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Broadchurch: the detectives behind the detective

Noémie Tosser

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Université
de Bretagne
Occidentale

BROADCHURCH

THE DETECTIVES BEHIND THE DETECTIVE

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MASTER 1 ARTS, LETTRES ET CIVILISATIONS - 2017

Table of content

Acknowledgements.....	4
Introduction.....	5
I – The archetypical detective in literature and Alec Hardy.....	8
1 – Definition of the archetypical detective.....	8
<i>a – History of detective stories in literature.....</i>	8
<i>b – Establishing the corpus and the archetype.....</i>	11
<i>c – Common points and disparities.....</i>	14
2 – Mental portrait of the detective in <i>Broadchurch</i>	19
<i>a – Alec Hardy as an egocentric character.....</i>	19
<i>b – A not-so-nice detective.....</i>	24
<i>c – Desire for solitude.....</i>	29
<i>d – Before Broadchurch.....</i>	32
3 – Professional and physical description of the detective.....	35
<i>a – Alec Hardy as a professional detective.....</i>	35
<i>b – The detective's physical appearance.....</i>	39
II – Adaptation: the evolution of detective stories.....	44
1 – From book to screen.....	44
<i>a – The appeal of adaptation.....</i>	44
<i>b – Screen over books.....</i>	47
<i>c – TV shows.....</i>	51
2 – Detective shows and their narrative architecture.....	54
<i>a – Popularity of detective shows.....</i>	54
<i>b – What to find in a detective show.....</i>	56
<i>c – Modern variations brought to detective shows.....</i>	59
3 – <i>Broadchurch</i> as a different detective show.....	62
<i>a – Broadchurch is not a “série nodale”.....</i>	62
<i>b – Lack of spectacular elements.....</i>	64
<i>c – A different narrative.....</i>	67
<i>d – Importance of the personal background of the detectives.....</i>	70
III – Construction of the story in <i>Broadchurch</i>	75

1 – Narration techniques in <i>Broadchurch</i>	75
<i>a – Filming technique and the editing</i>	75
<i>b – Themes, symbols and references in Broadchurch</i>	79
<i>c – Comic touches in a tragic plot</i>	82
2 – The investigations.....	84
<i>a – The victims</i>	84
<i>b – The murderers</i>	87
<i>c – What happens after the investigation?</i>	92
3 – The community.....	96
<i>a – Importance of the community and secondary characters</i>	96
<i>b – Parenthood as a main theme</i>	99
<i>c – The media, a third narrative arc</i>	103
Conclusion.....	111
Table of Appendixes.....	113
Appendix 1: Alec Hardy's loneliness through editing.....	115
Appendix 2.1: Comparison of the number of episodes aired on the three main channels in France per day*.....	120
Appendix 2.2: Comparison of the original country of shows aired on the three main channels in France per week*.....	121
Appendix 3: Olly Stevens and the social media.....	122
Bibliography.....	123

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Introduction

"To be sure – *Broadchurch* is everything you can hope for from a whodunit: it's gritty, dark and never, ever loses sight of the ultimate goal-to find Danny Latimer's killer. It's almost like watching a particularly gritty Christie whodunit directed with the finesse and perfectionism of a Wes Anderson."¹

The *whodunit* is something that has been part of narrative fiction for a very long time now. The interest of an audience in getting involved in an investigation has been the same from the early detective stories of previous centuries to today crime TV shows. Even though the implication of the reader is not the same as that of the spectator, both of them are waiting eagerly to find out who has been responsible for the crime and the explanation for why he/she did that. As a puzzle, a detective story or a crime series manages to trigger the mind of an outside person, spectator or reader, and plays with it until the very end. Giving that people enjoy this game implied by the detective genre, it seems obvious that the developments inside the genre, in books and on screens, are quite important. Indeed, it would be a very long and hard work to run a study of every piece of fiction which is part of the detective genre.

In this dissertation, we are going to propose an inter-medial analysis, thus we had to chose between the immensity of instances in the genre. As far as literature is concerned, we chose to work on three detectives. Our choice was mainly based on the popularity of these detectives, who are Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot and Father Brown. It was easier for us to compare these literary detectives to a detective in a crime show as they had themselves already been adapted into TV series. Furthermore, these three detectives are all from the same period, that is to say from the late 19th – early 20th century.

As for the TV product, we chose to concentrate our comparison on a single TV show, that is *Broadchurch*². The choice of this precise show was first based on the fact that there are only but a few academic works that have been based on this series. Considering that the airing of the third season started at the beginning of the year 2017, we will only base our analysis on the first two seasons of the show. The story of

1 Devanjali Banerjee, "Broadchurch: Gritty Agatha Christie Meets A Sullen Sherlock Holmes." *The Amateur Media Blog*. March 5 2016. <<http://www.theamateurmediablog.com/blog/broadchurch-gritty-agatha-christie-meets-a-sullen-sherlock-holmes>> Accessed September 1 2017.

2 *Broadchurch*, Chris Chibnall, ITV, 3 seasons, 2013 – present day.

