Kwantlen, Musqueam, Qayqayt, Tsleil Waututh and Tsawwassen First Nations. As a second-generation South Asian woman, my relationship to Surrey has been in constant flux. My parents, to who I owe many of my accomplishments, were both born in Punjab, India and immigrated to Canada. At age five, my mom and her family immigrated in 1976, where she grew up in South Vancouver on the unceded territories of the Musqueam First Nations. My dad immigrated to Surrey as a student in 1993, where he has since then acquired citizenship and created a home with my mom.

Surrey is where I have built community and where I have learnt the importance of solidarity. Despite outside perceptions of Surrey, many of which I had internalized growing up, the community I have formed here has shaped me. Community can mean a variety of things and we all belong to multiple communities, including the community you form as a teenager within school. I went through the public-school system in Surrey. I remember when it came time for me to go to high school, many of my friends' parents decided to put them in schools outside of the Surrey School District due to fears, both real and imagined, of violence within Surrey high schools. Although I never experienced any violence within the confines of my high school, I did however, experience symbolic violence often perpetuated through negative narratives about Surrey youth. These narratives were especially prevalent when I left Surrey after high school and began university and was met with those who had formed perception about Surrey despite never having visited the city.

Throughout my elementary and high school journey there were a variety of mentors that really strengthened my passion for academia and community service. From coaches to peer leaders and teachers, these mentors helped to guide me and a variety of ways, along different paths.

My experiences as a young person were extremely important to my volunteer and professional experience with the City of Surrey. Since I was young, I gravitated towards arts-based and recreational events ran by local organizations and enjoyed being a part of organizing community events. Throughout high school, I volunteered at cultural

events and shadowed coaches at my local recreation centre, where I ended up working years later as a municipal employee teaching those same sports classes and summer camps for young people. Between 2014-2019, I worked at Newton Recreation Centre in a variety of capacities from a youth sports instructor and day camp leader during the summers to leading after-school drop-in programs during the school year. Working with young people and listening to their experiences of school as well as their understanding of Surrey has formed a lot my understanding of community spaces.

My research focuses on the intersection between mainstream media coverage of South Asian youth and the implementation of community-based educational spaces within Surrey Schools. As a member of the South Asian community, I am working from a standpoint of situated knowledge, however, as a researcher who does not directly work within schools, I am simultaneously an outsider documenting the lived experiences of teachers, liaisons, and outreach workers.

It is important to note my positionality as a racialized settler who grew up in Surrey, where diversity and this notion of Canada as a cultural mosaic flourished with the education system. I understand colonialism as a network of oppression that conceals the power relations that continue to structure the current moment (Sengupta, 2006, p. 632). It also works to erase the existence of violence from our history and social imaginary. I believe this to be important because as South Asians, we are often weaponized against Indigenous groups in Canada as proof that multiculturalism works (Thobani, 2007). This is particularly noticeable in media discourse that uses words such as "integration" and "multiculturalism" when criticizing Indigenous groups within Canada. This is directly tied to my research in which I am researching media representations of young people and analyzing how the mainstream press characterizes youth in Surrey. In this sense, within my research, and beyond, it is important to note how certain racialized groups, such as the South Asian community in Surrey, are complicit in the continuation of these networks of oppression.

There are certain beliefs I hold in relation to my research of the education system and the media that are crucial to note. When examining certain inequities within schools and the media, I believe in transformative justice. This starkly contradicts a zero-tolerance policy approach that seeks to mentor vs. engage young, racialized folk. Instead, of focussing on individual patterns of behaviour, it is vital to understand the

systemic roots of violence that have been normalized within our communities. My interest in schools stem from the idea that schools are truly the core of our communities. Where parents trust educators to facilitate equitable growth for their children. However, schools are also where young people are first introduced to the inequities of society. In this sense, it is important to note how community-based education spaces within schools operate to mentor and engage students. My aim here is to understand the link between media representation, municipal policy, and the development of identity for South Asian youth in Surrey.

> The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility, we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom (bell hooks, 1990).

Chapter 1.

Introduction

> *"Youth have once again become the object of public analysis. Headlines proliferate like dispatches from a combat zone, frequently coupling youth and violence in the interests of promoting a new kind of commonsense relationship." Henry Giroux (1996, p. 27)*

It would be an understatement to say that media is a powerful force. Responsible for widely communicating social issues for public consumption, the media plays an important role in the construction of public perception by covering certain groups and events. Whether it be through policy documents, public material, websites, or the mainstream press, media producers choose the narrative disseminated by including or forgoing information. Therefore, as we operate through our day to day lives, as citizens and consumers of media, we are constantly reminded that we live in mediated times through the information and discourses we are exposed to. As a result, the task of understanding the media's influence over our lives today is essential, as it has been in generations before us.

In relation to mediated representation, young people have increasingly been a focal point in research surrounding youth cultures and mediation. The term youth was first introduced in the 1950s and although its meaning is constantly in flux, it has commonly been associated with the categorization of dependency with respect to structures of governance that look over young people, such as parental figures, governments, and the education and justice system. Additionally, the term youth has been linked to the symbolic outlook of optimism, with young people having a perceived type of vitality about them.

The evolution of youth studies can be characterized in three periods as outlined by Ginwright & Cammarota (2002). Beginning with the 1980s to early 1990s, theorists and policy makers were primarily concerned with identifying youth problems like crime, delinquency, and substance abuse, while simultaneously naming preventative measures to fix these issues (p. 83). In the mid 1990s, the focus shifted to include notions of emotional well-being, positive role models and empowerment to support young people through the various transitions of their life. Although a step in the right direction in terms

of youth justice, according to Ginwright & Cammarota (2002), these measures did “not go far enough to account for the powerful social forces that affect young people” (p. 84). Finally, the third period in youth studies takes place in the early 2000s, where the focus was on the social constraints that impact youth such as racism, poverty, abuse, and bullying. Research in this case, sought to understand how these systemic issues frame the construction of young people.

In the field of communication and media studies, a growing interest has been to unpack the media constructions and representation of youth. This mediation of young people in public material is the primary interest of this thesis. This type of research on mediated discourse as highlighted by Stuart Hall (1990), Yasmin Jiwani (2006), Henry Giroux (2000), and Mike Males (1999) looks at the construction of different groups by the media, focussing on how various identities are constructed in our culture and how the media plays an integral role in this process.

Ultimately, this thesis explores how media discourses about youth, particularly racialized youth, intersect in the material produced by youth intervention and prevention program websites. The focus is on how issues of crime and the characterization of criminality and community safety are presented in the media. I examine how intervention and prevention programs and their public presentation are responsive to these discourses about crime, and how the workers who engage with students in this educational space reflect and navigate racialized discourses about youth crime. The research focuses on Surrey, in British Columbia, using media coverage of the city, Surrey School Trustee documents, and public material from Safe Schools, a youth safety department run by the Surrey School District. As a South Asian woman, who was born and raised in Surrey and has gone through the Surrey Schools system, I have a special interest in examining how South Asian students are characterized in these public modes of communication. I am particularly interested in examining how those who work in these education spaces and work with youth, navigate a colonial and often racist media and education system.

Following the objectives outlined above, the main research questions that guide this study are:

1. In mainstream coverage of Surrey, Surrey Schools, and the South Asian community in British Columbia, how do media discourses characterize certain groups, and in what ways do they relate to intervention and prevention programs in Surrey?

2. How do community intervention and prevention programs respond to the discourses about crime in Surrey? How does this impact the public presentation of these programs? How do workers navigate these discourses through their work?

Through a discourse analysis of mainstream media and analysis of the Safe Schools Initiative, this thesis will explore how young people are constructed in mainstream news coverage, community program websites, policy documents, and by those adult mentors who are familiar with community-based education spaces in Surrey through interviews. It seeks to unpack how social issues facing youth crime and prevention are represented and what solutions are presented through the implementation of community programming. Additionally, in my research, I aim to understand how these community-based programs are responsive to the issues discussed in the media that are defined as possessing a danger to public safety. This analysis of the threat and categorization of youth is done through the text presented in public material and in the examination of youth programming in Surrey. Furthermore, the interviews are core in this thesis to understanding how Safe Schools and educators in Surrey understand these media discourses and navigate them in their daily work with students daily. The interviews with youth workers, teachers, and Safe School workers provide invaluable insight to understand how these discourses play out in their experiences working with students in Surrey on the ground in comparison to policy text or website characterizations.

1.1. Rationale: Why Surrey and Safe Schools?

The City of Surrey and Surrey Schools were selected as Surrey has been a focal point in the media coverage of crime and youth gang-related activity throughout the years, although Surrey is no more dangerous than other municipalities that surround it (Macleans, 2019). The crime rating for Surrey was in fact, lower compared to the neighbouring cities, but within the public imaginary Surrey remains to be situated in the space of crime and drugs. The Surrey School District is also the largest school district in British Columbia and has made it a priority to introduce multiple prevention and

intervention programs aimed at enhancing school safety, making it a key topic of discussion in the media, policy, and website analysis.

I will examine how the Safe Schools program, a Surrey Schools department funded by all three levels of government that aims to provide support to students and families (Surrey Schools, 2022). Since its inception in 1998, the Safe Schools Initiative has aimed to increase the safety of students and teachers. Its programs include standalone resources such as the Safe School Liaison, Substance Use Liaison, and Youth Diversity Liaison as well as partnerships with community leaders such as the Surrey RCMP (School Resource Officers), City of Surrey and Yo Bro Yo Girl (Safe Schools, 2022). In its own words, "Safe Schools remains vigilant about providing safety supports for Surrey School District staff, students and parents" (Safe Schools, 2022). This focus on enhancing student and community safety while simultaneously targeting the "needs" of certain communities and schools provides an important background to understand how its extensive program list responds to conversations about youth crime in the media and community.

The three angles of analysis within the research are the media representation of Surrey youth, an analysis of Safe Schools Program websites, and interviews that enhance the materials collected. I am situating Safe Schools within these axes of analysis as the program is at the intersection of different discourses involving South Asian youth, criminalization, and education. The Safe Schools program originated from real as well as perceived notions of danger. It aims to enhance student and staff safety through a variety of peer-to-peer and community-oriented initiatives.

Further, the Safe Schools Initiative was selected because of its agenda of focussing on mentorship and community in its programming, which spans different methods of digital engagement, peer mentorship, and holistic interventions. The Safe School Department's scope and reach make it a focus of this study, as its visual and textual representations of young people in public material via websites are responsive to the dominant discourses about young people in Surrey concerning safety. Although its programming stems from the assumption that crime and safety within Surrey Schools is an issue that requires management, over the years the department continues to mentor and engage students. Interviews with Safe Schools personnel and Surrey teachers examine the impact of these programs and highlight the complexities of community-

based education programming within schools. For this project, I have analyzed theories of media representation, particularly as it relates to the South Asian community. However, media representation is one axis of the research and is combined with analysis of Safe School's public, web-based materials, and interviews with workers. While existing research tends to overwhelmingly focus on media discourse itself, this research investigates the intersection between media discourses and educational programs, while moving beyond the analysis of discourse to understand the impact of media coverage on community programming through conversations with youth workers.

1.2. Situating This Research

I position my research within the field of communication studies, youth and education studies, and critical race theory. This thesis aims to examine how racialized youth in Surrey are constructed with a special interest in the South Asian community and the depiction of Surrey in the press. Furthermore, I aim to explore how media and public policy intersect when it comes to community programming within schools, particularly intervention and prevention programs.

Throughout the thesis, I aim to unpack how meaning is constructed about young people in Surrey in various public materials, and how these pieces of media or policy shape the construction of youth, linking them to wider societal themes related to safety, violence, or crime. Engaging theorists like Hall (1990), Jiwani (2006), Giroux (1996), and Cohen (1972), I seek to understand how the media, policy, and websites frame young people and emphasize solutions that aim to manage them. For theorists such as Stuart Hall (1990) and Yasmin Jiwani (2006), the media is vital in creating representations that solidify a type of shared cultural meaning about ourselves and the world in which we operate. The media in this sense has the function of asserting power over the public by shaping the hierarchies and social standings of certain groups, therefore creating meaning out of the material published. Representations in the media such as in film, television, and mainstream news, therefore, normalize specific worldviews or ideologies (Hall, 1997). According to Couldry (2000), these forms of representation, constructed from the perspectives of dominant groups, not only influence people's beliefs but can reinforce and widen power imbalances with damaging consequences for those who are misrepresented or narrowly stereotyped. This sentiment about power and inequity being widened by certain narratives is echoed by Jiwani (2006) who states, "as with the

positioning and perception of different groups in society, the shared language of power as it is discursively communicated by dominant institutions (such as the media, the medical system, the justice system, and the education system) influences the categories by which the world is defined" (p. 9). Following these theorists, this research aims to explore how discursive practices situate and connect students in Surrey to wider societal narratives about youth and the need to mitigate deviance amongst this group. These discourses about young people in Surrey are connected to the broadly negative portrayal of Surrey as a city by the media, characterized as being steeped with violence and crime that has been tied to the immigration and settlement of South Asians in the area in implicit and explicit ways.

I turn to a social constructionist approach when analyzing how news media frames violence among youth, both in communities and within schools. With an emphasis on the social implications of institutions, a social constructionist approach in this case focuses on how the media and public policy within schools' impact social life. Here, the focus is on how news media, institutions, and policymakers shape our view of social life or what constitutes our social imaginary specifically as it pertains to discourses about young people in Surrey, coverage of violence in the city, and the implementation of community-based education programs. With its vast resources, the media and other institutional forces that disseminate information work to construct meaning (Fishman, 1980).

> "Given that the average citizen has little firsthand knowledge of many social problems, he or she receives this information from claims makers whose duty it is to inform the public about these issues—namely, political bodies and the news media. Yet biases, ignorance, and hidden agendas often distort how claims makers report on problems and what information they choose to report" (Kupchik & Bracey, 2009, p. 137).

The result is often fear, or even fear, about a given issue. As further highlighted by Kupchik & Bracey (2009) "public concern about drug use during the 1980s and 1990s was stoked by political rhetoric and media reporting; this public anxiety, in turn, legitimated the "war on drugs" p. 137. In my thesis, I intend to focus on how the framing of certain anxieties surrounding youth crime subtly mirrors the panic that was linked to the "war on drugs" and fear about teenagers in the 1980s and 1990s. In addition, I will examine how negative coverage about Surrey creates a connection between youth that inhabit the space, often creating sweeping generalizations rooted in a racialized panic

about a certain group — in this case, South Asians. In *Creating Fear* (2002), David Altheide examines how the mainstream media and cultural industries actively promote fear as means of political organizing, either through the law or public policy. This organizing focuses on feelings of panic regarding an issue, to provoke or worry the community to spur action. In this sense, by presenting discourses that promote fear, the media's reporting style and content have provoked a shift in how Americans think about issues as diverse as religion, gangs, and schools. Altheide (2002) further emphasizes that "the problem frame promotes a discourse of fear that may be defined as the pervasive communication, symbolic awareness, and expectation that danger and risk are a central feature of the effective environment" (p. 41).

To analyze online website material produced by Safe Schools, I use a similar constructivist and cultural studies approach to understand how warning signs and solutions are expressed to students, stakeholders, teachers and parents. School crime, drugs, gang violence, and bullying are all ideal social issues to attract large groups of people because it exploits fears that many parents and community members hold about youth. Regardless, of socio-economic status or race, almost all parents send their children to school and are likely to care deeply when stories of violence among young people are relayed to them by the media. Of course, these social issues impact racialized youth in very different ways, as public policy and media coverage often demonize them. Regardless, this approach of fuelling panic works effectively to draw widespread attention and present a particular ultimately resulting in certain discourses becoming increasingly naturalized as truth (Hall, 1997).

This thesis also grapples with the notion of community, particularly the symbolic violence experienced by the South Asian community by the media, as well as how this community has responded to discourses of gang violence and crime amongst its youth. As argued by Himani Bannerji:

> Things are different with us, that is, non-white immigrants – even if we are conversant in English or French, which people from South Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean generally are. With them the process is reversed, since they come as individual migrants and slowly harden into the institutional form of the community. The reason for this, I am afraid, is not what is inside of them, but rather in their skin. Their skin is written upon with colonial discourse – which is orientalist and racist. Thus memories, experiences, customs, languages, and religions of such people become interpreted into reificatory and often negative cultural types or identities. The political

> process of minoritization accompanies this interpretive exercise, and together they lead to the formation of communities. When we speak of "diversity" it is this set of reified and politicized differences that we are invoking, and they provide the basis for ethnocultural identity and politics of representation (2000, p. 160).

Here the emphasis is on the persistent characterization of non-white immigrants by the colour of their skin by the media, compared to any other characteristic they may have. More often than not, news media homogenizes South Asians, irrelevant of their ethnic or linguistic background. This pushback experienced by immigrants can be understood as one factor that leads to the formation of diasporic communities. Surrey is one of these places in which South Asians have found solitude through community. In her analysis of Bannerji's work, Yasmin Jiwani (2006) concludes that ethnic groups who form communities and settle in close proximities become the focal point of the media — often in racist coverage of these spaces. For my research, I analyze the media's depiction of the South Asian community in British Columbia when it comes to crime, immigration, and Surrey Schools, and I highlight how the media has covered the South Asian community through a discourse of responsibility, pointing to it to fix issues that stem from its youth, including youth violence. This discourse of responsibility can be understood through the work of Kupchik & Bracey (2009), who examine how the media assigns responsibility to certain actors such as the school system or parents for the existence of youth violence. In their analysis, Kupchik & Bracey argue that this responsibility is assigned to groups by the media using coded language about prevention by characterizing instances of violence that "could have been stopped" (p. 151). For the coverage I examine, this discourse of responsibility falls onto the community, and takes place in discussion in the media of community forums, family programs, and the push for culturally sensitive resources to prevent violence or for the community to take responsibility and act. The solutions that are presented to students in the form of community programming or youth empowerment programs I argue, also are communicated through a discourse of responsibility. The responsibility tends to emphasize the role of the individual, encouraging individual student actions to enhance school safety. However, my interviews with youth workers emphasize the broader social dimensions that shape the lived realities of minoritized students and perceptions of youth, pushing back against prevailing discourses of youth programs that tend to emphasize individual accountability.

Chapter 2.

Community- Introduction

> *"Youth have once again become the object of public analysis. Headlines proliferate like dispatches from a combat zone, frequently coupling youth and violence in the interests of promoting a new kind of commonsense relationship." Henry Giroux (1996, p. 27)*

It would be an understatement to say that media is a powerful force. Responsible for widely communicating social issues for public consumption, the media plays an important role in the construction of public perception through covering certain groups and events. Whether it be through policy documents, public material, websites, or the mainstream press, media producers choose the narrative disseminated by including or forgoing information. Therefore, as we operate through our day to day lives, as citizens and consumers of media, we are constantly reminded that we live in mediated times through the information and discourses we are exposed to. As a result, the task of understanding the media's influence over our lives today is essential, as it has been in generations before us.

In relation to mediated representation, young people have increasingly been a focal point in research surrounding youth cultures and mediation. The term youth was first introduced in the 1950s and although its meaning is constantly in flux, it has commonly been associated with the categorization of dependency in respect to structures of governance that look over young people, such as parental figures, governments, and the education and justice system. Additionally, the term youth has been linked to the symbolic outlook of optimism, with young people having a perceived type of vitality about them.

The evolution of youth studies can be characterized in three periods as outlined by Ginwright & Cammarota (2002). Beginning with the 1980s to early 1990s, theorists and policy makers were primarily concerned with identifying youth problems like crime, delinquency, and substance abuse, while simultaneously naming preventative measures to fix these issues (p. 83). In the mid 1990s the focus shifted to include notions of emotional well-being, positive role models and empowerment to support young people through the various transitions of their life. Although a step in the right direction in terms

of youth justice, according to Ginwright & Cammarota (2002), these measures did "not go far enough to account for the powerful social forces that affect young people" (p. 84). Finally, the third period in youth studies takes place in the early 2000s, where the focus was on the social constraints that impact youth such as racism, poverty, abuse, and bullying. Research in this case sought to understand how these systemic issues frame the construction of young people.

In the field communication and media studies, a growing interest has been to unpack the media constructions and representation of youth. This mediation of young people in public material is the primary interest of this thesis. This type of research on mediated discourse as highlighted by Stuart Hall (1990), Yasmin Jiwani (2006), Henry Giroux (2000), and Mike Males (1999) looks at the construction of different groups by the media, focussing on how various identities are constructed in our culture and how the media plays an integral role in this process.

Ultimately, this thesis explores how media discourses about youth, particularly racialized youth, intersect in the material produced by youth intervention and prevention program websites. The focus is how issues of crime, and the characterization of criminality and community safety are presented in the media. I examine how intervention and prevention programs, and their public presentation are responsive to these discourses about crime, and how the workers who engage with students in this educational space reflect and navigate racialized discourses about youth crime. The research focuses on Surrey, in British Columbia, using media coverage of the city, Surrey School Trustee documents, and public material from Safe Schools, a youth safety department ran by the Surrey School District. As a South Asian woman, who was born and raised in Surrey and has gone through the Surrey Schools system, I have a special interest in examining how South Asian students are characterized in these public modes of communication. I am particularly interested in the examining how those who work in these education spaces and work with youth, navigate a colonial and often racist media and education system.

Following the objectives outlined above, the main research questions that guide this study are:

1. In mainstream coverage of Surrey, Surrey Schools and the South Asian community in British Columbia, how do media discourses characterize certain groups and in what ways to they relate to intervention and prevention programs in Surrey?

2. How do community intervention and prevention programs respond to the discourses about crime in Surrey? How does this impact the public presentation of these programs? How do workers navigate these discourses through their work?

Through a discourse analysis of mainstream media and analysis of the Safe Schools Initiative, this thesis will explore the ways in which young people are constructed in mainstream news coverage, community program websites, policy documents and by those adult mentors who are familiar with community-based education spaces in Surrey through interviews. It seeks to unpack how social issues facing youth crime and prevention are represented and what solutions are presented through the implementation of community programming. Additionally, in my research I aim to understand how these community-based programs are responsive to the issues discussed in the media that are defined as possessing a danger to public safety. This analysis of threat and categorization of youth is done through the text presented in public material and in the examination of youth programming in Surrey. Furthermore, the interviews are core in this thesis to understanding how Safe Schools and educators in Surrey understand these media discourses and navigate them in their daily work with students daily. The interviews with youth workers, teachers, and Safe School workers provide an invaluable insight to understand how these discourses play out in their experiences working with students in Surrey on the ground in compared to policy text or website characterizations.

2.1. Rationale: Why Surrey and Safe Schools?

The City of Surrey and Surrey Schools were selected as Surrey has been a focal point in the media coverage of crime and youth gang-related activity throughout the years, despite the fact that Surrey is no more dangerous than other municipalities that surround it (Macleans, 2019). The crime rating for Surrey was in fact, lower compared to the neighbouring cities, but within the public imaginary Surrey remains to be situated in the space of crime and drugs. The Surrey School District is also the largest school district in British Columbia and has made it apriority to introduce multiple prevention and

intervention programs aimed at enhancing school safety, making it a key topic of discussion in the media, policy, and website analysis.

I will examine how the Safe Schools program, a Surrey Schools department funded by all three levels of government that aims to provide support to students and families (Surrey Schools, 2022). Since its inception in 1998 the Safe Schools Initiative has aimed to increase the safety of students and teachers. Its programs include standalone resources such as the Safe School Liaison, Substance Use Liaison and Youth Diversity Liaison as well as partnerships with community leaders such as the Surrey RCMP (School Resource Officers), City of Surrey and Yo Bro Yo Girl (Safe Schools, 2022). In its own words, “Safe Schools remains vigilant about providing safety supports for Surrey School District staff, students and parents” (Safe Schools, 2022). This focus on enhancing student and community safety while simultaneously targeting the “needs” of certain communities and schools provides an important background to understand how its extensive program list responds to conversations about youth crime in the media and community.

The three angles of analysis within the research are the media representation of Surrey youth, an analysis of Safe Schools Program websites, and interviews that enhance the materials collected. I am situating Safe Schools within these axes of analysis as the program is at the intersection of different discourses involving South Asian youth, criminalization, and education. The Safe Schools program originated from real as well as perceived notions of danger. It aims to enhance student and staff safety through a variety of peer to peer and community-oriented initiatives.

Further, the Safe Schools Initiative was selected because of its agenda of focussing on mentorship and community in its programming, which spans different methods of digital engagement, peer mentorship and holistic interventions. The Safe School Department’s scope and reach make it a focus of this study, as its visual and textual representations of young people in public material via websites are responsive to the dominant discourses about young people in Surrey in relation to safety. Although its programming stems from the assumption that crime and safety within Surrey Schools is an issue that requires management, over the years the department continues to mentor and engage students. Interviews with Safe Schools personnel and Surrey teachers examine the impact of these programs and highlight the complexities of community-

based education programming within schools. For this project, I have analyzed theories of media representation, particularly as it relates to the South Asian community. However, media representation is one axis of the research, and is combined with analysis of Safe School's public, web-based materials, and interviews with workers. While existing research tends to overwhelmingly focus on media discourse itself, this research investigates the intersection between media discourses and educational programs, while moving beyond the analysis of discourse to understand the impact of media coverage on community programming through conversations with youth workers.

