CHAPTER FOUR
Conducting the Research: A Methodological Account

4.1 Introduction
The current chapter sets out the aims and objectives of this study and provides a practical account of the research process, from a further consideration of the theoretical assumptions that underpin the work to an explanation, justification and evaluation of the methods employed. As Kim Schröder and his colleagues have pointed out in *Researching Audiences*, ‘to be reflexive about our methodological practices will help us both to determine the explanatory potential of our research procedures and remind us of the incompleteness and temporariness of our findings, no matter how multiple the methods we use to understand audience and user practices’ (Schröder et al., 2003: 378). This is not to undermine our contributions to the jigsaw puzzle that is our knowledge of media audiences. It is a reminder that research is always conducted from a particular standpoint, under specific circumstances, and that both have an influence on what can be achieved at any given time.

This chapter considers the general stages of designing and conducting the study in an attempt to arrive at the kind of reflective account that Schröder et al. allude to. It is also necessary in the light of questions of validity and reliability, which remain contested issues within the field of qualitative inquiry. My own role as a researcher is bound up in the study’s decision-making processes. Thus, instead of distancing myself from my practices by way of writing, my research experience forms part of this account. Following on from the largely theoretical discussion of discourse analysis in the previous chapter, I provide an overview of the different stages of gathering and analysing the body of qualitative material. Putting emphasis on the specific analytic parameters here hopefully paves the way for a more focused discussion of patterns and relations in the remainder of the thesis.

As will be clear from what follows, qualitative audience research can be messy, partly because of the wealth of gathered material, but mostly because there
is no prescribed way of conducting it. One of the biggest challenges of this study has been, firstly, to recognise this difficulty and, secondly, to try and carefully and reflectively introduce some kind of system into the ‘mess’. At times, this was paralysing because it meant that I began to doubt every step or decision I took along the way. Yet, whilst the course of this study shows a series of trials and errors as a result, they have been an important part of the procedure and best illustrate the thought processes that went into a multi-faceted methodology.

4.2 In the Beginning...

As established in Chapter Two, this study evolved out of a concern with previous conceptualisation of media-related fear that saw the emotion as singular, negative, distinctive, ‘measurable’, and media-induced. In order to explore the possible different meanings and dimensions of the media/fear relationship, it was necessary to develop a qualitative approach, which would neither pre-conceptualise ‘fear’ nor second-guess the kind of media material that was relevant to the relationship between fear and the media (see Buckingham, 1996). For example, while horror, thrillers or the news immediately sprang to mind as potentially ‘frightening’ material, I wondered whether other programmes, such as talk shows, health magazines or soap operas, were equally able to evoke, touch, or help us deal with certain fears. Engaging viewers in thought and conversations about both their viewing practices and their emotional responses to the media was deemed essential to getting a better understanding of their meaning-making worlds.

In order to explore ‘fear’ within a complex socio-cultural framework, I set out to speak to different generations of viewers in Germany and the United Kingdom. Having grown up in these two media environments, I was aware of (dis)similarities in programming and media-related public debates, which I thought made a cross-national comparison fruitful. I also partly sought to build upon earlier audience studies that had begun to understand the importance of media use as a family experience, or as happening within the daily routines of family life (see, e.g., Lull, 1990; Morley, 1986). At the same time, I was hesitant about putting an a priori
emphasis on family units and the context of family viewing. While Morley’s move away from approaching the family as a collection of individuals (1986: 24) was certainly a significant one at the time of his research, my encounter with multi-television-set households suggested that the aspect of social viewing, in the sense that families would gather in front of the communal television set, was not always a given. This is not to say group viewing had ceased to exist entirely but that choices were made between watching a programme in the company of other family members or in the privacy of one’s room.

Keeping the family unit in mind, I thus sought to pay particular attention to differences and interrelations between generational viewing tastes and practices in the light of the overall focus on articulations of ‘fear’. As will become clear in the course of the thesis, the ‘social’ in social viewing did not have to imply the physical presence of actual audience members. It also increasingly involved those audiences that were ‘imagined’ during encounters with media material, as well as the impact such thoughts had on participants’ individual responses and experiences. In the light of the literature and my interest in nations and generations, I proposed six organising questions to guide this research:

- What kinds of fears (or worries) might be media-related?
- How are media-related fears connected to people’s wider understanding of and actions within the world?
- If one puts a working distinction between personal fears, fears for friends/relatives, and general anxieties, how far are these evidenced in the different generations?
- Are there any distinctive generational fears?
- What does it mean for certain fears to be welcome or unwelcome to the generations?
- In what ways might the specific media environments of Germany and the UK affect the ecology of fear?
In order to explore these questions, I chose to generate talk in the form of longitudinal viewing diaries/ledgers, open-ended questionnaires and in-depth interviews from three-generational families in Aberystwyth and Swansea, as well as in my German home town, Ketsch, and a nearby city, Mannheim. Originally, it was anticipated that families in both countries would record their viewing and responses simultaneously over the period of six months. During the initial stages of designing the study, I also felt it was important to include small-town and city perspectives in my sample of participants. Although it was clear that my study would not result in representative findings and thus would not allow for wide-reaching conclusions regarding geographical factors, I nevertheless deemed it relevant to explore the ways in which participants chose to make sense of their diverse immediate surroundings. Ketsch and Aberystwyth and Mannheim with its twin city Swansea were comparable in size and population and, further, seemed to be obvious choices for practical and financial reasons. Unfortunately, recruitment difficulties soon ensued, and I had to settle for access rather than theoretical sampling.

Through the course of the research, the cross-national and cross-generational aspects of this study became increasingly problematic, not only due to recruitment difficulties but also, later on in the study, due to a relative lack of distinct overall patterns (or differences) amongst national and generational groupings. As a result, the focus of this study shifted somewhat towards an investigation of shared themes and issues which at times include national or generational markers or traces (see 4.3.4). In the following, I review the nature and purposes of the individual methods employed, before turning my attention to the recruitment process and an eventual selection and analysis of material.