Broadchurch is that of a peaceable community situated in the south of England, characterized by its calm atmosphere disturbed by the murder of a young boy. As viewers, we follow the investigation of the death of the boy run by two detectives, Alec Hardy (David Tennant) and Ellie Miller (Olivia Colman). But we also follow Danny's grieving parents, Mark (Andrew Buchan) and Beth Latimer (Jodie Whittaker) and the life of this tight community. As the murderer is revealed at the end of the first season, the second one is about the trial of the latter, and also the unofficial re-opening of an old case, the Sandbrook case, in which Alec was the main detective in charge at the time.

In the course of our study, we are going to try and develop a link between the literary detective books we decided to use and the TV show at stake by running an analysis based on several points. We are therefore going to try to answer the following question: how did the archetypical detective novel manage to inspire a 21st-century crime TV series? We will try to answer this question by analysing the TV show *Broadchurch* with a critical mind, and we will try to compare it as much as possible to the literary origins of the genre.

First and foremost, we will begin by giving a presentation of the different detectives in our literary corpus. After providing an overview of the characteristics of the genre in literature, we try to draw a portrait of what an archetypical detective would be based on the ones we chose for our analysis, comparing their physical description as well as their mental capacities and techniques when it comes to being a detective. We then compare this portrait of the literary archetypical detective to the portrait of one of the detective in *Broadchurch*, Alec Hardy. This comparison is about the detective as a character, but to a further extent, it is also a first mention of the difference between what we could call a "paper" character and a screen character.

Next, we will propose a study of the gap between literature and screen products, especially between detective literary stories and crime shows. We will try to understand the reason behind the contemporary shift in the interest of people from books to screens. Moreover, we will notice the almost excessive supremacy of screen products, more specifically of TV series nowadays. We will then try to get even more specific by analysing the case of crime shows and their growing popularity as typical of the multiplicity of different types of crime shows inside the genre. As we draw a portrait of the typical detective novel, we will try to define what the main elements that we are to

find in a crime show are. Finally, we will see to what extent these elements apply more or less to *Broadchurch*, which is considered as a different crime series from the traditional ones.

Ultimately, we will have a closer look at the construction of the narrative in *Broadchurch*. After assuming that it is not what could be called a traditional crime show, we will try to find where the differences lay. In the end, we will see that even though it is categorised as a crime show, the investigation is not always the main focus of the narrative, which is by the way divided into several narrative arcs. Therefore, the plot sometimes focuses on other elements, such as the life of the community, or even the implication of the media. We will also keep comparing the change in the narrative to the early detective stories in literature to answer the questions we raised.

I – The archetypical detective in literature and Alec Hardy

The aim of this dissertation is going to be to show how the detective genre in literature inspired a 21st century TV series. Therefore, we are going to run a first analysis based on the main character, who is the detective. He is an essential character as, without him, the investigation could not take place. We are going to see how different detectives in literature inspired a modern detective: Alec Hardy.

1 – Definition of the archetypical detective

As a first step to propose a link between the detectives in literature and on TV, we are going to define the archetype of the detective in literature, which mainly appeared during the late 19th century and early 20th century. We will base our analysis on three main detectives: Sherlock Holmes, Father Brown and Hercule Poirot.

a – History of detective stories in literature

We first need to notice that, at the time, the historical and literary contexts were favourable to give birth to detective fiction. Although the 19th century evokes the creation of detective stories, it is also before anything else at this time that the police was created in a lot of different countries, and the United Kingdom is usually seen as the initiator for the creation of the police. Indeed, in 1829, Sir Robert Peel passed the Metropolitan Police Act, which defines the role of police authorities, and the first criminal investigation division was created in the London Metropolitan Police in 1842³. This new authority, which became part of everyday life, was something to be witnessed and it might have inspired different authors of detective stories that we are going to study in the course of this dissertation.

As far as the literary context is concerned, the first part of the 19th century witnessed the influence of romanticism, which focused on man himself and his own feelings. The sublime and the importance of art and nature were part of this romantic era. Romanticism was also characterized by the value of aestheticism, which was an

3 “Police.” *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Volume 25. (1995) 960,961.

inspiration for writers of detective stories in the second half of the century. As described by Hélène Machinal, the fact that the sublime was used on natural phenomena meant that it could also be used on social phenomena, as crimes in the case of the detective story⁴. Thomas De Quincey underlined this facet, that of aestheticism of murder, in his satirical essay “On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts”⁵. Likewise William Godwin introduces *Caleb Williams*⁶, a new kind of detective who is trying to restore the truth about the implication of Falkland in the deaths of several characters. Moreover, the emergence of detective stories also went with the rediscovery of determinism⁷, which is, according to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, the “belief that one is not free to choose the sort of person one wants to be, or how one behaves, because these things are decided by one's background, surroundings, etc.”⁸ It is therefore linked to the aim of the detective who gives a reason for the behaviour of the criminal, based on several clues and an investigation.

