Constructing 'road rage' as news
An analysis of two Australian newspapers

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ABSTRACT
The phenomenon known as 'road rage' emerged and attracted much attention in the news media in the 1990s. This article reports the findings from a study on representations and understandings of road rage in Australia. Over 600 news items published between 1995 and 2000 in the two major Sydney newspapers (the Sydney Morning Herald and the Daily Telegraph) were analysed using discourse analysis. After a discussion of the ways in which road rage was first introduced to readers, my analysis centres on the major themes emerging in later years of reporting. I conclude that the newspapers' representations of road rage, like those engendering other moral panics, sought to position the phenomenon as a negative outcome of contemporary urban society. Unlike most other moral panics, however, the villains identified as ('road ragers') are not members of minority subgroups or subcultures. Rather, every road user is portrayed as potentially capable of road rage, due to their exposure to the stresses of everyday life.

INTRODUCTION: CRIME IN THE NEWS
It has long been argued in the criminological literature that news media portrayals of crime are influential in the development of the public's understanding of and knowledge about crime. Most commentators within criminology have been critical of news coverage of crime, arguing that it tends to construct or reproduce stereotypes, unjustly singles out members of certain social groups as criminal (such as members of ethnic minorities and the poor), and selectively reports some crimes (such as homicide) while ignoring others, thus giving a distorted view of crime to audiences (see, for example, the literature reviewed in Barak, 1994; Daly, 1995; Ericson, 1991; Kidd-Hewitt, 1995; Sparks, 1992).
Further, the sensationalist aspects of news reporting, particularly its focus on violent crimes, have been implicated in developing fear of crime among members of the public (Schlesinger & Tumber, 1994; Sparks, 1992). The news media have also been criticised for their attempts to construct a 'crime wave' or 'crisis' from very few disparate cases, and for failing to acknowledge criminological knowledge about patterns in crime incidence, shifts in these patterns over time, or the broader socio-cultural conditions in which crimes are committed, in their efforts to frame stories with the 'bad news' discourse (Daly, 1995).

From a cultural studies perspective, media reporting of crime is a means by which collective anxieties and fears are expressed and often focused in particular ways: for example, on concerns about familial authority and maternal responsibility in the case of juvenile crime (Hay, 1995). One of the seminal texts in the area is *Policing the Crisis* (1978), by Hall, Clark, Jefferson, Critcher, and Roberts, an analysis of the ways in which the British press constructed a panic about mugging in the early 1970s. Hall et al. argued that this panic was underpinned by discourses articulating an increasing sense of social and political crisis in British society, centring around concerns about public safety and social cohesion. They identified in the media accounts an ambivalence about contemporary urban life and the nature of the city, with the city standing both as the apotheosis of 'civilisation' and as the site of moral decay, the disintegration of social order, and incivility. As other commentators have also argued (see, for example, Barak, 1994; Hay, 1995; Sparks, 1992), news reports of crime are inherently moral stories, used to identify deviant acts and demonstrate the repercussions they attract.

The literature on moral panics is also relevant to a discussion of news media's representations of crime. Another cultural studies text published in the 1970s, Cohen's *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (1972), has been influential in framing research and theorising about crime and the media in the context of moral panics. Cohen argues that certain distinguishable social types are identified as 'folk devils' or the deviant 'Other' in news accounts of certain crimes. A moral panic is constructed around these folk devils, in which they are positioned as a threat to established and dominant values, quickly creating an escalating sense of panic around how to contain this threat. The threat is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the newspapers; moral barricades are erected by various experts and journalists writing opinion pieces and editorials; diagnoses and solutions are proposed by experts and people in positions in power. The threat may then disappear or deteriorate or become more visible and more threatening. Underlying all moral panics...
is a deeper concern about an apparent fragmentation or breakdown in social order (Thompson, 1998, p. 3).

This article deals specifically with news media accounts of a 'new' phenomenon involving crime: 'road rage'. Road rage is particularly interesting to study because the news media played an important role in using and defining this new term for their audiences. The term emerged in the mid 1990s to describe a constellation of behaviours related to aggressive or violent driving and other socially undesirable reactions to other drivers using the same road space, such as rude gestures and verbal abuse. Some of these behaviours (such as homicide and assault) were already defined as criminal at the time the term emerged, while in some jurisdictions others have since been specifically designated as criminal. For example, legislation was introduced in the New South Wales State parliament in May 1997 to punish road-rage-related behaviour. The laws introduced three categories of offences: menacing driving, driving with intent to menace, and predatory driving.

