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Rescripting criminal identity: A ‘Close Reading’ of contemporary biographies of British criminals as entrepreneurship discourse

ABSTRACT:

Purpose – This research paper examines how organized criminals rescript their identities to engage with entrepreneurship discourse when authoring their biographies. From a sociological perspective, stereotypes and social constructs of the entrepreneur and the criminal are subjects of recurring interest. Yet, despite the prevalence of the stereotype of the entrepreneur as a hero-figure in the entrepreneurship literature and the conflation of the entrepreneur with the stereotype of the businessman, notions of entrepreneurial identity are not fixed with constructions of the entrepreneur as a rascal, rogue or villain being accepted as alternative social constructs.

Design/methodology/approach – The qualitative approaches of ‘Biographical Analysis’ and ‘Close Reading’ adopted, help us draw out discursive strategies.

Findings – The main finding is that a particular genre of criminal biographies can be re-read as entrepreneur stories. The theme of nuanced entrepreneurial identities and in particular gangster discourse is under researched. In this study, by conducting a close reading of contemporary biographies of British Criminals, we encounter self-representations of criminals who seek to author an alternative and more appealing social identity as entrepreneurs. That this re-scripting of personal biographies to make gangster stories conform to the genre of entrepreneur stories is of particular interest.

Research limitations/implications – This study points to similarities, and differences between criminal and entrepreneurial biographies. It also presents sociological insights into an alternative version of entrepreneurial identity and sociological constructions of the criminal as entrepreneur.

Practical implications – This research provides an insight into how criminals seek to legitimise their life-stories.

Originality/value – This research paper is of value in that it is the first to consider contemporary biographies of British Criminals as entrepreneurship discourse. Understanding how criminal biographies and entrepreneur stories share similar socially constructed themes, storylines and epistemologies contributes to the development of entrepreneurship and sociological research by examining entrepreneurship in an unusual social setting.

Key words - Criminal Entrepreneurship; Criminal Biographies; Moral Biography; Biographical Analysis; Entrepreneur Stories; Social Constructionism.

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1. INTRODUCTION

From a sociological perspective, stereotypes and social constructs of the entrepreneur (Thornton, 1999; Ruef and Lounsbury, 2007) and the criminal (Chapman, 1968; Hester and Eglin, 1992; and Sandberg, 2009) are subjects of recurring interest. In particular, Sandberg (2009) identified and conceptualised two apparently contradictory sociological discourses, for example:-

- (1) *Oppression discourse*, which includes personal narratives of unemployment, racism and psycho-social problems, often combined with stories about fighting the establishment; and
- (2) *Gangster discourse*, which includes a series of personal narratives emphasizing how hard, smart, and sexually alluring the young men are. This discourse is used to gain self-respect and respect from others.

In particular, Sandberg (2009) refers to the notion of ‘bi-lingual discursive practices’ and argues that when the same people use contrasting discourses, the picture becomes complicated. This article builds on Sandberg’s ‘Gangster Discourse’ by demonstrating how it shares epistemological and ontological connections to discourse of entrepreneurship. In this study a ‘Close Reading’ (Amernic and Craig, 2006) is conducted of biographies of contemporary British Gangsters to interrogate the interplay between gangster and entrepreneurship discourse. Biographies of British gangsters are currently in vogue via the genre of ‘True Crime’ [1]. The phrase “*Doing the Business*” (Hobbs, 1987) epitomises entrepreneurial criminality as hegemonic masculinity and in biographies there

is a tendency for criminals to present themselves as boys doing business. This study is thus situated between what Brewer (2004: abstract) referred to as “*intersection between biography and sociology*”. Criminal biographies are an accepted literary genre [2]. Biographies are a form of discursive practice and Sandberg (2009) has argued that the discursive practice of criminals inspires theoretical perspectives on criminal practice. The theoretical perspective of interest in this article is that of criminal-entrepreneurship (Smith, 2009; Gottschalk and Smith, 2011).

In entrepreneurship research circles, interest in criminal-entrepreneurship as a fresh field of research is a developing niche (vis-à-vis the studies of Smith, 2004; McElwee and Frith, 2009; Smith, 2009; Gottschalk, 2009; and Gottschalk, 2010a and b). The works of Smith and Gottschalk provide useful insights into the entrepreneurial behaviour in organised criminality. This emerging stream of research is of significance to scholars of sociology, criminology and entrepreneurship because most empirical research into entrepreneurship concentrates on legal and moral entrepreneurship as practiced in the business community (Anderson and Smith, 2007). Notwithstanding this, for Hobbs, (1987: 227) entrepreneurship is a relevant criminal strategy, characterized by predatory business acumen. Entrepreneurship can be productive, unproductive and destructive and that entrepreneurs and criminals often emerge from the same social strata (Baumol, 1990). Studying criminal-entrepreneurship offers insights into gangster discourse and entrepreneurial behaviour in different sociological applications, contexts and settings.

For scholars of any discipline, from an ethical perspective, gaining research access to criminal-entrepreneurs is problematic, hence the practicality of studying such individuals by reading their published biographies. This article expands upon the work of Goodey

(2000) in relation to research into criminal biographies, taking account of Denzin's narratological concept of the 'epiphany', or significant turning points in life (Denzin, 1989: 70). For Goodey, such biographies allow us to interpret the criminal lives of men and develop criminological [as well as sociological and entrepreneurial] theory. According to the sociologist Dick Hobbs (2000), biographical writings can contribute positively to our understanding of entrepreneurship, crime, and deviance given that 'sociological studies' of British professional criminals and organized crime are rare. Killengrey (2009) in seeking to establish the academic value of criminal "*insider accounts*" and how these add to our understanding of criminal action identified a gap in research into criminal biographies and in the existing literature on the use and usefulness of written criminal accounts. This study addresses this by examining criminal-entrepreneurship as portrayed in the biographies of contemporary British 'Villains' [3].

The findings of this study suggest that such biographies can be accommodated under the rubric of entrepreneurial narrative and re-read as entrepreneur stories. Whilst there is nothing new in the notion that (1) some forms of crime are entrepreneurial; or that (2) there is a definite crime - entrepreneurship nexus, this congruence is most visible in life stories of criminals as told in their biographies. This is important because our knowledge of such individuals and their 'Villainy' often comes to us from biographical accounts with all the flaws this entails. Consequentially, this paper is concerned with how British criminals engage in 1) gangster discourse; and 2) entrepreneurial practices to exploit and manipulate their life-stories in an entrepreneurial manner thus discursively extracting value from their environment (Anderson, 1995).