But even though the emergence of detective stories appeared in the second half of the 19th century, it was not the first time that there was a story resembling an investigation in literature. In the history of international literature, it occurred before the 19th century: for example, when a character has to play the role of the detective for a short period of time to solve a kind of mystery. As pointed out by Yves Reuter⁹, such characters can be found in the Bible, in Sophocles' works during Antiquity, in French literature with Voltaire or Balzac, and even in British literature with Shakespeare. In all those instances, the character who is close to a detective uses deduction to prove his point. There is no real investigation and no real method, and the reflection is mainly based on the fact that they are good observers. The examples mentioned above are the reason why we can say that the genre of the detective story was born during the second half of the 19th century. The characters that we are going to study throughout this dissertation are to be considered as detectives, as opposed to what has been said before, even though being a detective is not always their main profession.

The first author who wrote what is today known as a detective story was the

-
- 4 Hélène Machinal. *Le Superflu: Chose très nécessaire*. “Indice et superflu dans les récits de détection doyliens”, ed. Gaïd Girard. (Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2004) 201.
5 Thomas De Quincey. *On Murder*. “On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts”, 1827. (Oxford World's Classics, 2006).
6 William Godwin. *Caleb Williams*, 1794. (Oxford University Press, 1978)
7 Thomas Narcejac. *Une machine à lire : le roman policier*. (Denoël/Gonthier, 1975) 24.
8 “Determinism.” *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. (1993) 328.
9 Yves Reuter. *Le roman policier* (Armand Colin, 2005) 11.

American Edgar Allan Poe. He is indeed the one who revolutionized the genre and the first creator of the amateur detective archetype¹⁰, an archetype that is going to be defined in the course of this dissertation. He wrote the short story “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” published in 1841, and with the publication of this short story, he created Auguste Dupin. Dupin is a French gentleman, but his main activity is not to be a detective, he is an amateur detective. The first short story in which he appeared is a good example to describe the method he uses to solve an investigation. This story is divided into six parts, and each part is a new step toward elucidation: the first part introduces the detective. This is achieved by a narrator using a first person narrative. The second part introduces the murders on which he is going to work thanks to newspapers. The third part exposes the reflection of the detective based on what he read in the newspapers. The fourth part brings the detective and the narrator to the crime scene. The fifth part reveals that the detective has managed to solve the mystery. Finally, the sixth part is the confrontation with the culprit. With his first detective short story, Poe managed to introduce a detective that will become a type, because as we are going to see, many of the detectives that were invented after him followed this pattern of the amateur detective. The aim of Dupin, and of any investigator, is to prove, with a deterministic approach, that every problem has a solution, as said by Narcejac:

“Le coup de génie de Poe est d'avoir, si l'on ose dire, confondu déterminisme et nécessité, et montré que les actes humains obéissent à des lois au même titre que les phénomènes physiques, donc qu'ils sont prévisibles, donc qu'ils peuvent être “déduits”, donc que le mystère n'est qu'une apparence ; il suffira de raisonner correctement pour le résoudre. Et nous voilà au coeur du roman policier.”¹¹

Based on the instance of Dupin in Poe, we can now propose a definition of what a detective story is, a definition that will apply to our corpus in the rest of our study. A detective story is mainly called so because of the presence of a detective, who is often not a detective by profession. The detective is obviously the main character of the fiction in which he appears. Most of the time, he is accompanied by a secondary character, who is often the narrator of the story. The action often takes place in important cities, and it might be explained by the importance of a dense population linked to the urbanization that took place in the United Kingdom during the 19th century

10 “L'inventeur d'un personnage sinon nouveau à tout le moins archétypique : celui du détective amateur.” Robert Deleuse. *Les maîtres du roman policier* (Bordas, 1991) 26.

11 Narcejac, *op. cit.* 24.

as a post-industrial revolution effect. It would indeed be complicated to have a recurrent detective investigating crimes in a small town where there are not enough people to have frequent criminality, but not impossible, as it will be the case in the TV show used in our study. These are the main elements that define a detective story, and as we are going to see, this pattern was used several times to create the detectives of our corpus.

b – Establishing the corpus and the archetype

An archetype is “any individual work or form or episode that prefigures or symbolizes a type or an experience.”¹² Dupin might be a good example as the archetype of the perfect literary detective, but it would be hard to define this model based on only one instance. As the expansion of detective stories was also very important in Britain, we are going to study three other British literary detectives who, put together, might give us a good idea of the archetype that we are looking for.

One of the first detectives who ever appeared in British literature was the famous Sherlock Holmes and his accomplice, Dr. John Watson. They were both created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and appeared for the first time in *A Study in Scarlet* in 1887. As a whole, he appeared in four novels and fifty-six short stories by Conan Doyle¹³, but he was also the subject of many pastiches after the death of the author. The first time the detective is mentioned, he is described as: “A fellow who is working at the chemical laboratory up at the hospital. He was bemoaning himself this morning because he could not get someone to go halves with him in some nice rooms which he had found, and which were too much for his purse.”¹⁴ He is not at all described as a detective, and for someone who never heard of Sherlock Holmes, it is hard to guess that this is a detective story. The reason why he is not described as such is because he is not a real detective. He is, as he calls himself in *A Study in Scarlet*, a “consulting detective.”¹⁵ Sherlock Holmes is an amateur, but he takes the character of the detective to a whole new level. He is compared to Dupin at the beginning of the story:

12 “Archetype.” *Longman Companion to Twentieth Century Literature*. (1970) 27.