4.3 Gathering Material

4.3.1 Research Tools: Diaries and Open-Ended Questionnaires

The diary has in the past met with mixed responses within audience research, having originated as a (not always wholly accurate and reliable) tool for the
measurement of viewing tastes and behaviours in ratings research (see Ang, 1991). Whilst diaries and personal correspondence have gained refreshed interest as documents in historical audience research – for instance in Jonathan Rose’s (2001) study on the reading experiences of the British working class – books on audience and reception methodology largely fail to adequately incorporate and assess diaries as possible researcher-induced tools for data collection. This is in spite of the fact that there have been at least two particularly successful and insightful audience studies which have used varieties of viewing diaries for their purposes. The first is by David Gauntlett and Annette Hill (1999) who based their findings in TV Living on a five-year audience tracking study. The second is Sara Bragg and David Buckingham’s (2004) more recent investigation of young people’s take on sex and the media, in which blank diaries were used creatively as scrapbooks.

Yet, besides these two useful exceptions, when initially researching the diary method for this study, I found myself drawn to other social research disciplines which had given the tool more thought and credit than had generally been the case within audience studies. In a study on the needs and demands of primary health care, Heather Elliott for instance employed diaries, linked with in-depth interviews, over a three-week period in autumn 1996 (Elliott, 1997). In her reflections, Elliott reasons that the conjunction of research tools, such as the ‘diary-interview method’ (established by Zimmerman and Wieder in 1977) enabled participants to choose their preferred modes of response. Those who found it difficult to express themselves in diaries could do so during the interviews, and vice versa. Likewise, the diary method captured diarists’ own priorities and was thus particularly participant-led, giving rise to unexpected issues which could be probed and discussed in subsequent interviews. For Elliott, the research process was essential in putting topics into everyday, biographical contexts. The diary as a self-reflective act was considered rewarding, especially since it helped to create an understanding of what was often ‘taken for granted’ and made visible the invisible, the ordinary.¹

Linked to this consideration of the diary as a particularly participant-led, reflective and at the same time contemporaneous mode of data collection is the
notion that it produces a different kind of talk, or ‘knowledge’, than other modes of articulation. Teresa Belton, in her study of television’s influence on children’s imagination, makes a link to Michael Polanyi’s concept of the ‘tacit dimension’, which the scientist and philosopher first discussed in his book *Personal Knowledge* in 1958. ‘Polanyi’, Bolton writes, ‘believes that what we know but cannot tell may […] be communicated or displayed by means other than verbal accounts; writing can be such a channel’ (2000: 631). The researcher refers to ‘creative writing’ here. Her project was concerned with the analysis of children’s short stories as a less direct, less survey-based study of audience responses.² In my view, the diary, though researcher-induced and solicited, enabled a similar process by which participants, young and old, could draw upon various registers of ‘knowledge’, experience or emotion, than the ones used in in-depth interviews or focus group conversations.

My hope was that the use of individual diaries over a longer period of time would enable even more modes of thought and articulation. And further, that it might invoke the kinds of personal and intimate ‘voices’ that Buckingham and Bragg had aimed for in their research on young people’s views on issues of love, sex and relationships in the media (2004). Other advantages of the use of diaries over time were the ability to monitor changes in responses, in the sense that participants might review earlier emotional entries over time and, if appropriate, evaluate them in a new light. The idea was that participants may use diaries as ‘ledgers’ rather than ‘journals’, following a distinction made by Geraldine Francis (1998), again in a consideration of diaries within health research. While a journal is kept on a daily basis, ledger entries are only made when a specific event occurs. In the case of my study, I was keen to hear from participants whenever they felt something on film or television had caused or touched upon fears or worries.

Although the comparative and longitudinal nature of the viewing diaries was problematised by recruitment difficulties, which resulted in a change of time frames for the collection of material, they still fulfilled two main tasks in this study: firstly, the diaries served as rough viewing logs for those participants who preferred recording their viewing instances instead of highlighting them in their TV
magazines or newspapers and, secondly, they gave participants the opportunity to make a note of any thoughts or feelings of fear or anxiety they might have had after watching a specific film or programme. Participants were invited to also write about instances which only reminded them of fears or worries, and they were asked what in the film/programme had evoked these thoughts or emotions, whether the experiences were largely positive or negative, or whether participants consciously avoided watching a certain film or programme because they thought it might bother them. Although I had offered families the chance to e-mail me at regular intervals instead of keeping a hardcopy diary, the idea of having an actual book to work with appealed to most respondents, particularly those less inclined to use the internet. Participants were provided with lined A5 notebooks which had the overall ‘purposes’ of the diary spelt out on their first pages (see Appendix B, p. 311). Diaries were distinguished by colour, and each participant received a differently-coloured pen to go with them.

Also included in the diaries were some open-ended questions, which participants could either answer at the beginning of the study, as most of them did, or further towards its end. These questions were concerned with participants’ viewing preferences, past moments of fear-related viewing, and participants’ personal fears and everyday worries. Although I had intended some follow-up questions in the course of the six months of data collection, I eventually refrained from putting additional demands on participants. The diaries thus included just nine questions:

1. Which are your favourite television programmes, and why?
2. What kinds of television programmes do you dislike, and why?
3. Which are your favourite films, and why?
4. Are there any films you dislike? Can you tell me why?
5. Can you put into words what you would consider as your personal fears?
6. Are there any things you worry about on a day-to-day basis?
7. How do you deal with frightening moments?
8. When was the last time you experienced what you would describe as fearful feelings when watching a film/programme? Can you describe your experience?

9. What do you normally do when a programme scares or frightens you?

Asking informants for their viewing preferences, their likes and dislikes, was not to suggest that given preferences and actual viewing behaviour automatically coincided. As has been reported by several audience researchers, among them David Morley in his exploration of family viewing, audiences do not always watch what they want to watch. Often their viewing choices are subject to social contexts, to group decisions or to whoever dominates the remote control in any given household or viewing situation (see Morley, 1986: 18f). Yet knowing what participants chose to present as favourite or avoided media material would help me to identify taste categories, test possible contradictions, and create conversation entries during interviews.