The article is organised as follows. The next section provides a literature review, contextualising the literatures of entrepreneurship and criminology in relation to gangster discourse. Thereafter we consider methodology and the nature and problems of reading biography. The penultimate section reports on the biographical / textual analysis presenting themes identified in the discourse. The final reflective section considers implications of the research in relation to sociological understanding of criminal-entrepreneurship. In the process, we seek to answer two research questions, namely:-

- How do the criminals seek to portray themselves in biography?
- How do biographers portray the criminals in biography?

2. CONTEXTUALIZING THE VILLAINOUS-ENTREPRENEUR

This is not an exhaustive literature review of the crime – entrepreneurship nexus but a contextualization of the disparate literatures of entrepreneurship and criminology in relation to gangster discourse. In journalistic, and academic, circles the term ‘Criminal-Entrepreneur’ abounds, yet it is difficult to articulate or define albeit scholars of entrepreneurship agree that criminal-entrepreneurship is a legitimate area of study.

2.1. Early theorists of criminal entrepreneurship

One of the first scholars to consider criminal-entrepreneurship was Mack (1964) (1972) who used the word entrepreneur in a criminal context positing the terminology “*background-entrepreneur*” to signify exceptionally able individuals he regarded as the entrepreneurs of the traditional underworld. Another study by Heyl (1978) considered entrepreneurship in relation to prostitution and Smith (1978) considered ‘Organized

Crime and Entrepreneurship'. Indeed, Casson (1982: 351) viewed crime as an illegal form of entrepreneurship; and Baumol (1990) acknowledged the existence of criminal entrepreneurship. Yet, researching 'enterprise orientated crime' is difficult as it is committed by a plethora of criminal types as appreciated by Smith (1975) who constructed a typology of illicit-businessman, illicit-entrepreneur, and gangster-businessman. Socially, his first two categories of crimino-entrepreneurial types are far removed from the working class criminals whom are the focus of this study.

Criminologists and Sociologists have also touched upon this paradigm and a substantial literature now links the concepts of crime and entrepreneurship together. For example, according to Abandinsky (1983: 36), Sutherland (1937) in his seminal study 'The professional thief' appreciated the possibility of a self-made thief. A strong theme of enterprise runs through the rhetoric of criminality, as documented by the works of eminent criminologists such as Arlacchi (1979) (1983) (1996); Hess (1973) (1998) and Hobbs (1987). Blok (1974) introduced the notion of the Mafia as "*Entrepreneurs of Violence*" and Casson (1990: xxiii) accepts that 'Mafia Entrepreneurship' exists. Violence is part of the human psyche and the ability to fight is a treasured masculine trait, regardless of social class - thus, Volkov (1999) refers to violent entrepreneurship. In a British context, Hobbs (1996) charted the rise of entrepreneurial criminality during the Enterprise Culture of the 1990s. Collectively, these studies (and others) have legitimized the notion of 'criminal-entrepreneurship'.

2.2. The entrepreneur as a rough diamond

Running parallel to this is the British discourse of the entrepreneur, as a “*rough diamond*” (Scase and Goffee, 1982: 138). Thus Rimmington (1988: 131) and Swedeberg (2000: 334) refer to the “*villain-entrepreneur*”; whilst Goodwin and Whannel (1990: 163) to the entrepreneur as a “*Jack the lad figure*”. This dual connectivity between entrepreneurship and crime is evident in the academic literature where one finds references to the entrepreneur as a ‘Villain’ in academic literature. Entrepreneurs may commit villainous deeds as evidenced by the fall from grace of rogue-entrepreneurs such as John DeLorean (Fallon and Srodes, 1994) and Robert Maxwell (Greenslade, 1992). Also, Mark Casson’s (Casson, 1980) fictional hero ‘Jack Brash’ emerged from a streetwise background, establishing his first fortune in the black market. Such villainous deeds often come to us as fiction and biography where the entrepreneur is portrayed as a rascal, rogue or criminal. In real life, entrepreneurs such as George Reynolds (Bolton and Thompson, 2000) and Norwegian entrepreneur Kjell Rokke (Gibb, 2001) have overcome criminal beginnings and in his biography (Branson, 2001) Sir Richard Branson talks of having a scrape with the Inland Revenue and that a teacher prophesied that he would either end up a millionaire or in jail. It is perhaps more helpful to consider behavioural linkages between what entrepreneurs and professional criminals do?

2.3. Considering criminal and entrepreneurial behaviour as forms of predation

Crime is a predatory form of acquisitive behaviour. The economist William Baumol (1990) incisively argued that entrepreneurs and criminals often come from the same social pool a thesis mirrored by Mehlum *et al* who talk about predatory criminals and entrepreneurs. This is fitting because Bannock and Peacock (1989: 85) consider entrepreneurship to be a form of predation and for Hart (1975) the entrepreneurial

ideology of mutual benefit makes the entrepreneur a parasite. Hobbs (1988) posited the notion of the enterprise orientated criminal examining the interface between entrepreneurship, the working class. Hobbs (1988: 165) confirms the parasitic nature of entrepreneurship in an underworld where everything is negotiable; and for Haller (1997: 56) the underworld “*gives reign to personalities who take pleasure in deals, hustling and risk-taking*”. Moreover, Bannock and Peacock (1989) stress that traditionally it was unfashionable in Britain to start one’s own business making it a route taken predominantly by the untrained and uneducated – and by extension the working classes. In entrepreneurship circles Chell (1985) acknowledges the popular British image of the entrepreneur having much in common with the criminal.

In a similar vein, Smith and Anderson (2003) suggest that the entrepreneurial and criminal constructs share a common epistemological heritage firmly rooted in working class mythology in which the figures of the ‘Spiv’ and the ‘Barrow-Boy’ have influenced entrepreneurial iconology and the construct of the ‘Bad-boy-entrepreneur’. Despite generic societal disapproval of the villain, in British culture there remains a grudging admiration for those of an enterprising in nature. Casson (1982: 1) lent further credibility to this negative perception when he wrote - “*We all of us know someone who is an entrepreneur ... or just someone who knows how to turn a fast buck*”.

The literature on proletarian entrepreneurship also links crime and entrepreneurship through the working-class man-made-good (Chodrov, 1962; Finch, 1997; Hobbs, 1986) in which the hero has to resist the environmental pull of crime to make good. Working class heroes (Such as Peddlers in Chodrov’s case) are often entrepreneurs. Academic

studies such as those Hobbs (1987); and (Williams, 2008) in which crime and entrepreneurship are intertwined in the informal economy are also of note.

2.4. The businessman-gangster

Since the seminal work of Warshow (1970) the mythologies of entrepreneurship and gangsterism have overlapped in the form of the businessman-gangster who is constructed as an exaggerated image of the individualistic entrepreneur (Munby, 1999). It is perhaps the portrayal of the businessman-gangster in novels, the media and in movies that has led to this gangster-entrepreneurial morphology in which similarities can be found in their ideology, ethos and in the appearance (Smith and Anderson, 2003). Furthermore, Golding and Middleton (1982: 99) stress that businessmen who successfully evade tax are seen as displaying entrepreneurial initiative; and Wells (1992: Foreword) echoes this sentiment noting that the public, are intrigued and respectful of wealth, harbouring a secret admiration for successful middle class offenders who beat the system.