13 Jacques Baudou, Paul Gayot, *Le Dico Sherlock Holmes*. “Canon.” (Les Moutons Electriques Edition, 2015) 40-44.

14 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes – The Complete Novels and Stories Volume I*. “*A Study in Scarlet*.” 1887. (Bantam Classic, 2003) 5.

15 *Ibid.* 17.

“Now, in my opinion, Dupin was a very inferior fellow. That trick of his of breaking in his friends' thoughts with an apropos remark after a quarter of an hour's silence is really very showy and superficial.”¹⁶

Watson himself says that Holmes is superior to Dupin. Sherlock Holmes is less conventional than Poe's detective, he knows martial arts, and he is agile enough to climb on the back of a cab. But as Dupin, he does not reveal his mental process until the very end, so that the reader cannot solve the mystery before him. Since 1887, the mythical figure of Sherlock Holmes has kept growing, even after the death of his creator. He is one of the most important fictional figures in British literature, and still today, Holmes is at the centre of many pastiches and different types of adaptations such as films, TV shows or even plays. He is the most famous British detective in literature and might be the most famous fictional detective in the world.

“Il [Sherlock Holmes] naît au fond du gouffre de Reichenbach. À l’instant où le créateur y précipite sa créature pour s’en libérer. Dans l’abîme... *en abyme*. C’est le mythe d’une fiction qui refuse de disparaître et qui, comme mode de sa survie, tend à *s’actualiser*. Ultime feinte de la fiction que d’ainsi s’étendre au monde où elle est écrite. [...] Sherlock Holmes n’est pas une fiction devenue un mythe : il est *un mythe de la fiction*.”¹⁷

The second detective that we are going to study in our dissertation is Father Brown. He was created in 1911 by Gilbert Keith Chesterton and first appeared in the short story “The Blue Cross” from the collection *The Innocence of Father Brown*. To quote the title of one of his articles, Chesterton was concerned with “How to Write a Detective Story”¹⁸. Even though he was working on his eponymous character Father Brown, he admitted that he was not the perfect detective. Father Brown is a man of the church, who has not much to do with the police. In the first short story in which he appears, Father Brown is faced to a French detective, showing that the eponymous character does not belong to the professional detective field. But he manages to solve different kinds of crimes, as robbery, disappearance or murder. He appeared in fifty-two short stories collected into five volumes. As opposed to most detectives in literature, he does not really have a real companion, even though different people are working with

16 *Ibid.* 18.

17 Denis Mellier, *Sherlock Holmes et le signe de la fiction*. “L’aventure de la faille apocryphe ou Reichenbach et la Sherlock-fiction.” (ENS Editions, 1999) 137-138.

18 G. K. Chesterton. *Le sel de la vie*. “Comment écrire un roman policier.” 1925. (L’Age d’Homme. 2010)

him in each short story, as for instance Hercule Flambeau, a former criminal who becomes Father Brown's "only friend in the world"¹⁹. One particularity of Father Brown is that he is introduced as a new character in each short stories, as for instance in "The Head of Caesar": "It was, in fact, the face of one with the harmless human name of Brown, formerly priest of Cobhole in Essex, and now working in London."²⁰ He is introduced in that way even though it is not his very first appearance because he does not really stay in a precise place and seems to travel a lot. As far as his method is concerned, he generally lets the person who is working with him on the case come to his own conclusion. He tries to direct them toward the final solution and does not hesitate to correct them if necessary. He is a calm character and might appear as a rather passive detective. Father Brown is less well-known than other famous literary detectives, but as pointed out by *The Guardian*, the work of Chesterton was subject to many adaptations, which helps to make him a more popular character, especially today with the last BBC adaptation of 2013²¹:

"An IMDb search for adaptations of GK Chesterton's Father Brown stories yields one 1950s film, two television series [...], a clutch of American *Masterpiece Mystery* shows, and an American TV movie."²²

Finally, the last detective that we are going to base our analysis on is Hercule Poirot. He was created by Agatha Christie. He is a former Belgian detective. He came on stage for the first time in the first novel written by Agatha Christie, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* published in 1920. He is always accompanied by Captain Arthur Hastings, who is the narrator of the stories in which they appear. As to the presentation of the detective, he is presented by his companion as follow:

"Yet this quaint dandified little man who, I was sorry to see, now limped badly, had been in his time one of the most celebrated members of the Belgian police. As a detective, his *flair* had been extraordinary, and he had achieved triumphs by unravelling some of the most baffling cases of the day."²³

19 G. K. Chesterton. *The Complete Father Brown Stories*. "The Wrong Shape" (Penguin Classics. 2012) 101.

20 *Ibid*. "The Head of Caesar". 243.

21 *Father Brown*, Rachel Flowerday, Tahsin Guner, BBC, 5 seasons, 2013 – present day.

22 Michael Newton. "Father Brown: the empathetic detective." *The Guardian*. January 18, 2013. <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/jan/18/father-brown-the-empathetic-detective>> Accessed January 21, 2017.