2.2. Situating This Research

I position my research within the field of communication studies, youth and education studies, and critical race theory. This thesis aims to examine how racialized youth in Surrey are constructed with a special interest on the South Asian community and the depiction of Surrey in the press. Furthermore, I aim to explore how media and public policy intersect when it comes to community programming within schools, particularly intervention and prevention programs.

Throughout the thesis, I aim to unpack how meaning is constructed about young people in Surrey in various public materials, and how these pieces of media or policy shape the construction of youth, linking them to wider societal themes related to safety, violence, or crime. Engaging theorists like Hall (1990), Jiwani (2006), Giroux (1996), and Cohen (1972), I seek to understand how the media, policy, and websites frame young people and emphasize solutions that aim to manage them. For theorists such as Stuart Hall (1990) and Yasmin Jiwani (2006), the media is vital in creating representations that solidify a type of shared cultural meaning about ourselves and the world in which we operate. The media in this sense has the function of asserting power onto the public by shaping the hierarchies and social standings of certain groups, therefore creating meaning out of the material published. Representations in the media such as in film, television, mainstream news, therefore, normalize specific worldviews or ideologies (Hall, 1997). According to Couldry (2000), these forms of representation, constructed from the perspectives of dominant groups, not only influence people's beliefs but can reinforce and widen power imbalances with damaging consequences for those who are misrepresented or narrowly stereotyped. This sentiment about power and inequity being widened by certain narratives is echoed by Jiwani (2006) who states, "as with the

positioning and perception of different groups in society, the shared language of power as it is discursively communicated by dominant institutions (such as the media, the medical system, the justice system, and the education system) influences the categories by which the world is defined" (p. 9). Following these theorists, this research aims to explore how discursive practices situate and connect students in Surrey to wider societal narratives about youth and the need to mitigate deviance amongst this group. These discourses about young people in Surrey are connected to the broadly negative portrayal of Surrey as a city by the media, characterized as being steeped with violence and crime that has been tied to the immigration and settlement of South Asians in the area in implicit and explicit ways.

I turn to a social constructionist approach when analyzing how news media frames violence among youth, both in communities and within schools. With an emphasis on the social implications of institutions, a social constructionist approach in this case focuses on how the media and public policy within schools impacts social life. Here, the focus is on how news media, institutions and policy makers shape our view of social life or what constitutes as our social imaginary specifically as it pertains to discourses about young people in Surrey, coverage of violence in the city, and the implementation of community-based education programs. With its vast resources, the media and other institutional forces that disseminate information work to construct meaning (Fishman, 1980).

> "Given that the average citizen has little firsthand knowledge of many social problems, he or she receives this information from claims makers whose duty it is to inform the public about these issues—namely, political bodies and the news media. Yet biases, ignorance, and hidden agendas often distort how claims makers report on problems and what information they choose to report" (Kupchik & Bracey, 2009, p. 137).

The result is often fear, or even fear, about a given issue. As further highlighted by Kupchik & Bracey (2009) "public concern about drug use during the 1980s and 1990s was stoked by political rhetoric and media reporting; this public anxiety in turn legitimated the "war on drugs"" p. 137. In my thesis, I intend to focus on how the framing of certain anxieties surrounding youth crime subtly mirrors the panic that was linked to the "war on drugs" and fear about teenagers in the 1980s and 1990s. In addition, I will examine how negative coverage about Surrey creates a connection between youth that inhabit the space, often creating sweeping generalizations rooted in racialized panic

about a certain group — in this case, South Asians. In *Creating Fear* (2002), David Altheide examines how the mainstream media and cultural industries actively promote fear as means of political organizing, either through the law or public policy. This organizing focuses on feelings of panic regarding an issue, to provoke or worry the community in order to spur action. In this sense, by presenting discourses that promote fear, the media's reporting style and content have provoked a shift in how Americans think about issues as diverse as religion, gangs, and schools. Altheide (2002) further emphasizes that "the problem frame promotes a discourse of fear that may be defined as the pervasive communication, symbolic awareness, and expectation that danger and risk are a central feature of the effective environment" (p. 41).

To analyze online website material produced by Safe Schools, I use a similar constructivist and cultural studies approach to understand how warning signs and solutions are expressed to students, stakeholders, teachers and parents. School crime, drugs, gang violence, and bullying are all ideal social issues to attract large groups of people because it exploits fears that many parents and community members hold about youth. Regardless, of socio-economic status or race, almost all parents send their children to school and are likely to care deeply when stories of violence among young people are relayed to them by the media. Of course, these social issues impact racialized youth in very different ways, as public policy and media coverage often demonize them. Regardless, this approach of fuelling panic works effectively to draw widespread attention and present a particular ultimately resulting in certain discourses become increasingly naturalized as truth (Hall, 1997).

This thesis also grapples with the notion of community, particularly the symbolic violence experienced by the South Asian community by the media, as well as how this community has responded to discourses of gang violence and crime amongst its youth. As argued by Himani Bannerji:

> Things are different with us, that is, non-white immigrants – even if we are conversant in English or French, which people from South Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean generally are. With them the process is reversed, since they come as individual migrants and slowly harden into the institutional form of the community. The reason for this, I am afraid, is not what is inside of them, but rather in their skin. Their skin is written upon with colonial discourse – which is orientalist and racist. Thus memories, experiences, customs, languages, and religions of such people become interpreted into reificatory and often negative cultural types or identities. The political

> process of minoritization accompanies this interpretive exercise, and together they lead to the formation of communities. When we speak of "diversity" it is this set of reified and politicized differences that we are invoking, and they provide the basis for ethnocultural identity and politics of representation (2000, p. 160).

Here the emphasis is on the persistent characterization of non-white immigrants by the colour of their skin by the media, compared to any other characteristic they may have. More often than not, news media homogenizes South Asians, irrelevant of their ethnic or linguistic background. This pushback experienced by immigrants can be understood as one factor that leads to the formation of diasporic communities. Surrey is one of these places in which South Asians have found solitude through community. In her analysis of Bannerji's work, Yasmin Jiwani (2006) concludes that ethnic groups who form community and settle in close proximities become the focal point of the media — often in racist coverage of these spaces. For my research, I analyze the media's depiction of the South Asian community in British Columbia when it comes to crime, immigration, and Surrey Schools, and I highlight how the media has covered the South Asian community through a discourse of responsibility, pointing to it to fix issues that stem from its youth, including youth violence. This discourse of responsibility can be understood through the work of Kupchik & Bracey (2009), who examine how the media assigns responsibility to certain actors such as the school system or parents for the existence of youth violence. In their analysis, Kupchik & Bracey argue that this responsibility is assigned to groups by the media using coded language about prevention by characterizing instances of violence that "could have been stopped" (p. 151). For the coverage I examine, this discourse of responsibility falls onto the community, and takes place in discussion in the media of community forums, family programs, and the push for culturally sensitive resources to prevent violence or for the community to take responsibility and act. The solutions that are presented to students in the form of community programming or youth empowerment programs I argue, also are communicated through a discourse of responsibility. The responsibility tends to emphasize the role of the individual, encouraging individual student actions to enhance school safety. However, my interviews with youth workers emphasize the broader social dimensions that shape the lived realities of minoritized students and perceptions of youth, pushing back against prevailing discourses of youth programs that tend to emphasize individual accountability.

Community based education spaces live at the intersection between the media and educational policy. With the media coverage and website material examined deploying discourses of crime and "deviance" surrounding young people. But these spaces also offer young people mentors who are often a part of their community. Interviews with youth mentors such as teachers, safe school staff, and community outreach workers demonstrate how they navigate discourses of criminality surrounding youth in Surrey in their work daily. Further, this research is significantly influenced by critical race and gatekeeping theory, which will allow me to take into consideration the hierarchies of power and legitimacy that make up the media environment. Critical race theory, as produced by scholars such as Angela Davis (2000), Stuart Hall (1990), Sherene Razack (2007), examines the intersecting and interlocking hierarchies of power that maintain a structure on the basis of race, class, and gender. According to Yasmin Jiwani (2006), the hierarchical nature of contemporary Canadian society is part of our taken for granted common-sense stock of knowledge. I look at how these invisible structures of power are communicated through institutions of legitimation, including the mass media as done by Hall (1990).

This research engages in topics of race, racism and racialization. Racism cannot simply be attributed to individual intent and desire, though of course this is an important area of concern. Rather institutional practices, routinized behaviors and norms, values work in concert to structure the ways in which media institutions, like other institutions in society privilege particular interpretations (Davis, 2000). Inferential racism is just as violent as overt racism — and youth of colour have historically been more susceptible to this inferential racism through media narratives compared to white youth. This racialization at the hands of the media, creates inequities in the ways in which young people are characterized by society and within school. It is, therefore, the structures of power that enable racism both and it's passive and active form (Hall, 1990). The novelty or dramatic criteria of news stories also coincides with certain aspects of racialized minority cultures (Razack, 2002). Seen against a backdrop of white society, these groups offer colourful alternatives to dominant society, that are in return fetishized by the mainstream. Their fashion, music, and cuisine become objects of attention (Razack, 2002). It also communicates the positioning of different groups. Hence, how groups and individuals are seen becomes crucial in terms of where they are placed in the social order (Hall, 1990). According to critical race theories, violence is the outcome of both

white supremacy and patriarchy (Davis, 2000). In this sense, cultural discourse that focuses on what men do to women or over emphasizes the instances that take place within specific ethnic communities takes the attention away from ongoing societal complicity including racial and class positionality. With respect to this research, the cultural discourses that are communicated about Surrey and South Asians that inhabit the space work to racialize youth in Surrey — with crime and violence among youth tied to culture in many instances of coverage, either explicitly or implicitly. This is most apparent when conversations about "parenting" of "family structure" are brought forth in the reporting of violence among South Asian youth, with no research to explain any socio-economic causes of crime in the reporting, therefore giving a shallow picture of a complex problem.

Using gatekeeping theory, my research will analyze how the mainstream news acts as a hegemonic force that chooses the dominant discourse to present to the public. Gatekeeping theory describes the powerful process through which events are covered by the mass media, explaining how and why certain information either passes through gates or is closed off from media attention (Shoemaker, 1991). As analyzed by Tuchman (1978), there are specific gatekeeping processes used in deciding how to categorize and report the news. Due to the systemic economic and social pressures faced by journalists, the categorization has been necessary for job management (Tuchman, 1978). These routine practices of management have become institutionalized as methods to report the news. When it comes to the reporting of ethnic communities in Canada, this type of gatekeeping in then seen as the norm, and therefore dependent on passive racism and essentialist discourse, which makes the production of news simple and cost-effective (Razack, 2002). Gatekeepers, in this case, the mainstream media, determine what becomes a person's social reality and view of the world. This research will deconstruct the ways in which mainstream media continuously exclude racialized youth voices. Finally, using these critical theoretical frameworks will allow me to take into consideration the hierarchies of power and legitimacy that make up the media environment, as I research the intersecting and interlocking relations between the mainstream news media, young people, and the South Asian community in Surrey.

The website analysis and interview sections highlight the connection between the public presentation of Safe School through its website and affiliated prevention program websites, and the ways in which workers navigate the discourses presented by

programs they are associated with. Primarily, the discourse of the responsibility is a key focus, with the websites doing the work of negotiating the highlight charged and racialized environment the programs have been formed as a result of through messages of empowerment and student responsibility for enhancing safety. This responsibility discourse is then discussed through the perspectives of youth workers, who discuss the work they do with students, pointing to their struggles balancing individual actions and community issues. The websites I argue, have taken the code of racialized language historically presented in the media about Surrey and have responded to it by implementing programs that counter essentialist discourse and Surrey youth and through pushing solutions rooted in youth mentorship, engagement, and individual action to change the school environment for the better. This negotiation between the individual and community, is then questioned and discussed through interviews with workers to examine the limitations of the institution and the struggles youth workers engage in every day.

2.3. Scope and Significance

This research connects to communication studies through its examination of the media's role in characterizing racialized populations within Canada. Further, these media discourses play a role in the implementation of community-based educational programming regarding safety. The current climate of neo-liberal restructuring of the educational system intertwined with increased surveillance and police presence within schools in Canada has disproportionately impacted racialized youth. In addition to this increased web of zero-tolerance policies, ethnic and racialized communities have been disproportionately targeted in the media representation of crime (Davis, 2000). As argued by Jiwani (2006), the coverage of violence within minority communities has contributed to the gender and cultural stereotyping of South Asians in Canada, resulting in racism and cultural essentialism. When crime, specifically crime involving youth, is discussed in the media, there will often be an emphasis on the cultural or social causes of the acts if the perpetrator comes from a non-white community (Dasgupta, 1998). In this sense, when the discourse about crime in the mainstream news media rely on culturally essentialist knowledge, it works to solidify the idea that non-white others are those who engage in violence (Jiwani, 2006). The aim of this research is to examine how the media explicitly and implicitly constructs young people in Surrey as deviant through

its coverage — creating a public perception that violence is all encompassing in the city and therefore must be resolved. These solutions I argue, are presented in the form of public policy that responds to this media coverage. The result is then the implementation of community programs that seek to engage and mentor different groups of young people through various strategies, with the end goal of safety in mind.

2.4. Clarification of Terms

Before I move into my research, I will define some key terms below and explain how I use these concepts in my thesis.

Race/Racialized

In order to unpack how I use race and racialized in the context of my work, I turn to Sunera Thobani (2007) who emphasizes how despite any notions of equality in a given space, "the racialized marking of the body cannot be overcome" (p.172). Race then poses a significant challenge to Canada's image of a multicultural society that welcomes immigrants and refugees. Given the struggles of Indigenous communities in Canada, we cannot say race and colonialism are not seeped into every institution and governing body in this country, despite attempts to wipe away these histories by weaponizing the language of multiculturalism. This weaponization can be understood as racialization, in which an individual or group of people are being "raced." Racialization can be noted in this case, as an act that is places upon people of colour to supress or highlight difference.

In any given space, no matter what the intention may be to stay true to certain principles of equity and diversity, racism is still felt by folks in subtle and sometimes obvious ways. Nowhere is this importance of race more evident than is the education system. Schools often reproduce societal inequities among children, and it is in the halls of a school where students may be introduced to racism and come to terms with the concept of race.

Marginalization

Marginalization refers to a spatial relationship in which people are pushed to the periphery based on their social identities. It ties to intersectionality, in which race, class, gender, and nation interact in compounding ways. The most influential body of work on gender–race intersectionality has emerged from Black feminist and multicultural feminist studies such as Hooks and Spivak. As highlighted by Spivak (1988) the "margins" are not so much about difference as they are about a silence within the central governing force that determines who can speak and listen. The often lack of acceptance or power by the hand of the centre is what maintains inequalities and marginal status. With youth and the media, while being denied a voice, youth are subjected to the media's attempts to categorize them. This has placed them at the margins in mainstream coverage and in public education material. However, as Hooks (1990) points out, "marginality is not simply 'a site of deprivation' it can also be 'the site of radical possibility" (p. 341). This can be further linked to the on the groundwork conducted by youth workers. Those who we as researchers consider marginalized, don't always feel marginalized. This can be sensed in the interviews with Safe Schools staff when discussing youth engagement and prevention programming.

Moral Panics

First coined by Stanley Cohen (1972), moral panic refers to the stigmatization of a certain group by external forces like the mass media, public, or police force. Generally, the response is an overreaction — when the offences are usually small in nature. In his work, Cohen (1972) does not claim that the issue at hand is non-existent but that there is a disproportionate focus on this issue in which the targeting group represents a moral threat to community safety or to its values. This research will focus on the racialized moral panics that youth of colour are subjected to in the media's characterization of them. Moral panics highlight a crisis, in this case crime and youth violence, point to the urgency of the matter; and finally, tend to be solutions oriented.

> Moral panics 'are a means of orchestrating consent by actively intervening in the space of public opinion and social consciousness through the use of highly rhetorical and emotive language which has the effect of requiring that "something be done about it"' (McRobbie and Thornton 1995, p. 562).

This focus on “doing something” about the problem at hand will be a focus when analyzing community-based educational spaces in Surrey — and the moral panics used by the media, parents, and educators to justify their existence. For the purpose of this research, I will be discussing the specific panics in the media around increased immigration leading to crime as well as the notion that violence and drug use among young people is a vast and widespread issue in Surrey. Understanding moral panics as coined by Cohen (1972) in this case, is important because of Cohen’s emphasis on how small offences are portrayed as vast and all-consuming.

Community Based Educational Spaces

In the context of this thesis, community-based educational spaces (CBES), include afterschool programs, intervention programming and partnerships with community-based youth organizations. These programs have a legacy of disrupting the patters of inequity that exist for racialized youth (Baldridge et al., 2017). These spaces provide an environment for young people to imagine beyond the borders of zero-tolerance policies, which can work to re-define their identity in relation to their community away from the harmful representations that are pushed by mainstream media coverage. However, although CBES have a history of disrupting patterns of inequity within schools, there is also the issue of precarity among these spaces, as they are often dependent on funding. This forced reliance on the state, institutions, other actors, etc. which may enforce narratives that do not align with the organization’s purposes. Therefore, although designed as critical spaces in which mentors discuss the importance of community building, positive role models, and service, it is important to note how these programs may also be spaces where inequality is reproduced (Baldridge et al., 2017). This may be because of the precarious relationship with the political economy and ties to funders that may have different ideologies or agendas, typically priorities focussing on surveillance and control or because of the complex issues of crime prevention that these spaces seek to remedy.

South Asian

This research focuses on South Asian youth in Surrey — primarily those belonging to the Punjabi diaspora. As such, it is important to unpack the term South

Asian as an identifier, especially as it pertains to the media's characterization of South Asians in Canada historically.

The South Asian community in Canada numbers at approximately 1,963,330 (Statistics Canada, 2016). The Canadian Government characterized South Asians as those born or with heritage from Pakistan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Most of the South Asian diaspora in British Columbia is concentrated around the Lower Mainland region (Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey, New Westminster). The first group of South Asians to immigrate to Canada were Punjabi Sikhs

The first wave of South Asian immigration to Vancouver took place in the late 1800s and early 1900s, prior to the beginning of the War (Indra, 1979). Approximately, 85 percent of South Asians that arrived during this time period were Sikhs from the state of Punjab (Indra, 1979). They numbered around 5,000 and were faced with hostility, despite being relatively well off financially. Similarly, this thesis maps out how the essentialization and moral panic framework during this time is also present in the coverage of South Asian migration and settlement to Surrey and in the coverage of Surrey youth and education, with young people of South Asian background categorized as dangerous. This threat to society is then linked back to the community itself — something Yasmin Jiwani (2006) has observed in her research about the cultural essentialism evident in domestic violence coverage about racialized communities. In this thesis, the racialized panic that is brought forth by the mainstream news coverage examined works to create an environment in which policy can respond to —in the form of prevention and intervention programming targeting Surrey youth.

2.5. Chapter Outline

This introduction represents Chapter 1 of this thesis. Chapter 2 outlines the concept of community-based educational spaces and traces the history of community programming in British Columbia. This serves as an important description that identifies the environment that the Safe Schools Department was created in. Additionally, through this explanation of community spaces in British Columbia, I identify key education reports that explain the issues that young people are facing in schools. I examine the

targets listed in these reports and the rationale given for the implementation of community programs to identify how broader institutional forces like the government and school board categorize youth. This analysis highlights how community programs have historically formed as a result of real and imagined fears that ignite action. Finally, Chapter 2 analyzes the rationale Safe Schools gives for its creation given by the Surrey School Board in official documents. This rationale is linked to themes of adult mentorship, community building, and surveillance that are noted in the literature review of community-based educational spaces in this chapter.

Chapter 3 introduces the City of Surrey and South Asians in Canada, laying the groundwork for understanding the space in which Safe Schools operates. This chapter focuses on the racialization of South Asians in Canada, using early mainstream media newspapers that contain clearly racist depictions of South Asian workers in British Columbia. Analyzing this coverage highlights the process of othering and marginalization by the media. In many cases this racial characterization is not explicit but can be decoded through an examination of public material. Therefore, by highlighting an example this research sets up how these patterns have been reinforced in more recent media texts about South Asian youth in Surrey. Finally, the chapter explains how Surrey as a space has been routinely pushed to the margins through media texts and public understanding. This marginalization of the city has transferred to those who inhabit the space, which include the primary focus of this thesis, young people in Surrey.

Chapter 4 concentrates on the intersection between media and public policy by examining how media coverage relates to the construction of youth and development of policy – particularly how both policy and the media speak to one another. They do this through the media's ability to speak about policy initiatives to engage the public as well as how policy justifies programming by citing overarching themes discussed in the media, like instances of crime. The relationship between media and public policy leads into a discussion about moral panics, specifically how racialized moral panics are evident with Surrey youth and violence among young people in the City of Surrey being portrayed as a crisis within the media. This chapter highlights the urgency and measures that these moral panics evoke by identifying an example of a proposed solution of implementing drug dogs in Surrey schools — something that was debated by the School Board during the early 2000s, around the time Safe Schools was newly formed and expanding.

Chapter 5 includes a critical discourse analysis of mainstream newspaper coverage of Surrey, the South Asian community, and Surrey youth between the years 1990-2000, this time frame was chosen because during this period there was a lot of discussion taking place about youth crime in Metro Vancouver. In addition, the Safe Schools department was formed in 1998 as were other reports and initiatives within the BC education system involving bullying, youth crime, and community programming. The aim of this chapter is to examine the concentration of media coverage linking South Asian youth to crime and criminality, which builds on the examination of the relationship between media and public policy examined in Chapter 4. As pointed out by Altheide (2002), news coverage about crimes committed by young people has historically been sensationalized by the mainstream media. Having said this, with my critical discourse analysis, I trace how young people in Surrey were uniquely categorized as needing mentorship, intervention programs, and community support under the frame of racialized moral panics.

Chapter 6 examines Safe Schools programs through a website analysis. This analysis leads into a discussion about how young people are discussed in this public marketing material — particularly, how young, racialized students are portrayed textually and visually. The goal of this chapter is to go beyond the discourse analysis of newspapers, but to analyze the community programs that Safe Schools runs to understand the discourse these websites present. I look at the specific programs and discuss to whom the text is aimed, what messages the programs push about young people, and how youth in Surrey are racialized by these programs in text or visually. A major theme of the chapter is how students and adult mentors are positioned as solutions to youth violence, bullying and drug use in a discourse of responsibility. As Altheide (2002) explains, often when problems arise, there is a guilty party that assumes blame. This can be a school, parents, youth. In this case, the responsibility discourse, I argue, points to the South Asian community, who the media points to as a key figure that must take responsibility and be active in solving the issue of youth crime. By pushing this responsibility, the South Asian community, through the process of encoding and decoding messages the media narrates, is positioned as the blaming party in a sense. Furthermore, in relation to the website material, this responsibility discourse is linked to the commodification of youth that Giroux (1998) emphasizes in his work. In such, youth are not only demonized but also invited to be active participants in the culture of

consumer culture, or in this case, active in keeping their communities safe. The websites analyzed in Chapter 6 I argue are responsive to these discourses of responsibility, by persistently pushing messages of self-empowerment and individual responsibility as linked to the issue of school safety.

Chapter 7, the final chapter of the thesis works to go beyond textually and visual explanations of discourse about Surrey youth to analyzing perspectives from those who work with students every day. By interviewing Surrey Schools staff, this chapter provides fuller picture of the on-the-ground experience of those who work in education and community programming in Surrey. I argue that the program text examined, although works to highlight program success and aims, does not provide a complete picture of what staff do each and every day. Those who I spoke to have clearly though about the young people they interact with, in terms of cultural sensitivity, racialization, and the importance of positive mentorship that does not criminalize young student who have already been stigmatized in the mainstream press. By illuminating these narrative passages from workers who work within schools, I argue that these the workers are aware of the discourses Safe Schools and the media deploy, specifically solutions that involve individuated action. As a result, in addition to acknowledging such discourses, they also critically engage with their programs, combatted neo-liberal notions of safety, as they point to the community as vital in engaging young people. Through this critical work, these interviewees work to fight and work against feelings of alienation that students everywhere face within schools.

Community-based education spaces live at the intersection between the media and educational policy. With the media coverage and website material examined deploying discourses of crime and "deviance" surrounding young people. But these spaces also offer young people mentors who are often a part of their community. Interviews with youth mentors such as teachers, safe school staff, and community outreach workers demonstrate how they navigate discourses of criminality surrounding youth in Surrey in their work daily. Further, this research is significantly influenced by critical race and gatekeeping theory, which will allow me to take into consideration the hierarchies of power and legitimacy that make up the media environment. Critical race theory, as produced by scholars such as Angela Davis (2000), Stuart Hall (1990), Sherene Razack (2007), examines the intersecting and interlocking hierarchies of power that maintain a structure on the basis of race, class, and gender. According to Yasmin

Jiwani (2006), the hierarchical nature of contemporary Canadian society is part of our taken for granted common-sense stock of knowledge. I look at how these invisible structures of power are communicated through institutions of legitimation, including the mass media as done by Hall (1990).