2.5. In search of the criminal-entrepreneur in biography

It is apparent from the above readings that entrepreneurship is a valid strategy for criminals. It is also evident from their biographies that many choose to exploit entrepreneurial narrative as evidenced by contemporary images of British 'Villainy' in the pages a genre of crime books such as "*Hard Bastards*" (Kray, 2000) or "*Mean Streets*" (Barnes, 2000) in which criminals are frequently referred to as entrepreneurs.

An interesting illustration of this alternative form of entrepreneur story, is narrated by McDonald (2000: 204-207) who writes that in the East End of London "*Many early*

entrepreneurs were the old street bookies, who were more adept at wielding a razor or cosh than recording figures in the correct columns". McDonald spellbindingly narrates a world where a reputation for being game was a valuable attribute for the businessmen-gangster and a "*gallery of crooks, conmen and sharp business individuals*" who gathered in the same Pubs where an ability to fight was of equal importance to a sharp business brain. Both earned one respect. Thus the world of McDonald (2000: 266-277) was populated with "*lovable rogues*" and "*artful wheeler dealers who knew every means of double dealing and business chicanery ever invented*". McDonald describes his uncle Charles 'Wag' McDonald as a "*boxer, adventurer, traveller, entrepreneur and gangster*" (2000: 194) suggesting that the entrepreneurial label is an identity to be collected, or a set of stories to be exploited. We now consider methodology.

3. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Biographies come in two basic formats - autobiographies written by the subject themselves; and the biography written by another person (often a journalist). However, ghost-writing, and editorial influence must be considered because one may be collecting carefully scripted social constructions introduced into the text by another party. Biographies are useful sources of narrative data although Shipman (1997: 49) criticized autobiographies as being self-justifying; unreliable; exaggerated, glamourised stories, garnished in order to enhance their appeal to readers and to sell books. Rawlings (1992) highlights the disparaging nature of criminal biographies, which inform academic perceptions of criminality. Thus using such material as raw data can be problematic. The

analysis of biographies is in its infancy in entrepreneurial studies but has been used in criminology by Firestone (1997) who analysed the biographies of American Gangsters and Mafioso. Nevertheless, Smith (2005) suggests that there is a formulaic structure for telling entrepreneur stories and this holds true for criminal biographies (Cawletti, 1977).

In this enterprise the author used sociological theory to help him make sense of the research and research methodology and to help him think through the research (Black, 2004). This approach was helpful because biographies as self-contained narratives each have their own ideologically inspired underpinnings. This qualitative study uses biographical analysis and the techniques of content analysis (to develop recurring themes) and textual analysis (of what is written). The data set for this study was gleaned from biographies, auto-biographies or memoirs of contemporary British criminals chosen from those available to the author from the public library making it a purposeful, representative, yet convenient sample [4]. **The sample chosen is representative of the genre albeit there are over 500 such biographies of British criminals currently on sale to the public.** The **research** process involved three separate stages:-

Stage 1 – Reading / Initial Analysis: The author conducted a ‘Close Reading’ (Amernic and Craig, 2006) of twenty biographical accounts of British Criminals and selected fifteen of those for analysis. These consist of biographies relating to different criminal types. See table 1 for details:-

Insert table 1 here.

The biographies were subjected to constant comparative analysis and content analysis, searching for key words and themes associated with entrepreneurship which were

extrapolated from the data manually. This method although time consuming, was necessary because themes associated with entrepreneurship are often couched in metaphoric terminology (e.g. a finger in every pie, self-made man etc).

Stage 2 – Re-reading / Re-writing: These themes were then rewritten, as micro-biographies, to accommodate the entrepreneurial life themes invoked by the individual criminals, or their biographer. In traditional narrative analysis the academic strips interesting quotes from the body of the text thereby dismembering the text – removing that, which is of value. Conversely, by employing a micro-biographical approach one adds value by concentrating similar storylines and themes into a compact format. This stage reassembled the story using the same elements extrapolated from the text in a manner recognisable as an entrepreneur story. It is also essential not to over analyse the material, nor to add any extraneous material to the story. One must merely re-order the material from different chapters to tell an alternative tale accepting the material on face value. One is left with a reified story. For example in re-scripting the story of the feared London gangster ‘Tycoon’ Charles William Richardson it emerges as a near fairytale and parallel tale of entrepreneurial and criminal ability.

Stage 3 – Textual Analysis: The re-written texts were then subjected to a further textual analysis to identify other over-arching themes. These are presented and discussed in section four.

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This section presents the findings, or more appropriately the readings and begins with the re-contextualised biography of gangster Charles Richardson. Thereafter, in section 4.2,

we extrapolate common themes from the re-scripted life stories of criminals and in section 4.3 we go in search of entrepreneurial life themes.

4.1. A re-contextualised criminal biography

In analysing the biography of the Gangster Charlie Richardson the author identified twenty points of convergence between gangster discourse and entrepreneur stories, namely:-

- The 'humble beginnings' storyline.
- Overcoming adversity, poverty and working class origins.
- An introduction to enterprise by working in his grandmother's corner shop.
- The mentoring and encouragement he received from his mother.
- His education into entrepreneurial practices as a child prodigy figure.
- His use of his social capital and contacts.
- His obvious ambition to do something with his life and his drive / saving up to buy his first business.
- The rapid expansion of his business empire.
- His propensity to network.
- His pursuit of self-education and improving his communicational skills.
- Development of dual personalities.
- His pursuit of legitimacy and reputation building (on twin fronts).
- His cultivation of dual (legal and illegal) income streams.
- His business sense and the consolidation of his business empire.

- His subsequent diversification into the licensed trade to combine both legitimate and illegitimate businesses.
- His cultivation of new niche's, markets and networks (and alternative ones).
- His ability to adapt to new surroundings and set up a second business in a different country which he sold at a profit.
- Running multiple lives simultaneously.
- His delusions of grandeur, his hubris and his fall from grace – all of which are elements of entrepreneur stories.

This demonstrates that these themes can be used to rescript the story into an entrepreneur story.

4.2. Extrapolating common themes from the re-scripted life stories of criminals

In conducting content an analysis of the biographies and the re-scripted texts, it became apparent that there are different styles of criminal biography. There are three basic types:-

- The 'Memoir' in which a 'Villain' narrates their life of crime in the context of their life story; and
- Gangster hero stories in which the Villain is presenting a highly selective account of episodes in their life;
- Third party renditions in which the author who has no direct connection to the criminal seeks to recreate their life stories.