23 Agatha Christie. *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (Triad Panther, 1978) 22.

He is presented as a talented detective, and he indeed proves it in all the books in which he appeared. He is no longer a detective as far as his profession is concerned, but he keeps acting like one, as someone who has retired from a career but who keeps practising. As for his personality, he is always very assured of himself and often refuses to be wrong. He refers to himself in the third singular personal pronoun, which is a proof of his own egocentricity. During the investigation, he tends to hide things that he knows from Hastings or from other people, to have them reflect on something that he has already untangled.

“I was puzzled. It was unusually thick, quite unlike ordinary notepaper. Suddenly, an idea struck me.
'Poirot!' I cried. 'This is a fragment of a will!'
'Exactly.'
I looked up at him sharply.
'You are not surprised?'
'No,' he said gravely, 'I expected it.'”²⁴

Hercule Poirot appears in a large number of short stories and fifty-four novels. When considering Agatha Christie's entire work, he is the detective recurring most in her stories. When talking about adaptation, Hercule Poirot has been adapted in a lot of different media: plays, movies, TV series, and even a BBC Radio drama²⁵, as a proof of his popularity.

c – Common points and disparities

Now that we have studied each of the literary detectives that we are going to use in this research paper, we can note some similarities and some dissemblances between them. Based on what we said before, we can notice as a common point that these three men are not detectives in a professional way. None of them possesses a private detective practice as a professional detective would. Hercule Poirot is actually the only one to have a training as a detective, considering he has been one in the past for the Belgian police and that he is officially working with Scotland Yard. Sherlock Holmes is only a consultant, and he uses his powerful mind and his strong sense of reflection and

²⁴ Agatha Christie. *op. cit.* 42-43.

²⁵ “BBC Radio 4 Extra – Poirot – Episode guide”

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03js5pl/episodes/guide>> Accessed February 12, 2017.

deduction to deal with a case. He has not been trained as a detective in the past, and his talent as a detective only comes from his mental process. Finally, Father Brown is the one who is the furthest away from being a professional detective. As it has been said before, he is a Roman Catholic priest who acts as a detective in the short stories in which he appears. People recognize him as Father Brown. Being a detective might appear as a kind of part-time activity for him.

Another common point between all these three detectives is that the major part of their stories occurs in England, and more precisely in London. Indeed, the office of Sherlock Holmes is situated at 221B Baker Street, which is a popular place in the English capital. Most of his investigations take place in the metropolis, which makes sense because of the size of the capital, a lot can happen in such a big city. But even though, all the different appearances of Sherlock Holmes do not always take place in London, he sometimes travels to other English cities, and he even goes to Switzerland in *The Final Problem*. As for Hercule Poirot, he also travels a lot across England and through the entire world. In some popular novels of Agatha Christie, we follow the detective in other countries, as in *Death on the Nile* (1937) or even as he is travelling to go in another country as in *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934). Even though he is often working with the British police forces, he can investigate in any other place. Lastly, Father Brown is a particular case because he cannot be linked with a specific place. He appears more as a traveller as he is rarely in the same location from one short story to another. The place where the crime or where the investigation takes place does not seem to be of first importance. Compared to Sherlock Holmes who is characterised by his practice and the city of London, or Hercule Poirot who has a specific nationality, Father Brown does not belong to a specific place. In the recent BBC TV show *Father Brown*, the story occurs in Kembleford, a fictional village. The fact that they invented a place for the TV series shows the lack of importance of the place in the books. So as a whole, the place in which the detective operates as such is not always of prime importance, even though it might help to define the detective in a precise location.

One of the main common points that appears for the three detectives is that they are never on their own. They are always accompanied by another secondary character. There is even an evident similarity between Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Poirot, or rather between Dr. John Watson and Captain Arthur Hastings.

“Worn with pain, and weak from the prolonged hardships which I had undergone, I was removed, with a great train of wounded sufferers, to the base hospital at Peshawar. Here I rallied, and had already improved so far as to be able to walk about the wards, and even to bask a little upon the verandah, when I was struck down by enteric fever, that curse of our Indian possessions. For months my life was despaired of, and when at last I came to myself and became convalescent, I was so weak and emaciated that a medical board determined that not a day should be lost in sending me back to England.”²⁶

“I had been invalided home from the Front; and, after spending some months in a rather depressing Convalescent Home, was given a month's sick leave.”²⁷

As we can see, both of them have a military background. They went to war, were wounded, have been in convalescence, and are now ready to take a sort of new fresh start. This is one of the points on which Agatha Christie inspired herself from Conan Doyle to create her characters. Also, in both cases, they are first person narrators. Therefore, as readers, we are obliged to trust them, and they prove to be trustworthy throughout the different stories. We also have the case of Father Brown who, as we mentioned before, has several companions, but the one that comes back most often is Hercule Flambeau.