The diaries and questionnaires were discussed with participants at introductory meetings (see participant recruitment section below) in order to ensure that questions were understood. One question (Q5) repeatedly caused confusion. Often participants were unsure whether ‘personal fears’ related to their viewing (I had made a working distinction between the two), or they thought ‘fear’ was such a strong word that they found it difficult to place within the context of everyday life. In other words, they saw fearful situations in real life as out of the ordinary. Some respondents discussed the difference between ‘knowledge’ and ‘fear’, in the sense that one knows bad things happen in the world, but that it would be ludicrous to be in a constant state of fear as a result of that knowledge. Hence, while not all of the questions fully ‘worked’ in the eyes of participants, the issues they raised certainly resurfaced as important points of conversation in the remainder of the study.

The diary material then formed the basis for follow-up individual or group interviews, depending on participants’ preferences (see below). One final
questionnaire was sent to families at the end of their participation. It included just three sets of questions:

1. What was it like to take part in this project? Which bits did you enjoy, and what did you perhaps find difficult to do?
2. Is there anything else you’d like to comment on?
3. Finally, please could you say a few words describing yourself as a person?

I had been advised to avoid direct socio-demographic questions, so as not to run the risk of appearing to try to generalise within a non-representative context. Yet, since I felt an idea of age and occupation could be important in making sense of participants’ responses, the purpose of the final question was to unobtrusively gather information about any such details participants were happy to provide. This did not always ‘work’ (I eventually elicited some socio-demographic information during informal conversations), but the question usefully added to the picture respondents painted of themselves within the overall context of the study.

On reflection, the diary method only worked within limits. Particularly in the German context, where diaries were eventually kept for the period of six months (rather than one month, as in the UK), participants soon grew tired of recording their viewing experiences. Especially when diaries were used as viewing logs, family members felt their writing turned into a repetitive burden. The introductory prompt, while purposefully broad to allow for a participant-led approach, caused insecurities, with participants feeling unsure about what it was I wanted them to record. I was torn between rephrasing what I was interested in, thereby risking more leading questions, and encouraging respondents to trust their own interpretation of what was relevant, reassuring them that nothing they could write was ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. As a result, some participants chose to write about any emotional responses to particular films and programmes, any general views they had on them (e.g. quality or subject matter), or they simply refrained from making any additional observations (either because no ‘fear’-related issues came up, or because they were unsure what to write). The diaries played an important role as
bases for participant interviews (‘you wrote..., can you tell me more about this?’), as well as additional sources of information when making sense of interview transcripts. Yet, because of the above discrepancies in participants’ ledger use, I decided against systematically including them in the eventual analysis.

4.3.2 Research Tools: Semi-Structured Interviews

The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to discuss in more depth the issues that had been raised in individual participant diaries, as well as those generic subject areas that had emerged during earlier conversations with participants and, to some degree, in the light of the literature discussed in Chapter Two. The method was chosen in order to produce talk about media relations in what Schrøder et al. have called a ‘discursive realist’ approach to reception studies, ‘which has abandoned the notion of essential and permanent truth in social and cultural affairs [and, as such, does] not see the interview as a device for digging out the core of the informant's experience, but rather as a catalyst for activating the palette of discursive repertoires available to [them]’ (2003: 148, my italics). At the same time, as discussed in the previous chapter, my concern with participants’ reflections on emotional responses also meant that I thought it possible to make meaningful links between such discursive constructs and people’s ‘making sense of the world’.

In the case of the German material, I collected two (out of six) months’ worth of diary entries in the first instance. These were translated into English for ease of discussing the material with my supervisors, and then formed the basis of an interview schedule that would allow participants to expand on their initial entries. Interviews took place in the final month of data collection, which enabled me to take subsequent diary entries into account.

In addition to questions that were directly tailored to individual diaries, each participant was asked to elaborate on their answer to Q8, the question about past fearful media encounters. With regard to the generic areas of investigation, the interview schedule included open-ended question about ‘Krimi’ viewing (these played more of a role in the German context than their equivalents, crime
stories/murder mysteries, in the UK), horror films, the news, and participants’ favourite programmes, all of which directly emerged as significant from the diaries. The section on horror films for instance included questions about participants’ definitions or understandings of horror and, if they could remember the last time they watched a horror film, what feelings it had evoked in them. I also asked whether they would describe themselves as particularly prone to fearful responses to horror, and why. A final, slightly provocative question asked for their views on the kinds of people they thought sought out and enjoyed horror films. The reasoning behind this third-person question was to indirectly explore participants’ own stance towards the genre, partly because I had sensed some rejections of either the genre or the emotional responses associated with it during initial conversations. Although the question ran the risk of being too leading, it turned out to be particularly fruitful across the range of viewers who liked, hated or felt indifferent towards horror.

Beyond genre-specific questions, there were also a number of questions about participants’ understanding of the media in relation to the ‘real’ world. These were partly a result of diary entries, which had suggested differences in kinds and consequences of emotional responses depending on particular reality statuses. They were moreover relevant in the light of the existing literature on media-related fears, which had failed to convincingly explain how cultivation was for instance seen to work, whether audiences were prone to mixing up fictional and factual information over the course of time, or whether character identification and a ‘suspension of disbelief’ in fact functioned to blur boundaries.

All interviewees were thus invited to talk about the differences and similarities they saw between the ‘world’ we live in and that presented on film and television. Further, they were asked to discuss whether parallels or distinctions were in any way important to them, and why, and whether they would distinguish between fearful feelings in real life and those experienced while viewing a film or programme. Based on initial participant conversations, I also included a question regarding the ‘entertainment’ factor of film and television. More precisely, I told
participants that some people had spoken of film and TV as pure entertainment and that, to them, fearful responses were unfounded because of this. Again, the provocative nature of this question offered the opportunity for participants to agree or disagree, with an option to elaborate on their argument.  