Memoirs are important social ethnographies generally narrated with honesty in which the villain seeks to explain their upbringing, their environment and their morality. In telling their life-story they present themselves as likeable rogues who because of

circumstances (be they lack of educational opportunity, poverty, poor housing or environment) had no other choice corresponding to Sandberg's category of oppressive discourse. Memoirs are generally written by criminals at the end of their careers and have a reflective tone, replete with a moralistic appraisal of their life in which the moral is 'do not enter into a life of crime'. A process of sense-making by re-scripting life events is evident as they seek to reify their criminal past as 'entrepreneur stories'. The biographies of Roy Boy' Shaw and Freddie Foreman are memoirs.

Gangster hero stories are a different reading experience written by unrepentant, active criminals who seek to represent themselves as charming, likeable rogues or entrepreneurs. However, because they are still active they have to be highly selective in what they write for obvious reasons. These books are entertainment but enhance reputations by glorifying crime as a risky adventure. Examples of this genre are those of Dave Courtney and Charlie Seiga.

Third Party Renditions are enjoyable to read because the author has more **authorial** freedom. One is more likely to encounter passages referring to entrepreneurial activity because the author is trying to capture the scene by painting a picture of the activities of the criminal subject. Examples of renditions are those about Martin Cahill and Curtis 'Cocky' Warren. Sometimes the third party was directly involved in crime as was small businessman Daren Nicholl's who spins a cautionary tale to other businessmen. Nicholl's drifted into a life of crime seduced by the lifestyles of his playboy businessmen friends – flash businessmen with a propensity to wear 'bling'. The electrician turned thief, counterfeit currency trader and cannabis dealer whilst continuing to run legitimate small businesses.

Not all biographies fit this framework. **Some** offer an insight into an alternative, symbiotic entrepreneurial milieu – as in the biographical account written by Bernard O’Mahoney who tells of an alternative world of paranoid businessmen, shady car dealers, gangsters and wannabes - a Machiavellian world of violence and intrigue, fuelled by cocaine use. O’Mahoney carried out a debt recovery service for businessmen on a no recovery-no fee arrangement. Likewise, master-thief, Bruce Reynolds highlights the *modus vivendi* between the entrepreneur and the professional criminal both of whom possess a phenomenal spending power which brings them into contact with each other. Reynolds describes the link between the underworld and the business world as a climate of intrigue where everyone is plotting, looking for a piece of the action. He talks of hustlers, entrepreneurs and thieves plotting and presenting to get a piece of the action. Furthermore, Dave Courtney points out another linkage between businessmen and criminals by discussing the phenomenon of ‘Gangster Freaks’ who are invariably businessmen. Similarly, the biography of Nicholas Van Hoogstraten, uncovers the truth behind the apparent “*rags to riches story*” of this Property Tycoon who alleges to have earned his first fortune as a child by collecting stamps. Yet, aged eleven he was convicted for the theft of a typewriter from school and later for handling stolen goods. He became a millionaire slum landlord and fence as well as an entrepreneur of violence accruing convictions for assault (with a hand grenade) and was acquitted of the murder of a former business associate - Mohammed Sabir Raja.

4.3. In search of entrepreneurial life themes.

Irrespective of how they became villains, the author identified entrepreneurial life themes (Bolton and Thompson, 2000) namely, humble beginnings and overcoming adversity; an

anti-establishment mentality; use of social capital; networking ability; mentoring by significant others; and displaying entrepreneurial propensity.

Humble beginnings / overcoming adversity: Roy Shaw, Martin Cahill, John Gilligan and Freddie Forman all wrote of experiencing blighted educational opportunities. Foreman further blamed society for not providing an adequate structure of opportunities to its youth and blames marginality, poverty and humble beginnings for his career choice. Gilligan also had to overcome poverty and illiteracy. Personal foibles can play a part for example Shaw blames his extreme propensity for violence for his clash with the establishment and Peter Scott blames his libido for his predation. The biography of Armed Robber Martin Cahill mirrors the epic rise of a poor-boy-made-good from the slums of Dublin to become the ‘Godfather’ of Irish crime. However, Charlie Seiga is disparaging of criminal hard luck stories perpetuated by his peer group. Thus we have Sandberg’s oppression discourse mingling with entrepreneurship discourse.

Anti-Establishment Mentality: Roy Shaw, Freddie Forman, Martin Cahill and Charlie Seiga all espouse this philosophy and demonstrate an inability to conform. This caused Roy Shaw to adopt a competitive stance against the prison authorities ultimately leading to a descent into madness. Forman blames his working class culture with values of pride, independence and self –sufficiency for socializing him into an anti establishment mentality. This often stems from a propensity towards showmanship and gamesmanship as evident in the biographies of Shaw, Courtney and Seiga. Seiga talks of annoying the ‘bizzies’ by driving about in his Mercedes 500SL and Courtney dresses as a Court Jester for court appearances. Martin Cahill was supremely confident, daring and innovative and

played games with the establishment. Like the archetypal entrepreneur, he was bloated with pride and suffered from hubris. Ironically, Cahill disapproved of the infamous Dublin criminal entrepreneurs ‘The Dunne family’ because of their propensity towards flamboyance, flashiness, and their ostentatious display of wealth. Again we see parallels between oppression and entrepreneurship discourse.

Use of Social Capital: The most critical trait that separates the legitimate entrepreneur from the Villain is their use of Social Capital (Bourdieu, 1996). Bourgois (1995) explored this theme in relation to the entrepreneurial propensity within a Puerto-Rican crack dealing clique, attributing entrepreneurial success, or lack of it, to an individual’s level of social and cultural capital, acting as a barrier or a key to success (1995: 19). For Bourgeois the entrepreneur continually searches for respect. Presenting oneself as a likeable rogue allows the criminal to maintain a link to humanity and society. Roy Shaw capitalized on both his propensity for extreme violence and his entrepreneurial flair by going into business in areas he was comfortable e.g. using his boxing prowess by setting up a firm of doormen and invested in property. Dave Courtney built up a large firm of doormen and dabbled in the shady world of debt collecting and security. His businesses such as The Albion (a gangster theme club) were illegal, unregistered businesses. Curtis Warren also built up a firm of doormen who controlled the doors of pubs and clubs providing him with a quasi-legitimate business front. Martin Cahill’s limited social capital prevented him from ever becoming a legitimate entrepreneur despite his dream of going straight.