This research engages in topics of race, racism and racialization. Racism cannot simply be attributed to individual intent and desire, though of course this is an important area of concern. Rather institutional practices, routinized behaviors and norms, values work in concert to structure the ways in which media institutions, like other institutions in society privilege particular interpretations (Davis, 2000). Inferential racism is just as violent as overt racism — and youth of colour have historically been more susceptible to this inferential racism through media narratives compared to white youth. This racialization at the hands of the media, creates inequities in the ways in which young people are characterized by society and within school. It is, therefore, the structures of power that enable racism in both its passive and active form (Hall, 1990). The novelty or dramatic criteria of news stories also coincides with certain aspects of racialized minority cultures (Razack, 2002). Seen against a backdrop of white society, these groups offer colourful alternatives to dominant society, that are in return fetishized by the mainstream. Their fashion, music, and cuisine become objects of attention (Razack, 2002). It also communicates the positioning of different groups. Hence, how groups and individuals are seen becomes crucial in terms of where they are placed in the social order (Hall, 1990). According to critical race theories, violence is the outcome of both white supremacy and patriarchy (Davis, 2000). In this sense, cultural discourse that focuses on what men do to women or over-emphasizes the instances that take place within specific ethnic communities takes the attention away from ongoing societal complicity including racial and class positionality. Concerning this research, the cultural discourses that are communicated about Surrey and South Asians that inhabit the space work to racialize youth in Surrey — with crime and violence among youth tied to culture in many instances of coverage, either explicitly or implicitly. This is most apparent when conversations about “parenting” or “family structure” are brought forth in the reporting of violence among South Asian youth, with no research to explain any socio-economic causes of crime in the reporting, therefore giving a shallow picture of a complex problem.

Using gatekeeping theory, my research will analyze how mainstream news acts as a hegemonic force that chooses the dominant discourse to present to the public.

Gatekeeping theory describes the powerful process through which events are covered by the mass media, explaining how and why certain information either passes through gates or is closed off from media attention (Shoemaker, 1991). As analyzed by Tuchman (1978), there are specific gatekeeping processes used in deciding how to categorize and report the news. Due to the systemic economic and social pressures faced by journalists, categorization has been necessary for job management (Tuchman, 1978). These routine practices of management have become institutionalized as methods to report the news. When it comes to the reporting of ethnic communities in Canada, this type of gatekeeping is then seen as the norm, and therefore dependent on passive racism and essentialist discourse, which makes the production of news simple and cost-effective (Razack, 2002). Gatekeepers, in this case, the mainstream media, determine what becomes a person's social reality and view of the world. This research will deconstruct how mainstream media continuously exclude racialized youth voices. Finally, using these critical theoretical frameworks will allow me to take into consideration the hierarchies of power and legitimacy that make up the media environment, as I research the intersecting and interlocking relations between the mainstream news media, young people, and the South Asian community in Surrey.

The website analysis and interview sections highlight the connection between the public presentation of Safe School through its website and affiliated prevention program websites, and the ways in which workers navigate the discourses presented by programs they are associated with. Primarily, the discourse of responsibility is a key focus, with the websites doing the work of negotiating the highlight charged and racialized environment the programs have been formed as a result of through messages of empowerment and student responsibility for enhancing safety. This responsibility discourse is then discussed through the perspectives of youth workers, who discuss the work they do with students, pointing to their struggles balancing individual actions and community issues. The websites I argue, have taken the code of racialized language historically presented in the media about Surrey and have responded to it by implementing programs that counter essentialist discourse and Surrey youth and through pushing solutions rooted in youth mentorship, engagement, and individual action to change the school environment for the better. This negotiation between the individual and community is then questioned and discussed through interviews with workers to

examine the limitations of the institution and the struggles youth workers engage in every day.

2.6. Scope and Significance

This research connects to communication studies through its examination of the media's role in characterizing racialized populations within Canada. Further, these media discourses play a role in the implementation of community-based educational programming regarding safety. The current climate of neo-liberal restructuring of the educational system intertwined with increased surveillance and police presence within schools in Canada has disproportionately impacted racialized youth. In addition to this increased web of zero-tolerance policies, ethnic and racialized communities have been disproportionately targeted in the media representation of crime (Davis, 2000). As argued by Jiwani (2006), the coverage of violence within minority communities has contributed to the gender and cultural stereotyping of South Asians in Canada, resulting in racism and cultural essentialism. When crime, specifically crime involving youth, is discussed in the media, there will often be an emphasis on the cultural or social causes of the acts if the perpetrator comes from a non-white community (Dasgupta, 1998). In this sense, when the discourse about crime in the mainstream news media relies on culturally essentialist knowledge, it works to solidify the idea that non-white others are those who engage in violence (Jiwani, 2006). This research aims to examine how the media explicitly and implicitly constructs young people in Surrey as deviant through its coverage — creating a public perception that violence is all-encompassing in the city and therefore must be resolved. These solutions I argue, are presented in the form of public policy that responds to this media coverage. The result is then the implementation of community programs that seek to engage and mentor different groups of young people through various strategies, with the end goal of safety in mind.

2.7. Clarification of Terms

Before I move into my research, I will define some key terms below and explain how I use these concepts in my thesis.

Race/Racialized

To unpack how I use race and racialized in the context of my work, I turn to Sunera Thobani (2007) who emphasizes how despite any notions of equality in a given space, “the racialized marking of the body cannot be overcome” (p.172). Race then poses a significant challenge to Canada’s image of a multicultural society that welcomes immigrants and refugees. Given the struggles of Indigenous communities in Canada, we cannot say race and colonialism are not seeped into every institution and governing body in this country, despite attempts to wipe away these histories by weaponizing the language of multiculturalism. This weaponization can be understood as racialization, in which an individual or group of people are being “raced.” Racialization can be noted in this case, as an act that is placed upon people of colour to suppress or highlight difference.

In any given space, no matter what the intention may be to stay true to certain principles of equity and diversity, racism is still felt by folks in subtle and sometimes obvious ways. Nowhere is this importance of race more evident than in the education system. Schools often reproduce societal inequities among children, and it is in the halls of a school where students may be introduced to racism and come to terms with the concept of race.

Marginalization

Marginalization refers to a spatial relationship in which people are pushed to the periphery based on their social identities. It ties to intersectionality, in which race, class, gender, and nation interact in compounding ways. The most influential body of work on gender–race intersectionality has emerged from Black feminist and multicultural feminist studies such as Hooks and Spivak. As highlighted by Spivak (1988) the “margins” are not so much about difference as they are about a silence within the central governing force that determines who can speak and listen. The often lack of acceptance or power by the hand of the centre is what maintains inequalities and marginal status. With youth and the media, while being denied a voice, youth are subjected to the media’s attempts to categorize them. This has placed them at the margins of mainstream coverage and in public education material. However, as Hooks (1990) points out, “marginality is not simply ‘a site of deprivation’ it can also be ‘the site of radical possibility” (p. 341). This

can be further linked to on the groundwork conducted by youth workers. Those who we as researchers consider marginalized, don't always feel marginalized. This can be sensed in the interviews with Safe Schools staff when discussing youth engagement and prevention programming.

Moral Panics

First coined by Stanley Cohen (1972), moral panic refers to the stigmatization of a certain group by external forces like the mass media, the public, or the police force. Generally, the response is an overreaction — when the offences are usually small. In his work, Cohen (1972) does not claim that the issue at hand is non-existent but that there is a disproportionate focus on this issue in which the targeting group represents a moral threat to community safety or to its values. This research will focus on the racialized moral panics that youth of colour are subjected to in the media's characterization of them. Moral panics highlight a crisis, in this case, crime and youth violence, point to the urgency of the matter; and finally, tend to be solutions-oriented.

> Moral panics 'are a means of orchestrating consent by actively intervening in the space of public opinion and social consciousness through the use of highly rhetorical and emotive language which has the effect of requiring that "something be done about it"' (McRobbie and Thornton 1995, p. 562).

This focus on "doing something" about the problem at hand will be a focus when analyzing community-based educational spaces in Surrey — and the moral panics used by the media, parents, and educators to justify their existence. For the purpose of this research, I will be discussing the specific panics in the media around increased immigration leading to crime as well as the notion that violence and drug use among young people is a vast and widespread issue in Surrey. Understanding moral panics as coined by Cohen (1972) in this case, is important because of Cohen's emphasis on how small offences are portrayed as vast and all-consuming.

Community-Based Educational Spaces

In the context of this thesis, community-based educational spaces (CBES), include afterschool programs, intervention programming, and partnerships with community-based youth organizations. These programs have a legacy of disrupting the patterns of inequity that exist for racialized youth (Baldridge et al., 2017). These spaces

provide an environment for young people to imagine beyond the borders of zero-tolerance policies, which can work to redefine their identity in relation to their community away from the harmful representations that are pushed by mainstream media coverage. However, although CBES have a history of disrupting patterns of inequity within schools, there is also the issue of precarity among these spaces, as they are often dependent on funding. This forced reliance on the state, institutions, other actors, etc. may enforce narratives that do not align with the organization's purposes. Therefore, although designed as critical spaces in which mentors discuss the importance of community building, positive role models, and service, it is important to note how these programs may also be spaces where inequality is reproduced (Baldridge et al., 2017). This may be because of the precarious relationship with the political economy and ties to funders that may have different ideologies or agendas, typically priorities focusing on surveillance and control or because of the complex issues of crime prevention that these spaces seek to remedy.

South Asian

This research focuses on South Asian youth in Surrey — primarily those belonging to the Punjabi diaspora. As such, it is important to unpack the term South Asian as an identifier, especially as it pertains to the media's characterization of South Asians in Canada historically.

The South Asian community in Canada numbers approximately 1,963,330 (Statistics Canada, 2016). The Canadian Government characterized South Asians as those born or with heritage from Pakistan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Most of the South Asian diaspora in British Columbia is concentrated around the Lower Mainland region (Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey, New Westminster). The first group of South Asians to immigrate to Canada were Punjabi Sikhs

The first wave of South Asian immigration to Vancouver took place in the late 1800s and early 1900s, prior to the beginning of the War (Indra, 1979). Approximately, 85 percent of South Asians that arrived during this time period were Sikhs from the state of Punjab (Indra, 1979). They numbered around 5,000 and were faced with hostility,

despite being relatively well off financially. Similarly, this thesis maps out how the essentialization and moral panic framework during this time is also present in the coverage of South Asian migration and settlement to Surrey and in the coverage of Surrey youth and education, with young people of South Asian background categorized as dangerous. This threat to society is then linked back to the community itself — something Yasmin Jiwani (2006) has observed in her research about the cultural essentialism evident in domestic violence coverage of racialized communities. In this thesis, the racialized panic that is brought forth by the mainstream news coverage examined works to create an environment in which policy can respond — in the form of prevention and intervention programming targeting Surrey youth.

2.8. Chapter Outline

This introduction represents Chapter 1 of this thesis. Chapter 2 outlines the concept of community-based educational spaces and traces the history of community programming in British Columbia. This serves as an important description that identifies the environment in that the Safe Schools Department was created. Additionally, through this explanation of community spaces in British Columbia, I identify key education reports that explain the issues that young people are facing in schools. I examine the targets listed in these reports and the rationale given for the implementation of community programs to identify how broader institutional forces like the government and school board categorize youth. This analysis highlights how community programs have historically formed as a result of real and imagined fears that ignite action. Finally, Chapter 2 analyzes the rationale Safe Schools gives for its creation given by the Surrey School Board in official documents. This rationale is linked to themes of adult mentorship, community building, and surveillance that are noted in the literature review of community-based educational spaces in this chapter.

Chapter 3 introduces the City of Surrey and South Asians in Canada, laying the groundwork for understanding the space in which Safe Schools operates. This chapter focuses on the racialization of South Asians in Canada, using early mainstream media newspapers that contain clearly racist depictions of South Asian workers in British Columbia. Analyzing this coverage highlights the process of othering and marginalization by the media. In many cases, this racial characterization is not explicit but can be decoded through an examination of public material. Therefore, by highlighting an

example this research sets up how these patterns have been reinforced in more recent media texts about South Asian youth in Surrey. Finally, the chapter explains how Surrey as a space has been routinely pushed to the margins through media texts and public understanding. This marginalization of the city has transferred to those who inhabit the space, which includes the primary focus of this thesis, young people in Surrey.

Chapter 4 concentrates on the intersection between media and public policy by examining how media coverage relates to the construction of youth and the development of policy – particularly how both policy and the media speak to one another. They do this through the media's ability to speak about policy initiatives to engage the public as well as how policy justifies programming by citing overarching themes discussed in the media, like instances of crime. The relationship between media and public policy leads into a discussion about moral panics, specifically how racialized moral panics are evident with Surrey youth and violence among young people in the City of Surrey being portrayed as a crisis within the media. This chapter highlights the urgency and measures that these moral panics evoke by identifying an example of a proposed solution of implementing drug dogs in Surrey schools — something that was debated by the School Board during the early 2000s, around the time Safe Schools was newly formed and expanding.

Chapter 5 includes a critical discourse analysis of mainstream newspaper coverage of Surrey, the South Asian community, and Surrey youth between the years 1990-2000, this time frame was chosen because during this period there was a lot of discussion taking place about youth crime in Metro Vancouver. In addition, the Safe Schools department was formed in 1998 as were other reports and initiatives within the BC education system involving bullying, youth crime, and community programming. The aim of this chapter is to examine the concentration of media coverage linking South Asian youth to crime and criminality, which builds on the examination of the relationship between media and public policy examined in Chapter 4. As pointed out by Altheide (2002), news coverage about crimes committed by young people has historically been sensationalized by the mainstream media. Having said this, with my critical discourse analysis, I trace how young people in Surrey were uniquely categorized as needing mentorship, intervention programs, and community support under the frame of racialized moral panics.

Chapter 6 examines Safe Schools programs through website analysis. This analysis leads into a discussion about how young people are discussed in this public marketing material — particularly, how young, racialized students are portrayed textually and visually. The goal of this chapter is to go beyond the discourse analysis of newspapers, but to analyze the community programs that Safe Schools runs to understand the discourse these websites present. I look at the specific programs and discuss to whom the text is aimed, what messages the programs push about young people, and how youth in Surrey are racialized by these programs in text or visually. A major theme of the chapter is how students and adult mentors are positioned as solutions to youth violence, bullying, and drug use in a discourse of responsibility. As Altheide (2002) explains, often when problems arise, there is a guilty party that assumes blame. This can be a school, parents, or youth. In this case, the responsibility discourse, I argue, points to the South Asian community, who the media points to as a key figure that must take responsibility and be active in solving the issue of youth crime. By pushing this responsibility, the South Asian community, through the process of encoding and decoding messages the media narrates, is positioned as the blaming party in a sense. Furthermore, in relation to the website material, this responsibility discourse is linked to the commodification of youth that Giroux (1998) emphasizes in his work. As such, youth are not only demonized but also invited to be active participants in the culture of consumer culture, or in this case, active in keeping their communities safe. The websites analyzed in Chapter 6 I argue are responsive to these discourses of responsibility, by persistently pushing messages of self-empowerment and individual responsibility as linked to the issue of school safety.

Chapter 7, the final chapter of the thesis works to go beyond textually and visual explanations of discourse about Surrey youth to analyze perspectives from those who work with students every day. By interviewing Surrey Schools staff, this chapter provides a fuller picture of the on-the-ground experience of those who work in education and community programming in Surrey. I argue that the program text examined, although works to highlight program success and aims, does not provide a complete picture of what staff do each and every day. Those who I spoke to have clearly thought about the young people they interact with, in terms of cultural sensitivity, racialization, and the importance of positive mentorship that does not criminalize young students who have already been stigmatized in the mainstream press. By illuminating these narrative

passages from workers who work within schools, I argue that these workers are aware of the discourses Safe Schools and the media deploy, specifically, solutions that involve individuated action. As a result, in addition to acknowledging such discourses, they also critically engage with their programs, combatted neo-liberal notions of safety, as they point to the community as vital in engaging young people. Through this critical work, these interviewees work to fight and work against feelings of alienation that students everywhere face within schools.

Chapter 3.

Bringing Mentors into Schools — Community Spaces as a Means Towards Safety

This chapter examines the concept of community-based educational spaces and the history of community programming in the context of British Columbia. These community programs are the focus of my thesis; therefore, it is important to break down the purpose they have historically served. In this chapter, I also trace the history of intervention programming in British Columbia through the examination of B.C. government reports on the state of education in the province and what it considers the main problems facing youth. By outlining the targets laid out by the provincial government, particularly in the late 1990s, the chapter details the rationale given for the creation of Safe Schools. Furthermore, I highlight the production of youth in the government reports and documents related to community programming, focussing on how young people are constructed in official documents and what issues these reports list as priorities within schools.

3.1. Introducing Community-Based Education

Community-based education spaces can include after-school programs or youth organizations that inform the development of young people outside of school hours (Baldridge et al., 2017). For Gilmore (2007), these spaces and programs are deeply impacted by constantly changing public policy and education, despite having the flexibility of not being a part of the mandated government curriculum. Although the definitions for community-based educational spaces vary, for this research, they are any program or space that is not directly regulated by the provincial school curriculum but seeks to foster a safe environment using mentorship as a prime method. According to Baldridge et al. (2017) community-based educational spaces have a history of disrupting patterns of inequity within schools as they create an environment in which racialized youth can thrive. However, despite the positives, community-based educational spaces in whatever their form are often dependent on funding, making them precarious. As argued by Baldridge et al. (2017) “this forced reliance on the state, institutions, other actors, etc. may enforce narratives that do not align with the organizations purpose” (p.

382). With this in mind, it is important to note how these intervention programs may also be spaces where inequality is reproduced due to this precarious relationship and certain ties to funders who may have different ideologies. A key example of this is the process of grant writing in which program staff may state the purpose of a program is to prevent crime or increase safety for young people, using a very authoritative and surveillance-heavy frame, but in actuality, the program details on the ground may differ entirely based on the values of the program leaders. This disconnect between what is written in the program agenda and what takes place when interacting with young people is an observation made by Jones & Deutsch (2013).

With Safe Schools, much of the public material focuses on the importance of adult mentorships and community spaces to engage young people. However, in some instances, such as with *PSST* (a website students can use to report bullying or harassment). This component of the program can be linked to the concept of anonymity that the program pushes to keep the identities of student reporters safe.

Further, on the topic of disconnection between program guidelines or grant material and what takes place on the ground, my experience as a recreational staff member for the City of Surrey has informed this observation as well. At the recreation centre I was working at, the purpose of an after-school program I ran was often recorded in public discourse and official description as serving to keep teenagers “out of trouble” or violent behaviour through its implementation. But often, this program served as not a means to conduct surveillance but as a space where young people could do their homework, play video games, or talk to one another without the structure of a classroom or program. My experience is described by Jones & Deutsch (2013) as a “second home” feature of many after-school programs in which afterschool programs with strong relationships between staff and participants often replicate positive features known to be a part of the ideal family environment (p. 132). Positive relationships, in this case, emerge not because of the physical characteristics of a site, but because of the shared experiences that foster the space. This type of relationship building, which constitutes a key feature of literature on community-based educational spaces will be further unpacked when analyzing interviews with teachers, youth workers, and Safe School staff.

For this thesis, I consider the prevention and intervention programs analyzed as community-based educational programs because of the ties to the community that Safe Schools advertises in its public material. The community and community members, in this case, act as key actors providing mentorship and input in the facilitation and public discussion of the programs. As a result, using the term community-based educational spaces is important in this research as it alludes to the strength and agency of the community in how to program is communicated through public material.

3.2. Youth Workers as Cultural Workers

A key component in my analysis of Safe Schools is examining how discourses about adult-youth mentorships are mediated in public program material. Youth workers are often peripheral from educational discourse as they don't directly impact the curriculum or what is typically taught to students during school hours. However, as highlighted by Baldridge (2018), those who work in community programming linked to educational institutions and the community hold an important role in the lives of young people. As argued by Ginwright (2007), "because many youth workers engage students outside of traditional school contexts, they are uniquely privy to the daily challenges youth encounter within their schools, neighborhoods, and in their homes" (p. 4). Those who work in these spaces take on a range of responsibilities and can be defined as cultural workers in this instance as they "create spaces and opportunities for young people to process and critique the social and political problems they encounter" (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002, p. 7). For those who work under the umbrella of Safe Schools, they are uniquely positioned with their access to students' lives at home, school, and within their neighbourhoods.

For Dill & Ozer (2019), those who work in community-based spaces can also provide a type of social capital for young people, especially for those who belong to marginalized communities. These adults can provide care to young people, serving as critical forces in often stigmatized communities. This type of self-esteem boosting is important in analyzing the external forces within the media that often mediate problematic discourses about Surrey youth. It is then youth workers who work within Safe Schools or one of its umbrella initiatives that are primed to respond to the reactions of students. As highlighted by Dill & Ozer (2019) "on an interpersonal level, social support and social leverage are two key forms of network-based social capital period

social support refers to capital that individuals can draw upon to “get by” or to cope with daily problems” (p. 1615).

3.3. Context of British Columbia

Within the context of British Columbia, the implementation of intervention and prevention programming has been a key focus for B.C. schools since the 1990s because of the idea that violence has escalated within schools compared to years prior. Therefore, the idea of adult mentors and community programs has been presented as a solution for this rise in violence. Using data from the provincial and federal reports on fostering a safe environment in schools, we can learn more about the environment that Safe Schools arose from and the key targets the government sought to fulfill during this time.

First, a B.C. government Auditor General’s report titled *Fostering a safe learning environment: how the British Columbia public school system is doing* (Office of the B.C. Auditor, 2001) provides recommendations for improving school safety and outlines some of the issues students and the education system in B.C. are facing.

> Recent media reports of incidents of violence in schools locally and around the world have raised public concerns about the ability of the school system to provide a safe learning environment. In this province, the Ministry of Education has responded with increased funding under the BC Safe Schools Initiative for programs aimed at reducing student aggression. Also, school districts have developed safe learning strategies to complement core curriculum and teacher in-service training intended to promote socially responsible behaviour (Office of the B.C. Auditor, 2001, p. 5).
>
> There are many outside factors that influence student behaviour in schools, notably early childhood development, family background and community influence, school connectedness, entertainment and the media, gender, race, culture, religion and developmental challenges (Appendix A). Schools have the challenge of dealing with the negative aspects of these factors when they contribute to aggression in the school setting (Office of the B.C. Auditor, 2001, p. 18).

The media reports of violence here are used as justification for new strategies and programs to be implemented to create a safer learning environment for students. The findings of the report take into consideration programs and cases of violence within schools that took place in the 1990s and highlight the strides that BC schools have taken

to mitigate this issue of aggression, which is noted as a key indicator of violence within schools.

> The ministry, school districts and schools need to do more to track student attitudes and behaviours as they relate to aggression. Only then will the school system be in a position to know whether money spent to improve the learning environment is properly focused on where it will do the most good (Office of the B.C. Auditor, 2001, p. 11).

The report then goes on to focus on an increase in dangerous behaviours that impact both school and community safety in the 1990s. Although media reports and cases are not directly mentioned in the report or cited, the report follows a trend of assuming youth violence is on the rise by using survey data and anecdotal evidence from school staff – ultimately used to justify the need for intervention.

Students surveyed on aggression levels in 1992 and early 1998 report no significant change in behaviours, except for drug use, which was reported to be on the rise. Educators surveyed in late 1999 also report increases in drug use, but say they are seeing more verbal and physical abuse, vandalism and theft, and signs of suicidal gestures and depression (Office of the B.C. Auditor, 2001, p. 46). According to the report, these results should not be interpreted as a failure of initiatives that have only recently been introduced, citing that more research and time is needed to monitor the impact of these programs.

As a result, despite this rise is violence, as cited throughout the report, the solution listed points to policy solutions in the form of intervention and prevention programs. Many of which include the presence of adult mentors spending more time within schools and using external community organizations to play a role in programming.

> School districts should find ways to improve the involvement of elementary school-ground supervisors in school initiatives to reduce aggression (Office of the B.C. Auditor, 2001, p. 46)

> Schools use a combination of strategies that are developed internally and those that are delivered with the help of outside agencies, such as local police and multi-cultural groups. We found that those running all year are better integrated into school curriculum and programs, which adds to the likelihood that they will influence student attitudes and behaviours (Office of the B.C. Auditor, 2001, p. 46).

Similarly, in the B.C government's report titled *Safe, Orderly, and Caring Schools* (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2008), policy measures and community involvement is emphasized greatly.

> While there is no question that British Columbia faces a serious problem with bullying, harassment and intimidation in its school system, there are many signs that suggest we have a great opportunity to address the problem. Acceptance and acknowledgement is key. Once our schools and communities face their fears and accept responsibility for these problems, we can find ways to make our schools safer. The challenge is to help both schools and communities develop or adopt programs that will work for them. It is imperative that schools and communities work together to solve these problems with the support of provincial agencies. Local solutions to address local problems are required; however, the supports must be in place to guide schools and communities." (Facing Our Fears – Accepting Our Responsibility Report of the Safe Schools Task Force, 2003 in British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 5)

The importance of adult mentorship and presence that is expressed by these documents transfers to local decisions made by Surrey Schools in the 1990s. For example, in a Surrey School Board Trustee meeting that took place on May 22, 1997, officials decided to set up a Safety Teams initiative to pair with Safe Schools because of the need to have mentors and adult staff present in the hallways.