The UK interview schedule was equally based on individuals’ diary entries, and even though crime stories or murder mysteries did not play quite the same role in the British context, the remaining overall conversation topics were so similar that the German schedule was adopted and some murder mystery questions included for reasons of completeness. In both countries, most interviews were conducted at the families’ homes so as to, firstly, prevent any additional inconvenience for participants and, secondly, make sure respondents felt relatively comfortable in their surroundings. Where participants lived too far away for me to visit them in person, individual phone interviews were arranged and recorded. Although this inhibited me from observing interviewees’ body language or, equally importantly, from getting an idea of their homes and general life circumstances, most of the phone interviews turned out to be rather productive. Unlike face-to-face interaction, phone conversations left little room for shyness or awkwardness, either on the side of the researcher or that of the researched. On the other hand, it was often difficult for me to interpret silences. At times, I simply could not tell whether they derived from thought processes or distractions. The phone interviews comprised 7 out of 19 interviews in the UK. All German interviews, a total of 13, were conducted in person.

Most face-to-face interviews were carried out while sitting in participants’ living rooms or around a dining room table, in order to guarantee easy tape-recording and an adequate sound quality. It was up to the members of each family to decide whether they wanted to be interviewed individually or in groups of two to four. While differences between individual and group interviews inevitably changed the nature of conversations, I felt it was most important to create an atmosphere in which participants were at ease. For the main part, respondents told me about their preferences. In one or two cases, I could not help but wonder
whether some of the younger participants would have made their wishes clear to their parents; the decision was made almost entirely by the parents who stressed their family ‘had no secrets’ between one another. Despite my concerns, where I could not intervene by directly and privately inquiring about the teenagers’ needs, I had to accept the parents’ decisions.

Much has been written about the different functions and dynamics of individual versus (focus) group interviews (see, for example, Bryman, 2001; Kitzinger, 1994; Kvale, 1996; Morgan, 1997; Schröder et al., 2001; Wilkinson, 2004). Both are designed to elicit participant-oriented talk about more or less broadly defined topics, but while the former is seen to concentrate on personal and ‘private’ reflection, the latter permits a variety of viewpoints or voices (some stronger or louder than others), or alternatively, illustrates how respondents might arrive at shared meanings. Group interviews are often chosen to stimulate the kinds of communal productions of meaning that occur in everyday conversations, while critics argue that the performative nature of group talk only ever allows an analysis of interpersonal communication, rather than of the topics at stake (see, for example, Gauntlett, 2007). In the case of my own study, group size certainly turned out to be an issue, in the sense that I felt I got a better insight into people’s views and experiences when speaking to them individually or in couples. In fact, speaking to two family members at a time was usually the best option, particularly if they belonged to the same generation. The encounter was still relatively intimate, while the presence of the second family member was a useful ‘validation’ of individuals’ accounts. Conversations often flowed more freely, and participants would engage each other in conversation, rather than merely responding to my questions. In the case of one German interview, which I conducted with both the parents and their two teenage daughters, individual views became very fragmented, and I did not feel I got to know family members as well as was the case with some of the other interviews. Although similarities between interviews (e.g. the choice of only coupled or individual interviews) would have smoothed the analytic process, I reasoned that while the different set-ups provided me with different kinds of
knowledge, it was knowledge nonetheless. A solution was to bear interview circumstances in mind when drawing wider conclusions about the gathered material.

All interviews were between 30 and 90 minutes long. They were transcribed according to some general guidelines, emphasising argumentation rather than interactional detail. While I made a note of pauses, laughter, and general intonation, I decided against the scrutiny of a Jeffersonian transcript, since I was not concerned with the intricacies of turn-taking per se. At the same time, I felt it was important to produce as accurate a representation of the conversation as possible. My initial attempt to translate all German interviews into English was not only unrealistic in the light of time constraints, it also ran the risk of misrepresenting the original record, due to differences in syntax between English and German (see 4.3.4 for details).

While the sound quality of most interview recordings was reasonable, I had to discard four of the British interviews due to inadequate equipment. In the end, the wealth of material forced me to further reduce the number of interviews for analysis. The choice of material will be explained shortly.

4.3.3 The Search for Participants and its Impact on Research Tools

For a number of reasons discussed above, the period for general data collection was initially set for six months. I sought to provide a bit more than a snapshot account of audience responses, and I was particularly interested in the dynamics between contemporaneous reports of emotional responses and those which were made after the passing of time. However, perhaps unsurprisingly, the high demand this decision put on families in terms of effort and duration of participation, as well as the particular challenges of finding three generations of one family within immediate surroundings of each other, created recruitment difficulties right from the start. In the case of Germany, these were eventually overcome. In the UK, I had ultimately to change the parameters of data collection in order to attract three-generation families to the project (and, in two cases, even opted for two-generation
compromises instead). In both countries, I made use of a number of different
recruitment avenues from April 2005. As mentioned above, geographical
considerations had to give way to access. In the end, my main recruitment criteria
consisted of relatively local three-generation families whose youngest generation
was between 10 and 16 years of age, or thereabout. Younger children, I felt, would
not have been in the position to make use of the diaries in quite the way I had
proposed, and an inclusion of additional creative methods of data collection was not
within the scope of the study. At home, in Germany, I e-mailed friends, relatives
and acquaintances, contacted my former secondary school and sent out recruitment
letters to parents in selected classes at a further secondary school in the region.

Eventually, four German three-generational families confirmed their
participation. Three out of the four families lived in my hometown, Ketsch (near
Heidelberg/Mannheim); the fourth, Family A, was partly resident in a neighbouring
town, Brühl (parents and teenagers), and partly in a larger city nearby,
Ludwigshafen (grandparents). In total, I spoke to 22 participants in Germany,
including grandparents in their sixties and seventies, parents and aunts in their
forties, and teenage children: The ‘Auer’ family (Family A) consisted of one set of
grandparents, parents, son and daughter (aged 16 and 19). The ‘Beck’ family
included grandparents, one mother (44), her daughter (13), and the mother’s sister
(40). Only three members of the ‘Conrad’ family took part, grandmother, mother,
and a 15-year-old daughter. And finally, I spoke to eight members of the ‘Dieterle’
family – one grandfather, parents, two daughters (aged 16 and 17), as well as the
mother’s sister (43) and her two daughters (aged 12 and 18). The overrepresentation
of female participants is partly coincidental and partly explicable through the nature
of the study. In some cases, families happened to comprise of more women than
men. In other cases, male relatives were reluctant to take part, mainly giving time
constraints or the lack of ‘fear’ or interest as their reasons, if they gave any at all.