Networking Ability: The biographies of Peter Scott; Freddie Forman; Dave Courtney; Kenny Noye, Curtis Warren, John Gilligan, Charlie Seiga and Nicholas Van Hoogstraten all highlight this ability. Seiga talks of networking with business clientele and Gilligan of networking with other crooked and ‘tricky’ Irish businessmen. Gilligan assiduously cultivated contacts in the legitimate business world. Van Hoogstraten taps into a global network of multimillionaire businessmen; whilst Courtney is a prolific networker, organiser and arbitrator - hence his nickname ‘The Yellow Pages of Crime’. Noye has twin networks of serious villains and respected businessmen. Noye also boasts of joining his local Freemasons Lodge (Clarkson, 2002: 21); whereas allegedly Warren networked with businessmen, local villains and even the Sicilian Mafia, the Columbian Cartels and the Turkish Mafia.

Mentoring by Significant Others: In this category, we encounter entrepreneurship discourse - Peter Scott was mentored by an entrepreneur ‘Crawford Scott’ who became his business mentor / role model. Scott alternated between a criminal lifestyle and owning businesses in the haulage, demolition and property development industries. Charlie Seiga was inspired by his mother’s enterprising example and describes his early life helping her in their chip shop. He narrates that she was a shrewd businesswoman who simultaneously bartered on the black market. Martin Cahill displayed philanthropic tendencies and helped others enter legitimate business with start-up capital.

Displaying Entrepreneurial Propensity: – Charlie Seiga, Roy Shaw, Dave Courtney, Freddie Forman, Kenny Noye, and Ronnie Knight all display this in abundance. Seiga and Shaw both claim the status of entrepreneur and utilize entrepreneurship discourse.

Peter Scott is unusual in that he possesses dual abilities as a criminal and entrepreneurial ability. Seiga refers to himself as a 'self-made businessman'. Dave Courtney is a criminal-entrepreneur with considerable entrepreneurial flair who has built an alternative income stream, earning revenue from the sale of his autobiographies and from his website www.davecourtney.com - an effective propaganda mechanism against the establishment and a commercial vehicle for selling gangster merchandise. Courtney labels himself as a businessman. Forman stresses that he wanted to be his own boss and crime offered a route for poor but enterprising youths like him - crime is a business and a vehicle for social mobility in his search for respect.

Ronnie Knight, Bernard O'Mahoney, Bruce Reynolds, Dave Courtney and Charlie Seiga revere businessmen and entrepreneurs. In fact Knight eulogises his businessmen brothers Billy, Jimmy and John and tells a story of Billy having ten dismissing ten grand stolen from his safe as beer money. Businessmen are seen as being shrewd and resourceful. Reynolds jokes about former friends becoming straight businessmen because they could be legitimately bent. One of Martin Cahill's peers, Paddy Shannon is an interesting character, who led a double life as a successful businessman, auctioneer, and builder by day and armed robber on the sly. Seiga is also intensely proud of a brother Billy becoming a successful businessman and of other peers who became successful, legitimate businessmen. Courtney revels in his association with honest businessmen being careful to separate these from other criminals turned entrepreneur. Emphasis is placed upon money, expensive cars, mansions, hedonism, holidays, yachts, clubbing, affairs with women, a champagne lifestyle and membership of Masonic Orders because for 'Villains' these are indicators of legitimacy. The talk is of colourful characters,

ordinary decent criminals, honest villains, of being a 'Flash Harry character and playing the rascal. This is a process of identity shifting by telling different stories and indeed many criminals are also natural storytellers.

Language therefore plays an important part in identity shifting as metaphors associated with entrepreneurship discourse abound - for example Charlie Seiga talks of having the '*Midas Touch*'. Entrepreneurial status can be ascribed by the biographer - thus Hogg *et al* (1988: 131) in a chapter entitled "A *Self-made man*", invoke entrepreneurial narrative describing Kenny Noye as a "*Crooked Midas*". Wensley Clarkson (Clarkson, 2002: 194) describes Noye as an "*entrepreneurial spirit*", noting that he cultivated the image of the successful businessman rising from nothing to be a multi millionaire. Noye is portrayed as a child prodigy and presented as a 'poor-boy-made-good'. We hear of him working Saturday jobs, doing two paper rounds. As an adult he worked as a printer whilst taking a second job as a truck driver. By the age of twenty three he had his own haulage business and became a successful entrepreneur honing a reputation as a shrewd businessman, family man and philanthropist. Yet, Noye had a string of convictions for dishonesty and was unmasked as a criminal for the death of a police officer during a surveillance operation; and for his part in laundering the proceeds of the Brinks Matt Gold Bullion Robbery in 1983. He is now regarded as a major criminal. Hogg *et al* (1988) described Noye as a "*Wheeler-dealer*" - another common metaphor for entrepreneurs; and Barnes *et al* (2000) refer to criminal turned businessman Brian Jennings as a "*wheeler-dealer with a finger in every pie*".

Often the biographer invokes entrepreneurial status by mimicking the fairytale narrative style of entrepreneur stories. For example Barnes *et al* (2000: V11) begin the

biography of drug dealer Curtis ‘Cocky’ Warren with the words “*Once upon a time in the nineties*”. In a few short pages they cast Warren as a ‘poor-boy-made-good’ and ostentatious Drugs Baron who rose from obscurity to fraternize with professional criminals, businessmen and back street entrepreneurs. Barnes *et al* also use the connection with Liverpool’s reputation for rough commerce to infuse Warren with its entrepreneurial spirit. Another technique used by biographers to re-create an entrepreneurial milieu in words is to spin a complex web of related stories, in which the participants are all shady businessmen, haulage contractors, second-hand car dealers, (dis)honest grocer’s etc - led by a ‘Mr-Big’ figure. Barnes *et al* highlight the entrepreneurial trading nature of this white dominated Liverpool Mafia and refer to them as a loose knit syndicate conforming to businessmen-gangster ideals and describe Liverpool’s ‘Mr-Big’ as an “*enterprising wide-boy*” with assets worth £50,000. Villains such as Charlie Seiga, John Gilligan, Freddie Forman, Ronnie Knight and Kenny Noye adopt the status and persona of wealthy businessman to project an image of success as jeans and leather jackets give way to suits, shirts and sports jackets. Others like Martin Cahill never made this transition but were still entrepreneurs of crime.

Entrepreneurship discourse presents two very different opportunities to criminals – 1) as a target against which to practice their craft; and 2) as a means of becoming other via diversification. The latter course further permits a third course of action – the possibility of telling stories of ‘going legit’.

The Entrepreneurial Parasite: The ‘Entrepreneurial Community’, represent a rich source of income to professional criminals. As thieves, Peter Scott, Martin Cahill and Bruce Reynolds are classic examples of entrepreneurial parasites because they targeted the

entrepreneurial business classes and the aristocracy. Martin Cahill targeted the shops and houses of the Dublin business community. Cahill despised the bourgeoisie lifestyle and regarded the wealthy as criminal practicing predatory entrepreneurship by taxing local businessmen and often tried to 'oust' them from their businesses. He bullied other legitimate entrepreneurs using intimidation, fear, threats, beatings, and petrol bombings. Cahill was an entrepreneur of violence as evidenced by the crucifixion story, which entered the folklore of Dublin crime (1998: 66) where he is alleged to have literally crucified a suspected police informer. Charlie Seiga talks of preying on the business community because of their predictable 9-5 routines. Having businessmen friends in one's network can enable a criminal to access intelligence about the business community.

