



INDIAN JOURNAL OF
LEGAL REVIEW

VOLUME 5 AND ISSUE 9 OF 2025

INSTITUTE OF LEGAL EDUCATION



INDIAN JOURNAL OF LEGAL REVIEW

APIS – 3920 – 0001 | ISSN – 2583-2344

(Open Access Journal)

Journal's Home Page – <https://ijlr.iledu.in/>

Journal's Editorial Page – <https://ijlr.iledu.in/editorial-board/>

Volume 5 and Issue 9 of 2025 (Access Full Issue on – <https://ijlr.iledu.in/volume-5-and-issue-10-of-2025/>)

Publisher

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CRIME, CULTURE, AND CINEMA: EXPLORING THE DEPICTION OF CRIME IN WORLD CINEMA AS A REFLECTION OF REALITY AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION, WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR LEGAL DISCOURSE

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BEST CITATION – AMALA JOSEPH, ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN OLD AGE ADULTS IN THE FAMILY, *INDIAN JOURNAL OF LEGAL REVIEW (IJLR)*, 5 (9) OF 2025, PG. 93-101, APIS – 3920 – 0001 & ISSN – 2583-2344.

This article is published in the collaborated special issue of Amity Law School, Amity University, Mumbai and the Institute of Legal Education (ILE), titled “Emerging Trends in Law: Exploring Recent Developments and Reforms” (ISBN: 978-81-986345-1-1).

Introduction

Cinema, since the beginning, has not stayed a mere entertainment. It has interfered and rewritten the societal codes that shape human perception of the world. Among the many themes that persistently occupy the cinematic frame, crime holds a place of enduring fascination. It is more than a genre; it is a mirror to society’s deviance, morality, power structures, and justice mechanisms. Crime cinema walks the delicate line between reality and dramatization, between critique and glamorization, often influencing how we perceive criminals, victims, and the law itself.

This research paper, titled “Crime Culture and Cinema: Exploring the Depiction of Crime in World Cinema as a Reflection of Reality and Artistic Expression, with Implications for Legal Discourse”, will look into an interdisciplinary journey. It examines how films from various cultures and eras have portrayed crime. Crime is not just a narrative it is a reflection of socio-political anxieties, cultural identities, and legal complexities. This research aims to understand how cinema not only reflects crime in society but also contributes to its cultural meaning and its normalization or rejection in the particular society

This study tries to include both global and regional crime films. *Drishyam*¹⁷⁰, *Man Bites Dog*¹⁷¹, *Clockwork Orange*¹⁷², *The Act of Killing*¹⁷³ etc. are some of the movies discussed on the basis of critical academic writings on criminology, audience reception, film culture, and media ethics. These works help explore how different societies narrate, justify or critique crime, depending on their own political and historical contexts. For instance, the point of justice in *Drishyam*¹⁷⁴ is not just a narrative twist but a challenge to institutional policing and due

process in India. Similarly, *Dexter*¹⁷⁵ blurs the boundary between psychopathology and social justice, asking the audience the question, ‘can murder ever be morally coded?’.

The legal implications of these portrayals are manifold. When audiences are emotionally moved by characters who commit crimes, when systems of justice are portrayed as corrupt, or when violence becomes stylized, cinema begins to mold cultural notions of legality and deviance. Can film influence public opinion toward harsher or more lenient legal frameworks? Can it provoke social reform or increase societal desensitization? These are questions explored throughout this research.