“Flambeau was in England. The police of three countries had tracked the great criminal at last from Ghent to Brussels, from Brussels to the Hook of Holland; and it was conjectured that he would take some advantage of the unfamiliarity and confusion of the Eucharistic Congress, then taking place in London. Probably he would travel as some minor clerk or secretary connected with it; but of course, Valentin could not be certain; nobody could be certain about Flambeau.”²⁸

As being a former criminal, the aim of Flambeau being the sidekick of Father Brown reveals a kind of redemption, taking a fresh start after being considered a criminal by the police. For the three instances that we have, their role is to have the main detective talk and expose his own stream of thoughts to the reader, mainly by voicing assumptions that are not true or that do not lead towards the solution of the investigation, to have the detective correct them and display the progress of the inquiry. The reader is, therefore, feeling close to this secondary character, especially in the first two cases because of the first person narrative.

Finally, to compare these three detectives, we can focus on the importance of

26 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *op.cit.* 3-4.

27 Agatha Christie. *op. cit.* 5.

28 G. K. Chesterton. *op.cit.* “The Wrong Shape.” 3.

physical appearance in literature. Each of the characters that we are dealing with is more or less described physically in the literary work in which they appear. To start with Father Brown, we can notice that no proper physical description is used to have an idea of what the priest looks like. The reader can only imagine him with the proper outfit of a Catholic priest of the late 19th century/early 20th century. The rest of his appearance is rather free for imagination. He does not have any feature that would make him distinguishable. He is a rather ordinary man, and there is a reason behind this choice made by Chesterton.

“In Father Brown, it was the chief feature to be featureless. The point of him was to appear pointless; and one might say that his conspicuous quality was not being conspicuous. His commonplace exterior was meant to contrast with his unsuspected vigilance and intelligence; and being so, of course I made his appearance shabby and shapeless, his face round and expressionless, his manners clumsy and so on.”²⁹

We, therefore, understand the lack of description as far as his physical appearance is concerned. The aim of Chesterton was to create a detective that would be remembered for his intellect and his talent of detection rather than for his physical image. The reader is free to imagine the character as he wishes, it does not even need to go along with the mental agility of the priest.

Contrary to this idea of having a portrait only based on mental skills, we are going to see that the other two detectives of our corpus are described more accurately, and are leaving less freedom to the reader. Conan Doyle, as Chesterton, inspired himself from a real life person, Dr. Joseph Bell, who was a lecturer in Edinburgh university, to create Sherlock Holmes. He is precisely described as for instance in *A Study in Scarlet*:

“His very person and appearance were such as to strike the attention of the most casual observer. In height he was rather over six feet, and so excessively lean that he seemed to be considerably taller. His eyes were sharp and piercing, save during those intervals of torpor to which I have alluded; and his thin, hawk-like nose gave his whole expression an air of alertness and decision. His chin, too, had the prominence and squareness which mark the man of determination. His hands were invariably blotted with ink and stained with chemicals, yet he was possessed of extraordinary delicacy of touch, as I frequently had occasion to observe when I watched him manipulating his fragile philosophical instruments.”³⁰

29 G. K. Chesterton. *Autobiography*. “The God with the Golden Key”. (Hutchinson & Co., 1936) 322.

30 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *op.cit.* 11.

There is, in this precise case, a kind of emphasis on the facial traits of the detective. The description that Watson gives of Sherlock Holmes' face could also be applied to the face of Bell. Compared to Father Brown, it is clearly stated that Sherlock Holmes attracted the eye by his “very person and appearance”, he is recognizable. We can also note that Sherlock Holmes helped to create the mythical figure of the detective, and therefore, his portrait has often been associated with a deerstalker³¹. But as a matter of fact, the deerstalker was never mentioned in the literary work of Conan Doyle. It only appeared on an illustration for the *Strand Magazine* of the short story “The Boscombe Valley Mystery”, in which Sherlock Holmes is said to wear a “long grey travelling-cloak and close-fitting cloth cap”³². Therefore, we can also say that the physical representation of Sherlock Holmes was not only based on the literary text, it also comes from illustrations and adaptations which helped readers to have a precise image of Sherlock Holmes in mind while reading the books.

Finally, in the case of Poirot, we can agree that he is the one detective who is most described. Agatha Christie chooses to give an importance to the physical appearance of Hercule Poirot, who is described as follows by Hastings:

“Poirot was an extraordinary-looking little man. He was hardly more than five feet four inches, but carried himself with great dignity. His head was exactly the shape of an egg, and he always perched it a little on one side. His moustache was very stiff and military. The neatness of his attire was almost incredible; I believe a speck of dust would have caused him more pain than a bullet wound.”³³

The description of the detective is more precise than both the descriptions we studied before. Here, the emphasis is put on different parts of the body, and even on the outfit of Poirot. Christie has chosen precise features to describe her character: a round shape, a little man, with a moustache and in a perfect suit. There is no real imagination left to the reader, who can easily have a precise picture of Hercule Poirot while reading, without having seen a photograph before. As a proof, we can note that in the different adaptations of Agatha Christie's work, Poirot is always played by a man with a round face, dark hair and a black moustache perfectly brushed up.

31 Hélène Machinal. *Sherlock Holmes, un nouveau limier pour le XXI^e siècle*. “De Holmes à Sherlock.” (Presse Universitaire de Rennes, 2016) 14.