Becoming 'other' by diversification into business – Freddie Foreman diversified into legitimate businesses including pubs, betting shops and clubs, all of which bore a symbiotic relationship to his criminal business allowing him to develop a front of respectability whilst permitting him to invest his bent money in straight business. He took an intense pride in his legitimate businesses turning over vast sums of money. Likewise, flush with money from criminal activities, Charlie Seiga set himself up as with a taxi firm, a scrap-metal dealer, a Restaurant, a Wholesale Grocer's business, a haulage business and property speculation. John Gilligan diversified into the second hand car sales business and opened a Riding School as fronts, whilst Kenny Noye invested in small businesses such as mini cab companies, launderettes and sometimes even in the stock market. Doing this permitted them to become other.

Going legit': Charlie Seiga, Freddie Forman, Ronnie Knight and Dave Courtney all narrate this storyline. Knight had a varied entrepreneurial career as a businessman, long firm fraudster and armed robber before diversifying back into business as a club owner and becoming a crime writer. Forman's motivation was to earn enough money to go legit', whilst Seiga talks of going straight - but to him that meant becoming involved in a succession of scams such as counterfeit money, manufacturing illicit alcohol and financing others scams. Courtney courts the 'gone legit' label and is obsessed with legitimacy; whilst Cahill dreamed of going straight and providing a secure non-criminal life for his children. Cahill diversified into modest businesses such as pubs, a corner shop, a pigeon food shop, a coal yard, a sack company and a launderette leaving others to run them. These businesses provided a steady cash flow.

A common denominator in these biographies is that these deviant yet enterprising men rose from working class roots. Re-scripting their biographies permits them to present themselves as 'achievers'. Peter Scott comes across as well read and educated being raised in a respectable Irish Middle Class family. However, they disowned him when he chose to associate with criminal classes. Yet Crawford Scott did not disown him. The absence of more Middle Class men from the sample is surprising but perhaps they have a greater desire for legitimacy and thus a greater need to cover up any shady dealings. See table 2 for a discussion of further themes identified in the analysis.

Insert table 2 here.

There are obviously other themes missing from the model – the main one being the stereotype of mother love. Most gangsters have a tough female role model (a familial mentor figure) who advises and inspires them in their villainy. Another missing

dimension is that of affectionate tales of family and friends deployed in order to create the image of monster-with-a-human-face. Social class, habitus and identity are also implicit in these accounts. Tales of Villainy narrated in biographies are heavily gendered towards working class masculinity although there are biographies of criminal women [5].

In these criminal biographies, one can detect what Bolton and Thompson (2000: 193) refer to as “*strong entrepreneurial life themes*” which permeate the text. These are not always visible unless one has knowledge of entrepreneurship discourse as discussed above. As state, entrepreneurship is commonly introduced by invoking myth, metaphor, stereotypes and clichés and weaving them into a narrative. Thus familiar phrases such as from humble beginnings; self-made man; a finger in every pie; a poor-boy-made-good; he started with nothing; or he became rich beyond his wildest dreams are introduced.

This study confirmed the presence of strong entrepreneurial life themes evident in the life stories of these ordinary British ‘Villains’ albeit they manifest themselves in different ways, dependent upon the degree of social capital possessed. Another important finding was the exposure of a formulaic structure (or narrative model) used by Villains to tell their ‘Tales of Villainy’ as a variant of entrepreneur stories. The gangster and the entrepreneur stories are invoked using similar storylines but for different purposes. Likewise, entrepreneur stories can also conform to the tenets of criminal narrative. Both narrate success stories as the gangster reinvents himself as the poor-boy’s made good of the criminal fraternity [6].

From a cultural perspective, it is significant that the public are less interested in Richardson the businessman than Richardson the gangster (Richardson, 1991). Peter Scott makes a similar claim in his biography. However, an enterprising thief or an armed

robber can be entrepreneurial, just as an entrepreneur can be criminal and it is important to differentiate between the criminal-entrepreneur and the entrepreneurial-criminal. The latter repeatedly displays innovative and entrepreneurial tendencies and succeeds by virtue of these very traits, imbuing their criminal actions with a competitive edge. They may operate at the forefront of professional crime, exploring and developing new markets, whilst simultaneously controlling and exploiting existing markets. The former cynically exploit crime as another lucrative market. Their profiles and modus operandi differ. Researching them is notoriously difficult because respondents are elusive and gaining research access to gangsters is difficult, hence the utility of biographies, providing one guard against accepting criminal biographies at face value.

Criminal stories follow a similar cyclic, repetitive, and climactic, formula to entrepreneur stories but the storylines are invoked at different times in their lifecycles. The two discourses can crossover or overlap, or can run simultaneously as contemporary criminals may have more in common with the entrepreneur than the stereotypical criminal of yore. Their stories are not a perverted parody of the entrepreneurship discourse as suggested by Warshaw (1970), just a variant form. Criminal stories are often narrated as cautionary tales and failure stories but failure, and recovery from a criminal lifestyle, can build character. Such tales possess an epic quality where the drama occurs over a long period of time, across many locations. Such stories are important social narratives, being stories of personal development, of change, and of maturing but what can 'we' as academics learn from this?

Biographical analysis offers important insights into the lifestyle and modus operandi of entrepreneurial criminals who in struggling for legitimacy in their respective spheres

generate their own body of folklore and mythology. These stories ascribe status and contain a rich vein of cultural and social capital worthy of serious sociological research. The most successful of these entrepreneurial criminals, such as Charlie Richardson, Freddie Foreman, Charlie Richardson, Kenneth Noye and Charlie Seiga, were socialized into an entrepreneurial mindset until it became a feature of their committed criminality. It is apparent that the criminals use autobiography to present themselves as likeable rogues and entrepreneurs to achieve legitimacy. Conversely, journalists and biographers invoke entrepreneurial life themes for the purpose of vilification.