Families were initially provided with a lengthy introductory letter
concerning the purposes of the study, as well as their roles within it. Where
possible, I organised a meeting with all or most family members in order to discuss
details and answer any questions they might have in advance of the project. In some cases, a meeting or phone conversation with only one or two members of a family had to suffice, and information was passed on to others. The German material was gathered in the form of viewing diaries and open-ended questionnaires between June and November 2005, with in-depth interviews conducted towards the end of the six-month period, in November.

In Wales, recruitment again involved making use of personal contacts, such as friends and colleagues. In order to reach a wider set of people, I posted calls for participants on Aberystwyth and Swansea Universities’ ‘Weekly E-mails’, put up posters and flyers around campus and in local shops, and used established contacts in a local secondary school, all with the intention of snowballing further. The Cambrian News, a weekly newspaper for Aberystwyth and surrounding areas, published a call for participants in their history section, whilst the BBC studio for Mid Wales was so kind as to post a message on their ‘Ask a Local’ website. Unfortunately, the only British family who confirmed their participation early on, and who started keeping diaries from June 2005 onwards, had to withdraw due to illness and a family bereavement.

It almost took another year and a change of plan before British participants could be recruited. Eventually, five families agreed to keep diaries for a one-month period in May 2006, and were interviewed during the subsequent summer months (July and August). Most parents and teenagers were based in Aberystwyth and surrounding areas, but the geographical boundaries could not be sustained for all relatives, which is why I had to opt for some phone conversations with family members living outside of Aberystwyth (including Devon, Liverpool and Milton Keynes). The project was partly saved by members of staff at Aberystwyth University who eventually took pity on me and convinced their families to take part. In spite of my attempts to reach participants from wider class sections, this meant that many informants belonged to a well-educated middle class. In fact, all participants in Germany and the UK can broadly be described as white middle-
class, though it became clear during conversations that some family members, particularly the older generations, had originated from working class backgrounds.

In total, I gathered material from 26 participants across five British families only three of which were strictly speaking three-generational. The ‘Andersons’ comprised of six participants, grandparents in their 70s, parents in their 40s, a son and daughter, (aged 19 and 17). The ‘Bennett’ family had a similar set-up, though their daughter and son were considerably younger (13 and 9). The ‘Cowies’ were only two-generational, with parents and two teenage sons (14 and 16); the father’s older sister also took part with her husband and son. The ‘Davies’ family consisted of three: a grandmother in her late 60s, a mother in her early 40s, and a son, aged 14. And finally, the ‘Eagletons’, again not strictly speaking a three-generational family, included two mothers, a 12-year-old daughter, and an uncle in his early 60s who qualified through his age, even though he had not in fact any grandchildren of his own.

Due to the wealth of material (I conducted 13 interviews in Germany, 19 in the UK), technical difficulties with four of the British interviews and general time constraints during the transcription process, I had to make a selection of twenty interviews (i.e. ten interviews and seventeen participants from each country) for further analytic consideration. The selection process sought to find relative cross-matches in terms of family set-ups and kinds of interviews (individual versus group), as shown in the tables below. The first table shows family units. Interviews are marked by Roman numbers (e.g. Dorothee and Sascha Auer were interviewed together, G-IV, as were Nina and Matt Anderson, UK-XV):

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Teens</td>
<td>Dorothee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sascha (IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Monika</td>
<td>Celia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Florian (XII)</td>
<td>Edwin (XIV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparents</td>
<td>Irma</td>
<td>Rachel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helmut (XIII)</td>
<td>Jim (XVI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Teens</td>
<td>Julia (V)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Accordingly, the analysis was based on interviews with twelve teenagers, fourteen parents (including two aunts) and eight grandparents. 22 participants were female; only 12 were male. The ‘kinds’ of interviews were distributed across the generations as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.1 Family Units Across Countries</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G-IV</td>
<td>UK-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-VI (individual)</td>
<td>UK-XV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-VII (individual)</td>
<td>UK-XI (individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-XII</td>
<td>UK-XIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenagers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-III</td>
<td>UK-XIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-V</td>
<td>UK-XVII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-II (individual)</td>
<td>UK-IX (individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-VIII (individual)</td>
<td>UK-XVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-IX (individual)</td>
<td>UK-XVIII (individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-XIII</td>
<td>UK-XIX (individual)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Interview Selection
4.3.4 The Cross-National Aspect: Translation Issues and Comparability

As noted above, the cross-national dimensions of this study partly derived from opportunism. With my family still living in Germany, it was possible for me to travel back and forth between home and my current country of residence, Wales, at relatively low cost and effort. I spoke the language and was familiar with the German media landscape. Moreover, I sensed there were differences between the British and German cultural context and the media’s role within it. My impression as a viewer in both countries – not, I must add, as a researcher, since I had no systematic evidence for my claims – was that the British media appeared on the whole more ‘scare-mongering’ (for the lack of a better term) than its German equivalent. An example of this is the issue of paedophilia which had noticeably changed the way I thought about children, childhood, and ‘strange men’, seemingly ever since I entered the country in the year 2000. In hindsight, it is possible discourses of paedophilia began to intensify in Germany at the same time, and I was simply out of reach of the everyday changes in media output. In any case, I felt that a comparison between audience responses in the two countries could be instructive.

Since my initial decision to conduct this study across generations and nations, I more than once regretted my choice, both for practical and theoretical reasons. Practically, issues of translation and variation in material turned out to be considerably more challenging than anticipated. Even though German is my mother tongue, I was more accustomed to conducting interviews through the medium of English, probably because I had always studied (and thus acquired my interviewing skills) in the UK. Translating the interview schedule from my initial discussions with supervisors into a German version was not straightforward; it took some time and the help of German friends and family until my questions were as clear (and still informal) as their English originals. Translation issues continued after the gathering of material. I was torn between providing literal and figurative translations of terms and expressions, often opting for both (see transcription code). In some cases, I had to concede that words could not be translated unambiguously. For instance, the German noun ‘Spannung’ can mean ‘tension’ or ‘suspense’, while
its adjective, ‘spannend’, can stand for ‘exciting’ or ‘suspenseful’. Since it was a purpose of this thesis to map kinds of fear or related emotional responses, I had to interpret what was meant within the context of individual interviews. In order for (German-speaking) readers to pass informed judgement on my interpretations, individual excerpts from the original material, including pauses and turn-taking details, are available in Appendix E (pp. 477-87).