¹⁷⁰ *Drishyam* (2013), Jeethu Joseph, Ashirvad Cinemas

¹⁷¹ *Man Bites Dog* (1992), Remy Belvaux, Les Artistes Anonymes

¹⁷² *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), Stanley Kubrick, Warner Bros

¹⁷³ *The Act of Killing* (2012), Joshua Oppenheimer, Final cut for Real

¹⁷⁴ *Drishyam*, (n 1)

¹⁷⁵ *Dexter* (2006), James Manos Jr., Showtime

The structure of the paper moves through five chapters. Chapter One examines the historical emergence of crime cinema and its early thematic shifts. Chapter Two discusses cinematic techniques and aesthetic symbolism in portraying crime. Chapter Three investigates how crime narratives involve in reflecting and shaping societal attitudes toward justice and morality. Chapter Four analyzes the audience's role in decoding cinematic crime and its impact on behavior and perception. Chapter Five focuses on the political economy of crime cinema. How power, profit, and ideology influence what crimes get shown and how they are framed.

By combining personal insights, cinematic critique, criminological theory, and legal reflection, this research ultimately argues that crime cinema is not just a passive cultural product. It is an active participant in shaping humans' collective imagination of crime and justice. This intersection, where art meets law, where image meets ideology is precisely where new questions emerge for scholars, filmmakers, policymakers, and viewers alike.

For future researchers, this field holds immense possibilities. In an age of digital streaming, algorithmic content curation, and blurred lines between fiction and reality, the study of crime in cinema is not just relevant it is urgent. Whether we are students, filmmakers, or nothing else but citizens, understanding how crime is represented and misrepresented on screen helps us better grasp the laws we obey, the fears we hold, and the justice we seek.

Chapter 1

Historical Perspectives ; Evolution of Crime Depictions in Cinema

The portrayal of crime in cinema has undergone a dynamic evolution, shaped by societal shifts, political landscapes, and technological innovations. In the early 20th century, the silent era offered rudimentary representations of crime as simple morality tales where good triumphed over evil. Films like

The Great Train Robbery (1903)¹⁷⁶ set a precedent for crime-based narratives, using spectacle and suspense to engage audiences while reinforcing the moral codes of the time.

The 1930s witnessed the rise of the gangster genre with classics like *Little Caesar*¹⁷⁷ and *Public Enemy*¹⁷⁸, which introduced audiences to morally ambiguous protagonists. These films reflected a society grappling with the Great Depression, where lawlessness and anti-establishment sentiments gained traction. Despite censorship pressures these films humanized criminals, offering a critique of socioeconomic disparities. By mid-twentieth century, crime films had developed into sophisticated commentaries on the American Dream, disillusionment, and survival.

Post-World War II cinema saw a shift towards a darker, more psychological exploration of crime. Characters were morally conflicted, justice was ambiguous, and the visual aesthetic reflected the conflict. As cinema expanded globally, different cultures began producing crime films infused with local political and social anxieties. For example, India's *Drishyam* (2013)¹⁷⁹ presents crime through a domestic, morally ambiguous lens, challenging the assumption that law equals justice.

The 1970s brought experimental storytelling and intense psychological themes, with Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* (1971)¹⁸⁰ examining state control and moral free will. Its ultra-violent aesthetic stirred controversy but also opened doors for deeper philosophical engagement with the nature of crime and punishment.

Modern crime cinema travels from mockumentary (*Man Bites Dog*)¹⁸¹, through docu-fiction (*The Act of Killing*)¹⁸², to hybrid storytelling, reflecting audience maturity. Crime

¹⁷⁶ The great Train Robbery (1903),Edwin S. Porter, Edison Manufacturing Company

¹⁷⁷ Little Ceasar (1931), Mervyn LeRoy, Warner Bros

¹⁷⁸ Public Enemy (1931), William A. Wellman, Warner Bros

¹⁷⁹ Drishyam (n 1)

¹⁸⁰ A Clockwork Orange (n 3)

¹⁸¹ Man bites dog (n 2)

¹⁸² The Act (n 4)