In the process of re-reading the criminal biographies as entrepreneur stories, the author gained a valuable insight into the power of entrepreneurship discourse as a socially accepted life changing narrative, which permits them to re-script their moral biographies (Schervich, 2006) and reposition themselves in the public domain thereby achieving a veneer of legitimacy. Thus it is apparent that via biography criminals can re-script their criminal life stories to become an entrepreneur story. Indeed, Schervish makes reference to the both the creation of one's 'Moral Biography' and to 'Moral Geography' to refer to the way entrepreneurs combine two elements of daily life e.g. personal capacity and moral compass. Moral biographies are important to entrepreneurs in scripting socially acceptable life stories. Both of these practices are a form of re-scripting moral character as envisaged by Chan (2006). This process of re-scripting character describes the process carried out by the criminals surveyed for this study. It is also reminiscent of Goodey and Denzin's concept of 'epiphany' in that an appreciation of an alternative more entrepreneurial identity can be a life changing event.

5. REFLECTING ON CONTEMPORARY GANGSTER DISCOURSES

Two types of criminal biographies predominate – namely the reformed criminal and the unrepentant criminal. Each has different motivations. This leads us to consider whether criminals seek to forge and thus legitimise a criminal reputation through published accounts of their life and crimes. This provides another dimension to the more traditional approach to reputation-building via criminal deeds. This is significant in terms of markets, community and identity in a mediatised world as it suggests that criminal autobiographies may themselves be a reflection of authorial entrepreneurship. Many criminals write such books for the money. Royalties (even if only miniscule) are a source of legitimate income and the label of author adds another dimension to their re-scripted criminal identity and permits them to re-label themselves as authors and entrepreneurs. Indeed, several celebrity-gangsters now list their occupational title as author or crime writers. As criminals they have a vested interest in 'talking up' crime. In a mediatised age, book sales merely represent another market to the entrepreneurial criminal and authoring criminal biographies is perhaps just another example of the commoditisation of criminal identity.

It is necessary to address the "*So What?*" question. This can be articulated as follows - Why should academe and society care that there are twenty commonalities between criminal discourse and entrepreneur stories? This matters because entrepreneurship in its authentic form is productive in a Baumolian sense (Baumol, 1990) whereas criminal entrepreneurship is generally unproductive and / or destructive for society. If entrepreneurs and criminals are practicing similar behaviours in different settings and contexts then understanding how their epistemological narratives are similar and yet

different will allow us an opportunity to rescript different outcomes. Entrepreneur and gangster stories are similar yet different because both emanate from the archetypal “poor-boy” narrative common to many different societies. For example, see the works of Scarpitti, Murray, Dinitz and Reckless (1960); Klapp (1949); and Bottigheimer (1993) which support this assertion that as a narrative genre the poor-boy-made good and its many variants such as the “lazy boy” and “good boy” have roots that extend back to medieval fabliaux literature and span many cultures including biblical and historical stories. This tells us that entrepreneurship is a universal (and thus perhaps elemental) life theme and that an understanding of the different contextual epistemes can be used to induce social change for the benefit of society.

The fact that some forms of criminal and entrepreneur stories are ‘cut from the same cloth’ tells us that entrepreneurship is a complex embroidered social tapestry which tells us more about our cognitive (in)ability to stray too far from socially constructed scripts. It also corroborates Baumol’s assertion that entrepreneurs and criminals emerge from the same social strata (and as such why should we expect them to be different)? However, a weakness of this research lies in its acceptance of Baumol’s theories. For example, Douhan and Henrekson (2008) and Sobel (2008) criticise and challenge Baumol’s theory in that there are obviously more institutional variables in play.

This preliminary research raises many questions which are worthy of further research. For example:-

- Why are the stories similar, yet different? What social, historical and cultural issues are at play?

- Why did they decide to choose different, yet similar paths? Did they have a choice?
- What are the National differences? Do Scottish or Irish biographies of criminals differ from English ones? Does the narrative model work for criminal biographies in other countries and cultures such as Russia or Africa?
- What are the regional differences between North and South and for particular cities such as Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, etc?
- What are the Gender issues at play?

Answering these questions would go a long way towards understanding the nuances between the entrepreneur and the criminal. Being able to answer these questions would allow us as academics to advise society better in how to deal with the complex nature of both entrepreneurship and criminality. The exclusive focus on British criminal biographies does limit the comparative analysis between criminals and entrepreneurs in general because there is a wealth of American, Australian and European biographies of criminals in print. It also limits the rich discussion on the influence of individual cultural and geographic factors such as for example the Italian Mafia, the Chinese Triads, the Russian Mafiya, the Japanese Yakuza and Biker Gangs operate across national and international boundaries (See Galeotti, 1998; Galeotti, 2002; Paoli, 2004; and Huisman, 2008) thus in this context British Criminals may be viewed as being parochial. Yet, many commentators have argued that all of the examples cited above operate in an entrepreneurial manner. Thus a particular study such as this taken out of context from the wider picture could be seen as being subjective, parochial and thus of minor consequence

when this is far from the truth. A power of the cultural focus of this study is that it allows the author to concentrate on specific culturally specific details.

There are obvious implications of this research at the intersection between entrepreneurship and criminal justice. However, as indicated above this could be addressed by further research into generic and culturally specific facets of such behaviours. If entrepreneurs and criminals do in fact operate in a similar manner and are socially constructed to be similar then this offers clear opportunities to the authorities to use a knowledge of entrepreneurship theory to help interdict criminals and to prevent / deter the practice of criminal entrepreneurship. It also permits opportunities to divert organized criminals towards legitimate entrepreneurial opportunities. The financial and social benefits to society would be immense. There is also scope for such knowledge to be used to help develop and initiate new training packages in relation to investigative practices.

At a deeper sociological level this article makes a contribution to extant knowledge drawing out some overlaps and transforming modes between the practices of entrepreneurship and professional criminality and in particular the conflation of gangster and entrepreneurship discourse by demonstrating that many contemporary criminals use gangster and entrepreneurship discourse alternatively as it suits their needs. It is another example of the bi-lingual discursive practice suggested by Sandberg (2009). This study has important sociological implications for society because biographies permit criminals an opportunity to set the record straight and narrate what is of importance to them. Society seldom listens seriously to them. Indeed, Hess (1988: 48) argues that police pay scant attention to the *“life-story of the criminal”*. In this respect, biographical analysis

provides a rich vein of data, highlighting a shared formulaic structure between the stories of ‘Villains’ and entrepreneurs. Both discourses are predominantly masculine, exclusionary and pejorative constructs. Villains and entrepreneurs are living discourses, and sense can often be made of them in the storybook format found in their biographies. However, there are deeper sociological lessons in relation to the socially constructed nature of gangster and entrepreneur stories. There are clear implications in relation to journalism and authorial practices and the utility of pointing out such similarities without highlighting the very real differences.

Finally, re-reading criminal biographies as entrepreneur stories has potential in respect of diverting criminals away from crime towards more productive forms of entrepreneurship. Brewer (2004) has made reference to the concept of the sociological imagination, and in this article we get closer to the criminological imagination and to the psyche of the celebrity- gangster. The most fascinating aspect of this exploration of contemporary gangster discourse is the use of self-reflexiveness by the celebrity-gangsters to rescript their biographies.

