

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Hotspots, Crime and Media: An Exploratory Study of Media Discourse on Marginalised Communities and Violent Crime in Trinidad and Tobago**

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The study explores the intersection of crime, community and media discourse within the twin island republic of Trinidad and Tobago. One hundred and twenty-one (121) articles on violent crime, published between January to March 2017, by the Trinidad and Tobago Guardian were examined to understand how an elite newspaper recruits discourses and generates its own discourses around violent crime both within the wider society and around marginalised communities. Drawing on Stuart Hall's concept of "primary definers" i.e sources used to shape the news agenda, it was discovered that the T&T Guardian relies primarily on those with State and class power such as politicians, police officials, lawyers and judges to craft the discourse on violent crime in Trinidad and Tobago. News reports on violent crime as well as marginalised communities were examined and deconstructed using the discursive frameworks of Michel Foucault, Stuart Hall and James Paul Gee. The subsequent discourses discovered and elaborated on in this study included discourses of war, discourses of legal control, discourses of social decay, discourses of victimhood, discourses of coloniality, discourses of stigma and discourses of violence. Finally, the presentation of violent crime in the T&T Guardian was examined and compared to official crime statistics from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. This comparison revealed that crimes such as murder are overrepresented by the newspaper while others, such as robbery are underrepresented. This suggests that the T&T Guardian has a hierarchy of newsworthy violence which it disseminates to the wider public of Trinidad and Tobago

**Keywords:** Trinidad and Tobago; violent crime; media discourse; hotspots; marginalised communities