> WHEREAS the Board believes that a strong adult presence in our secondary school hallways, etc., will assist in the monitoring of the students' activities, and therefore assist in the prevention of incidents involving violence or harassment (Surrey School Board, 1997, p. 3)

The language in these documents continuously reinforces the notion that aggression and harassment is escalating within schools and uses this escalation to present policy solutions in the form of prevention and intervention programming involving caring adults. The discourse of safety and crime mitigation that is communicated here links to the ways in which the programs themselves, like Safe Schools and its umbrella initiatives, discuss their aims. This will be examined when analyzing the public materials produced by a few Safe Schools programs.

Chapter 4.

South Asians in Canada and the Characterization of Surrey

This chapter briefly introduces the history of South Asians in Canada and traces how the portrayal of Surrey is linked to the symbolic violence ethnic and racialized groups have experienced by the media. The South Asian community and diasporic community in Surrey is mentioned here because these demographics have impacted how prevention and intervention programs tailor and address young people and their families. Therefore, the analysis of the media coverage of young people in Surrey and Surrey Schools was expanded in this thesis to include coverage of the South Asian community in the 1990s and early 2000s. This is because the three categories overlap and are undeniably connected in both proximity within the city, and because of programming targets set by the School District to be more culturally sensitive. This chapter sets up the media analysis of the South Asian community in Surrey during the 1990s and early 2000s by explaining the history of South Asian media representation in British Columbia.

Further, because this thesis centres around the youth in Surrey, I must discuss Surrey as a space in order to provide a full description about the environment and treatment of the place these systems — media, education, and justice — operate in. The emphasis on subjection and categorization is relevant when looking at how young, racialized people in Surrey are constructed in the media and public material relating to after-school programming. In many cases, this racial characterization is not explicit but can be decoded through an examination of public material, as this thesis undertakes. As Mike Males (1999) shows in his work, the press consciously and systematically distorts the facts about youth, whom he calls “the officially designated scapegoat of the 90s” (p. 288), to “frame” them.

4.1. South Asians in Canada

The explicit marginalization experienced by South Asian immigrants by the media highlights the legacy of racist reporting that has carried forward into the late 1990s in

subtle ways. Outlining the categorization that took place in this chapter highlights how the media has and continues to shape discourses about racialized bodies through its coverage. Early narratives of South Asians in Canada in the media marked the group as devious foreigners who threatened the racial homogeny of Vancouver. This construction of racialized difference in the mainstream press was met with public policy in 1908 which required all immigrants entering via Pacific ports to come through an uninterrupted journey from their country of origin (Indra, 1979). No such route existed from India, so immigration was halted. This legislation titled the Continuous Passage Act remained in place until 1947. It is important to note how exclusionary narratives within the mainstream press as noted above, worked to paint South Asians during this time as undesirable. This type of undesirability was used to push policies such as the Continuous Passage Act. These factors and narratives work to shape the relationship members of the South Asian diaspora have with their new home in terms of class, citizenship, and belonging. The role the media plays in weaving narratives of certain groups and shaping our reality will be discussed further in chapter 4. Since the late 1990s, approximately 30,000 Indians have immigrated to Canada each year (Agrawal & Lovell, 2010). In addition to addressing the history of South Asians in Canada, it is also important to analyze how Surrey as a space for settlement has created a unique environment within the South Asian diaspora, where certain narratives about South Asian youth have historically emerged. As outlined by Jiwani (2006):

> The issue of which community is racialized is central to how the media select groups and how the latter are framed. Skin colour is most often used as a sign of race, especially in North America and western European countries. The contrasting stories of immigrants and refugees from different countries of origin reveal that those who are raced and whose appearance differs from the dominant society are more likely to be subjected to racialized reporting, as opposed to those who racially blend in with the dominant society (p. 57).

As discussed by Yasmin Jiwani (2006) and Doreen Indra (1979), discourses about racialized communities have been distorted to fit a colonized and racist framework in which “racialized minority groups come under increasing scrutiny” and the “the liability of individual acts is quickly transferred to entire communities, which are then stereotyped and criminalized” (Jiwani, 2006, p. 59). This scrutiny and liability can be linked to prevention and intervention programming and the lengths that institutions such as

schools will take to implement methods where crime can be mitigated. School districts and governments attempt to be responsive to external narratives by deploying programming to control crime and manage public perception of safety.

4.2. Surrey: A Space in Constant Transition

Moving on from how the South Asian community has been historically racialized in media texts, as outlined in the previous section, this section analyzes how Surrey as a space has been shaped as inferior in public discourses. By tracing the characterization of Surrey as a space, we can find contradictions in Canada's official policy of multiculturalism, which claims to accept diversity and cultural harmony, but continues to mark racialized spaces and bodies as other. As Thobani (2007) points out, "the racialized marking of the body cannot be overcome, no matter the sophistication of one's deportment, the undetectability of one's accent, the depth of one's longing to belong" (p. 172). Young people in Surrey are found at the intersection of this displacement, particularly young, racialized bodies who are deemed a threat due to their position racially and as minors whose behaviour is sought to be managed.

Much of this characterization of Surrey as a space by the media can be analyzed by using the term "new racism" which is practiced through the assertion of certain images, narratives, and practices in Canada. This new racism is produced through a fear of a cultural difference, masked by a push for Canadian identity (Goldberg, 2009). Although Canada's official policy of multiculturalism claims to accept diversity and cultural harmony, diversity is only accepted if it can be used and commodified to endorse order. As argued by Stein (2007), Canada successfully celebrates cultural events and food, compared to actively fighting for the lives of minorized folk and immigrants that it has welcomed. In this sense, Canadians boast about the democratic values of justice and equality that this country has been built on, a notion that can be contested by diving through official historical records about the treatment of Indigenous people and immigrants, while continuing these practices of discrimination. The assertions that accompany the characterization of the Newton area of Surrey can be understood through the process of racialization. As argued by Robert Miles (1989), racism can be understood as broadly as being not solely linked to science but from a range of things such as stereotypes, folklore, and common sense. In this

sense, the racialization of minoritized groups in Canada is constantly taking new forms in both media discourse and institutional policy.

Geographically, the City of Surrey is the third largest city in British Columbia, with six main communities: Cloverdale, Fleetwood, Guildford, Newton, South Surrey, and Whalley. In terms of population, it is the second-largest municipality with a population of 568,322 recorded in 2021. The City of Surrey is home to a large South Asian population. According to the 2021 Census, the number of Surrey immigrants who spoke Punjabi most often at home was greater than the number of people that spoke the other four common home languages combined. Surrey was chosen as a site for this research not only due to the large South Asian population that has settled within the space over the years but also because of the narratives of exclusion and degeneracy that have marked Surrey through media discourse and public opinion.

Patterns of settlement for immigrants tend to vary depending on several factors, including cultural and economic factors such as ethnic belonging and affordable housing. In Canada, the majority of immigrants have chosen to settle in urban areas such as Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal. In Canada, 70 percent of new immigrants between the years of 2001 and 2006 chose to settle in the three urban centres mentioned above (Teixeira, 2014). Newcomers often face a range of barriers, including housing affordability, finding a sense of belonging, and language accessibility. In the case of Vancouver, it is important to note that although it has remained an important entry point for new immigrants, including those of South Asian origin, the surrounding cities, also known as “satellite suburbs,” have become key spaces for immigrants to build community. Throughout the years, Surrey has emerged as one of these key suburban municipalities that immigrants have chosen to call home.

The City of Surrey is the fastest-growing city in the Lower Mainland and over the years media discourse and narratives have led to certain perspectives about those who inhabit the space. In his work, *The racialization of space: Producing Surrey*, Gurpreet Johal (2007) explores the dynamics of oppression within a specific space through official discourses and regulatory measures. Johal (2007) unpacks how two key historical sources about the production of Surrey titled The Surrey Story and The Surrey Pioneers, ignore the role of racialized bodies as key figures in its history and development.

> "In the story of the production of Surrey, the space of humanity is reserved solely for those white pioneers who had names and stories to tell. Bodies of colour are relegated to the wilderness, as the land on which Surrey stands (Kwantlen and Semiamhoo First Nations as the land that needed settling) and as the tools used to develop Surrey (immigrants from Asia as the animals used to break the land)." (Johal, 2007, p. 185)

By ignoring or omitting the role of Indigenous communities and Asian immigrants in this space, the narrative that racialized bodies have recently moved into Surrey has been solidified over the years. I grew up in an area of Surrey known as Strawberry Hill. Growing up we would often joke about how there were once strawberries that grew where our homes were now built. In actuality, this area has a rich history, where Japanese pioneers created a space where they built their farms to avoid racist hiring practices by white settlers. The farms and land that was acquired over the years by these Japanese families was eventually taken away during the 1940s as folks were forced into internment camps. Now, the area has a large concentration of South Asians who have built a community in the Strawberry Hill region. The historical contributions of Japanese and Indigenous folk in Surrey have been wiped in official narratives and within own social imaginary as residents of Surrey:

> "The fact that bodies of colour existed when the history of Surrey began is important to remember because it helps disrupt the myth that the migration of bodies of colour to Surrey is something new." (Johal, 2007, p. 186)

Analyzing the history of Surrey and the people who have occupied the space is important to understand how the city has been marked in media discourse and within public consciousness. As highlighted by Johal, 2007, "the symbolic and material borders that map the landscapes of Surrey into zones of respectability and degeneracy are constantly being negotiated, adhered to, and contested by those who live in Surrey" (pg. 182). How space is constructed are simultaneously objective and subjective. In the context of Surrey, different areas are accompanied by different cultural meanings that have developed over the years. South Surrey has been marked as affluent which produces a specific understanding of those who inhabit the space. On the other hand, the Newton area of Surrey, where much of this research is conducted, is home to a large South Asian population and has been characterized in official discourse as having an issue of crime and safety.

There is also a class component when it comes to the racialization of space and particular groups. There has been a history of racialization that has manifested within Canada's labour market linked to immigration and the categorization of racialized bodies (Bolaria & Li, 1988). Despite racial minorities and immigrants being integral in the development of Canada's economy, many jobs, including domestic, factory, and farm labour have been racialized. In addition, the space itself, including houses has been racialized.

Discussion, for example, about real estate in the Lower Mainland use the term "mega-houses" to point to the increase of South-Asian homeowners in Surrey. In its reporting of the flow of white families moving out of Richmond in the early 1990s, the Vancouver Sun interviewed a family who states that the increase in Chinese immigration, and what the Smith's described as "crowded malls" in Richmond, caused them to move to Surrey.

> They moved to Surrey, to a "nice little house." The neighborhood was more like the Richmond they had known. Then all of a sudden," Marla said, "the neighborhood was full of big mega-houses" (McMartin, 1993, 15 November: B1).

The use of including the term "mega-houses" is common in the coverage of housing and immigration. The articles examined most often associated these mega-houses with Chinese and South Asians, pointing to a disruption in landscape and the displacement of white neighbours. Coverage like this is not neutral and works to paint a picture of the City of Surrey and therefore those who inhabit this space. The role of the media in this meaning making process will be discussed further in the next chapter, in terms of how it has impacted the public understanding of Surrey in comparison to other spaces in the Lower Mainland.

Relating to the concept of new racism, this thesis seeks to examine how the media and public program material about youth programming construct young people, and how race might be subtly inserted in this material. Surrey, and how it is constructed holds a lot of meaning when it comes to understanding how young people in the city are positioned in the media. This framing and positioning links to larger narratives about moral panics, violence, and immigration. These themes will be further unpacked in the next chapter through an explanation of how policy and media intersect, and further in a critical discourse analysis of mainstream media coverage of Surrey.

Chapter 5.

Public Policy and the Media

In this chapter, I discuss the relationship between public policy and the media, particularly how media coverage relates to the construction of youth and the development of policy. My intention is not to outline a causal relationship between the media examined and educational policy impacting Surrey Schools, but to examine how policy has historically been responsive to the media in the literature examined and to unpack common themes between the coverage and issues regarding youth crime and safety management. This research on the link between public policy and the media will therefore lay the foundation for my discourse analysis on mainstream representations of young people in Surrey, the South Asian community, and intervention and prevention programming in schools.

5.1. Defining Youth

As outlined by Giroux (1996), youth have often been the object of public analysis in the media through coverage that equates youth activity to violence, and in public policy where youth are construed as a problem to be solved, instead of a group of people with certain needs, opinions, and identities. When defining youth, Grossberg (1994) emphasizes that "youth cannot be represented, for it is an identity largely defined by and for the adults who, in a variety of ways, invest in it and use it to locate themselves" (p. 26). When it comes to constructing youth in public material, they have become an easy target for public discourse in which the dual strategies of scapegoating and commodifying are present. Young people in this case are seen as objects to be feared and managed but simultaneously propped up and constructed as a commodity to be targeted or "sold" to an aging population as outlined by cultural theorists like Henry Giroux (1998) and Larry Grossberg (1994). From a policy perspective, young people are often left out of the discussion, with their input rarely being highlighted. Therefore, when it comes to preventive and intervention programming within schools it is important to unpack how youth are constructed in policy papers, program material, and the media because this often shapes public perception of the young people these programs seek to engage.

5.2. Public Policy and the Media

The link between mass media and public policy can often be unclear, considering public policy forms over an extended period of time and the media doesn't often cover topics for a sustained period. For policy to take form into concrete programming or action it can take a long time – whereas the media frenzy around an issue can disappear quickly. Public opinion is one of the most obvious links between media and the implementation of public policy. According to Herbst (1998), policymakers have characterized the media and what it produces as a shortcut to unpacking public opinion about a certain issue or event. In addition, policymakers often assume that the public is heavily swayed by what they consume in the news media. As a result, adapting policy based on what issues are covered in mainstream media is a method to adjust to what is assumed to be the priorities of the mass public or electorate. The response to the media can differ in terms of the policy as it can be confined to symbolic gestures. In other cases, what is covered in the media can often alter certain proposals and programs to adapt to an assumed public opinion. The heightened focus on safety observed in Surrey during the late 1990s and early 2000s as examined in this research is in line with Burns & Crawford's (1999) research on school shootings. First, the public becomes concerned, which is highlighted by the various provincial reports on bullying and safety I found, the media then cover the story which gets the public involved. Next, officials and representatives react by taking a tough stance on the issue and the media covers this tough position (Burns & Crawford, 1999).

When it comes to the education system, we cannot assume that schools are isolated structures within our communities. Educational policy and young people are both impacted by popular culture and the media, specifically when it comes to the topic of cultural reproduction and the programming within schools. The media that young people consume in this case, can be referred to as a lived curriculum in which forces external to the school environment are brought forth (Dimitriadis & McCarthy, 2000). The media is also a key educating force for young people to understand difference. According to Dimitriadis & McCarthy (2000), "the vast field of meaning making [has been] opened, in which the tasks of educating about group differences, the management of diversity, etc. have been absorbed within an ever-expanding arena of simulation generated by and through electronic mediation" (p. 173). With this, discourses about

racialized youth that are being mediated and therefore consumed, combined with the media's impact on policy or public opinion make it an important factor that has both symbolic and structural repercussions.

Edelman (1988) examines how public policy and discourses about youth in the media are intertwined. His work looks at the media's vital role in the construction of a political spectacle, also known as a "meaning machine of alternative realities" (p. 26). The media uses anxieties and concerns about certain issues to create what Edelman (1988) characterizes as a political spectacle, to create support for a policy decision. According to Edelman (1988) language and discourse play a vital role in how a problem is named, the emotion involved, and what information is included in terms of statistics and facts. The selection of details works to define events as crisis needing to be solved, which in turn pushes media discourse out of symbolic impact to a political issue to be solved by public policy. "A crisis, like all news developments, is a creation of the language used to depict it; the appearance of a crisis is a political act, not a recognition of a fact or a rare situation" (Edelman, 1988, p. 31). Crises, according to Edelman, "typically rationalize policies that are especially harmful to those who are already disadvantaged" (p. 31). This echoes what media scholars such as Yasmin Jiwani and Stuart Hall echo about how the careful selection of facts within news stories works to construct a specific narrative about racialized bodies such as their worthiness as victims (Jiwani, 2006) and their placement within society (Hall, 1997).

Concerning this thesis matter, violence among young people in the City of Surrey is portrayed as a crisis, questioned constantly by the media in which solutions are demanded by the public. As discussed above by Edelman, newspapers, television, and radio play an important role in mediating reality. Anderson (2007) unpacks how when used to promote special interests, the media changes how society understands control and democratic participation when it comes to educational policy decisions. "Moral panic" for instance, is a prime example of this. When it comes to youth crime rates, they are declining since the 90s as pointed by Anderson (2007). However, although the presence of physical violence in schools is not as high as perceived by the public, its obsession with crime, also labelled as a moral panic, has real implications for education policy and crime prevention. Moral panic is an important topic I will be examining when it comes to mediated discourses about South Asian youth in Surrey; and it can be linked to

Edelman (1988) and his characterization of media as a meaning making machine of alternative realities which in turn impact educational policy.

Another way in which policy and the media are intertwined is the fact that the media is the way in which the public first learns about educational policy. As Blackmore and Thorpe (2003) argue, "the media, in the privileging of some discourses and not others, [mediates] policy" (p. 578). Blackmore and Thorpe (2003) emphasize this relationship between media, public knowledge, and policy in their work:

> The media is also the means by which educational policy most often becomes known to the public – and indeed to professionals within the field itself. The media plays an active part in constructing particular readings both of and for policy. Feminists, for instance, have pointed to the recent cases of the backlash against feminism and the 'what about the boys?' discourses as evidence of the power of the media to generate significant shifts in policy and resources away from girls to boys by generating a moral panic about the 'underachievement' of boys (p. 278).

Mainstream media taps into educational discourse to situate certain policies so they can be understood (Blackmore & Thorpe, 2003). Examples of this can be breaking down intervention programming within schools, linking them to what is happening in society, like youth crime, bullying, increase in social media, etc. as a way in which the public can understand why policy makers have put public funding towards a program. By using specific common language and events such as shootings or teen deaths to educate the public about policy the media works to simplify youth intervention programming in schools for public consumption. For Kupchick & Bracy (2009), "over the past several decades, schools have implemented strict security measures and policies designed to prevent school crime, apprehend school offenders and punish them severely (p. 152). Evidence of how media has shaped public policy can be examined using the example of school shootings in the United States and the reciprocal chain of events that often follows:

> The public is concerned; the media cover the story; the public's concern is compounded by the intense media coverage; the public then demands action from government representatives; officials and representatives react by taking a tough stance on the issue; the media covers this tough stance; and this further legitimizes the problem of school violence. The result is more punitive policies and punishments for juveniles (Burns and Crawford,1999 in Kupchick & Bracy 2009, p. 152).

> Therefore, the continuous mention of crime rates among youth rising can work to "legitimate the use of these policies and punishments by constructing school crime as a growing problem in need of aggressive interventions" (Kupchick & Bracy 2009, p. 152).

The interventions that follow this media coverage, whether they be punitive or positively centring young people, can include the creation focussed departments, like in the case of Safe Schools, or focus on surveillance via external contractors.

> With large amounts of dollars available, a business that once served private investigators, retail companies, and corporate security details has found an entirely new customer base: schools and government funds. Capitalizing on the fears of citizens, and the policy changes that attempt to alleviate these fears, is big business. Companies not only compound the fears through advertising, but also shape the types of solutions that are offered (Killingbeck, 2001, p. 196).

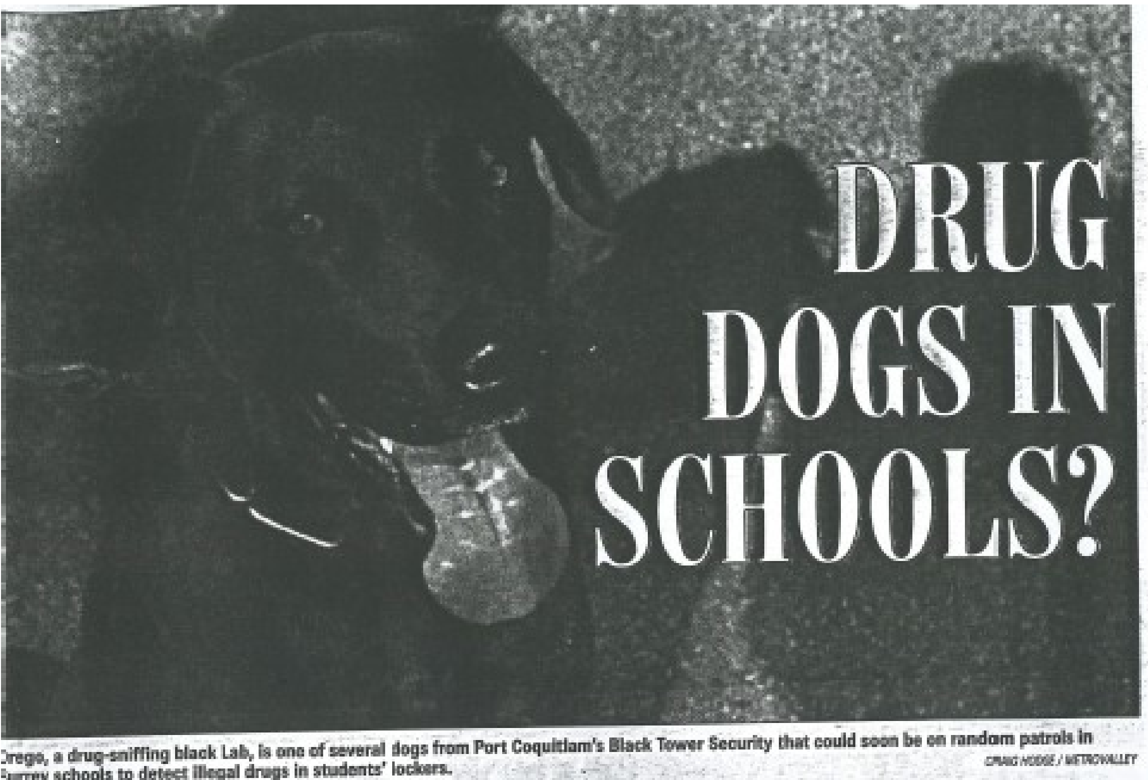

Figure 1 Screenshot of Surrey Leader published October 30, 2002

The attempt to introduce drug-sniffing dogs in schools during the early 2000s by Surrey politicians is an example of what Killingbeck outlines in his work regarding the capitalization of fear. In this case, Port Coquitalm's Black Tower Security was introduced to the debate about implementing drug dogs in elementary and high schools in South

Surrey. Although this attempt was not successful, the media attention it received as well as the fact that this debate occurred in the first place highlights the heightened panic that was present about the potentially illegal activities young people were engaged in, which in this case happened to be drug use.

The connection between policy and the media, in this case, is clear, with the media being used to inform the public about certain policy debates taking place as well as informing public policy itself with respect to issues of high concern amongst the public. The media, therefore, plays a vital role in shaping public policy. In the case of the drug dog debate, this tough stance is outlined by the “no-tolerance policy” mentioned in the article. Additionally, the characterization of school violence perpetrators as being wholesome, as having come from good families and good communities, reiterates the message that no one and no place is insulated from the reach of school violence, this is emphasized in the passage about how it the economic background of a student’s parents is irrelevant as drug use impacts all youth. As Cohen (1972) describes, these descriptors characterize school violence, or in this case, drug use, as being able to happen anywhere. Furthermore, when it comes to the role of media, the portrayal of school crime as bad and getting worse in news articles, as found in this case, may legitimate the use of these policies and punishments by constructing school crime as a growing epidemic that needs to be fought with aggressive interventions. This framework of moral panics and urgency is key to understanding how the media characterizes young people in Surrey as well as the South Asian community — with crime among racialized, South Asian youth, pushed heavily as a serious issue that can be linked to the community and City itself and needs to be met with immediate solutions.

Chapter 6.

Constructing Youth: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Mainstream Newspapers

As outlined in Chapter 4, public policy and the media are in conversation with one another. With the media being used to inform the public about certain policy debates taking place, and public policy changing over the years as a result of media coverage that cites widespread public concern about certain issues. Building off this examination of media and public policy, the focus of this chapter is to examine the concentration of media coverage linking South Asian youth to crime and criminality. As outlined by Giroux (1998) young people have often been an easy target for public discourse in both policies and the media as a scapegoat for violence. The excessive coverage and amplification of youth crime and deviance is a common trend in the 1990s among the mainstream media. As a result, this media amplification when it comes to young people, specifically, racialized youth, has historically contributed to the presence of moral panics, with certain groups demonized and labelled as dangerous. In the context of intervention and prevention programing, institutions such as schools are often responsive to what is taking place in the media, a connection emphasized by Burns & Crawford (1999).