Chapter 2

Crime as Narrative and Spectacle. Artistic Expression and Criminological Themes

depiction is no longer merely narrative. It has successfully become discourse, critique, and cultural history. Beyond the historical timeline of crime cinema, what's most compelling is the way early filmmakers subtly encoded resistance, rebellion, and critique of systems within their narratives. For example, during the Hays Code era, filmmakers found clever ways to suggest rather than show, to imply injustice while technically conforming to regulations. How does this dual-layered narrative technique evolve and still influence censorship strategies across cultures. Early crime films can also be seen as part of a larger cultural myth-making project an effort to define the "American Dream" or to contrast moral decline against capitalist growth. The glorification of outlaws like in *Public Enemy* reflects a deeper public fascination with anti-establishment heroes. This ambivalence toward authority persists in contemporary cinema. It's valuable to ask why viewers continuously gravitate toward morally ambiguous figures. Is it a lack of faith in institutions? Or a desire to rebel vicariously through the screen?

Non-Western crime cinema during an early period developed independently. For example, early Indian films dealing with social justice themes like caste discrimination or corruption often used symbolic representation and drama as opposed to the stark realism of Hollywood. Understanding these regional differences helps globalize the crime film genre as a narrative mode.

Lastly, the emergence of gangster and crime genres should also be viewed through the lens of class struggle. Films of this era frequently reveal deep anxieties around poverty and law enforcement. They allowed audiences particularly those marginalized by mainstream, a glimpse into a world where control and power were possible, even if through illegitimate means.

Crime cinema is deeply intertwined with artistic expression. Directors often use crime as a narrative framework to explore complex human emotions, philosophical questions, and social critiques. In this context, crime is not just an act. It is a symbol. Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*¹⁸³ is an artistic experiment in moral relativism. Alex, the protagonist, is a charming yet sadistic youth whose violent behavior is countered by a state that imposes psychological control. Kubrick challenges whether removing the ability to choose evil also eliminates the capacity for good. The film, banned in some countries, sparked international debates about freedom, violence, and censorship. *Man Bites Dog*¹⁸⁴, a Belgian mockumentary, presents a terrifying portrayal of a serial killer. By breaking the fourth wall, the film implicates the viewer and the media in the spectacle of violence. It reveals the pleasure audiences derive from watching crime unfold on screen and critiques the media's complicity in sensationalizing criminal acts. Indian films like *Munna Bhai MBBS*¹⁸⁵ and *Hindi Medium*¹⁸⁶ use humor to address academic fraud and systemic corruption. While lighter in tone, these films carry potent critiques of the education system and middle-class anxiety. The crime here is institutional and normalized, presenting a different layer of narrative: one where legality exists but justice is still inaccessible. Criminological theories like rational choice theory, strain theory, social disorganization theory are often embedded in these films, consciously or not. For example, *Dexter*¹⁸⁷, the serial killer protagonist in the eponymous TV series, is a classic anti-hero shaped by trauma and molded by a code of vigilante justice. His actions provoke reflection on the legal system's limitations and the moral

¹⁸³ *A Clockwork Orange* (n 3)

¹⁸⁴ *Man Bites dog* (n2)

¹⁸⁵ *Munna Bhai MBBS* (2003), Rajkumar Hirani, Vinod Chopra films

¹⁸⁶ *Hindi Medium* (2017), Saket Chaudhary, T-Series Films & Maddok Films

¹⁸⁷ *Dexter* (n 6)

grey zones where legality and justice could never cross their paths.

Crime as spectacle also reflects audience desires and cultural anxieties. Films exaggerate, stylize, or aestheticize crime, creating emotional experiences that linger. This emotional power is not without consequence of shaping public opinion and legal perception.

The use of crime as a visual device brings forward a more philosophical debate: does art imitate life, or does it reshape it? When filmmakers like Kubrick, stylize violence in movies like *A Clockwork Orange*, they don't just portray brutality, they question the mechanics of social conditioning, free will, and the existing systems. This makes it essential for future legal scholars to analyze how aesthetic choices in cinema reflect evolving jurisprudential philosophies. Is law about retribution, deterrence, or rehabilitation? The visual treatment of crime often says more than the plot itself.