In terms of theoretical considerations, I found it difficult to assess what kinds of claims I could make about country-specific aspects. Sonia Livingstone warns of the dangers of comparing ‘apples and oranges’ in cross-national media research (2003: 480). Further, she notes a dilemma of searching for differences or similarities between countries; the latter appears unimaginative, the former ‘only serves to exacerbate national stereotypes, overstating internal homogeneity while underplaying heterogeneity, ambiguity and borderline phenomena’ (ibid: 479). Although my study is non-representative, I have found myself falling into the trap of making quasi-quantitative generalisations in dealing with the material. One study which has helped me tackle this problem is Maya Götz et al.’s Media and the Make-Believe Worlds of Children (2005), which presents findings about the fantasy worlds of children from Germany, Israel, South Korea and the US. In their chapter on country-specific observations, the researchers put forward the notion of ‘cultural traces’, rather than ‘cultural differences’, since the small nature of their sample, combined with variations in sampling procedure and research contexts, did not allow them to approach the material as in any way ‘typical’ of the cultures under investigation (2005: 150). What they managed to do was to investigate whether children’s fantasy worlds were ‘filtered’ through ‘cultural lenses’ (ibid: 151). This allowed them to contextualise emerging (unique) themes in relation to the individual countries.

In this thesis, I have adopted a similar approach. While observations about specificities and patterns in each country are made in the course of the thesis, these cannot in any way be taken as direct, representative comparisons between the countries, and neither can differences and similarities between generations. In both cases, the aim is to assess whether cultural or generational frames can be applied to
the analysis whilst, at other times, the consideration of ‘universal’ themes has been more appropriate or instructive.\textsuperscript{10} On the whole, I have had to concede that the scope and magnitude of national and generational considerations in this thesis can only be limited and is foremost focused on in the discussion of national and generational ‘traces’ towards the end of Chapter Six and, to an extent, in Chapter Five’s investigation of a cross-match of interviews. Partly, this is the result of the range of questions I sought to answer in the course of the project, such as what kinds of ‘fears’ might be media-related in the first place. Partly, the richness of the gathered material, combined with the relatively small number of inhabitants of individual age groups, made it difficult to discern any distinct age- or country-specific patterns of the kind that would have enabled obvious focal points within the structure of this thesis.

Having said this, comparativeness was an essential analytic framework in my approach to the gathered material, and the discussion of national and generational traces demonstrates that the participant recruitment along those lines has not entirely been in vain. Where useful, I have sought to highlight national, generational and inter-familial markers and discussed their potential significance, albeit in tentative terms.

\subsection*{4.4 The Analysis}

The criticism held against much qualitative research is its apparent failure to provide evidence for a critical and systematic investigation of the research material that does not solely rely on unsystematic illustrations of some well-chosen examples. As Bryman argues,

\begin{quote}
[t]here is a tendency towards an anecdotal approach to the use of data in relation to conclusions or explanations in qualitative research. Brief conversations, snippets from unstructured interviews... are used to provide evidence of a particular contention. There are grounds for disquiet in that the representativeness or generality of these fragments is rarely addressed.
\end{quote}

(Bryman, cited in Silverman, 2001: 34)
The implication is that qualitative researchers all too often fall for the temptation of pulling out from existing material the ‘loudest’ or most interesting themes and patterns, omitting the justifications of their choices, and possibly leaving less clear-cut or ‘thinner’ cases aside.11 This makes it difficult for readers to evaluate the usefulness or validity of particular research findings. Of course, what Bryman fails to address here is the very problem qualitative researchers face regarding the subsequent presentation of materials. It is certainly true that, in addition to the attached risk of ‘anecdotalism’, the tactic of using examples of interviews can be unhelpful if taken out of context, not least since it fails to recognise the possible dynamics and densities of a research interview. Yet the question is how best to convey the complexities of qualitative material without simply replicating the entire source. Surely, the inclusion of illustrative interview fragments is the most straightforward way to do so, since a mere descriptive account devoid of first-hand ‘evidence’ to back up one’s claims is equally futile.

The prevention of both perils of arbitrariness must lie in the attempt to, firstly, ensure a systematic approach to one’s data and, secondly, to be transparent about the different steps of analysis taken. While I have outlined the purposes of the methods employed for the generation of ‘fear’-related talk, I did not enter this research enterprise with a finalised template for analysis. Finding the right tools that would allow me to make sense of participants’ discourse in the light of my knowledge of DP and IPA was part of the endeavour. In the following, I discuss the different steps that went into refining my analytic parameters with respect to one interview, UK-XIV, with the parent generation of the Anderson family, Edwin and Celia. The interview very much served as a testing ground. I chose it because it seemed particularly rich and participant-led. Further, the Andersons’ family set-up closely matched that of the Auer family in Germany. In fact, Chapter Five comprises of a detailed discussion of UK-XIV alongside its German ‘cross-match’, G-XII (with Monika and Florian). First, I consider the analytic process as exemplified through UK-XIV, in order to build a base for the analytic chapters to come.
4.4.1 Revisiting UK-XIV in Transcript Form

The re-familiarisation process with Edwin (47) and Celia’s (45) 90-minute interview began during the transcribing stage and continued during repeated readings of the finished document. I was conscious of the fact that my DP-analytic eye picked up on specific elements of the interview more quickly than on others, such as the ways in which participants actively constructed their emotional selves, and accounted for certain emotional responses. There were immediately a number of topics or themes I saw running through the interview. These were the recurrent, unprompted discussion of media violence and the couple’s dislike thereof, as well as the general sense in which, in Celia and Edwin’s eyes, society was declining in its values and practices. This was manifest in their talk about an apparent loss of childhood, the changing media environment, and people’s changing responses to the media.