This thesis seeks to understand how young people in Surrey are constructed in public material, with this in mind this chapter uses critical discourse analysis to understand the themes that emerge through a series of newspaper articles about South Asian youth and about how prevention programs in Surrey are constructed as a solution in the media, emphasizing the relationship between public policy and the media. Given the connection between policy, discourse, and the media, we cannot assume that schools can be studied as isolated and autonomous structures. This is why discourse about young people in the mainstream media is important to understand as it plays a role in the construction of young people and their role in crime. Furthermore, the media's characterization of other social problems like immigration informs public understanding of what solutions are needed to mitigate the threats communicated. As a result, the discourse analysis of the media is important in deciphering how young people are constructed as it concerns social issues like youth crime. When it comes to the connection between the media, youth, and community-based programming, public fear

in this case often points to solutions that are surveillance based, such as the case of drug dogs mentioned in the previous chapter. However, public fear can also point to a more holistic programming need, based on a model that prioritizes the hiring of caring, adult mentors and the implementation of social support. The implementation of this type of model, created as a result of real and imagined fears, will be discussed in the news material collected in this chapter, and in the Safe Schools programs analyzed Chapter 6.

Over the past three decades, nearly two hundred South Asian men aged 16-30 years old have died as a result of what has been characterized as a wave of gang violence in the Lower Mainland, British Columbia. Forums, community prevention programs, and federal reports have been organized to understand this phenomenon of youth violence. According to an online poll conducted by Ipsos Reid in 2006, 62% of the 8,431 Canadians who responded believed that racialized and ethnic groups were the most responsible for crime compared to white Canadians (Bridge & Fowlie, 2006). Within this poll, South Asians, referred to as Indo-Canadians, were ranked as the ethnic group responsible for driving the issue of gang violence. According to a study conducted by Gordon (1994) however, 40% of incarcerated gang members in British Columbia were of European decent and around one third were of Asian descent. These statistics do not add up to the notion that organized violence amongst young people in British Columbia is a uniquely South Asian phenomenon.

Most citizens receive information about social problems from claims makers, like politicians, journalists, and policy experts whose duty it is to inform the public about these issues (Kupchik & Bracy, 2009). Despite this, biases, ignorance, and hidden agendas often distort how these experts report on problems and what information they choose to report (Altheide, 2002). The result is often the creation of public fear about issues, like in this case violence within schools and the community by youth, that do not directly impact most people (Altheide, 2002). As outlined by Kupchik & Bracy, (2009), “sociologists have shown how public concern about drug use during the 1980s and 1990s was stoked by political rhetoric and media reporting; this public anxiety, in turn, legitimated the “war on drugs” and fueled panic about the crack epidemic” (p. 137). This public anxiety is exemplified by the Surrey School Board’s push to implement drug-sniffing dogs in elementary and high schools throughout the city, as noted in the previous chapter. These anxieties, I argue, are not limited to drug use among students

nor do they apply to all groups equally — but have a distinct racialized component in the coverage of social issues with ethnic and racialized communities being targeted.

6.1. Constructing Realities — The Role of News Media

News coverage about crimes committed by young people, in general, has historically been sensationalized by the mainstream media. Often, the coverage of these cases presents a key problem and group of individuals for society and the government to manage. Henry Giroux (2000) emphasizes that this special importance that the media plays in characterizing young people has led to “an essentialist representation of youth” (1996, p. 36). This essentialism is more pronounced when it comes to racialized youth who belong to communities that have historically been categorized and othered. In this case, adolescence innocence is granted to White, middle- or upper-class youth:

> “The notion of childhood innocence comes into play in media coverage of youth, it is generally applied only to White, middle-class youth. Some of the most compelling examples of this can be found in news coverage of the Columbine High School shootings, which were accompanied by headlines announcing: “If It Could Happen Here, Many Say, It Could Happen Anywhere” or questioning “How Could This Happen?” The implication being how could this happen here (i.e. in White, middle-class suburbia)?” (Giroux, 2000 in Mazzarella, 2005, p. 233).

Regarding the coverage analyzed in this chapter, much of the focus is on the overarching nature of crime in Surrey and the notion that it can be conducted by anyone, economically and socially privileged White youth, like the case of drug dogs in South Surrey. In coverage about drug and alcohol usage amongst teenagers in Surrey, much of the coverage examined in this chapter highlights public concern about how even in the most affluent, middle-class areas in Surrey, teenagers are still participating in deviant activities.

As outlined in the media coverage examined, special attention is paid to the South Asian community in Surrey in the media coverage, with prominent thought leaders, parents, and community figures often quoted — emphasizing the close relationship between the community and youth crime during this time period. Concering this, Renisa Mawani argues that despite public perception having no basis in factual data, perceptions are what drive material implications on the lives of many individuals (Bridge & Fowlie, 2006). Negative stereotypes and increased coverage of violence within

the South Asian community have real consequences, socially in the framing of racialized bodies, as well as with the implementation of community programming and political policy. It is important to analyze the role of the media in delivering community perceptions of violence because much of the data about instances of youth crime that the public receives comes from the mainstream news media.

This chapter presents research from a discourse analysis of Canadian print representations of violence and policy about young people within Surrey Schools with a focus on representations of South Asian youth offenders in the mainstream news media. In addition, it offers key thematic analyses of the news coverage mentioned above. Critical discourse analysis is used to examine media representations of South Asian youth in the Lower Mainland, with a special focus on the City of Surrey, one of the largest South Asian diasporas in Canada, and coverage of Surrey Schools. In the discourse analysis, I examine coverage in mainstream news publications from 1990-2010[1], a period when the media in Canada was extensively discussing crime among South Asian youth, and when new intervention and prevention programs were being introduced within the City of Surrey and Surrey Schools.

6.2. Overview of Critical Discourse Analysis as a Method

Critical discourse analysis was selected to analyze the selected media texts due to its ability to unpack how racialized identities are categorized within mainstream media. In the context of my research, this is related to the media's ability to categorize students in Surrey and Surrey itself as dangerous and frame issues surrounding youth violence as endemic and therefore needing urgent solutions in the form of community programming.

By using critical discourse analysis, one can understand how certain narratives and ideologies are produced as "common sense." As defined by Henry & Tator (2002):

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[1] The reason that 1990-2010 was chosen as the timeframe for this discourse analysis was because this was the period in which community programs tailored to youth in schools were emerging in, and examines the discursive context through which these programs took shape. Though not possible within the scope of this specific project, a more sustained CDA is needed of the current time period beyond 2010 to contextualize the nature of the current environment of community programming in Surrey schools.

> "Critical discourse analysis of language and text provides a tool for deconstructing the ideologies of mass media and other elite groups and for identifying and defining social, economic, and historical power relations between dominant and subordinate groups" (p. 72).

Fairclough (2013) emphasizes that there are three components to critical discourse analysis: (1) the description of text, (2) the interpretation of the interaction processes and their relationship, (3) explanation of how the interaction process relates to social action. Furthermore, Fairclough (2013) focuses on the multi-dimensional aspect of a media text, with CDA as a means to understand the different social and cultural structures that are reproduced through narratives and stories. As noted by van Dijk (1997), the choice of text is key when analyzing media discourse

> "There is meaning behind each selection which input meaning into topics that may potentially be neutral. Under this selection, analyzing who is quoted or consulted, what headlines are used, and what themes are reoccurring is a key component of CDA." (van Dijk, 1997, as cited in Henry & Tator, 2002, p. 75)

Although neutrality and objectivity are key pillars of journalism, the views and choices of journalists and editors have proven to paint a picture of certain social issues. As explained by Henry & Tator (2002), "journalists and editors select what readers will get to read; and by combining the information that they do include in a certain manner, they also influence how it will be interpreted" (p. 75). This selection applies to quotations, who is consulted in a story, headlines, etc. As a result, by conducting CDA to a group of media sources over a period of time, certain reoccurring themes, assertions, and narratives about a group of people or specific topics can be mapped out. By conducting a discourse analysis of news coverage of Surrey youth, schools, and the City broadly this thesis is mapping out certain themes related to community-based programming in Surrey.

> The very act of decoding these discourses of racial violence contributes to a mapping of the values, norms, and practices around which these discourses are organized. In so doing, possible sites of intervention can be explored, whether these afford momentary or enduring changes. On an individual level, media monitoring raises consciousness (Jiwani, 2006, p. 59)

> Critical discourse analysis has been used by several scholars to understand the categorization of racialized folk by the media. Media representations work to normalize certain ideologies or world views that society has (Hall, 1997).

Thompson & Ungerleider (2004) focus on the mechanism which is used by Canadian news organizations to create and sustain the narratives and images regarding minorities. They argue that along with under-representation there has historically been an issue of misrepresentation when it comes to the characterization of racialized folk in Canada. For Thobani (2007):

> Differences between nationals and outsiders are exaggerated, even as the commonalities within these groupings are inflated. National subjects who fail to live up to the exalted qualities are treated as aberrations; their failings as individual and isolated ones. The failings of outsiders, however, are seen as reflective of the inadequacies of their community, of their culture, and, indeed, of their entire 'race.' Conversely, their successes are treated as individual and isolated exceptions (p. 7).

When situating South Asian youth violence in this context, the mention of crime in the media is linked to the community, instead of pointing to any systemic issues that cause crime to escalate. Furthermore, has been a shift in the way racism presently manifests in contemporary media content. This form of racism, also coined as new or modern racism is constantly evolving to label racialized groups in Canada, by not denying their existence or the fact that Canada is diverse, but by feeding certain images of racialized communities to the public as natural. Entman (1990), argues that modern racism can be defined as "an updated and somewhat veiled form of anti-black racism" (p. 333). Its existence rests on the assumption that "racism is dead and that racial discrimination no longer inhibits black achievement" (Entman, 1990, p. 333). Similarly, Hall (1981) uses the term "inferential racism" to unpack those "naturalized representations of events and situations relating to race" that characterize racialized groups (p. 101). These common-sense narratives can be linked to their ideological foundations that a critical discourses analysis can highlight.

> "Ideologies tend to disappear from view into the taken--for--granted "naturalized" world of common sense. Since (like gender) race appears to be "given" by Nature, racism is one of the most profoundly "naturalized" of existing ideologies." (Hall, 1981, p. 101)

Ideologies, in this case, racism, "predate[s] individuals, and form[s] part of the determinate social formations and conditions into which individuals are born." Media is a powerful tool that helps us "make sense" of the world and those who inhabit it (Hall, 1981, pg. 101). However, the media's attempt to categorize certain groups, in this case, young people can lead to a misconstruction because youth themselves are not afforded

a voice. This is highlighted by Larry Grossberg (1994, p. 25) who describes youth as "the most silenced population in society."

These forms of misrecognition, control, and silence, however, can be subtle and appear as "normalized" characterizations of certain groups or communities devoid of harm. According to Doreen Indra (1979), "newspapers have had a profound impact on ethnic individuals, to the extent that it has fundamentally modified their notions of where they fit into society" (p. 186). These consequences can be seen in the work of Kelly (1998), where she analyzes the experience of Black Canadian high school students who emphasized their reliance in the media as sources for their identities. As such, I argue that through its coverage, the media attaches meanings of deviance and criminality to racialized students in Surrey. Furthermore, by identifying a void of positive intervention for youth, the media simultaneously creates an environment for Safe Schools to flourish.

6.3. My Methodological Approach

As mentioned, the critical discourse analysis of language and text provides a tool for deconstructing the ideologies of mass media and other elite groups and for identifying and defining social economic, and historical power relations between dominant and subordinate groups (Hook, 2001). It is a type of method that focuses on how social power, dominance, and inequality are produced reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political arenas of society which strongly aligns with my project objectives and focal points. As noted by Hook (2001), critical discourse analysis does more than analyze the social origins of linguistic forms, it also considers those sets of social relations ordered by a particular discourse. I will assess how the media defines crime, what events it focuses on, and how it portrays Surrey youth.

This research examines the key structuring and argumentative strategies used within the media sources selected. In this sense, the headlines, body text, statistics, and figures selected are of importance during the analysis. This includes headlines such as "School safety begins in the community: Recent stabbing of a vice-principal is a warning that we must reduce danger for students, teacher" (Herron, 1996) or "Help sought as Surrey school vandalism rises" (Sieberg, 2000). As well as statistics the media includes about youth and their perspectives on safety — "only 51 percent of Grade 8 students felt safe at school (Herron, 1996). This mirrors the strategy used by Harding (2006) in his

analysis of Indigenous representation in the Canadian news media as well as Doreen Indra's (1979) work of analyzing representations of South Asians in the mainstream press in British Columbia through a comparative approach. A weakness of critical discourse, however, can be the overgeneralization of groups of people under review (Jiwani, 2006). In this sense, it is important to clarify that this research is not trying to oversimplify the representations of the South Asian community in Surrey as well as other minoritized groups but to highlight the systemic essentialization that takes place within mainstream media discourse in the characterization of young people in Surrey. I am interested in analyzing how the media group's stories they are presenting, and the processes involved in choosing specific discourses to present to the public.

The research is based on a discourse analysis of 106 news articles published in Canadian mainstream press publications such as The Vancouver Sun, The Province, The Globe and Mail. The sample was gathered from a Factiva Dow Jones and ProQuest–Canadian Newsstream database search of "South Asian youth" and/or "Surrey Schools." The timeframe of the news articles is from 1990-2010. This frame was selected because it begins six years before the creation of Safe Schools, to the early 2000s, when the department was implementing new programs as a response to youth violence. Of these, most news articles focused on safety and crime management coverage (31), gang violence (24), institutional racism within schools and society (12), intergenerational cultural clashes (12), community prevention and support programming (10), immigration (10), and positive stories (7) which often included coverage of South Asian sports tournament or music festivals for young people. The safety and crime management coverage focused on strategies to improve safety within the school and the community and includes tactics and methods.

In addition, the immigration category was very closely intertwined with the category of gang violence and safety and crime management, as the stories offer an analysis of the demographic shifts in Surrey and the Lower Mainland due to immigration. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this research, I use insights from critical race theory and feminist media studies for the analytical framework. According to Hall (1980), the analysis of discourse is meaningful because of the process of encoding by the message producers and decoding that takes place by the message receivers, in this case, the newspaper readers. This type of cultural studies perspective is beneficial as it values the choice of words used to describe individuals and events.

6.4. Analysis

Dominant Narratives: Fear, Panic, and Safety Management

The sample of articles analyzed portrays crime as a serious issue or as getting worse, emphasizing the severity of this issue in Surrey. As researched by Anderson (2007), these types of media responses to school violence or violence within the community fit within a moral panic framework, given that the stories describe evildoers, in this case, young people in Surrey or immigrants who have caused a threat to the natural order by bringing danger to what should be a safe haven. For Altheide (2002), this constant negative discourse about crime being linked to a specific group is used by the mass media to perpetuate public fears.

Throughout the sample of collected newspaper coverage, there is a common idea that crime committed by young people and gang violence is not only increasing but moving away from Vancouver and to the suburbs. Although the City of Surrey is not a central focus in many articles about the increase in crime, the influx of articles during this period about suburban crime provides context to the central messages about crime during this time period. This type of documentation is more common in the articles collected from the early 1990s.

> The criminal activity of Vancouver's street gangs is spreading into Lower Mainland suburbs and Fraser Valley communities, a police officer said Thursday. Gang members are moving out of Vancouver with their families because they can no longer afford to live in the city, said Vancouver police Cpl. Steve Hess, a member of the police academy at the Justice Institute of B.C (Hall, 1991, 31 May: B1)

The discourse perpetuated here points to the transition of crime from urban to suburban. Thus, positioning Surrey and surrounding cities as spaces for ‘deviant activity’ at the hands of young people.

Multiple stories point to a wave of youth violence and acts of vandalism and theft that requires a community response, most often included in the coverage of local forums and school dialogues about youth crime. There is a clear sense of urgency evident in the majority of the coverage. The discourse used here is very similar to what has been noted in the literature about moral panics. According to Cohen (1972), moral panics consist of periods in time where “a condition, episode, person or group of persons [emerge] to

become defined as a threat to societal values and interests" (pg.1). As a result, experts' surface within the mainstream press to provide their diagnoses and solutions (Cohen, 1972). In many of the articles collected the discourse present can be characterized as alarmist, pointing to young people as more dangerous than ever.

> "Every community we go into people say: 'Youth. They're the worst problem we've got. We're afraid of them and we don't know what to do." (Hume & Munro, 1992, 24 October: B1).
>
> Patti Pearcey, coordinator of the B.C. Coalition for Safer Communities, said violent youth crime is a problem around the province. There seems to be a more widespread randomness to the violence. It's a huge concern," she said (Hume & Munro, 1992, 24 October: B1).

Here, not only does the information presented perpetuate fears about violence among young people in British Columbia and in schools, but this construction of young people being more violent than ever is then solidified by an "expert" opinion. In none of these articles about young people in B.C. are youth voices or perspectives included. This echoes research conducted by Larry Grossberg who calls youth a "silenced" population (1994, p. 25). Similarly, Giroux (1998) has argued in his work that young people are rarely afforded a voice in the press, even when the issues being debated or covered revolve around young people themselves. Hartley (1998), takes this one step further by asserting that youth, in their denial of a voice are left powerless:

> [Youth] are "powerless" over their own image, presumed incapable of self-representation, not imagined to have a collective interest which needs to be defended in the news, and represented in ways which are comparable to a colonised people (p. 52)

Although this notion of absolute powerlessness can be debated, with the rise of social media, youth activist networks, and young people themselves taking to the media to voice their opinions about the criminal justice and education system, what Hartley and Giroux bring up about this attempt by the media to categorize young people in its construction of them is apparent in the material I collected.

With headlines like "School safety begins in the community: Recent stabbing of a vice-principal is a warning that we must reduce danger for students" (The Vancouver Sun, 1996), crime and violence is constructed as all-encompassing and inescapable. This is further emphasized with the use of facts and community reports about the danger facing students in British Columbia:

> Our children are growing up scared in this decade. Consider: * A 1995 survey by B.C.'s education ministry reported that only 51 per cent of Grade 8 students felt safe at school. This improved somewhat by Grade 11; 62.5 per cent of students in that grade said they felt safe. (Herron, 1996, 02 April: A11).
>
> A 1994 study for the federal government reported that ``knives are weapons of choice in Canadian schools. School staff and police must deal with pocketknives, buck knives, machetes and meat cleavers, as well as prohibited weapons such as switchblades and butterfly knife ... in some schools these sorts of weapons are confiscated daily (Herron, 1996, 02 April: A11).

By including these facts and reports in the coverage of school crime in Canadian schools, the articles suggest that crime among young people is a serious and ongoing problem. A problem that is backed up by government reports and student surveys on the manner. This information, when communicated to parents and stakeholders, fits within a moral panic discourse about the rise of youth crime and disobedience, and therefore the need for structure and strict solutions.

The Urgent Need for Solutions: Surveillance in Schools

Moral panics tend to be accompanied by a push toward urgent solutions. In the discourse examined, this urgency is prominent when it comes to a solutions-oriented framing used in discussions on how to solve the crisis of youth violence within schools. In terms of solutions, several articles highlight reports conducted by the local and provincial governments that seek to understand youth violence. As mentioned above, these reports included in the media reports are the Burnaby school district report on Keeping our Schools Safe (1992); the City of Vancouver's Safer City Task Force (1993); the Vancouver elementary principals' safety survey (1993); and the B.C. Teachers' Federation's Task Force on Violence in Schools (1994). By naming these reports in the ongoing discussion on youth crime, the collected articles push the notion that the issue of safety within schools is a new phenomenon Canadians are experiencing in the 1990s. This becomes evident with the use of phrases like, “our children are growing up scared in this decade” and “knives are weapons of choice in Canadian schools” (Herron, 1996, 02 April: A11). These statistics and messages were overwhelmingly present in the coverage of the stabbing of a Surrey vice-principal who was injured by a student with a pair of scissors. This incident was used as a call to action to provide a safe space for students

> We now seem to have reached that point in British Columbia. Schools cannot deal with the problem alone. We need a strong community-wide commitment to address this issue (Herron, 1996, 02 April: A11).

On this note, the sample that was analyzed reveals a shift in coverage from focussing on identifying the existence of the issues, in this case, violence committed by young people within and outside of schools, to focussing on solutions. The discourse about a community-oriented crime management strategy, primarily beginning in the mid-1990s, is what makes up the majority of news articles within the safety and crime management narrative grouping (31 articles).

The newspaper coverage of Surrey's issue of safety indicates the need to group together to mitigate many of the problems the City of Surrey and Surrey Schools are facing. One key issue mentioned repeatedly is the vandalization of school property and the need for neighbourhood watch patrols. Headlines such as "Volunteer crime watch patrols to be launched" (Munro, 1992, 03 November: B5) are common throughout the sample. The coverage about this repeatedly points to the need for community involvement, calling for volunteer night patrols and neighbourhood watch meetings.

> Surrey Mayor Bob Bose announced the formation of a mayor's advisory committee on youth violence (Munro, 1992, 03 November: B5).

These ideas begin to hold a great deal of importance within the reporting of youth crime as messaging about the efficacy of community surveillance is featured:

> Coordinated efforts curb Surrey school vandalism: Students, parents and volunteers get credit for a drop in anti-vandalism costs (Sinoski, 1999, 16 February: B1).

In relation to narratives about safety and surveillance, there is a large focus amongst the collected articles on the influx of drug use within schools and the need for drug-sniffing dogs:

> Surrey trustees set to hire drug-sniffing dogs: Private security firms would make random searches -- a move some call 'outrageous (Keating & Tanner, 31 October: A3).

> Stilwell said she and her five colleagues from the Surrey Electors Team support the idea of using drug-sniffing dogs in Surrey's 117 public schools. "We need more work in the area of enforcement," Stilwell said yesterday "And the things that we would be looking at could include the drug-sniffing dogs and random locker searches" (Keating & Tanner, 31 October: A3).

Newspapers report on this issue at a greater frequency in the early 2000s. From a qualitative perspective, there is a manner of sensationalism that is associated with the coverage of youth crime. Youth are portrayed as violent through the media's continuous mention of the randomness of youth violence and the general sense of uneasiness felt by the City of Surrey residents interviewed. The coverage about young people in Surrey, especially in the 1990s is overwhelmingly negative. The result is the idea that young people need structure, specifically within schools which fits within the theme of moral panics. Furthermore, there is a major focus on solutions in the coverage that is paired with the urgency of the issue that is constructed.

Discussion: The Media's Role in Using Racially Encoded Narratives as A Way to Push for Solutions to Violence

The moral panic discourse examined in many of the articles was found to be racially coded. Here, racialized moral panics about the South Asian community, and South Asian youth, in particular, is a key theme. In her work on the criminality of Black youth in inner-city schools, Farmer (2010) addresses how racialized moral panics in the media impact the social landscape and imaginary in which the public views inner-school youth, ultimately demoralizing this group through constant negative attention. This she emphasizes, changes the ways in which politicians and educators construct policies to manage Black youth, listing threats of securitization and surveillance policies as a common result.

> Racialized moral panic produces deficient narratives about the moral capacity of Black youth, and such narratives inform and constrain the public moral imagination with regard to youth of color (Farmer, 2010, p. 373).

Canadian media institutions have been criticized for their reluctance to respond to the country's multicultural commitments with their insistent negative representation of minority groups (Henry et al.2006). According to Fleras (2003) racism is so naturally embedded in the media structure and daily routine operations that the biased representation of minorities is even beyond awareness (p. 283). Since the media is so integral in its role in shaping belief systems and values within society, scholars such as Hall (1990), Jiwani (2006), Thobani (2007), and Farmer (2010) have pointed out that if we want to develop effective strategies for fighting racism, we need to direct our attention and efforts to media racism and the ways certain groups are constructed. This

section of the thesis, therefore, seeks to unpack how the moral panics discussed above are racially coded and present certain depictions about the South Asian community and South Asian youth that link to larger racialized moral panics and narratives. Similar to the essentialization of youth that Giroux (1996) has discussed when it comes to young people in the media, the essentialization of the South Asian community and its youth is a common theme among the articles examined, with overwhelming negative coverage of crime, immigration, and violence.

Newspaper coverage suggests that South Asian culture is to blame for much of the youth violence happening in the Lower Mainland. The overwhelming message is that youth are stuck between western society and their culture, causing violence within and outside of school. The presence of crime is constructed as a new phenomenon, with quotations from parents like "this kind of thing didn't happen when we were kids" (Greg, 1996, 12 May: A5). This statement relates to the impact of racialized moral panics, with specific events and crime among youth being equated to immigrant communities considered to be “recent” arrivals. The concern from parents in the coverage is hard to miss, as the media use this fear in its reporting: "It's going to be hell," said one parent. "There are going to be gangs of whites and gangs of East Indians out looking for each other for revenge" (Greg, 1996, 12 May: A5).

Coverage like this about young South Asians comes after years of the mainstream press presenting articles outlining culture as a cause of domestic violence and sex preference within the South Asian community in the 1990s and early 2000s. Headlines such as “A boy or a girl; Answer can be terminal” (Moysa, 1996, 12 October: A1) and “Young woman's life ended where roots of her culture lay: Her story has raised the question of the role played by the South Asian culture in the chain of events” (Grewal, 2000, 04 August: A13) are extremely common in the sampled articles. In this sense, the coverage consistently points to cultural differences as key factors in crime.