FOOTNOTES

[1]. Readers may gravitate towards true-crime because of voyeurism (Horsley, 2005); the ego ideal (Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1984); and a fascination with hegemonic masculinity (Messerschmidt, 1993; Connell, 1995; Newburn and Stanko, 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). This is a rapidly expanding market which is of immense interest because the messages contained within the genre influence public perception. True crime books as well as being entertaining contain a rich dynamic underpinned by socio-economic elements. This raises the questions of who reads ‘True Crime’ books; and what is the composition of the readership? One can assume that more working-class men are now buying books? Also, the role of supermarkets and on-line retailers in the book market must be considered in increasing sales of such books. It is also possible that the genre of true crime targets traditional non-book-buyers to expand existing markets? Readers of true crime may also enjoy vicariously experiencing crime and criminal acts. In some instances these will be other criminals and neophytes in search of an ideal typical criminal persona – an image of the perfect self towards what the (criminal) ego should aspire to – for example the London gangster Dave Courtney’s creation of his ‘Storybook Gangster’ persona. This brings the question of author motivation into play. A decade ago the typical self respecting major-league ‘Villain’ would not have dreamt of publishing a book drawing unwanted attention too themselves. Now it is a mark of criminal

legitimacy and to be considered a serious player they have to author a public persona - hence the rash of 'me too' biographies.

[2]. Criminal biographies have been popular since the 16th century (Hamilton, 1993) whether biographical or thinly veiled fictional accounts [picaresque-novels and rogue-fiction] based on identifiable persons or events. Rawlings (1995) suggests that most people first come into contact with crime is through newspapers, books, television, films, and videos and that crime-writers utilise journalistic techniques such as short paragraphs and chapters, as well as narrating several stories simultaneously to create tension.

[3]. This quintessentially British term refers to a small cadre of professional criminals or entrepreneurial underclass of working class criminals and criminally inclined entrepreneurs. Many such ruthless and enterprising individuals can narrate themselves as 'self-made men' and as 'poor-boys-made-good'. When attempting to make sense of their biographies the voice of the criminal may be stifled, by a co-author or ghost-writer. Biographies can become stories about Villains, and not their stories. Authors of criminal biographies write to a formula but the ghost writer may enable the criminal voice by re articulating the moral and the message. Some solo-authored crime biographies would be hard to publish without professional help but solo-authored work does not guarantee authenticity. Crime stories are often co-authored scripts channeling the lives of celebrity-criminals into an established form based on the 'what works' logic of the market.

[4]. In this study no cross comparison has been made between criminal entrepreneurs and non-criminal entrepreneurs such as Richard Branson, Alan Sugar etc many of whom narrate poor-boy-made-good stories. This aspect of entrepreneurial morality, markets, and legitimacy and in particular the connections between these two subsets receive little attention and are the subject of a further study in progress.

[5]. For example, see - "Criminal Women" (Christina, Carlen and Hicks, 1985); "Six Criminal Women" (Jenkins; 1987); "Pandora's Daughters" (Robinson, 2002); and "Gone Shopping: the true story of Shirley Pitts, Queen of thieves" (Gammon, 1999) - all of which discuss the criminal careers of entrepreneurial women.

[6]. However, the criminal dream is about having a nice house; nice clothes; nice car; a good time; a trophy wife; and holidays. These underpin the drama and provide the 'Villain' with an all-consuming passion. It is all about having everything up front. Villains work towards setting up a straight business and retiring into obscurity. For many, it is a vague notion in which a straight business equals legitimacy. Conversely, the entrepreneurial dream is its polar opposite. One begins by setting up a straight business and works towards one's dream of legitimacy. The rewards for both are similar in that both the Villain and the entrepreneur pursue legitimacy and desire the respect of their peer groups. Both stories possess drama, human interest and tragedy but illustrate different entrepreneurial moralities.

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Tables

TABLE 1 – THE CRIMINAL BIOGRAPHIES READ LISTED BY CRIMINAL TYPES

Biographies	Criminal typologies
Bruce Reynolds (Reynolds, 1995); Peter Scott (Scott, 1995).	Reynolds and Scott are career thieves with no propensity towards violence - known as gentleman thieves. Reynolds frequented in social settings with entrepreneurs whilst Scott has also operated as a legitimate entrepreneur.
Roy ‘Pretty Boy’ Shaw (Shaw and Kray, 1999); Bernard O’Mahoney (O’Mahoney, 1998); Martin Cahill (Williams, 1998); Curtis Warren (Barnes <i>et al</i> , 2000); Charles William Richardson (Parker, 1981); and Dave Courtney (Courtney, 1999, 2001).	Shaw, O’Mahoney, Cahill and Warren can be characterized as ordinary criminals with an entrepreneurial flair and as such present either as gangster-entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial criminals. Richardson can be described as an old school gangster whilst Courtney is a self styled new skool type gangster and criminal entrepreneur.
Freddie Forman (Forman and Lisners, 1996); Kenny Noye (Hogg <i>et al</i> 1988) (Clarkson, 2002); Charlie Seiga (Seiga 2001); John Gilligan (Mooney, 2001); Ronnie Knight (Knight, 1988); Nicholas Van Hoogstraten (Jordan and Walsh, 2003); and Darren Nicholls (Thompson, 2000).	Foreman, Noye, Seiga, Gilligan and Knight can be classified as contemporary businessmen gangster types whilst Van Hoogstraten can best be profiled as a rogue entrepreneur. Nicholls is a small businessman turned criminal.

TABLE 1 – A DISCUSSION OF THE THEMES IDENTIFIED IN THE STUDY.

THEMES	DISCUSSION
DREAMS	Villains appear to be driven by conflated individuated criminal and entrepreneurial dreams of success. Courtney (1999: 384) appreciates the allure of the gangster dream stressing that Villains dream of making it big, buying a fancy gaffe abroad or in the country.
STORYTELLING	Many Villains are charismatic storytellers - storytelling is an important facet of criminality essential in presenting oneself as a success. Korobkin (2003) remarks on the ability criminals to tell stories and trade on rhetoric. Many criminal conversations occur within the prison system or underworld, making them a valuable social currency. To be privy to, and be able to tell the stories, is to belong. To make their mark they must learn to frame their stories in a manner appropriate to their ambitions. Korobkin argues that we appropriate the sentiments, rhetoric, plots,

	and characters of fiction. Hard-luck tales, poor-boy-made-good / humble-origins are sentimental storylines open to all.
PURSUIT OF LEGITIMACY	It is apparent both genres share a mutual fascination with 'Bad Boy' imagery adopted by successful males and actively present an image of being likeable rogues and outsiders. However, 'Tales of Villainy' negotiate a different legitimacy.