In this article, I report on findings from the first part of a two-part study on road rage that involved both media analysis and interviews. In the first part of the study, all accounts of road rage published in the two Sydney metropolitan daily newspapers from 1995 to the end of 2000 were collected and analysed. The second part of the study involved qualitative semi-structured interviews with 77 Sydney residents about their attitudes towards and experiences of driving and road rage. Only the data from the first part are drawn upon here.

**METHODOLOGY**

A media-monitoring company was engaged to conduct a search of all articles or news items referring to road rage in the Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) and the Daily Telegraph (DT). The Sunday editions of these newspapers (the Sun Herald (SH) and Sunday Telegraph (ST) respectively) were also included. The company was asked to search for the first mention of the term (this was found to occur in January 1995) and to continue until the end of 2000.

These newspapers were chosen both because they represent important and influential organs of the Australian press and because they are published in the city in which the second part of the study took place, and, thus, were more likely than any other newspapers to be read by the participants and contribute to their understandings of road rage. Both newspapers are published for a Sydney readership but have very different tenors and audiences. The SMH is an elite broadsheet that caters to the interests and tastes of a well-educated, middle-class readership. Its
headlines are smaller and generally less sensationalist, and it carries articles of greater length and depth than does its competitor, with more political and overseas news coverage. The DT is a populist broadsheet that is designed to appeal to a wider (and larger) audience, with shorter news items and more human-interest stories.

A total of 609 articles was collected for the six-year period spanning the study. A qualitative approach, discourse analysis, was adopted to analyse their content (Fairclough, 1992; Fowler, 1992). Discourse analysis of news texts is interested in the ways in which meaning is conveyed via the language and visual imagery employed. It is less focused on counting aspects of texts (as in quantitative content analysis) than in identifying the ways in which certain dominant discourses, or patterned ways of representing and giving meaning to phenomena, are reproduced in the texts. In conducting a discourse analysis of the news texts, I read each article closely, noting in particular such features as the topic or theme, the use of language in headline and main text (focusing on such features as figurative language and stereotypes), and the use of news actors and news sources. The research questions guiding the analysis included: How was road rage initially identified and constructed as a social problem? How was it and its perpetrators characterised? Who were portrayed as its perpetrators and victims? What causes of and solutions for road rage were identified?

**Findings**

Table 1 shows the frequency of news stories mentioning road rage published in each newspaper from the first use of the term until the end of 2000. Although the *Sydney Morning Herald* was the first to use the term, over the six years the *Daily Telegraph* published a slightly greater number of articles (57% of the total). As Table 1 shows, both newspapers started off slowly in their first year of reporting the road rage phenomenon, each publishing only a handful of items, but coverage quickly escalated, particularly in the *DT*. The peak of reporting in terms of numbers of articles published was 1997. Then followed a decline, which was especially marked in the extent of *DT* coverage. In the years 1996 and 1997, in particular, there were a higher number of articles published in the *DT* than the *SMH*. These years represented a period in which road rage was a new, sensational, and interesting phenomenon.

The two newspapers reported the road rage phenomenon very differently. Most of the articles published in the *DT* reported incidents of road rage, many of which occurred in parts of Sydney, or the results of cases of aggressive driving in magistrates’ courts, again largely in Sydney.
Table 1: Number of articles referring to road rage published, 1995–2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sydney Morning Herald</th>
<th>Daily Telegraph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>89</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>76</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They were usually several paragraphs long, and bore headlines including the term ‘road rage’: for example, ‘Road Rage Tempers Run Hot’ (15 November 1996) and ‘Road Rage Terror: Motorist Bashed For Blowing His Horn’ (12 January 1997). Some reports of incidents of road rage were followed up in the same issue or the next day by personalised stories of the victims. In contrast, in most of the articles published by the SMH using the term ‘road rage’ the references to the phenomenon were fleeting, and part of a report on another issue. Because of this different approach to using the term, fewer headlines featuring the term ‘road rage’ were published in the SMH.