As argued by Jiwani (2006), the coverage of violence within minority communities has contributed to the gender and cultural stereotyping of South Asians in Canada, resulting in racism and cultural essentialism, the process of tying certain “natural” traits to certain cultures, therefore categorizing individuals based on this ethnic logic or assumed “inherent trait.” When crime, specifically crime involving youth, is discussed in the media, there will often be an emphasis on the cultural or social causes

of the acts if the perpetrator comes from a non-white community (Dasgupta, 1998). In this sense, when the discourse about crime in the mainstream news media relies on culturally essentialist knowledge, it works to solidify the idea that non-white others are those who engage in violence (Jiwani, 2006). Instead of focusing on structural causes of violence, the coverage consistently points to family dynamics and parents for the rise in gang violence and crime among South Asian youth:

> Brutal criminal violence by Indo-Canadian male youths over the past decade is being blamed by B.C. community leaders, social workers and police on a culture clash that has driven deep divisions between children and their parents, says a federal study (O'Neil, 2004, 04 May: A8).

Several articles contain statements from members of the South Asian community about the issue of gang violence. This type of discourse of responsibility also relates to Buffman's work on the portrayal of gang violence in the media (2016). The media here provides a platform for South Asian members of the community to denounce issues of culture, blaming private actors vs. institutional factors involving marginalization and race. Whether the issue is domestic violence or gang violence amongst youth, the community is presented and responsible and therefore encouraged to mobilize in the coverage examined:

> Indo-Canadian gang shootings rage on: Police appeal to the community to help end the violence (Bolan & Morton, 2002, 16 April: B1/Front).

The coverage places Surrey as a unique space in which the influx of diversity, painted in the media as both a strength in terms of an example of Canada's multicultural mosaic and a space for improvement in managing ethnic divisions and youth identities that are in transition.

This chapter has explored the media's role in constructing young people, the South Asian community, and youth in British Columbia during the 1990s and early 2000s. The collection of articles demonstrates how narratives of essentialism are present within the discourse about racialized youth in the Lower Mainland during this time period, with questions about how to "manage" young people and prevent crime making up a major theme. The discourse points to crime being rampant, working to stoke fears amongst the parents, stakeholders, and community members interviewed by the media. This notion that crime among young people is new relates to the discourse about moral panics as discussed by Cohen (1972) who, in his work, doesn't claim that

the issue at hand is non-existent but simply that oftentimes society's response is inappropriate and does not get to the true root of the issue. In these articles, cultural difference is often pointed out as a reason why crime and gang violence, but this ignores the fact that organized crime has always been present, and simultaneously the actions of young people in every generation have always to some extent been considered puzzling to governing figures in society.

The articles examined in this chapter, however, do not provide any historical analysis or economic analysis for why young people might feel disconnected, but instead, use racially coded language to overwhelmingly link the South Asian community to crime in the Lower Mainland. Furthermore, the articles examined also demand action — such as more community-oriented solutions like forums or punitive measures like drug dogs, pointing to policing and surveillance as a solution. According to McRobbie & Thornton (1995), "moral panics 'are a means of orchestrating consent by actively intervening in the space of public opinion and social consciousness through the use of highly rhetorical and emotive language which has the effect of requiring that "something be done about it"' (p. 562). Regarding the racially coded language in the press, society either responds to racialized fears by creating policies or the threat disappears and remains in society's collective memory. Therefore, as a result of the overwhelming nature of youth violence constructed in the media, the community and schools are positioned to act.

Chapter 7.

Analysis of Safe Schools

This chapter introduces the Safe Schools initiative and contains an analysis of select programs that fall under or are related to the Safe Schools Department through a textual and visual analysis of public websites and online brochures. Created in 1998, Safe Schools has been "a provincial, national and international leader in the development and implementation of many unique, evidence-based, highly successful and comprehensive prevention and intervention programs, initiatives and resource materials aimed at enhancing student and staff safety" (Safe Schools, 2022). My decision to analyze Safe Schools using screenshots from its website and program materials in the form of program brochures stems from the objective to go beyond solely looking at how discourse is presented about Surrey youth and Surrey Schools in the mainstream press. Therefore, I chose to analyze the discourse presented in the online website material of intervention programs which includes the images and text displayed on the chosen websites. Through the analysis of these websites, I analyze how students and adult mentors are positioned as solutions to youth violence, bullying, and drug use through a discourse of responsibility. This discourse of responsibility I argue positions students in charge of their own lives and pushes messages of personal responsibility and empowerment through images of positive role models and community.

I argue that narratives about the importance of community involvement, adult mentorship, and reporting on dangerous activities are prioritized in the web pages analyzed. These narratives about community involvement and the need for solutions to crime echo much of the mainstream press coverage analyzed in the previous chapter. Similarly, these webpages construct youth as needing adult mentorship and community involvement through extensive support from Surrey Schools, counsellors, and adult mentees — which both justifies the presence of Safe Schools itself and sends a message to the public that the School District is doing something about issues facing young people in Surrey.

This chapter seeks to understand how the programs are framed and what is the connection to a larger media discourse about young people in Surrey through the visual

and textual analysis section of each program. Similarly, Wilson & Carlsen (2016) examine how schools communicate their mission and values through their websites. Their examination of images, information, and symbols works to unpack how public material such as websites appeals to families and students. Websites, in this case, are treated as qualitative documents that offer a “window” into what the schools would like to be understood by an external audience (Wilson & Carlsen, 2016, p.29). CDA is helpful in this sense to understand the taken-for-granted assumptions and latent meaning that are embedded in the text, images, and symbols used by Surrey Schools. By analyzing the Safe Schools website, I examine the discourse and narratives present in its public-facing material to understand how safety and young people are constructed in this material as being dependent on prevention and intervention programs through mentorship and guidance which is consistent to some of the solutions presented in the mainstream media reporting of young people in B.C. during the 1990s and early 2000s.

In this chapter, I use Fairclough’s three-dimensional approach to CDA in my analysis of Safe Schools and the programs that fall under the department. On a micro level, I will focus on the text in the website screenshots, which describe an event or program. Textual analysis will be conducted here where I will note the specific words and descriptors these programs use to describe students in Surrey as well as the programs that seek to serve them. In the discussion of this chapter, I will perform a macro-level analysis, connecting the website material to the wider social context that informs the text and structures that are being analyzed. According to Fairclough (2013), the analysis here focuses on the influence of social events, practices, and structures on the text. I will analyze the discourse present in each screenshot of the Safe Schools website and affiliated programs through both a textual and visual analysis to understand how these programs frame youth, safety, and their programming in public material. This section seeks to address how the themes presented in the website material overlap with what was communicated in media coverage in terms of the sheer danger of youth crime and bullying communicated. As well as the implicit racialization present in the material and the discourse of urgency that pushes the message that immediate steps are needed to solve these community problems. In addition, the chapter points out a key distinction in the website material compared to what was analyzed in the media coverage with a large focus on the website material being student autonomy and empowerment. The websites analyzed push positive messaging position young people as responsible for the

safety of their schools in addition to administrators and mentors — ultimately emphasizing the discourse of responsibility and youth empowerment.

7.1. PSST: Case #1

The PSST program stands for Protecting Surrey Schools Together — a program that is managed by the district's Safe Schools department. According to the Safe Schools website:

> Protecting Surrey Schools Together (PSST) is a website hosted by Surrey Schools with support from the Surrey RCMP and Surrey Crime Prevention. The website provides:
>
> - a respected, trusted and confidential resource for students to share or obtain information about issues that concern them
> - an interactive forum for district students to discuss and share experiences
> - an opportunity for young writers to practise and post stories publicly
> - a venue to promote student pride in their school and education, and
> - a tool to communicate topical information to students
>
> PSST is a unique, innovative website designed by the Surrey School District in partnership with the Surrey RCMP and sponsored by the BC Lions. The primary goal is to encourage students to get personally involved in ensuring the safety and security of their school. The site (http://psst-bc.ca/) was designed for students who want to discuss school safety issues, but want to remain anonymous. Parents are encouraged to visit the site to explore and review all the resources and supports available to their children and students throughout the Surrey School District (Safe School Parent Resource, 2020)

The interactive component of this website relates to communication research on using interactive technology, tailored to young people to position them as users and consumers — instead of simply proposing programming onto them (Giroux, 1998). As highlighted by Mazarella (2005), “while, on the one hand, the press and popular culture construct youth as a problem, at the same time, they also construct youth as a commodity and/or a target market either to sell “youth” to an aging adult population eager to recapture their own lost youth, or to sell products to young people themselves” (p. 232). In the case of PSST and Safe Schools, although there needs to be community

buy in, it is a public program, so they avoid corporate language. Money generation is not a key concern here, but instead, public acknowledgment is the focus. So, on one hand, students are the focus, in the sense that students are being invited to use the website to improve safety within school halls. They are able to report issues within their communities and get further help from an administrator if needed. Second, parents and community members are being addressed, with informational content about bullying, drug use, and gang violence — all things Surrey Schools have prioritized as key challenges facing youth.

Publicly in media reports, the program stresses that the component of anonymity creates a safe space where students can oversee preventing harassment and bullying, making it “a valuable tool for the Surrey School District to keep schools and students safe” (“Psst... student tip website revamped”, 2008).

> The site, at www.psst-bc.ca, was first launched in April 2005 in partnership with the Surrey RCMP and includes input, participation and articles from Surrey teens. It also has a 'Report It' button which allows elementary or secondary students to anonymously submit tips to district staff about anything that's bothering them or causing concern at school.
>
> It's estimated the district receives between eight and 10 tips per month, with about half of those relating to bullying.
>
> Manager of safe schools Theresa Campbell said reports have provided school principals with invaluable information about teasing and harassment that allows them to intervene when it is most effective - with young children at the elementary school level.
>
> "We know a key to preventing bullying is to identify and remedy the behaviour at a young age," Campbell says. "Tips received through PSST have greatly assisted us in addressing harassment in schools." (“Psst... student tip website revamped”, 2008).

This deployment of young people as being responsible for the monitoring of harassment or bullying at their schools is a key theme throughout the website, with young people being constructed as instrumental in maintaining safety. This framework of youth accountability and empowerment has been researched by Hauge (2014), who when discussing youth media programming, outlines that points out that this content pushes young people to enact solutions to issues in their lives, communities, and world (p. 471). The emphasis here is on young people themselves:

> This belief in agency, learning, media and hope for a better future, foregrounds agency as the way to move forward creating change in the world, and it constructs youth participants as key bodies that can create change (Hauge, 2014, p. 472).

This construction of young people as decision-makers and active contributors coincides with suggestions from government reports such as Safe and Orderly Schools (2008), that push administration to get students involved in anti-bullying initiatives.

Figure 2 Screenshot from PSST.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Ready to take action?

If you've seen or heard something, let us know.

Is someone or something bothering you or your friends at school?

The PSST Report It! form is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Make your school safe, in just a few clicks.

REPORT IT NOW →

Figure 3 Screenshot from PSST.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Unsure about reporting?

If you are unsure if your issue should be reported, we have resources to help.

Learn more to keep yourself, and your school a safe place. Understand what to look for, and how to help friends and classmates when they are in trouble.

Bullying

Drugs

Self-Harm

Online Safety

Discrimination

Gangs

SOGI

Figure 4 Screenshot from PSST.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Analysis

PSST is routinely communicated publicly as an innovative website, with its anonymous feature highlighted in public material and on the website. The website itself is very visually appealing to young people with its interactive features as you scroll to the different sections of issues that can be reported. This further reinforced the point that the main audience for the site is primarily students and secondly adults in the community like parents or community stakeholders who want to learn more about youth issues in schools. The combination of text, educational material, and interactivity of the PSST website draws the website user to report certain issues it has deemed important. In addition to providing information on how to keep themselves and their school community safe, the website is directly tapping on students who visit the page as having the power to improve safety through reporting – thus the connection to the title PSST as both an acronym for Protecting Surrey Schools Together and as the sound made to indicate a secret.

As mentioned, PSST addresses multiple possible publics — from parents and community stakeholders to learn about youth issues to young people themselves as

users of the site. The most obvious discourse presented in the site is that of youth as the target to be used to enhance school safety. Using this discourse of empowerment and individual response to youth violence, the aim PSST pushed is for students to use PSST's website resources and anonymous tipping function. As a result, instead, youth are invited to buy into this discourse of responsibility in that their individual actions can impact the safety of their schools and communities.

The textual and visual elements of the PSST website subtly push the solutions to youth violence and substance abuse through the discourse of personal responsibility, youth empowerment, and information sharing. Beginning at the homepage in Figure 1, the PSST logo is in the form of a chat bubble. This is a subtle way of building in the notion of reporting and two-way communication with the aim to improve safety within schools. Moving towards the centre of the homepage, although the PSST – Protecting Surrey Schools Together text is the larger focus, the background blue image of teens in a school hallway acts as an aesthetic means to bring real images of students to the website. Furthermore, with the PSST website, Safe Schools emphasizes the 'REPORT IT' tip box where students can let administrators and the RCMP know what is taking place in their schools (figure 2). This theme of personal responsibility is further emphasized when you go move from the Safe Schools explainer of PSST to the actual website which immediately focuses on the words 'Protecting Surrey Schools Together.' Additionally, the text "ready to take action" is highlighted in bold text at the foot of the webpage seen in figure 3, further focussing on the role students play in creating a safe environment, free from what the PSST considers as dangerous. Here, the discourse of individual responsibility and urgency is indicated in these visual and textual elements of the homepage — making the primary aim to invite students to make use of the site.

Next, there is also an informational component to the PSST website that guides students if they are unsure about what to report. There are sections about bullying, drugs, self-harm, online safety, discrimination, gangs, and SOGI as outlined in figure 4. The theme of personal responsibility which is a focus throughout the website is also prevalent in this component of the website. A key indicator of this is the text that reads 'understand what to look for, and how to help friends and classmates when they are in trouble.' In addition to providing information to students about issues they may be facing, these resources make a clear statement about what is deemed a danger to the school community and what is not. Underneath the section on drugs, although alcohol is

mentioned as presenting harm, it is not a large focus, as statistics about the harms of marijuana and how 26% of youth have reported trying marijuana. Here, the primary solution is to understand the harms of drugs as students and to contact a Substance Use Liaison employed with Safe Schools. The language employed by Safe School prioritizes two things: education about the issues it has decided as priorities for students and pushing those who visit the site to contact a Substance Use Liaison for help, highlighting the benefits of adult-student mentorship and support.

Through the PSST website, Safe School positions itself as a way for students to receive knowledge about problems they may be facing, like bullying, drug abuse, violence, etc. as well as a means to report these issues. This is evident in the text “if you’ve seen or heard something, let us know” and other subtle phrases that push website visitors to the report links. Throughout the entire website, there is text that points students who visit to seek further help from a Substance Use Liaison or school administrator — ultimately providing a pathway to a Safe Schools administrator or caring adult as another solution on top of self-reporting an issue.

7.2. Yo Bro/Yo Girl Youth Initiative

The next program analyzed is the Yo Bro/Yo Girl Initiative, a mentorship program that has a partnership with the Safe Schools Department. According to its description on the Safe Schools website, the program aims “to protect children as young as 11 from entering a violent lifestyle that is claiming the lives of young men on Surrey's streets” (Surrey Schools, 2022).

> While several programs exist for youth already involved in gangs, Yo Bro Yo Girl is focused on early intervention and prevention, Calendino said. The non-profit provides mentorship and helps foster a sense of belonging in kids who are lacking a peer group, experimenting with drugs or who have an older brother or cousin involved in the drug trade.
>
> Azez said a typical weekly meeting with youth involves "hanging out and having a good time," playing sports and engaging in casual conversation. Leaders aim to be role models, forming relationships with participants and making themselves available to them when they have questions or concerns (Eagland, 2017).

As highlighted in the media discourse above, the focus in public communication of YBYG, is on its mentorship and early prevention aims. The rationale for the program

is that high school is too late to intervene in a young person's life who has already been introduced to crime — something that is a key point in the media coverage and the website analysis conducted in this section.

> Grade 8 is too late to take a proactive role in preventing violence in young lives. By starting in elementary school, Yo Bro/ Yo Girl Youth Initiative staff and volunteer mentors aim to develop a strong, healthy community early, whether it's in school, after school, or during school holidays (Yo Bro/Yo Girl, 2022).

Furthermore, the justification for the program is fuelled by background information about the ongoing risks facing young people in Surrey:

> The expansion comes as Surrey RCMP battle an ongoing, drug-related street war. Officers have responded to more than two dozen shootings so far this year and many have involved men in their late teens and early 20s. Victims of these often-brazen attacks have refused to co-operate with investigators (Eagland, 2017).

Like the analysis of PSST, this section will address the discourse of self-responsibility and empowerment present throughout the Yo Bro/Yo Girl website as it addresses stakeholders and community members. This audience is difference than that of PSST, and therefore the textual and visual elements also reflect the differing audience, with statistics and mission statement making up a lot of the content of the site. In addition, I unpack the subtle racialized discourses present in the representation of Yo Bro/Yo Girl through the elements of its website.

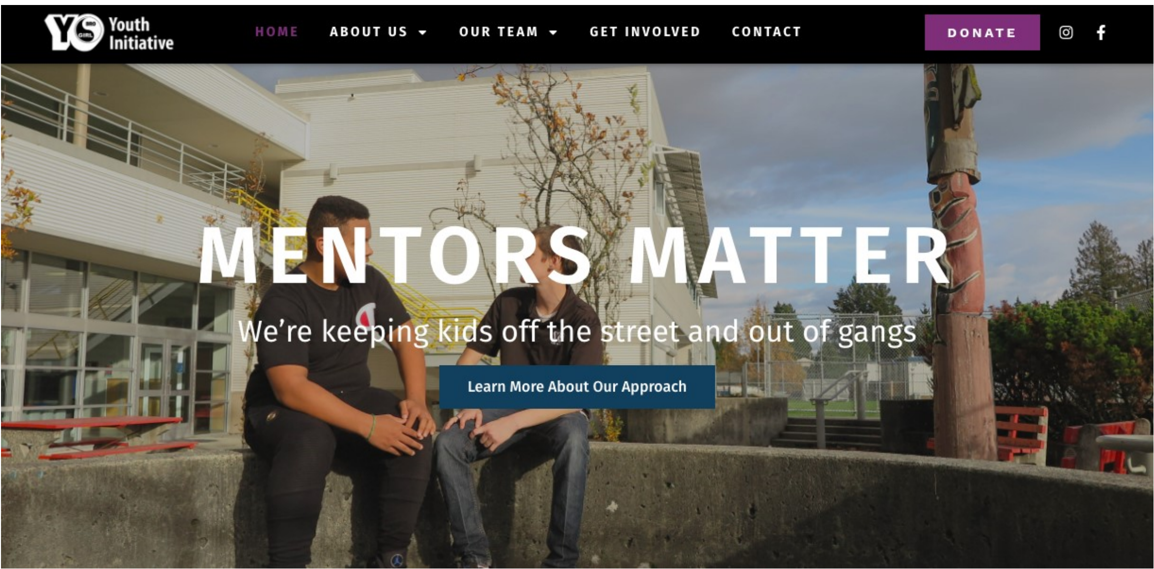
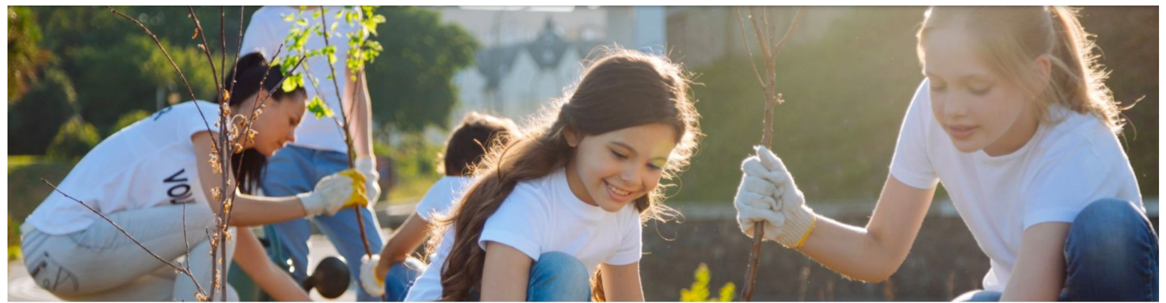


Figure 5 Screenshot from ybyg.ca, taken March 11, 2022



About Us

Gangs And Our Youth

Our Approach

Our Programs

Your Impact

Our Approach

We focus on prevention. And we start in Grade 6.

Grade 8 is too late to take a proactive role in preventing violence in young lives.

By starting in elementary school, Yo Bro | Yo Girl Youth Initiative staff and volunteer mentors aim to develop strong, healthy community early, whether it's in school, after school, or during school holidays.

Figure 6 Screenshot from ybyg.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Our approach is to reach at-risk children and youth, and support them in three specific ways:

1. Social Responsibility

Our aim is always to encourage and increase positive behaviors in children and youth where they are capable of building healthy connections to adults and peers, and grow into positively contributing members of society.

2. Graduation and Post-Secondary Success

Having YBYG youth complete high school and head down the path towards post-secondary education or training for employment is considered a huge success for us. These opportunities open doors for our youth that otherwise would have been closed to them for good.

3. Youth Empowerment

Building the next generation of future leaders is a priority. In communities where violence, crime and risky behaviour starts young, empowering youth to share their learnings and personal success as role models and youth leaders is an invaluable way of preventing more kids from going down the wrong path.

Figure 7 Screenshot from ybyg.ca, taken March 11, 2022

We believe children and youth are inherently resilient. Regardless of background or upbringing, each young person has the capacity to tap into their inner strength and resiliency, if given the opportunity.

At Yo Bro | Yo Girl Youth Initiative, our programs are strategically designed to help youth find their inner strength and unleash their resiliency.

"For a young person to fully flourish, research strongly suggests they need a minimum of six healthy adults attached to them. The greater the number of role models in a young person's life, the greater potential they have."

— Rob Rai, Director of School and Community Connections for the Surrey School District

Figure 8 Screenshot from ybyg.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Your Impact

During the 2019/20 school year, Yo Bro | Yo Girl Youth Initiative ran 42 programs in 30 locations reaching over 1,300 children and youth in Surrey, Delta, Vancouver and Chilliwack, BC. Additionally, we connected with over 1,500 children, youth and community members through our educational presentations.

With the support of generous donors, all of our programs are free to participants and schools to ensure that any young person that wants to be involved is able to.

Figure 9 Screenshot from ybyg.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Gangs and Our Youth

Children and youth in gangs are put into life-threatening situations by those who recruit them. It is a dangerous game because most will have to carry out violence acts to prove themselves, which puts them at the centre of gang wars, and at high risk for criminal charges.

Learn More >

Figure 10 Screenshot from ybyg.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Figure 11 Screenshot from ybyg.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Figure 12 Screenshot from ybyg.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Analysis

The Yo Bro/Yo Girl Youth Initiative website focuses on adult-youth mentorship in its content, with the aim of preventing gang violence and aggression among students in Surrey communicated as the program's intention. This goal is made clear with the tagline on the homepage of the website in Figure 5 that reads “Mentors Matter: We're keeping kids off the street and out of gangs.” Furthermore, in Figure 4, the image of the two students combined with the text ‘Mentors Matter,’ connects to the overall theme of togetherness and resilience that is prevalent within all screenshots. In this case, the relationships are in the form of two students and a peer-to-peer relationship. The Yo Bro/Yo Girl, with its ability to supply these caring adults, is positioned as the solution by providing the tools needed for success, in this case, crime prevention.

The aim of prevention vs intervention with the use of mentors is further emphasized in the initiatives approach section in Figure 5. The text here highlights that the Yo Bro/Yo Girl Initiative focuses on prevention compared to intervention, therefore justifying its elementary programing. The theme of urgency is key here, especially with the details of the approach that state "Grade 8 is too late to take a preventative role in preventing youth violence."

> Not all afterschool programs integrate intentional practices, but comprehensive programs like the Boys & Girls Club are often organized around the changing developmental needs of youth and targeted to different age groups (Jones & Deutsch, N., 2013, p. 21).

Here, the program positions itself as being vital to gang violence prevention, by forming healthy bonds with students "in school, after school, or during school holidays." By targeting different age groups, YB/YG positions itself as a key in shaping and empowering young people as they transition through the various stages of their lives. The graphics displayed in the 'Our Approach' section in Figure 7, although text heavy, do clearly outline the path the initiative takes with the three purple icons. The three sections are easy to follow along and read with clear headers that indicate how students will be supported – 'Social Responsibility,' 'Graduation and Post-Secondary Success,' and 'Youth Empowerment.' The icons used for social responsibility and youth empowerment outline a feedback look in which students enter the program and grow to transition to the third supportive approach, youth empowerment, in which the participants themselves become role models for young people. In addition, when looking at this approach section in Figure 7, the audience appears to be mainly stakeholders, administrators, or parents who are interested in the trajectory and process the program takes — this section, therefore, plays a key role in justifying YBYG's existence within Surrey Schools.