Furthermore, in cinema, silence, lighting, and camera movement can be as meaningful as dialogue. The calmness in *The Act of Killing*, contrasted with its grotesque re-enactments, forces viewers into an uncomfortable moral position. This use of visual contradiction could be studied for how it shapes ethical engagement, leading to a question of how can, form challenge the audience's moral complacency. The intersection between criminal psychology and visual storytelling is commendable. Shows like *Dexter* not only represent psychological profiling but aestheticize it through visual metaphors like blood spatter art or lab settings. What effect does this have on public understanding of forensic science and psychological assessment? Doesn't it romanticize or oversimplify it? Also, another growing area of concern is the use of color theory, aspect ratio, and mise-en-scène to create sympathy for criminals. From Scorsese's red-heavy emotional palette in *Goodfellas*¹⁸⁸ to the warm tones in

*Breaking Bad*¹⁸⁹, visuals can distort moral judgment.

Finally, the democratization of filmmaking technology has allowed independent filmmakers to explore crime artistically without the constraints of studios. This opens space for new voices of the marginalized communities to represent crime from unique cultural standpoints. The future of this discourse lies in how diverse creators reinterpret the aesthetics of crime through their lived realities.

Chapter 3

Reality vs. Fiction – Blurring Lines and the Ethics of Representation

Cinema has a unique power to blur the lines between fiction and reality. The ethical implications of this power are significant, especially in crime cinema. When films like *The Act of Killing* invite perpetrators of genocide to re-enact their crimes in Hollywood-style sequences, they force viewers to confront the seductive nature of violence. Director Joshua Oppenheimer allows reality and fiction to coexist, provoking emotional and intellectual discomfort. The viewer is not just watching a film but they are engaging with real-world trauma through the lens of cinematic art. The same blurring happens in fictionalized narratives. *Drishyam* presents a family man who commits an elaborate cover-up to protect his daughter. The film's success lies in its moral ambiguity. Is he a criminal or a father doing what he must? Audiences cheer for him, even as he manipulates evidence and deceives law enforcement. This duality reflects society's complex relationship with crime, where empathy often outweighs legality.

The *Dexter* series further complicates these boundaries. Based on real-life inspirations such as the Shradha Walkar murder, the show is criticized that it normalizes a serial killer protagonist, making viewers complicit in his actions. This emotional alignment with criminals can desensitize audiences to violence or shift

¹⁸⁸ *GoodFellas* (1990), Martin Scorsese, Warner Bros

¹⁸⁹ *Breaking Bad* (2008), Vince Gilligan, High Bridge Entertainment

moral compasses subtly. Academic works like Steni Simon's *Reely Really Gory*¹⁹⁰ and Oshiki Bansal's criminological studies¹⁹¹ argue that crime films often present 'performative crime' not to document reality but to narrativize it, and to emotionalize it. However, this is not necessarily a flaw. It opens space for critique and artistic exploration.

Yet, the ethical challenge remains. When does representation become exploitation? Can depicting trauma risk re-traumatization? These questions are central to the evolving discourse on cinematic ethics. Crime cinema is not merely a mirror; it is a distorting lens that reveals, conceals, and constructs social narratives. It can both confront and normalize violence. This contradiction makes it a vital field of inquiry for sociologists, legal theorists, and cultural critics. A key question arises hereby: what happens when crime becomes an aesthetic rather than an ethical problem?

Take *Munnabhai MBBS* for instance. Its comic approach to academic fraud opens room to critique in educational elitism. But does it also unintentionally trivialize the crime. When crime becomes laughable, does that reduce its moral weight? These are the "grey area" films that blend humor with deviance. The area underexplored is how such films influence marginalized groups. For example, *Hindi Medium* not only discusses class but brings to light the systemic discrimination faced by those trying to "fit in." It implicitly critiques how laws and policies disproportionately affect the underprivileged, even in the name of merit. Another moral ambiguity arises in the audience's emotional investment. Why do we cheer for a Dexter? Or sympathize with Mohanlal's character in *Drishyam*? Is it because these characters are smarter than the law? Or is it a subconscious protest against a legal system the society collectively find flawed?