The first reports (1995)

The first appearance of the term road rage was on 25 January 1995, in a two-paragraph item in the Sydney Morning Herald’s gossip/light news back-page column ‘Stay in Touch’. This positioning signalled that the SMH had not viewed the road rage phenomenon as ‘hard news’, but rather as a quirky foreign news item designed to provoke readers’ amusement or bemusement. Road rage was described by the column editors as ‘another symptom of modern urban life’ that had officially been defined as ‘unchecked behaviour designed to cause harm to another road user, not normally in the behavioural repertoire of the person’. It was noted in the item that ‘the citizens of Los Angeles have been familiar with it for years, but now the symptoms are breaking out in Britain’. There was no suggestion that ‘road rage’ may be occurring in Australia.

While a further two brief items appeared in the SMH’s motoring section, the only other substantial piece on road rage published that year in that...
newspaper was a personalised account. This appeared in the more tabloid format of the *Sun Herald* (28 May 1995), and related to an Australian context. The female columnist described an incident in which she had been the victim of road rage while driving onto the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The columnist went on to describe how the driver tailgated her ‘so closely we must have been touching bumpers’, then overtook, cut in ‘just centimetres in front of me’, and ‘accelerated away with a one-fingered salute through the open window’. The driver then ‘suddenly applied his brakes as if practising his emergency stop’, forcing the columnist to come to ‘a screeching halt’ and then ‘tore off’. The columnist claimed that she later drew level with the driver and finally saw ‘what kind of person it takes to be so easily driven to that kind of blind fury’. And then the revelation came: ‘he’ turns out to be ‘a white-haired woman who couldn’t have been on the right side of 70’. She ended her column by asking ‘what kind of lives we’re all living that makes that kind of behaviour possible’, and went on to answer by listing long hours of work, high stress levels, and ‘tension’.

The central messages of this personalised account were clear. Road rage was occurring on Sydney’s roads. It could affect and be perpetrated by anyone (even the ‘sweet, kind grandmother’ stereotypical figure, which is so different from the usual stereotype of the young, male aggressive driver). Further, road rage is a product of modern times and frenetic, stressed lifestyles.

The first *Daily Telegraph* article on road rage did not appear until quite late in the year: 12 September 1995. This article, on the pattern of road accidents in Sydney, used the term ‘road rage’ as a gloss for ‘driver frustration’. It claimed that ‘Friday evening is “road rage” time’ (that is, the time of the week when most accidents happen). The suggestion is clearly that road rage causes accidents. The next article, appearing on 3 October, appeared to be a follow-up story. It was again about the incidence of car crashes, this time using a nation-wide research by the Australian insurer AAMI, and repeated much of the same information given in the previous report. The article again referred to road rage, also referred to as ‘displaced anger’, as a cause of accidents. The third and final article published in the *DT* in 1995, later that month, reported an incident of road rage occurring in New Zealand. It was newsworthy because the perpetrator was a member of the All Black rugby union team. He was convicted of assault after ‘an apparent road-rage attack following a car accident’. The football player had punched the male passenger of a car that had collided with him while both cars were still moving.

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In summary, then, the first year of reporting on road rage in the two newspapers took the following angles. Road rage was represented as exotic, largely occurring in foreign countries, such as the US and UK. By the middle of the year, however, it was represented as becoming more of a domestic problem, as evinced by one columnist’s personalised account of being a victim while driving in Sydney, and reference to Sydney and national road accident statistics that were interpreted partly via the explanation of road rage. Road rage as manifested in Australia was linked to such phenomena as stress, the recession, and frustration and lack of tolerance caused by driving in congested traffic.


**The ‘Epidemic’ of Road Rage**

In 1996, the notion that road rage was becoming a major problem in Australia (and specifically in Sydney) became dominant in the newspapers’ accounts. Several incidents made headlines that year, including one involving a semi-trailer driver who allegedly rammed a car, forced a bus off the road, and drove at a policeman on the New South Wales North Coast (10 June 1996, *Daily Telegraph*), and another incident in Sydney in which a delivery truck driver was stabbed in the neck by another motorist after a minor traffic dispute. In reports of the latter incident, an AAMI insurance spokesperson was quoted as claiming that ‘up to half of road accidents were the result of aggressive driving’, going on to claim that ‘There is no doubt from an empirical point of view that road rage is on the rise’ (17 October 1996, *DT* and *Sydney Morning Herald*).