With the selection of quotations, Yo Bro/Yo Girl Initiative's website further emphasizes the presence of adult mentors as key prevention tools regarding youth drug use, violence, or gang affiliation. This is outlined in Figure 8, where the potential young people possess is equated to and increased by the number of positive adults present in their life. With the screenshots selected the issues facing young people, solutions, and results are clearly outlined especially with the 'Our Approach' and 'Your Impact' sections of the website that take users through the thought process and discourses used by the

program – which, as mentioned are the urgency aspect (i.e.. starting the program at a young age) and the importance of adult mentorship. These two factors align with the media discourses and educational material discussed in previous chapters that focus on the lack of adult figures or role models for youth who belong to the South Asian community. The Yo Bro/Yo Girl website in this case, is responding to the notion that positive role models are needed for racialized, South Asian youth. With its website, Yo Bro/Yo Girl's website subtly uses common discourses about adult mentorship and prevention at a young age to communicate the program to others with its public material. The website is therefore responsive to the media coverage about violence in Surrey and has coded textually and visual elements that without explicitly mentioning the South Asian community, point to it.

These racialized dimensions of the website are further reinforced visually and are paired with a discourse of moral panics around violence amongst youth, with the urgency needed to remedy the problems identified. The image of the elementary students in the approach section in figure 8 for example, highlights this requirement of urgency. These children are young, racialized, and willingly participating in a Yo Bro/Yo Girl program emphasizing the role that starting prevention at a young age plays in building resiliency. The text that accompanies this image highlights the idea of diversity, either racially or social economically, among young people subtly, with the text "regardless of background or upbringing, each young person has the capacity to tap into their inner strength and resiliency if given the opportunity." The use of images of young people throughout various parts of the website as seen in Figures 10, 11, and 12 also, tie into this discourse of moral panic and subtly racialization of youth. The images are darker and the text that accompanies them points to a fear about the existence of youth crime from teachers and administrators worried about what their students are being exposed to. By outlining these issues, and highlighting the severity of youth crime, the Yo Bro/Yo Girl website further justifies its existence — pointing to its mentorship programs as necessary to fight these clearly defined problems. YBYG is therefore responding to these moral panics through solutions that fall under the themes of youth self-responsibility and adult-student mentorship.

7.3. Wraparound Program

The next program, Safe Schools' Wraparound Program (WRAP) has garnered the most attention in the media compared to other Safe Schools programs — making it an important program to analyze when it comes to the solutions Safe Schools proposes for combatting youth crime. The program was created as a response to gang violence in the City of Surrey.

> The Wraparound Surrey Project will work with 11- to 17-year-old Surrey students who are considered at risk, who display "wannabe" gangster behaviour or who are already engaged in gang activity. Students will be provided a personalized care plan to address the risks, which may extend to various facets of the young person's life - personal, family, school, peer and community - thus "wrapping" the student with a network of support and encouragement, according to the school district.
>
> "Youth gang-related violence is a community issue and it's great to have the involvement and resources of all these community agencies in a focused effort to address the problem," said Surrey Board of Education chair Laurae McNally. "The Wraparound Surrey Project is an innovative and intensive approach, and the board is proud of the fact it is a Surrey School District initiative."
>
> The school district will work in partnership with the City of Surrey, Surrey RCMP, the Integrated Gang Task Force of B.C., Public Safety Canada and various community service organizations to support youth for up to three years (Reynolds, 2009)

The Wraparound program has also been a focus of scholarly research about community programming, particularly concerning the program's missions and values.

> WRAP endeavors to increase client attachment to five domains: (a) school, (b) community, (c) family/home, (d) prosocial peers, and (e) the self. Supported by a team of staff facilitators including a manager, a youth diversity liaison, a substance abuse liaison, and a youth interventionist from the RCMP, the young person is encouraged to have "voice and choice" when making important life decisions throughout their engagement with the program (Reynold, 2009).

Information about Wraparound, lives on the Surrey Schools website under the Safe Schools Department page. Unlike PSST and Yo Bro/Yo Girl, the Wrap program does not have its own website. Instead, this section will analyze a screenshot of the Safe Schools Department page that outlines the rationale for Wraparound. Similar to the previous programs, the Wraparound page prioritizes the concept of adult-student

mentoring. This is highlighted in the program's objectives "to positively attach youth to school, their community, and the home by building a trusting and positive relationship." This theme is echoed in the program highlights in which the webpage mentions that awareness is built through a "mentoring relationship."

SURREY SCHOOLS > DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY > SAFE SCHOOLS > PROGRAMS > WRAPAROUND

The Surrey Wraparound Program (WRAP) is a partnership between the Surrey School District, RCMP and the City of Surrey. The program's objective is to positively attach youth to school, their community and the home by building a trusting and positive relationship. Parents, caregivers and/or guardians are included in goal setting while assisting the program's objective in building a positive lifestyle and self-worth for youth.

The following are some of the program highlights:

- Wrap can collaborate with school staff, the parent and youth in goal setting and outlining strategic interventions that assist the youth to be successful in the school environment;
- Wrap has seven school district staff who work collaboratively with youth and family;
- Wrap has two dedicated RCMP members who can build a positive and trusting relationship with youth;
- Wrap can provide and supervise work experience for youth that is helpful to the community while building self-worth;
- Wrap can provide athletic and recreational opportunities through the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Surrey. Also, Wrap can facilitate artistic, creative and other opportunities in relation to a youth's interests and strengths;
- Wrap can help youth utilize their strengths in a positive manner through awareness in a mentoring relationship;
- Wrap collaborates with family in a manner that is supportive and non-judgmental.

Figure 13 Screenshot from Surreyschools.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Analysis

In its program description, Wraparound is responding to mainstream media discourses that push for an increase in positive role models and mentors in Surrey. As a result, the reference to attaching young people to their schools echoes this notion that schools and community programs can be a type of "second home" for young people where they feel safe and therefore stay away from illegal activities. Wraparound positions itself as a remedy to mitigate violence among young people in Surrey. This is made evident through the repeated usage of the word "provide" in the program material. Although the information is limited, the text helps to position Wraparound as a solution to

the ongoing issues – mainly gang violence facing young people. Although gang violence is not explicitly mentioned, the focus on Wraparound's partnership with the RCMP in the first sentence and in the program highlights points to crime prevention being a key component of the program. The themes of positive adult mentorship and role models are therefore very important when unpacking the overall meaning presented in the Wraparound webpage.

The fact that public-facing material about Wraparound lives on the Surrey Schools website and not separately on its own webpage points to a type of integration not seen with the previous programs. Unlike PSST and Yo Bro/Yo Girl, the WrapAround program has limited text and information about the program. This may be because much of the work WrapAround does is not public facing, but instead is directly linked to Safe School staff so public communication and justification for the program is not a priority. The single page is more of an explainer for parents and administrators to understand what Wraparound does briefly focussing on the goal of positively attaching students to their communities through mentorship, whereas the other pages examined were more tailored to young people or donors. The audience here is therefore limited to concerned parents as a means to learn more about Wraparound or for media personnel to be made aware of its presence within the Safe Schools Department

Unlike the previous web pages, Wraparound's page does not present many visuals, further emphasizing the fact that its aim is to provide users with standard background information about the program and not keep them on the site. The concept of mentorship is highlighted by the one image on the webpage of program participants and their mentors. The image also implies a gendered aspect to the program itself as all participants are male and mostly racialized, subtly implying who Wraparound is designed for. This emphasizes how websites about community programming within schools, despite having a large aim of serving all students, are coded to identify the need for intervention with certain groups. On this note, the pattern of adapting discourses to reach certain groups is even more apparent with the Safe Schools program Girls Group.

Figure 14 Screenshot from Surreyschools.ca, taken March 11, 2022

Like Wraparound, the Girls Empowerment Program focuses on creating a second home for participants within their schools. According to Safe Schools (2022):

> The program targets girls in grades 8-10 who struggle to make and maintain healthy relationships, have school/community based behavioral issues, and are not attached to pro-social activities at home or in the community.

In the case of both Wraparound and Girls Group, discourses of self-empowerment through adult mentors are the key focus. Both programs communicate this goal through textual elements, as mentioned, but also through images of youth participating in recreational activities. Paired with the text and key words such as “positive and trusting relationships.” Therefore, the images of these young girls and boys doing activities in the community, outside of school, and with trusting adults reinforces the idea that these spaces run by Safe Schools are safe places for participants.

7.4. Conclusion

Community programming and non-profits are an industry like no other — and as a result, must continue to justify why they exist to the public. In this section, the visual and textual presence of Safe School and affiliate programs within their specific sites communicate this justification in the form of public material by capitalizing on certain public fears about safety and youth violence in Surrey. Fears, I argue, that are strongly communicated in media discourse about Surrey youth as examined in Chapter 5. As highlighted by Gewirtz (2002), programming that takes place within schools and universities has become a flow of performances with each space serving as its own spectacle. The websites examined in this chapter, work to situate their presence as mandatory and essential to minimizing crime among Surrey students through their involvement within schools. They capitalize on both real and perceived threats of violence and illegal activity among young people to justify their existence. The donation angle is clear in the Yo Bro/Yo Girl programs website compared to the other programs analyzed. The reason for this may be that although YBYG falls under the Safe Schools umbrella, the program itself is contracted out by the department, unlike Safe School liaisons and the Wraparound program whose workers are Surrey School District staff. Program funding in this case could heavily fall under the jurisdiction of the province — which would explain the lack of metrics and statistics as justifiers in the program websites.

> With the support of generous donors, all of our programs are free to participants and schools to ensure that any young person that wants to be involved is able to (Yo Bro/Yo Girl, 2022).

This text above found under the *Your Impact* section of the website is clearly an acknowledgment to funders to justify their donations. YGYB, therefore, uses metrics, as shown in Figure 5, to not only attract donors but to report the program's success to existing donors.

This chapter has explored the websites of community programs that fall under the Safe Schools Department to unpack the narratives these public sites communicate about young people in Surrey — specifically racialized youth, and how the material uses solutions-oriented framing with its visual presence of mentors and young students. Through a visual and textual analysis key themes and terms were identified as

justifications for the existence of these prevention/intervention programs. The key categories and themes the websites communicate were community involvement through mentorship, the deployment of families, cultural sensitivity, and two-way communication through reporting technology. The visual layers of the websites present young images of racialized youth, emphasizing the concept of early, diverse, prevention to solve problems facing youth identified in the texts as gang violence, bullying, and drug and alcohol abuse. With its focus on holistic, community programming, Safe Schools is positioned as a solution to violence in Surrey— with the presence of adult mentors being a key point. The website material examined works to negotiate a highly charged symbolic environment through the images of diverse students — i.e., White students alongside racialized youth. Through these images and the depictions of “win” and success stories, there is a process of symbolic rehabilitation taking place, where Safe Schools is responding to the years of negative discourse about youth and reframing the program itself as a positive alternative to this negative coverage. In the following chapter, I move beyond analyzing public material, to analyzing interviews with youth workers involved in Surrey Schools. I will consider the narratives that have emerged in the analysis of news media and these websites, to examine the on-the-ground perspectives of those who work with students daily. Special attention will be paid to how these workers describe the programs that they work in and their views on the specific issues the programs seek to mitigate.

Chapter 8.

Interviews

In this chapter, I will examine the 4 interviews conducted with teachers and Safe School program workers. The term "youth worker" is used here to include those who mentor, guide, and teach youth in a variety of spaces including, but not limited to non-profit community-based programs, schools, youth detention centers, summer camps, etc. (Baldridge et al., 2017). The aim of the interviews is to learn about the unique socio-cultural and political processes that inform the initiative and their experiences working with young people in schools. The purpose is to understand the rationale behind the program and the experiences of the participants and those who are involved. By inviting those who are familiar with the Safe Schools Department and issues facing youth in Surrey, I had hoped to understand how policies surrounding schools and young people in Surrey have been impacted by certain issues facing young people and how these programs like Yo Bro/Yo Girl and the implementation of Safe School Liaisons in schools are communicated by the workers in their outreach. By engaging in dialogue, the conversations that arise further unpack issues my critical discourse analysis of the websites may have missed, specifically the conditions through which these community programs have arisen and the role that these workers fulfill daily, that is not represented in the website material (Walling, 2010). The purpose of these semi-structured interviews is not to evaluate the program itself, but to analyze the data and answers through an equity lens to understand the broader issues at play. The interviews provide a fuller picture compared to solely conducting a critical discourse analysis of the websites and media sources as they allow for critical conversations will those who work with students every day.

In terms of ethical considerations, the confidentiality of the interview session was addressed before the meetings. An interview approach provides the most complete answers and will help to supplement any gaps in research from the critical discourse analysis phase. This potential issue was combatted by having a clear outline of key discussion points that can be referred to when facilitating the discussion (Walling, 2010). Semi-structured interviews were arranged for over the phone conversations and at the participants' convenience. They lasted anywhere from 30 – 60 minutes, largely

dependent on how much detail each participant was willing to provide about their experiences and how much information they wanted to share. Each interview began by going over the consent form and asking if the participant(s) had any questions before we began. I then started by asking participants to introduce themselves and we would have a general discussion about their role within Surrey Schools. Interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed. Participants were informed that they could skip questions, return to questions, and retract comments at any time during or after the interview.

Through interviews, I was able to directly communicate with Safe School staff who interact with the youth and implement the programs mentioned in the public material. As a result, this chapter outlines issues facing young people that are not listed publicly such as symbolic violence, in this research defined as the violence exercised by the media by racialized, South Asian youth in Surrey, by the media's role in categorization and social ordering through the discourses presented in the coverage of Surrey. Using Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence, Cui and Worrell (2019), argue that "those who occupy the dominant position of the field have symbolic power to influence the rules of the field" (p. 238). The media in this case, not only have the power to inform but inflict violence on certain communities. The interviews I conducted, therefore, provide an insight into how the discourse analyzed in the research is perceived by students. In addition, the interviews are vital in highlighting the limits of a colonial institution in solving violence among youth, something that is overwhelmingly a community issue. These limitations are guided by the fact that the main discourse perpetuated by the public materials of these prevention programs is that of individual responsibility, as highlighted by the Safe School webpages and their focus on student empowerment and individuated actions. Or, of a single community holding the responsibility, like the discourse pushed in the media analysis of the South Asian community and young people in British Columbia. This chapter further highlights this tension between the individual and community as workers discuss their experiences navigating a highly charged environment as they engage and mentor young people in Surrey.

8.1. Bringing Community into the Classroom

Community connectedness is a major component of community-based education space (Baldridge et al., 2017). This importance of empowering young people through community involvement was also a major theme among the research participants. This pertains to their school communities but also, the South Asian community in Surrey. These conversations about the issues facing these different communities provided a critical look into the work conducted in schools — especially for those who brought in their own lived experience in their work.

This was a clear theme in my discussion with Miriam, a high-school teacher at a school in Surrey, who believes that the personal and professional are interconnected. She emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary studies throughout her teaching practice and the fact that it is important to address multiple sources of violence that students experience, including the violence that the media and certain narratives inflict on young people in Surrey.

> If I know there are things going on in the hallways in these students lives, instead of going right into math or science, I'll ask my students to talk about it and I'll talk about it myself (Personal communication, March 6, 2022).

Miriam stresses that she doesn't believe in censorship culture as it creates a negative learning environment. For Baldridge et al. (2017), schools are often places where hierarchies and inequities can manifest, either from educators or from the fact that there is a dismissal of many of the problems that students of colour must deal with outside of its walls. This inequity is an example of symbolic violence, violence that I argue reproduces systems and feelings of marginalization for racialized students in schools. This type of violence is fuelled by negative representations communicated by the media (Cui & Worrell, 2019). This content was particularly apparent in the discourse analysis of mainstream coverage of Surrey. My conversations with youth workers illuminated the consequences of these representations.

For Miriam, her focus as someone who runs the Career and Life program at her school, as well as Math and Science courses, is to make students feel comfortable in her class — which means having these uncomfortable topics like racism, war, and politics that may be on her students' minds.

> Black and Brown kids are already fighting this battle you don't see when they enter the classroom — and then they have to learn (Miriam, personal communication, March 6, 2022).

> Once you acknowledge these topics, you create a real safe space where students can concentrate (Miriam, personal communication, March 6, 2022).

These "battles" that Miriam mentions are particularly important when considering the consequences of media narratives when it reports on issues of violence in Surrey — violence that community programs like those run by Safe Schools seek to remedy. When the media consistently reports on the negative components about young people in Surrey or the city as a space, it can systematically work to reproduce certain racialized narratives about crime and danger in the city that students must deal with.

As noted in the analysis of Safe Schools program websites, adult mentorship and self-empowerment are key discourses communicated by Safe Schools and its affiliated programs. This importance of having caring adults was also echoed in the interviews. Although Miriam does not directly work with Safe Schools, as a teacher she has experience with the Safe School Liaisons (SSLs) that work in her school. She views programs like Safe Schools and SSLs tools for students to use. Emphasizing, how her relationship with the Safe School Liaison at her school informs what she'll be talking about that day or week, especially if there are things going on in the hallways that teachers may not be aware of.

For Blake — an SSL in the Newton area, whose name has been changed to protect anonymity, and Abeerah, an SSL at another Surrey school in the Clayton area, tailoring to each community is huge, whether that be ethnic community or school community.

According to Blake, the solution to many of the issues is two-fold: having more bodies in the school —two SSLs minimum per school and having more of your community in your schools. His school is fortunate to have two liaisons, and his partner is South Asian so she can relate. Having caring adults a part of your community and he stresses makes sure SSLs can have a wider reach and "makes people feel more comfortable" (Personal communication, March 5, 2022). On his positionality, he highlights that "many students come from Africa or Somalia so [he is] able to relate to

them." This theme of relatability was something that Blake repeatedly brought up during our discussion.

My discussion with Abeerah also touched on this theme of relatability when trying to reach students. As highlighted when in my analysis of program websites, each webpage works to subtly target certain groups, whether that be based on age, gender, or race. Abeerah often presents on topics like healthy relationships and runs the Girls Group at her school. As a woman, Abeerah's own lived experience is a huge factor when she runs this program, she says she tries to outline what healthy communication looks like and model this for the young girls in her program, something only herself and other female SSLs would have experience with. This is similar to Blake's experience communicating with Black students within his school.

Although not explicitly mentioned by the programs themselves, the initiatives analyze work to target specific groups in unique ways to engage and mentor participants. This targeting is also based on gender. With Yo Bro/Yo Girl, this gendered component is apparent in its name.

> Gender-specific programs are successful through the medium of staff guidance, and also reflect the important role of peers in the social learning of the programs. In these gender-specific programs, staff give positive guidance as they mentor adolescents into adulthood (Jones & Deutsch, N., 2013, p. 30).

This gendered aspect was a common theme in my interviews with Abeerah about her Girls Group program and with Blake who says that in many instances, young boys feel more comfortable coming to him because of the relatability; and it's the same thing for young girls who often choose to confide in the female SSL at his school.

Research on intersectionality has focused on the ways that race, class, gender, and nation interact in compounding ways, particularly those who are subjugated to marginal positions based on their social identities (Baldridge et al., 2011, p. 122). By discussing their own background and lived experiences in their work with students and acknowledging the unique challenges facing young people, workers like Miriam, Blake, and Abeerah actively bring community into their practices as youth workers and educators. As a result, their outlook on Safe Schools and community programming in

Surrey more generally indicates the thought and intentionality that workers, like themselves put into their practices.

8.2. Mentorship as a means of prevention: The “hook-up”

As mentioned, the use of mentors to empower students through discourses of responsibility is a major component in how Safe Schools communicated its intentions throughout the program webpages. This section further analyzed this mentorship component of Safe Schools through communication with those who work for two specific initiatives under the Safe Schools umbrella —Safe School Liaisons and the Yo Bro/Yo Girl program.

> Having adult allies can help young people navigate complex institutions (Baldridge et al., 2017, p.388). These mentoring relationships have proven to create intergenerational ties that cultivate high expectations and opportunities to engage in social change within their communities (Ginwright, 2007).
>
> By attending to the core domains of education in holistic ways, community-based spaces reimagine education and make space for students’ experiences and culture while practically acknowledging the academic and economic imperatives of learning traditional standards. (Baldridge et al., 2017, p. 390).

Here, Ginwright (2007) and Baldridge et al. (2017) outline key discourses about adult mentorship in creating safe spaces for young people. Particularly messages on the impact caring adults can have to create opportunities for marginalized youth to engage in social change themselves. As such, special attention is paid to how these workers talk about their unique programs in relation to program aims and their roles in the lives of students.

When asked about the importance of mentorship, Paul, who has worked with Yo Bro/Yo Girl for the past 15+ years as both a volunteer and staff member emphasizes the importance of role models and mentorship. YB/YG goes beyond Surrey and is in other municipalities — however, they are contracted out by Safe Schools, with common ideologies and goals according to Paul. For him growing up in Surrey, the South Asian community previously lacked prominent role models, but with community programs like YBYG, adult mentors can inform kids and bridge the cultural gap often seen in Surrey.

> Kids need an outlet — we need more community-based programs that keep kids engaged (Paul, Miriam, personal communication, June 13, 2022).

The mission of Yo Bro/Yo Girl in his words is to provide this space and outlet in a holistic way:

> [Yo Bro/Yo Girl is a] pro-social recreational program that offers a safe and fun environment for youth. Kids participate in a number of games, challenges, martial arts, and everything else. [We] have music programs and art therapy programs. One on one casework provided as well for outreach (Personal communication, June 13, 2022).

This communication from Paul about the program about the impact of YB/YG reinforces the idea that Yo Bro/Yo Girl is a remedy for much of the anxieties facing young people in Surrey. The problem according to Paul is the lack of adult role models, and as a result, his program provides the solution through mentorship.

Like what was outlined on the YB/YG website, Paul describes the program as innovative and holistic, as mentors discuss many different topics related to students, with the aim of ensuring they are empowered towards making a difference.

> This year we started a music program, trying to build a reading program — whatever kids are interested in we want to bring it to them (Personal communication, June 13, 2022).

This newly added component to the program, although not highlighted on the website, is used as another example by Paul about their goal to constantly evolve and meet the need of the kids they serve. From my conversations with Abeerah and Blake, it is evident that similar to the mentors who work with Yo Bro/Yo Girl, SSL's are also at the periphery of education in that they reach students in their personal lives, and help them with issues that take place beyond the hallways of their schools.

> Because many youth workers engage students outside of traditional school contexts, they are uniquely privy to the daily challenges youth encounter within their schools, neighborhoods, and in their homes (Baldridge, 2018, p. 4).

Similarly, the role of a Safe School Liaison is to build meaningful relationships with youth in that they feel comfortable coming to them with what is going on.

> Our main focus is prevention in terms of schools, violence, drugs, fights — our focus is to build relationships so we can prevent these things (Blake, personal communication, March 5, 2022).

> Most kids feel more conformable going to us compared to the counsellor because we're always in the hall with them (Blake, personal communication, March 5, 2022).

Regarding Safe Schools, Blake said these programs aim to watch over kids — it's really about listening to the kids, what their background is, and where they're coming from. So as liaisons, Blake and Abeerah are therefore put in the position to learn this without the label of an administrator.

> I can get guns and knives off of kids — I can sit down with the kid and talk to them. Consent is important, always get the students consent first before taking any immediate action (Blake, personal communication, March 5, 2022).

> Every school has issues, for us the drugs, the fights, gang involvement, bullying – we're here to create a presence, I'm not a counsellor or principal, I'm that middleman (Blake, personal communication, March 5, 2022).

> Every day is different and over the years Safe Schools has changed its role in the sense that it's not about getting students in trouble but about keeping students out of trouble (Abeerah, personal communication, June 13, 2022).

In my interview with Blake, this mentorship aspect was a common theme in the prevention of violence and creating this safe space SSL's aim to do —not just through his ability to listen to students but to assist students with social capital also.

> On the interpersonal level, social support and social leverage are two key forms of network-based social capital. Social support refers to capital that individuals can draw upon to "get by" or to cope with daily problems (Dill & Ozer, 2019, p. 1615).

In Blake's role, he has given students tips on scholarships, coaching opportunities, and career resources, that aid in bettering the students beyond simply prevention of criminal activity or violence (Personal communication, March 5, 2022). This "hook-up" is similar to what Dill & Ozer (2019) found in their work about the importance of network-based social capital serving as a critical force in distressed and stigmatized communities. In their personal communication, Blake, Abeerah, and Paul all communicate a discourse of student self-empowerment through adult mentorship when discussing the importance of their programs and roles. This mirrors what the programs

themselves communicate in their website material when it comes to student safety and the importance of Safe Schools to create this safety through staff support.

8.3. Fighting Negative Narratives with Positive Reinforcement Through Community Programming

> So much of the negativity in our city and in our community is highlighted. A lot of times the good work in our community is not given equal weight. If there is a shooting or a stabbing it goes viral and we hear about it but whenever kids are doing great work it's rarely highlighted. (Paul, personal communication, June 13, 2022).

Media and external narratives have had a profound impact on racialized students, to the extent that it has fundamentally modified their notions of where they fit into society (Jiwani, 2006). However, moving beyond the analysis of public discourse through the media and websites, the interviews highlighted how youth workers are aware of the symbolic violence practices by the media through its deployment of negative coverage. And further use these constructed narratives of Surrey to adapt their practices of engaging young people in Surrey.

When I asked Blake about how media affects his role as an SSL working in Safe Schools, he pointed to his own experience growing up in East Van, highlighting how external messages affected him, being of African descent.

> Media also has a big part to play in how we look at the community — I believe if you're only showing the negative, then that's how people are going to look at it. Nobody's going to want to come to Surrey. They say: oh, that school? Oh, I don't want to go into that school, even if that school is changing for the better (Personal communication, March 5, 2022).