Moreover, cinema also reflects gendered interpretations of crime. Female perpetrators or victims are often hyper-sexualized or infantilized, rarely treated as full subjects. Exploring the representation of gender in crime cinema opens crucial feminist and legal discussions. Films like *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*¹⁹² or *Kahaani*¹⁹³ are examples to this.

The ambiguity in crime films creates a fertile space for dialectic thinking. Future. This transforms cinema from leisure into pedagogy.

Chapter 4

Legal Discourse and Public Perception – Crime Films Shaping Legal Consciousness

Crime films do more than entertain. They shape the very ways in which society understand law, justice, and punishment. The portrayal of police, courts, and legal procedures in cinema often simplifies or sometimes dramatizes real-life complexities. This has a direct effect on public expectations and legal culture. For example, courtroom dramas often present quick, dramatic verdicts, reinforcing the idea that truth is always discoverable and justice is always served. In reality, legal systems are slow, bureaucratic, and imperfect. But films like *Drishyam* subvert this trope, showing how justice may be manipulated, delayed, or even subverted entirely in pursuit of moral outcomes.

Academic fraud in *Munnabhai MBBS* highlights systemic failures where crime is woven into institutional practices. The light hearted narrative doesn't diminish the critique. It amplifies it through irony and satire. Films impact legal literacy. Audience unfamiliar with legal terms, processes, or rights often base their understanding on what they see on screen. This cinematic legal knowledge can influence jury decisions, public opinion on criminal trials, and even political advocacy.

¹⁹⁰ Steni Simon, 'Reely Really Gory : The connection between cinema and crime', *The New Indian Express*, (23 November 2022)

¹⁹¹ Oshiki Bansal, 'All About Criminology and criminal Psychology', *iPleaders*, (2 November 2021)

¹⁹² *The Girl With The dragon Tattoo* (2011), David Fincher, Columbia Pictures

¹⁹³ *Kahaani* (2012), Sujoy Ghosh Boundscript Motion Pictures

Prashant Sonkar's Unveiling the Silver Screen¹⁹⁴ and R. Lindsey's studies in A Cinematic History of Crime¹⁹⁵ show that law and cinema exist in a dynamic feedback loop. Judges, lawmakers, and legal scholars increasingly use film as a pedagogical tool. Cinema becomes a parallel form of legal discourse that is emotionally potent, widely accessible, and culturally resonant. Even international jurisprudence is not immune. Films like *The Look of Silence*¹⁹⁶ and *The Act of Killing* were screened at human rights forums and played a role in reopening legal investigations in Indonesia. Cinema, in this sense, becomes an agent of justice, truth-telling, and advocacy.

Law is often viewed as rigid, but cinema reveals its fluid edges. Through hypothetical legal situations, moral dilemmas, and courtroom dramas, cinema functions as an imaginative extension of the law itself. Creating structured framework would help in analyzing how legal processes are dramatized, what liberties are taken, and what truths are revealed. One overlooked dimension is how cinema reflects the emotional texture of the law, the fear of unjust accusation, the trauma of surviving crime, the frustration with bureaucracy. Films like *Drishyam* emotionally map the subjective experience of legal entanglement. Legal discourse needs to make space for this affective dimension.

The repetitive theme of failed justice in Indian films (e.g., vigilante movies or encounter killings) may desensitize viewers or legitimize extrajudicial solutions. Is this artistic license or a subtle critique of the legal machinery? There is a huge impact of such narratives on public trust in the judiciary. The misrepresentation of legal procedures in films where lawyers always "win" with dramatic flair, can misinform the public. Yet, these distortions also reflect what people

wish law could be: fast, fair, and emotionally satisfying. This aspiration is worth studying. It shows a gap between legal reality and public desire.