A number of other articles in 1996 also suggested that road-rage incidents were escalating. For example, in an article headlined ‘Road Rage Surges as Drivers Do Battle’ (30 October 1996, *DT*), it was claimed that ‘Road rage has increased dramatically across Australia as drivers vent their frustrations on other road users by abusing, tailgating or attacking them’. Headlines such as ‘Violent Road Rage Rising’ (9 December 1996, *DT*) and ‘Road Rage is a Growing Menace’ (22 December 1996, *DT*) contributed to the sense that the phenomenon was becoming prevalent. The linking of words such as ‘violence’, ‘battle’, and ‘menace’ with ‘surge’, ‘rising’, and ‘growing’ in such headlines was a powerful combination, suggesting that a serious social problem was emerging.

In concert with a portrayal of road rage as an ever-increasing threat, the newspapers’ editorials began to call for government action. One example is an editorial that was published in the *Sun Herald* on 20 October 1996, three days after an incident in which a Sydney courier was
stabbed in a road rage incident. Headlined ‘Road Rage Outrage’, the writer began by asserting that ‘The [New South Wales] Carr Government must take firm action to combat the road rage menace’, and then suggested various ways in which the New South Wales State laws could be changed to achieve this. Into 1997, the newspapers continued to place pressure on the Government with strongly worded editorials. One example is the editorial in the Sunday Telegraph (12 January 1997) headlined ‘Assaults Must Be Punished’. The writer argued that ‘The rampage on our roads is continuing unabated...The insidious growth of road-rage attacks is becoming a terrifying addition to an increasingly violent society’.

Through such representations of the ‘road rage outrage’, the newspapers represented themselves as the moral guardians of society. Their positioning the Government as ‘needing to act’ in order to combat what was portrayed as a ‘terrifying’ ‘menace’, in concert with the other reports published in the newspapers highlighting the apparent increase in road-rage incidents, served to construct the phenomenon as a moral panic.

The continuing litany of court reports presented in the pages of the DT also served to give the impression that road rage was becoming a serious problem in Australia. Whereas in 1995 there were no such accounts, by 1996 they became common news items in that newspaper, becoming very frequent in 1997 and continuing to appear throughout the study period. The court reports mainly recounted various cases of assaults on the part of motorists coming before Sydney magistrates’ courts: for example, a 23-year-old man who was charged with assault after punching a 71-year-old man in the face because he was frustrated that the elderly man was driving too slowly (3 December 1996, DT). All but one of the cases reported involved men as assailants, and nearly all of their victims were also men.

Throughout 1996 and 1997, various deaths caused by road rage in other countries were reported. It was not until 4 October 1997, however, that the DT claimed the first case in Australia of road-rage-related death. The incident involved a Melbourne woman who was fatally injured in a car crash following an altercation between her husband, who was driving the car, and another driver, who lost control of his vehicle, clipped the other car, and caused it to crash. In July 1998, both the DT and the SMH reported that a 30-year-old Sydney man died in hospital after suffering serious head injuries following an assault by three men over a parking space. In March 1999, the DT reported that an 18-year-old Sydney man, who was driving with a learner’s permit
while affected by heroin, had been charged with killing three people in an alleged road rage-incident involving dangerous driving causing death. On 1 December 2000, a follow-up article was published in which it was noted that this man had been sentenced to six years' jail. The headline of this article was: ‘Road Rage Killer Who is Bad to the Bone’. Such representations suggested that people who lost control of their emotions on the roads were extremely dangerous, and could potentially use their vehicles as deadly weapons.

**Characterising road rage**

As the above description of ‘road rage killers’ suggests, another major theme in the reporting of road rage was the characterisation of the phenomenon and those who succumbed to it. Many articles sought to describe the type of individuals that were thought to be likely to engage in road rage, and to proffer explanations for why road rage had apparently become so prevalent at the end of the 20th century.