On the topic of crime coverage, he said that the way the media has and continues to sensationalize violence in Surrey is problematic. For example, if there was a shooting in a certain area people may say, "I don't want to go there" …. but there are shootings everywhere (Personal communication, March 5, 2022).

These observations about the role in constructing a certain view about Surrey as a racialized space, full of danger, is something Mariam and Paul also touched on in their interviews. For Miriam, the media plays an important role in how they represent racialized folks.

> If my students are constantly being told you're one thing, it does get into [their] head (Miriam, personal communication, March 6, 2022).

This observation is an example of the effects of symbolic violence practices by the media, linking the structural actions of the media to individual results that impact racialized students in Surrey. On this note, Miriam is very aware of how media not only reproduces racial inequality institutionally and systematically but also impacts Surrey youth individually.

> People need to realize, the faults of racialized people are highlighted and outlined to us so well but the faults of white folks who also commit violent crimes, not always in the form of a punch, but can be hidden but it's just as cruel and it's just as painful (Miriam, personal communication, March 6, 2022).
>
> So, when we talk about safety, there needs to be accountability and that needs to be across the board for everyone (Miriam, personal communication, March 6, 2022).

The workers interviewed have observed the effects the media have had on their students and program participants — in its construction of Surrey and those young people who inhabit it. This disruption to the self-identification of Surrey students because of these constant narratives can be understood through the "myth of multiculturalism." Ali (2008) argues that this myth becomes shattered when racialized youth are exposed to categorization by institutions outside of their diverse communities.

> Within the confines of their micro-environment, they do not experience racism because most people with whom they interact on a regular basis are also racialized immigrants or their children (Ali, 2008, p. 91).

Ali goes on to outline that when the youth look beyond their local spaces and consider how racialized immigrants/people born in Canada are treated by White people and institutions they begin to realize the limits of Canadian multiculturalism (2008). They are disappointed when they discover this is not the case, this can start within schools and with the discourse they are fed at a young age by certain institutions and the media.

In response to these media narratives, Paul emphasizes that Yo Bro/Yo Girl tries to focus a lot on core messaging in their programing.

> We try to highlight our successes in the program — not the failures; we focus on the changes that are taking place (Personal communication, June 13, 2022).

> Messaging is really important — we work with young kids, so it's important to ask these kids how they would like to be respected and what they want (Personal communication, June 13, 2022).

He said that some of the key messages that the program tries to push are really basic and include being a humanitarian, a good person, and the best version of themselves (Personal communication, June 13, 2022). By focusing on this positive messaging, Yo Bro/Yo Girl are once again prioritizing a discourse of self-empowerment instead of panic to reach students and showcase program success. Furthermore, about community programming in Surrey, the interviewees pointed to a connection they've observed between media coverage and program implementation — highlighting some key barriers they face as they try to engage young people.

> When crime goes up, shootings take place, then all of a sudden, they want to put money into Safe Schools instead of just putting money in these programs beforehand (Blake, personal communication, March 5, 2022)

This lack of consistency has been a huge barrier for Paul and the YB/YG program. Paul runs a free wrestling program every Sunday where everyone leaves with a hot meal. The challenge for him has been how to get more than one day of availability, as there is not enough community help in that aspect.

> This challenge is indicative of the issue of precarity among community-based education spaces, as they are often dependent on funding. This forced reliance on the state, institutions, other actors, etc. may enforce narratives that do not align with the organizations purpose (Baldridge et al., 2017, p. 382).

The work of Baldridge et al (2017) as referred to above describes Paul's situation and also effectively outlines the tension between the individual vs the institution. Paul, through his work with YBYG, must often resort to individuated actions to mentor and engage young people in Surrey, as he faces challenges on an institutional level. The interview with Paul and his description of his struggles outlines a common problem within non-profits, with resource scarcity as multiple actors try to navigate deep-rooted societal issues as a single entity. Furthermore, Paul's interview also highlights the limitations of individuated actions to remedy youth violence through the use of empowerment discourse and mentorship, as presented in the website analysis of the Yo Bro/Yo Girl program.

Despite being a bit separate from the school system as an after-school program, YB/YG is still dependent on public policy trends and public discourses because of their situation in the political economy (Gilmore, 2007). Therefore, Paul must work with the City of Surrey and Surrey Schools and negotiate Yo Bro/Yo Girl's place within this municipal ecosystem to run this free program and get access to a space.

Miriam's understanding of media discourse and education policy stems from her observations of her students who she says are dealing with a specific type of neglect that stems from an insecurity with their hybrid identities as racialized youth. She said that many students don't feel as understood and this manifests differently for students (Personal communication, March 6, 2022).

> The kid who's sitting in a classroom getting good grades might be going through the same thing the kid punching a wall is (Personal communication, March 6, 2022).

In addition, Miriam's interview highlights the limits of the institution to solve these deeply complex issues that involve racialized youth.

> When you only cater to a specific group of kids [through] education policy with these programs, I think this is in direct relation to the media. Because the media tells you that brown men are violent, brown kids are violent. So, I even question the implementation of these programs sometimes. Is it for the kids or is it for everyone else in society to feel safe and to prove to other white people, don't worry we have a SSL group with violence prevention at [school name] so that these brown people you're scared of don't grow up to cause more violence like you're seeing this news (Personal communication, March 6, 2022).

> What that does often generate these programs — which in some cases, some of these programs can be a knee jerk reaction because you're not really sitting down with the people of the community and asking them what the actual issues are and what do you need (Personal communication, March 6, 2022).

Through conversation with Miriam, it brings up the question about the individualization of community issues, as is done through solely focusing on empowerment without an equal focus on the systemic causes of youth violence and inequity. Although the websites analyzed do respond to stereotypical notions of youth violence through their images of diverse youth, as with YBYG and defining the issues facing youth such as in PSST, the solutions presented fall upon the individual student, program, or in this case worker who mentors youth. The fact that Miriam is questioning

the intentionality behind programs like Safe Schools emphasizes the role of community or raises the question of community responsibility, and the pressure that workers can feel when the solution to youth violence is individuated and falls upon a single entity or worker.

She wants to make it clear — this isn't a critique of the SSL's and the workers who are on the ground. She has a lot of respect for these workers and for Safe Schools. But she questions the intentions behind it — "is it for the kids?" (Personal communication, March 6, 2022). This line of questioning is particularly interesting coming from an educator who has observed community programs like those run by Safe Schools, as it shows how workers like Miriam are constantly reflecting on what is taking place within the halls of the schools. This observation coincides with what Altheide (2002) argues, in that the media plays a distinct role in framing social issues in a way that promotes fear, shifting how people think about diverse issues towards a more panic-driven response. In her teaching practice, Miriam has reflected on this panic driven approach based on her personal communication with me. This reflection I argue is what makes initiatives like Safe Schools critical spaces, as workers like Miriam, Paul, and Blake are constantly evolving in their practice and thinking about the larger impact their work has.

8.4. Analysis: Moving towards Critical and Community-Engaged Programming for All

Through my interviews, it is evident that those who work in this space are uniquely positioned within the lives of students with access to their lives at home, school, and within their neighbourhoods — this was echoed in my conversation with Miriam, who, as a teacher, has witnessed the role that the SSLs in her school play in the lives of her students as well as her own teaching practice. The SSLs I spoke to understand that Safe Schools was created because of violence within schools, but both Blake and Abeerah note that the mission of Safe Schools, especially for SSLs who are in the hallways with young people, has expanded to include mental health supports and scholarship resources. These fall under "life-changing chances" that Blake stressed are important if schools want to support students for the better.

The participants interviewed agreed that negative constructions, present in the media, impact the young people they work with in unique ways, typically impacting self-esteem. Furthermore, the participants did, albeit anecdotally, relate an increase in the funding programs receive to an increase in media coverage about violence among youth such as a shooting, stabbing, or gang activity. Finally, the solutions the participants pointed to involve holistic programming for young people that includes an open dialogue with parents, students, and the community — something Blake and Miriam noted is being done on a community level by Safe Schools.

None of those who I interviewed had an alarmist tone about the issues facing young people in Surrey, as they routinely mentioned that all schools in every city have problems that are unique, and it has very little to do with the city or ethnic make-up of the school. However, when the issues revolve around Black and Brown students, the media attention is observed as being amplified (Miriam, personal communication, March 6, 2022). The existence of this racialized, symbolic violence as analyzed in the critical discourse analysis section of this research, relates to these observations that participants had when it comes to community programming within schools; and as youth workers this is the type of symbolic violence, they said they are trying to combat personally.

> When I build those relationships of respect so that a kid feels comfortable telling [me] something and doesn't look at [me] as a threat — that's where I personally succeed (Blake, personal communication, March 5, 2022).

8.5. Interview Analysis

The interviews conducted with education workers highlight a connection between the discourses of individual responsibility pushed by the website material examined and the anxiety this brings forth for cultural workers when a community issue is individuated. For Miriam ideal programming engages with the community, by bringing in positive role models in her classroom, engaging in conversations about social issues, and combatting these negative narratives the news wants to portray.

> We have to bring in very diverse programs that will hit different aspects of the pain students are experiencing. Pain is not only manifested through violence, it [also] shows up through the snarky comments girls make towards one another, it shows up through that perfect A student who can't take the weekend off. So, if you truly care about the students and the

> intention is healing, the policy has to be reflective of the diverse pain that is being shown to you (Personal communication, March 6, 2022).

There is a clear tension between the individual and community in this case as Miriam emphasizes the importance of community solidarity to solve issues involving racialized youth. The individualization of these complex community problems resonates with neo-liberal ideology, which focuses on the discourse of responsibility and empowerment instead of community engagement. Although communities may be mentioned within the website and media discourse, Miriam's interview highlights that there needs to be more done to engage with the community to implement solutions within the schools as mentorship and prevention programs can have their limitations. These limitations are evident in Paul's struggle with securing space at a local recreation centre to run a free wrestling class, and in Blake's experience with funding patterns often being dependent on sensationalized media coverage. These institutional limitations that they encounter are evident in the conversations I had with them. However, they do not shy away from discussing these struggles. Everyone I spoke to is very aware of the problems they face in their work — whether that be stereotypical and negative media coverage about young people, the lack of funding, or the pressure they feel in their work. But, despite these issues, they all agree that programs like Safe Schools and workers like Safe School Liaisons, as cultural workers, and mentors reach students in a way that many other educators or community figures cannot due to SSL's years of relationship building. This model of mentorship, I argue highlights the positives of this empowerment and mentorship discourse that the Safe School websites push as being central to its program aims. The interviews, in this case, speak to the discourses presented in the websites by outlining the pressure that workers face that is not highlighted in public material, but also reinforce the public presentation of Safe Schools and affiliated programs examined in the website analysis when it comes to the overwhelming push for responsibility to enhance school safety.

Chapter 9.

Conclusion

In his work, Cohen (1972) emphasizes how violence amongst youth, especially within schools, is a prime example of how the moral panic framework operates. With its involvement of suitable “folk devils,” sympathetic victims, and widespread concern from parents and the community. This thesis has outlined how violent incidents involving youth involve rapid responses and often elicit widespread fear, as was highlighted by this thesis about crime coverage in Surrey. By using parents, community members, and educators to communicate fears, news media organizations tell compelling stories that are often sensationalized in nature. At the same time, community programs use these often-stereotyped notions of young people to justify their existence which this thesis demonstrated through the website analysis. Images of teens in hoodies, young women who need protection, and young racialized youth in elementary schools feed into these narratives of criminality amongst young, racialized students in Surrey. Policy and the media in this case are responding to one another, with the media communicating these fears, and institutions using policy as a means to intervene and solve this widespread issue of violence being communicated.

In this research, I discussed how racialized bodies are categorized and deemed as a threat far greater than their white counterparts, particularly when it comes to young people in Surrey. This fear is evident in the racialized moral panics evident in the media coverage — which community programs then capitalize on. As noted by Altheide (2002), a moral panic framing usually depicts a crisis as all-encompassing, is solution-oriented, and emphasizes urgency. These characteristics are indicative of the media that was examined in which I argue that the content about Surrey, young people in the city, and immigration flows from Vancouver to Surrey can be understood using a specific racialized moral panic framework in which the space of Surrey itself is narrated as a dangerous space which as a result transfers onto Surrey youth themselves. Community programing in Surrey is a result of this moral panic discourse, with the interviewees I spoke to confirming that they saw an increase in funding and attention when crime spikes and the media cover these incidents. Having said this, this thesis has illuminated an important feature of the media in which media and education policy, speak to one

another to make concrete changes within schools. Simultaneously, I argue that the websites of these programs are impacted by this discourse, as they use stereotypical notions of community, racialized fear, and teenage violence in the public communication of their program aims — typically to speak to parents, teachers, and donors about program achievements publicly as identified by the Yo Bro/Yo Girl website. Despite the implicit racialization through the use of key moral panic-driven buzz words and visuals of teenagers in hoodies, for example, these programs I argue, do produce positive, emancipatory results for students because of those youth workers who are on the ground mentoring and engaging with students about complex topics of poverty, bullying, and racism. This is evident in the interviews conducted with teachers and youth workers who describe their daily jobs as being mentors and support systems for young people in Surrey that constantly have negative narratives pushed by external forces. My interview with Miriam in particular highlights what Tuck & Yang (2013) discuss as everyday acts of resistance among community members, with her ability to bring community and issues impacting the community into the classroom to engage her students. Furthermore, her explanation of her practice, in particular, the way she questions every program implemented and what the intention is, highlights her teaching as critical and constantly evolving. Having said this, the interview chapter also highlights how adult mentors use social capital to support youth in schools, this specific importance that SSLs hold that was mentioned in their personal communication is something not included in the public communication released by Safe Schools. For Paul, this means continuously pitching new ideas to mentor and engage youth, as he tries to be a role model. And for Blake, this is exemplified in the resources and mentorship he provides the students who he works with every day. Although positive in their efforts, these individuated acts can be problematic as they position individual workers or single programs and initiatives to tackle very complicated community issues. Thus, reinforcing problematic frameworks that prioritize individual actions vs. government or community-based solutions.

The interviews also outlined a crucial component of community programs in their vulnerability to funding and how workers observe the role that media plays in the funding pattern of certain community programs for youth in Surrey. Although anecdotal, these interviews illuminate how departments like Safe Schools see an increase in funding and importance when media coverage about violence in Surrey occurs at high volumes. Having said this, educational programming is a part of an industry like every other

program dependent on funding, as a result, many programs have to abide by certain norms when it comes to attracting donors. This is evident when the websites report on statistics about crime and subsequently program success in mitigating this criminal activity and using moral panic framing about young people and the danger within schools to justify and sustain their programs. These tactics I argue, however, do not take away from the good work that many workers and program staff undertake every day but are indicative of a larger institutional hurdle that school systems, governments, and non-profits must jump over. By examining the Safe Schools department, through the analysis of media discourse on Surrey and Surrey Schools and, by speaking to youth workers in Surrey I examined the disconnect between what is communicated in public material when it comes to community programming and through media coverage vs what takes place from the perspectives of youth workers who are working with young people every day. As discussed by the workers, many schools have issues, but in Metro Vancouver, Surrey has received a distinct reputation for being more dangerous as a space. These narratives of Surrey being dangerous I argue have transferred over to the discourse about those who inhabit the space, which includes Surrey youth. Amid this panic that arises in the public, initiatives like Safe Schools are positioned as the solution to these issues Surrey is facing.

This solution-oriented framing is evident in the website material examined, with mentors and responsible adults being constantly pushed, both visually and textually, as a remedy to the problems students in Surrey face. The discourse of responsibility that pushed the enhancement of safety onto students, students, mentors, or a single community, although presented through positive affirmations and images, can also touch on the problematic nature of individualizing complicated issues involving youth. It can be dangerous it emerges from neo-liberal ideas that are deeply related to racializing discourses about young people, linking social issues to one group, instead of informing people about the history of violence and marginalization facing economically disenfranchised and racialized groups. However, at the same time, it is very clear that the web materials and the Safe School Department in its presentation attempt to remedy these symbolic messages of marginalization and stigmatization through positive discourses of empowerment. This is further reinforced through the conversation with Safe School staff who discuss their experience in tailoring program goals based on the school or community they work in.

This research has examined a set of connections not researched before when it comes to Surrey, education programs, media, and workers experiences. The analysis I conducted of safe school program websites highlights the process of symbolic rehabilitation, as these pages publicly communicate the positive impact that they are trying to have, with the website discourse directly pushing back on negative narratives about Surrey. In the field of communication studies, the impact of prevention and intervention programs in schools has not discussed substantially but are deserving of closer attention. These spaces are rich sites to understand how media discourse is implicated in educational spaces and institutions. To this end, future research could, as mentioned in Chapter 6, examine the discursive context for intervention programs from 2010 onward by conducting critical discourse analysis of news media (print, as well as broadcast) during this period. Further, research on this topic could usefully examine the programs under Safe Schools or other school districts through using participant observation of program activities and of liaison team meetings to advance understandings of student experiences in these programs. In each of the research areas analyzed for this project, I found that there was a lack of youth voices in the public communication about the community programs, though the role of young people in producing and receiving material about programs that frame their identities and roles within the school community should be further examined. A focus on youth voices – which can be reflected in participant observation, as well as in interviews and focus groups -- can enrich understandings of the experience and efficacy of these programs, and shape future directions in this research area.

Ultimately, this work pushes back on how we determine which students need support and which do not (ie. who and what constitutes “at-risk youth”), while examining those structures that have shaped these decisions, including the media and educational policy. By having conversations with those who interact with students every day I was able to develop understandings of how educational workers navigate this discursive environment and the needs of students. This thesis has outlined how policy and public communication materials like the media and web materials speak to one another and are in conversation with the public’s racialized anxieties about youth and criminality, something I argue, is reflected by and has been shaped overtime by mainstream media coverage of Surrey.

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Appendix A.

Interview Guide

Opening Question

- First, can you tell me a little bit about yourself? What is your position and for how long have you been working on topics related to education or youth programming in Surrey?
- What type of work do you/ your organization do?

Community-Based Educational Spaces and Issues of Identity

- Can you tell me a little bit about the current context of community-based education spaces in Surrey?
- What is your experience with Safe Schools?
- What are the main issues social issues that inform the implementation of programs like Safe Schools?
- Do these affect racialized youth in unique ways? How?
- What are the main issues impacting the negotiation of identify for youth in Surrey?

Addressing the Issues

- In what ways do you believe media discourse impacts educational and/or municipal policy?
- How does this discourse impact sense of belonging when it comes to Surrey youth?
- How may these issues be remedied?
- Who holds the power to remedy these solutions? Government? Community members?

Closing Questions

- Is there something else you would like to add?
- Do you know someone else who might be interested in participating in this study?
- Would you mind asking them if they would agree to be contacted by me or sharing this
- information with them (Appendix B) so that they can contact me for an interview?
- Thank you very much for your time and for participating in this study.

Appendix B.

Consent Form

This document provides information that will help you decide whether you consent to participate in this study, which is being conducted for a master's degree.

Who is conducting the study?

Principal Investigator: Jasleen Bains, School of Communication, Simon Fraser University

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Karrmen Crey, School of Communication. Simon Fraser University

This research is for a graduate thesis. Any information collected will go towards the thesis and may be presented at conferences or included in social media posts.

Funding

This study is being funded by the Shahrgon Annual Graduate Award, the Community-Engaged Research Initiative CERi Graduate Research Fellowship, the Dean's Graduate Fellowship, and the BC Graduate Scholarship.

Study Purpose

This project aims to explore and share the experiences of those who work with the Safe Schools program or in related community-based education spaces within Surrey. It will examine how discourses of criminalization inform municipal and educational policy and how young racialized people navigate these institutions.

Why should you take part in this study?

You are being invited to take part in this research study because you have lived and/or working experience with racialized youth in Surrey and work closely with that demographic. We want to learn more about how community-based educational spaces in Surrey impact racialized youth, specifically the Safe Schools Initiative. We are inviting

people like you who have experience with the Safe Program and/or Surrey Schools to help us.

Your participation is voluntary

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You will not be compensated for your participation in this study. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw consent and drop out of the process at any time for any reason without any negative consequences to your education, employment or any other services. At this point any data including audio files, consent form, emails, associated with the participant will be destroyed.

You should feel in no way obligated or pressured to participate due to an existing or prior relationship with me or the University. If you do feel a sense of obligation or pressure, you should decline to participate.

How is the study done?

If you agree to the study as say 'Yes', here is how I will do the study:

- I will ask you a series of questions about the Safe Schools Program, your experience working with racialized youth in Surrey, and how representation and discourses of danger in Surrey impact the development of identity for these individuals.
- Participation in this study will be through a 1-2-hour interview over the Zoom platform.
- If you would like your information to remain confidential, any identifiable markers will be stripped during the transcription process.
- Your name will be replaced during transcription with a pseudonym, and the researcher will be the only person with access to the audio recordings. Since Zoom, telephone and email are not a secure means of communication, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- After the principal investigator completes the transcription process, the audio files will be destroyed. The digital material will be put on the SFU Vault system. The research materials, consent forms, and recordings of consent will be stored for 2 years after the completion of the study.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for you?

After an initial assessment of the research, this study has no anticipated risks involved. There will be no effects or consequences yourself or to your education or employment if

you refuse to participate. Some questions we ask may seem sensitive or personal. You do not need to answer any question if you do not want to.

What are the benefits of participating?

Despite Surrey being crucial for minority communities, there is limited scholarship on the effect media has on residents navigating the diaspora. For participants, the research will offer a space where the benefits and/or complexities of community-based educational spaces and municipal governance can be unpacked and shared. In the future planning and operations of community based educational spaces, policy makers and educators may benefit from what was learned in this study.

How will your identity be protected?

Your confidentiality will be respected. **Information that discloses your identity will not be released without your consent,** and you can choose to use a pseudonym instead of your name. In this case, any identifiable markers will be stripped during the transcription process. The participants name will be replaced during transcription with a pseudonym, and the researcher will be the only person with access to the audio recordings.

Please note that posting to comments sections, liking or sharing on social media or other forums about this study may identify you as a participant. We therefore suggest that if this study was made available to you via a social media site or other online forums, you refrain from posting comments to maintain confidentiality.

Since telephone and email are not a secure means of communication, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

All digital material will be put on the SFU Vault system. All SFU files uploaded into the system will be protected under the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FIPPA), which alleviates any risk of storing sensitive information within US-based cloud storage providers such as Dropbox, Google Drive, etc. The research materials, consent forms, and recordings of consent will be stored for 2 years after the completion of the study.

Please also remember that if you choose to use a pseudonym, your identity may still be inferred from study results if your views are well known. If you choose to use a pseudonym, the file linking names with pseudonyms will be kept secure and separate from other data collected in the study.

Organizational Permission

Permission to conduct this study from the Surrey School Board has been obtained. The risk of your participation with the organization's consent is minimal but any answers given may strain relations within the organization. Any identifiers during the interview process can be scrubbed as discussed above.

Video and Audio Recordings

Audio and video will be recorded through Zoom. The researcher will let the participant know when the recording will begin, and the participant will receive a pop-up notification alerting them that the meeting is being recorded. Please note your participation will result in the disclosure of personal information to Zoom Video Communications. All data collected through Zoom is subjected to the US Patriot and Cloud Acts.

Dissemination Study Results

The results associated with this research will be included in a graduate thesis and will be available on the researcher's personal website. In addition, the research results may also be included in the university's website and researcher's social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The research may also be presented at academic conferences, published in academic journal articles, books, informational graphics or news articles. Participants will be able to view the full video, audio recording, and quotes prior to the publication of the graduate thesis. Additionally, results may be disseminated and presented in community meetings, forums, or dialogues held by community organizations within Surrey as well as the City of Surrey.

Future use of Data

Future use of the data collected beyond the conclusion of this research project includes using the data for journal articles, book chapters, presentations, or for future research.

Providing consent to participate in this study includes giving consent that this information may be used in future studies.

Future Contact

You will be re-contacted to approve the study results and interviews. You may also be re-contacted for any future research pertaining to this research area. Please indicate if you give permission for re-contacting for future studies below.

☐ **Please check if you agree to be re-contacted by the researcher for future studies.**

Who can you contact if you have question about the study?

For any questions about the study you can contact the principal investigator Jasleen Bains.

Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the study?

If you have any concerns about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact the SFU Office of Research Ethics.

Questions to be asked during the interview regarding informed consent.

- Do you consent to participate in this study?
- Do you consent to be recorded during the interview?
- What pseudonym or name would you like to use for the interview?
- Do you want to be re-contacted to learn about the study findings?
- If so, how should I get in touch with you?
- Do you have any questions or concerns before we start?

Participant Consent and Signature

Taking part in this study is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of this study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on your employment or access to further services.

☐ **Please check if you would like any results found during the study to remain as confidential as possible which will include removing your name and any identifying markers after the interview.**

☐ **Please check this box to agree for your video and audio to be included in the circulation of results. This is not a requirement of participation and if you choose to have your video and audio shared, you will be fully identified as participants.**

- Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.
- Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

____

Participant Signature Date

____

Printed Name of the Participant signing above