Having come across what I considered important themes in the interview, I drew out some excerpts from the transcript in order to discuss them in detail. Thus what began to take shape was an interview portrait, an initial analytic summary of contents, patterns and connections. But in order to minimise the risk of cherry-picking favoured elements, I adopted the strategy of categorising talk into tables. In fact, three tabling procedures followed until I achieved what I considered a functional format. The first was an attempt to find all-encompassing categories of talk, which would provide me with an overview of what had been said (e.g. topics, media subject matters), how it had been talked about (e.g. as clearly defined or as part of a struggle for meaning, as more or less significant for participants), and what other kinds of information were made relevant in relation to that. It was not the kind of content analysis which sought to turn qualitative material into quantitative data by identifying categories of talk or topics and counting their occurrence (compare Wilkinson, 2000). But it was a check for content nevertheless, putting comprehensiveness into the centre of interest, and aiming to disclose any interesting patterns and relations that might not have been evident prior to coding.

The first table consisted of 23 categories of talk, along with descriptions of each category, keywords, topics, media examples, page numbers, and
interconnections between the talk. With the completion of this rather mechanical and time-consuming task came the recognition that the identified categories were either too similar or too different in nature and significance to enable any meaningful analysis. Some talk related to participants’ everyday lives and general fears and worries, while other sections constituted detailed descriptions of specific real-life situations or media encounters. Some categories simply constituted different ‘kinds of talk’, whereas others disclosed what could more readily be described as ‘themes’ running through the conversation.12 There was also a sense that I had to attend to broader levels of talk before considering smaller entities.

Partly influenced by Andrew Tudor’s distinctions between the personal, cultural and social (see Chapter Two), I identified three overall frames of conversation in the interview: the ‘socio-psychological’ (concerning the participant as individual and as social being), ‘socio-cultural’ (the individual in relation to culture, in this case mainly film & TV), and ‘societal’ (regarding society out there, not the self). Within these, I distinguished between eleven kinds of emotion talk in Edwin and Celia’s conversation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-psychological</th>
<th>Socio-cultural</th>
<th>Societal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Generic Fears</td>
<td>3. Mediated Fears</td>
<td>10. Media-Related Concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Life Sentiments</td>
<td>4. Pleasurable Media Emotions</td>
<td>11. Concern about Society as a Whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Unnerving Media Experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Wholly to be Avoided Media Emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Mixed Feelings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Media Projections and Evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Emotive Media Descriptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 Three Overarching Categories

Again, these categories were put into a table, along with illustrations from the transcript (an idea taken from IPA), a note of corresponding subject matters, as well as what I called ‘moderating factors’. These were not so much categories of talk as
they were exemplifications of the resources Celia and Edwin drew on in accounting for experiential or cognitive variation, for example references to ‘reality dimensions’, ‘personal experience’, ‘coping strategies’, and ‘legitimacy dimensions’ (i.e. evaluations of emotional responses as more or less appropriate).

While the second table succeeded in condensing material from 23 to 11 categories and enabling discursive strategies to emerge, it still failed to be fully functional in terms of making visible the interrelations between different categories of talk and moderating factors. Attempts to replicate the approach in the light of other interviews failed, mainly because they led to the development of yet more categories of talk and less room for comparison, which suggested that the eleven categories above were perhaps too interview-specific. Further, the categorisation meant the transcript became fragmented and any sense of the interview as a whole was lost in the approach. I therefore returned to writing an analytic portrait of the interview, this time reading through the transcript and using the left margin to note any media material (or distinct conversation topic) that was talked about, while highlighting in the text any emotional expressions, as well as particular stretches of conversation that suggested something of note was going on in the talk. I subsequently wrote summaries of each of the 19 remaining interviews. Diary material and ‘field’ notes, which I had recorded in the aftermath of each interview, completed the picture where needed.

By writing these comprehensive summaries and immersing myself in the material, I felt I did justice to the complexities of participants’ accounts. At the same time, the interview portraits emphasised many idiosyncratic elements over differences or similarities between the interviews. I had still not found a way of comparing the interviews systematically for parallels, discrepancies, or any other overall patterns. Thus, a third table was employed, which allowed me to assess the topical distribution between nations and generations, along with interrelations between media material and emotional responses. Again, I began with UK Interview XIV. This time I reduced it to relevant stretches of talk and, for ease of managing the material, named them numerically (see Table 4.4, ‘#’). Listed in this
were the kinds of media material referred to (whether this related to talk about film and television in particular, or specific films and programmes), the kinds of discourses or ‘resources’ employed (a mixture, as it turns out, of categories of talk and moderating factors, some of which were renamed or more appropriately defined in view of the remaining corpus of material), as well as the emotions (and sometimes cognitive processes) referred to. Each discourse or resource was again exemplified through quotes from the interview or descriptions of the kinds of arguments employed. If applicable, I also included measures of value judgement or evaluation (abbreviated as ‘Val.’ here), which illustrate whether Celia and Edwin considered the particular media experience as a positive (+) or negative (-) one, or one of mixed feelings (+/−). This, of course, was an abbreviated version of my initial distinction between ‘pleasurable’ and ‘wholly to be avoided’ media experiences, whilst the category of ‘unnerving media experiences’ either fell under the negative (-) or the mixed feeling evaluation (+/-), depending on the overall sentiment expressed. Key words and phrases are highlighted below. References to ‘Change’ and participants’ ‘Age’ were recurring resources the participants drew on in accounting for certain responses or constructing arguments. In relation to these, I added the reference to ‘History’. For reasons of space, other resources of talk and topics are abbreviated. They include issues relating to participants’ construction of self (e.g. emotional dispositions (ED), life sentiments (LS), such as being a parent), as well as references to different aspects of the media material (e.g. media content (MC), production processes (PP)).