Young men were often singled out as the most likely offenders, but the phenomenon of (particularly young) female road ragers was also established (see below). This identification of road ragers sought to claim that such individuals were more likely than others to be aggressive and risk-taking, and to exert less control over their angry feelings than other demographic groups. Thus, for example, the ‘typical road rager’ identified in one article was described as a ‘Young male aged 18–24. Liking for speed. Probable convictions for driving offences. Extremely aggressive driving style. Impatient with other motorists’ (30 October 1996, DT).

In many other articles, however, it was claimed that road rage could strike any motorist suffering from the stresses of modern urban living. According to several articles (mainly published in the DT), the expression of anger in general had become a phenomenon of the 1990s. For example, in an article headlined ‘Blow Your Top, It’s All the Rage’ (12 November 1999, DT), the journalist argued that ‘It’s the Nineties, and we’re angry...This is an era in which we are richer, more socially connected, politically aware and consumer driven, and yet we seem to be angrier than ever’. Such articles tended to identify the ‘pressures’ and ‘stresses’ of daily living as one of the dominant causes of road rage, along with congested roads that caused frustration for motorists. As noted above, this kind of explanation was first put forward in one of the earliest accounts of road rage, and it continued to be a common theme throughout the study period.

Common to most accounts of road rage was the description of the road rager as having lost complete control of his (and very rarely, her)
emotions. For example, both the SMH and the DT devoted several articles to an incident on 14 July 2000, in which, following an altercation with a motorcycle rider, a Sydney man had deliberately driven at and hit three people with his car, severely injuring one of them (a woman who had gone to assist the motorcycle rider). Headlines of these articles included: ‘Driver’s Blind Rage—Woman Critical After Car Frenzy’ (15 July 2000, DT) and ‘Four Wheel Fury—Truck Driver Aimed Car at Three People, Court Hears’ (16 July 2000, ST).

As these articles demonstrate, people who engage in road rage were characterised as ‘exploding’ with their anger, and thus becoming ‘monsters’. Other words and phrases used to describe road ragers included ‘frenzied’, ‘in a blind rage’, ‘evil’, ‘fury’, ‘uncivilised’, and ‘bad to the bone’. Such figurative expressions display the disquiet evoked by loss of control over socially proscribed emotions such as anger, with those who lose such control being portrayed as almost subhuman and, thus, to be feared.

One interesting aspect in the reporting of road rage over the study period was the increasing attention paid to the female road rager. While, as noted above, the vast majority of people described as road ragers in the news reports were men, several articles suggested that women could also behave aggressively on the roads. One example was described above, when a first-hand account of being a road-rage victim ended with the revelation that the culprit was an elderly woman. This theme was newsworthy because it countered dominant stereotypes of men as aggressors and more likely to be provoked by anger into violent behaviour, and women as docile, passive, and non-aggressive.

Other articles featuring female road raging included a report published in the DT on 24 September 1996, recounting an incident in London involving two women, one of whom assaulted the other when she hit her car from behind. By the end of 1997, the notion that Australian women could be aggressive drivers became evident in news accounts, particularly those published in the DT. An article published in that newspaper on 8 December 1997 reported an AAMI survey that found that young women drivers are becoming more aggressive and abusive in their behaviours on the roads. This report was accompanied by another article giving the personal view of a 19-year-old female university student, who was quoted as saying that some of her female friends displayed ‘classic signs of “road rage”’.

Another follow-up article, published on 18 January 1998, reported the findings of a university study on Australian driving behaviours. Headlined ‘Wilful Women: Females Turn Nasty Behind the Wheel’, the jour-
nalist went on to contend that 'They’re young, confident and aggressive on the roads. They’re also female and competing with young men for the worst statistics in drink-driving and road rage'. Despite such claims, few reports were published that detailed specific incidents in which an Australian woman had engaged in road rage behaviour. The exception was a DT report published at the very end of the study period, which gave an account of an incident near Newcastle in which a woman was involved as the assailant (11 December 2000).