Cinema also builds legal imagination by dramatizing legal dilemmas rarely addressed in courts, such as moral policing, caste-based prejudice, or the impact of colonial laws. These fictional "case studies" allow us to rethink what justice should look like. Future legal pedagogy might incorporate curated film lists for students to encourage empathy and creative thinking about justice. Bridging legal reasoning with cultural narratives will prepare more humane lawyers, judges, and policymakers.

Chapter 5

Mutual Influence

How Crime Influences Cinema and Cinema Influences Crime

The relationship between crime and cinema is not unidirectional. Crime shapes the themes and aesthetics of cinema, while cinema, influences how crime is committed, perceived, and punished. Films often emerge in response to crime waves or societal fears. The post-9/11 world saw a surge in films about surveillance, terrorism, and state control. Similarly, rising concerns about juvenile delinquency and moral decay in the 1960s influenced films like *A Clockwork Orange*. Crime becomes the raw material from which cinematic narratives are built. Conversely, cinema influences real-world crime. The infamous "Dexter killer" in Canada, Mark Twitchell, modelled his crime after the TV show. The media and psychologists traced his behaviours, diary entries, and methodology directly to episodes of *Dexter*. Similar concerns were raised after the release of *Natural Born Killers*¹⁹⁷ and *Fight Club*¹⁹⁸, which won't be talked about, as viewers mimicked behaviours depicted on screen.

¹⁹⁴ Prashant Sonkar and Manini Srivastava, 'Unveiling the Silver Screen: Exploring the Impact of Movies on Criminal Cases from a Social Learning Perspective' (*International Journal of Formal and Methodical Research*, 25 September 2023)

¹⁹⁵ R. Lindsey, 'A Cinematic History of Crime, Part 1' (*St. Louis Public Library*, 30 April 2024)

¹⁹⁶ *The Look Of silence* (2014), Joshua Oppenheimer, Final Cut for Real

¹⁹⁷ *Natural Born Killers*, (1994), Oliver Stone, Warner Bros

¹⁹⁸ *Fight Club*, (1999), David Fincher, 20th Century Fox

Cultural criminologists like Gordon Dahl and Stefano DellaVigna¹⁹⁹ have investigated how violent films correlate with spikes in aggressive behavior. While causality is debated, the psychological impact of repeated exposure to violence is undeniable especially on adolescents. Hafiza Khadija's research²⁰⁰ explores how cinematic violence reshapes behavioral inhibition, decision-making, and identity formation among youth. *Pink*²⁰¹, though not a crime thriller in the traditional sense, influenced public dialogue and court discussions on consent. Similarly, *Drishyam* prompted debates about legal loopholes and system of forensic evidence in India.

The Influence also plays out through aesthetics. Real-life criminals adopt cinematic styles as fashion, language and rituals. The "gangster culture" in parts of urban India and Latin America borrows heavily from film iconography. Criminals become performers, shaping their identities through cinematic tropes.

Cinema and crime thus exist in a feedback loop each influencing the form, function, and impact of the other. Understanding this interplay is essential for criminologists, legal scholars, educators, and filmmakers alike. The symbiosis between cinema and crime extends beyond representation. Can watching violent films increase aggression? Can they desensitize audiences or even provoke imitation? Research by Gordon Dahl and Stefano DellaVigna suggests temporary reductions in violent crime following the release of violent movies, possibly because potential perpetrators are in theaters. This counters simplistic notions of media influence.

However, fictional depictions can still shape long-term cultural norms. Repeated exposure to certain tropes like corrupt cops, glamorous gangsters or helpless victims can normalize these ideas. On the other hand, real-life crimes

often inspire films, which in turn influence public discourse. The case of Shradha Walkar and its narrative adaptation in media like *Dexter* shows how fiction and reality feed into one another. Ethical questions arise: who controls the narrative, and whose perspective is missing?