This table allowed for a closer consideration of various factors both regarding the interview as a distinct object of investigation and in relation to other interviews and tables within the corpus of material. It thus enabled me to, firstly, gain and provide another (though more indexical) overall sense of the topics and discourses that were made relevant in participants’ conversations, and to explore the significance of specific uses of emotion words, for instance with regard to particular kinds of media material. And secondly, when ‘comparing’ tables across countries and generations, it was now possible to draw out connection points from
the tables, in order to return to particular stretches of talk in the transcripts and more closely and systematically investigate them for the nature and significance of discursive moves and orientations. Below is an extract of the interview table that was created in view of my conversation with Edwin and Celia (abbreviated as E and C, respectively):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Val.</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Quotes and Descriptions</th>
<th>Emotions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>film and TV in general</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>ME/MI, Age, MC: media violence, desensitisation discourse</td>
<td>children don’t react as strongly to violent material</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>ED, LS: being a parent</td>
<td>C: all fears based on children, whereas the kids have different fears</td>
<td>parental fears, frightened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>ED: phobias, MC</td>
<td>E: phobias, ‘the more I looked at TV the more I thought, oh God, I suppose I got more than I thought I had’</td>
<td>phobias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>film and TV in general</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>SM: drug culture, knife culture, RD, MC, ED/LS: being a parent</td>
<td>‘as a parent’ worried about some news, ‘reality far more scary than fiction’, reality stuff gave cause for concern</td>
<td>parental worries, scary, concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(fact vs. fiction)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Angel of Death, See No Evil</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>MI, RD: based on fact, SM: Beverly Allitt, Moors murders</td>
<td>‘stayed with me’, ‘really did unnerve me’</td>
<td>stayed with C, unnerving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>thrillers, mystery (+)</td>
<td></td>
<td>TP, ME/MC, LH, LD</td>
<td>suspense, drama, adrenaline rush, satisfying, C: ‘I’ve always liked the scary bits’, scary but not real, ‘otherwise you sound awful if you enjoy being scared’, if not real it’s okay to derive pleasure from it</td>
<td>suspense, adrenaline rush, scary, pleasure, satisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 Excerpt UK-XIV

I constructed similar interview tables for all of the remaining 19 interviews, enabling me to attend to country- or generation-specific details. Both the interview portraits
and tables already entailed a form of analysis. They constituted my particular way into the material. But they were also tools for further investigation. The following chapter provides a detailed analysis of UK-XIV, along with its German ‘cross-match’, G-XII, in order to acquaint the reader with the kinds of material gathered in this study and to further illustrate the analytic process. This will then form the basis for the identification of some overall patterns and the discussion of emerging themes across the corpus of material.

4.5 Conclusion

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter and exemplified in the previous section, it has been something of a struggle to gather and analyse the material for this study (which is probably true for most audience research of this kind). The fact that I was dealing with the study of emotions through talk meant that I was particularly wary of errors or simplifications. It has been my intention to be open and honest about the problems I encountered. By providing a detailed account of the analytic groundwork and by making interview tables and summaries available in Appendices C and D (pp. 316-476), I hope to allow readers to make an informed judgement of subsequent findings and observations.

I have already pointed at some limitations of this project. One was manifested in recruitment difficulties; gathering the research material simultaneously across countries would have certainly strengthened the study. Equally, it would have perhaps been of advantage to attend to more defined age brackets. It is hardly possible to speak of one generation when discussing the responses of 9 and 19-year-olds (!). At the same time, I have pointed out that the project is not comparable with quantitative studies and representative samples. I have been interested to see how issues of age or country of residence were made relevant by participants in this study. The relationship between this and the kind of work presented by Gerbner et al. must be approached with caution.

There were some ambiguities as regards respondents’ understanding of what was expected of them during the diary stage. In hindsight, I suspect a
narrower and more focused approach would have been advisable. Yet, again, it is important to see this study as an exploratory exercise. Entering the research with an open mind and refraining from pre-conceptualisations of media-related ‘fear’ was an important premise. The following analytic chapters have thus to be read in consideration of this point of departure.

2 See also Machin, 2002, and Griffiths and Machin, 2003, for a discussion of child audience research within everyday cultural contexts.
3 This is discussed in some detail in Chapter Seven.
4 This combination of diary and interview material was an iterative process and resulted, in the first instance, in interview portraits, as discussed in the analysis part of this chapter.
5 The full interview schedule is included in Appendix B (pp. 312-4).
6 See Appendix B (p. 315) for the transcription code used in this thesis.
7 Names have been changed for reasons of confidentiality.
8 The son eventually turned out to be in his 30s (!) but was initially included in the study nonetheless. His interview, along with that of his father, was later excluded for reasons of scope and manageability.
9 Again, names have been changed for reasons of anonymity.
10 For a brief summary of the German media landscape, see Appendix.
11 One way to guard against this is to apply Silverman’s suggested ‘deviant-case analysis’, in which emerging theories are tested by actively seeking out and addressing discrepant elements in the research material (2001: 83).
12 Likewise, the listing of page numbers was not as useful as originally anticipated. Although I had made distinctions between single mentions and more detailed discussions of a certain theme or topic, it was still misleading to evaluate their dominance or importance in the light of number of occurrences.
13 By ‘relevant’ I mean that I included any talk that was ‘fear-related’ in the sense that it a) regarded mentions of fear or fear-related emotion words, such as scare, fright, horror, worry, anxiety (both with regard to media experiences and general emotional ‘dispositions’), b) included responses to potential risk messages (e.g. climate change, knife culture, and other crime), and c) comprised of responses to potentially scary material (e.g. horror films, suspense thrillers, crime dramas, and the news). Also included were the following three recurrent themes: The media violence discourse, reality dimensions, and the question of entertainment (related to distinctions between real life and the media).
14 Coping Strategies (CS), Emotional Dispositions (ED), Fear Dimensions (FD), Imagined Audiences (IA), Legitimacy Dimensions (LD), Life History (LH), Life Sentiment (LS = geographies, group alignment, e.g. being a parent…), Media Content (MC), Media Engagement (ME), Media Impact (MI), Media Literacy (ML), Media Purposes (MP), Personal Experience (PE, ‘non-media’), Production Processes (PP), Reality Dimensions (RD), Risk Messages (RM), Subject Matters (SM), Tastes and Preferences (TP), Viewing Context (VC).