**CONCLUSION**

The reporting of road rage in the two Sydney newspapers, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Daily Telegraph* and their Sunday editions, the *Sun Herald* and *Sunday Telegraph*, reveals much about the ways in which the press may represent not only violence and crime, but also the nature and tenor of ‘modern urban life’. Underpinning descriptions and accounts of road rage incidents were concerns about the negative effects that living in crowded cities has upon individuals. Modern life was depicted as fraught with tensions and stresses that are cumulative, relating to such aspects deemed characteristic of this era as long working hours and competing pressures at work and at home to meet expectations. These tensions and stresses were depicted as having few outlets other than in incivility, including displays of anger and violence on the roads. According to the ‘age of rage’ discourse advanced in some articles, road rage was simply part of a spectrum of behaviours that have emerged from these conditions.

The moral panic around road rage, therefore, as it was articulated in the newspapers, was not so much about aggressive and violent driving behaviours but rather about contemporary life and the inability of governments to act to improve conditions. There was a suggestion of lack of potency both on the part of individuals and on the part of government in dealing with the negative aspects of modern society.

Much of this anxiety is not new: over 20 years ago, researchers such as Hall et al. (1978) and Cohen (1972) made similar conclusions in their studies of news reporting of mugging and youth gangs respectively, and they have been repeated in many such studies since. What was new about the road rage phenomenon as it had been reported in the Sydney metropolitan press was the emphasis on the notion that anyone is potentially criminal or ‘deviant’ when it comes to aggressive or violent behaviour on the roads. The reporting of road rage suggested an incipient lack of control on the part of all drivers faced with frustrating road conditions and a generalised feeling of anger and stress about their lives.
Women as well as men were implicated as aggressors, as were older as well as younger drivers: even 'white-haired grandmothers' could turn nasty behind the wheel.

It is here that the representation of the road rage problem differed from the classic definition of moral panic. In this representation, there were no 'folk devils', no deviant 'Other'. Rather, it was suggested that each of us could transform into a road rager, should the appropriate triggers be in place to incite us to lose control. What is more, given contemporary western societies' dependence on motor vehicle transport, nearly everyone was positioned as being 'at risk' of being a victim of road rage. It was portrayed as a threat that was present whenever one took to the road, regardless of one's age, ethnicity, gender, or social class.

This is not to say that behaviours deemed to be part of the road rage phenomenon were sanctioned in press accounts. On the contrary, people who indulged in these behaviours were represented extremely negatively as almost subhuman and dangerous to others in their inability to control their anger or divert it non-aggressively. It is evident from the newspaper representations here analysed that there is a major anxiety in contemporary societies about the 'uncivilised' persona that lurks behind the thin veneer of respectable, civil behaviour. The 'road rager' is the epitome of the person who has allowed this 'civilised' veneer to crack and crumble. While loss of control over anger is always threatening to others, the person who is behind the wheel of a powerful vehicle is even more threatening, because the vehicle may then be used as a weapon that is as dangerous as a firearm in its potential to kill. The taken-for-granted assumptions that allow people to use roads are undermined by the figure of the road rager, especially those concerning safety and the expectation that other road users will obey the road rules.

While the newspapers examined characterised road rage in these ways, the question remains of what the general public made of these portrayals. To argue that the media portrayal of crime has a direct relationship to audiences' perceptions and understandings of crime has been criticised as too simplistic. People do not rely solely on the media in their constructions of knowledges about crime, but also draw on personal experience, discussions with others, and so on (see, for example, Ericson, 1991; Lupton, 1999; Schleisinger & Tumber, 1994; Sparks, 1992). However, as noted above, it may be argued that the news and other media play a central role in the reproduction of stock narratives, discourses, and stereotypes by which dangerous 'Others' and dangerous places may be identified and given meaning. They make available certain ways of seeing and interpreting crime, upon which audiences
may choose to draw. The second part of this study will be able to build upon the findings here presented by examining what lay people make of road rage, and the meanings and interpretations they give to the phenomenon.

NOTES
1. This research was funded by an Australian Research Council large grant.
2. Not all news items referring to road rage found by the media-monitoring firm were included in the study. During the study period a popular song entitled ‘Road Rage’ released by the Welsh rock group Catatonia entered the Australian charts, and a bestselling crime novel by Ruth Rendell of the same title was published (which, despite its title, was not about aggressive driving but rather about a group of people protesting against the building of a freeway near their homes). Articles or news items (e.g., best-seller lists and reviews) referring to the song and novel were not included in the study.

REFERENCES