32 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *op.cit.* “The Boscombe Valley Mystery.” 1891. 306.

33 Agatha Christie. *op. cit.* 21.

We can finally say that in each case, the detective is presented in different ways. Therefore, the reader is left to create his own mental image of the detective. But as for others aspects than his physical appearance, we can note several similarities. They have common characteristics as for their profession as a detective for instance, or the fact that they are not on their own during their adventures.

2 – Mental portrait of the detective in *Broadchurch*

We are now going to compare this portrait of an archetypical detective in literature to the character of Alec Hardy, who is the main character and main detective in the TV series *Broadchurch*³⁴. The mental portrait of the detective will be our first concern.

a – Alec Hardy as an egocentric character

In the show, Alec Hardy appears several times as a character who is quite self-centred. He introduces himself in the first episode of the series by saying to CS Elaine Jenkinson, the head of the police: “I've met your team. No one's as qualified as me. Sandbrook doesn't make me vulnerable. It makes me the best man for the job.”³⁵ He has just arrived in town but already places himself above anyone else. This is a facet of his personality that is mainly present in the first season of the show, as in the second season, he will go back to a past investigation that he failed to elucidate. But even though, he manages to show off about his abilities as a detective during the Sandbrook investigation. In the third episode of this second season, Ellie, his co-worker, manages to find elements about Claire Ripley that he never mentioned before:

“Alec Hardy: Rohypnol? She definitely said rohypnol?

Ellie Miller: Yeah. She said she woke up to see him cleaning.

Alec: She never said any of that before.

Ellie: Why are you being such a fuckwit about this?

Alec: Sorry?

Ellie: She lived next door, she had access. Her story's inconsistent. This woman you've been protecting, she is a suspect!

Alec: I know.

34 *Broadchurch*, Chris Chibnall, ITV, 3 seasons, 2013 – 2017.

35 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 24:36 – 24:43.

Ellie: What? You told me you've been protecting her.

Alec: No. I said that I was keeping her safe so she didn't abscond.

Ellie: How long have you thought this and why didn't you tell me?

Alec: I needed to know if I was going mad. I wanted to someone to look at it objectively.

Ellie: For God's sake!"³⁶

Alec had Ellie working on the Sandbrook case to find out something he already knew, that is to say, that Claire Ripley is a suspect in the case. In that sense, he could easily be compared to Sherlock Holmes or to Hercule Poirot who often point out to their respective companions that what they are guessing is quite obvious because they already knew about it.

Alec Hardy can also sometimes be defined as a bully, ordering other people around. He is the DI (Detective Inspector) of the police station and therefore behaves as a clear leader. Even though Ellie was supposed to become the DI of Broadchurch Police Station, she is relegated to the role of Alec's assistant. He directs her, as for instance when she suggests to go tell the Latimer family about Danny's murder:

"Alec Hardy: How many deaths like that have you worked?

Ellie Miller: This is my first.

Alec: You can't make it better. Don't try.

Ellie: You don't know how I work.

Alec: Most likely premise is abduction. Was he taken, and so who by? Watch them. Every movement. If anything doesn't make sense, you tell me.

Ellie: OK.

Alec: Don't look at me like that."³⁷

In this extract, the use of imperatives shows what kind of boss Alec is with Ellie. He does not trust her, and even though their relationship evolves toward a most trustful one, he still bosses her around in the second season. In the latter, he also goes after Claire. He is supposed to protect her, but in the end, he pushes her around several times, as for instance when she enters court during Joe Miller's trial³⁸. In this extract, Alec grabs Claire by the arm to take her out of the room, he tells her that she is wrong, that he knows better than her if the man they are talking about is back in the country, and he orders her to go back to her house. As opposed to his relationship with Ellie, that between Alec and Claire is not of a professional order so he does not have a professional

36 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 36:21 – 36:51.

37 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 15:54 – 16:16.

38 Claire Ripley, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 10:44 – 11:51.

and hierarchic superiority over her. The detective also does not hesitate to throw someone else under the bus when something goes wrong, as for instance in the third episode of the second season, when he says to Ellie about Lee and Claire running away under his supervision: “What is the point of you Miller? [...] I'm going to look for them because you didn't do what we agreed.”³⁹ However, we can notice an evolution between the first and second season of the series. In the first season, he tries to define his place by bossing around other characters. But in the second season, he is faced with an investigation that he has failed on in the past, and so it is harder for him to direct other characters when he has to face his own failure.

But even though he can sometimes appear as a superior figure in the show, he is also lowered down by a number of other characters. As his co-worker, Ellie is often the one who tells Alec that he is not a man who knows everything. At the end of the second season, Ellie appears as a clear superior to Alec. In the sixth episode of the second season, Ellie tells Alec to put stress on the Gillespies, Lee and Claire, and a few moments later, Alec calls Claire to ask her to leave the house in which he has put her to protect her, saying: “I think we're done” all under the supervision of Ellie⁴⁰. At this point in the show, we understand there has been a shift in Alec's power as a detective in favour of Ellie. However, she is not the only one to oppose Alec and his point of view. One of the characters who is the most reluctant at trusting Alec might be Reverend Paul Coates. After the suicide of Jack Marshall, Paul appears to be mad at Alec, and he clearly states it during Jack's funeral, mentioning the fact that some people failed the man, and thanks to the editing, we understand that he is looking at Alec⁴¹. Also, Paul addresses himself directly to Alec:

“**Alec Hardy:** That was a bit of a lecture back there, wasn't it? Tore a strip off the town.