One overlooked area is the effect of crime cinema on policy response. Public outcry after films like *Pink* or *Article 15*²⁰² often leads to media debates and legal re-evaluation. Cinema is, thus, not just entertainment but a soft power influencing governance. Another key dimension is youth perception. As noted by Hafiza Khadija and others, cinematic crime can distort adolescent understanding of legality, violence, and success. The rise of true-crime documentaries like *The Look of Silence* and *The Act of Killing* shows how cinema can serve as historical evidence and intervention. These films challenge official narratives, giving voice to victims and exposing systemic injustice. Legal scholars must acknowledge these films as part of the justice-seeking process.

In summary, crime and cinema influence each other cyclically. Crime shapes narratives; narratives, in turn, influence societal and legal perceptions. This loop makes the study of crime cinema not just culturally relevant, but a necessary tool for legal innovation, policy development, and public education.

Conclusion

This research has delved into the multi-layered relationship between crime and cinema, exploring how films are not mere forms of entertainment but powerful cultural texts that shape, reflect, and often complicate our understanding of crime, justice, and society. By studying crime in world cinema ranging from the Belgian mockumentary *Man Bites Dog* to the Indian psychological drama *Drishyam* we have seen how the medium of film operates simultaneously as a mirror of social realities and a canvas for artistic and ideological experimentation.

¹⁹⁹ Gordon B. Dahl and Stefano DellaVigna, 'Does Movie Violence Increase Violent Crime?' (2009) 124 *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 677

²⁰⁰ Hafiza Khadija Azeem, 'Impact of Cinematic Crime (Netflix Series and Movies) on Youth' (Journal of Media and Communication Studies, 2023)

²⁰¹ *Pink*, 2016, Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury, Rising Sun Films

²⁰² *Article 15*, 2019, Anubhav Sinha, Benaras Media Works & Zee Studios

Chapter One traced the historical emergence of crime cinema as a genre and its early moral dilemmas, influenced by social anxieties and legal narratives of the times. The works of prominent directors and films from the 1930s revealed how criminal figures became tragic or cautionary icons in cultural memory.

Chapter Two examined the aesthetic and symbolic techniques filmmakers use to dramatize crime as violence, confession, surveillance, guilt, or justice all stylized to provoke empathy, horror, or introspection. Here, *Clockwork Orange* and *The Act of Killing* demonstrated how violence on screen serves as both critique and spectacle.

Chapter Three addressed how crime narratives reshape cultural consciousness and ethical discourse. Through films like *Munna Bhai MBBS*, *Hindi Medium*, and *Dexter*, we see how cinema can humanize criminals or complicate the boundaries of law, especially in the face of socio-economic pressures or moral ambiguity. These narratives question what it means to be “guilty” or “innocent” in societies where legal and cultural norms are constantly shifting.

Chapter Four explored audience reception and the impact of these films on behaviour, perception, and social discourse. Drawing from empirical studies and criminological research, we saw how cinematic violence may desensitize, influence, or even educate viewers. At the same time, audience interpretation is fluid and contextual as in what provokes imitation in one viewer may prompt critical reflection in another.

Chapter Five extended the analysis to the political economy of crime cinema, situating films within broader structures of power, censorship, capital, and ideology. Crime becomes a commodity, violence a profitable aesthetic, and justice a performative trope. Filmmakers, knowingly or not, engage with existing political systems, sometimes reinforcing dominant ideologies and sometimes subverting them.

What emerges from this interdisciplinary journey is the recognition that cinema and crime are bound together by more than narrative. They interact at the level of form, ideology, politics, and audience imagination. Cinema is not just about depicting crime. It actively produces meaning about crime. It can be used to reinforce stereotypes or to dismantle them, to critique the justice system or to romanticize transgression.

As a researcher and a citizen, I am left with one essential thought; Cinema is not neutral. It is a space of struggle between art and truth, between capital and conscience, between law and justice. Understanding how it engages with crime allows us not just to critique cinema, but to reflect on the society that produces it, consumes it, and is shaped by it.

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