Paul Coates: Not really. Unless you were worried it was directed at you.

Alec: Was it?

Paul: I came to you. I told you that Jack needed protecting. You did nothing.”⁴²

We have here a precise example of Alec's confidence being challenged. Paul accuses him of being wrong about Jack Marshall. The detective knew about the man's story, but

39 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 1:21 – 1:31.

40 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, Claire Ripley, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 6, 3:00 – 6:52.

41 Paul Coates, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 7:15 – 7:50.

42 Paul Coates, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 9:25 – 9:45.

he did not protect him when needed, and as the local newspaper was involved in informing the population about Jack's fake tendency to paedophilia and his past, the police did not do anything to help him against the media, leading him to his suicide. Paul, therefore, reproaches Alec with the fact that he is too sure of himself and that he should sometimes listen to other people instead of having a reflection on his own.

Another character who easily goes to Alec to tell him that he is wrong is Lee Ashworth in the second season. He was the one judged for the murders of Lisa Newbury and Pippa Gillespie in the former Sandbrook trial. In the second season, he tries to have the detective understand that he is not the murderer. Lee clearly implies that Alec missed something when he was working on the Sandbrook case and he goes to him to tell the detective what he knows about Sandbrook as he has built his own file, as a detective would.

“Alec Hardy: We've got nothing more to say.

Lee Ashworth: I got plenty to tell you. Notes, interviews, people's movement on that night. I knew you'd never want to clear my name so I started working on it myself. Talking to people. [...] Ricky and David Gillespie. Dads of the two girls. Two dads, two brothers. You barely even looked at them.

Alec: No, we did.

Lee: Not far enough. Lisa told me once that Ricky made a move on her when driving her home after baby-sitting.

Alec: Made a pass at his niece?

Lee: What about this guy seen hanging around the estate three weeks before? [...] You missed things. [...] Look at that stuff. Look at the Gillespies. Look at that block hanging around the estate.”⁴³

Lee proves that Alec missed things, and helps to bring new elements to the investigation, elements that will prove to be relevant by the end of the season.

Several other characters criticize the detective, but rather than going straight to him, they warn other people. For instance, we have in the first season Cate Gillespie who is warning Beth Latimer about Alec, saying: “Oh God, Beth. Listen. That man is toxic. They lost evidence. They ballsed up the trial. My daughter's killer is still out there because of that man. Do not believe anything he says.”⁴⁴ Karen, a London journalist who worked on the Sandbrook case, is also in *Broadchurch*. She says about Alec that “he failed that family. [She] saw it happen, and [she is] worried he is going to do it

43 Alec Hardy, Lee Ashworth, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 29:50 – 31:28.

44 Cate Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 21:29 – 21:41.

again here [in Broadchurch].”⁴⁵ Both Cate and Karen are belittling Alec because of his past, and because of the role he had to play in the Sandbrook case. Their role is, therefore, to warn people about him being self-centred and not always as efficient as a detective should be. In the end, we can say that even though Alec often appears as a predominant detective, he is not considered as more than human, as opposed to Sherlock Holmes. The latter is barely ever asked to justify himself in literature; therefore, everybody trusts this detective and never questions what he says or what he thinks, and sometimes, if he does not give any explanation for how he did solve the mystery, no one will ask him to do so⁴⁶.

Finally, even though up to this point we described Alec as a controversial character, he sometimes admits that he might be wrong. The most obvious instance of Alec not being right is the Sandbrook case. At the beginning of the first season, we do not really know what Sandbrook is all about, but we know that it led to degrading the very image of Alec as a detective. He was a recognized detective before this case, but now, he is looking for redemption by finding the murderer of Danny Latimer. He does not want to make the same mistake as in Sandbrook, even though in the end, he was not responsible for the collapse of the trial. Linked with the Sandbrook case, in the second season, Alec also admits that he regrets locking up Lee and even apologizes to him, saying: “I’m sorry, I apologize for any error of judgement.”⁴⁷ So as a whole, we can say that it is hard for him to recognize his mistakes, but when these are quite obvious, he will not try to escape from his responsibilities. He might be a self-centred detective, but in spite of that, he stays as legitimate as he can be, and he is always going to try to account for his mistakes, especially, as we said when talking about Sandbrook. A detective that might not always be right, and might even sometimes be wrong, is not often present in literature. As far as our corpus is concerned, neither Sherlock Holmes, Father Brown nor Hercule Poirot ever made a mistake on a case, all of them always managed to go to the end of their investigations and to have justice restored. Even though we know that at the end of the second season Alec manages to have confessions from the culprits of the Sandbrook case, the trial and the investigation have already been dropped at some point in the past.

45 Olly Stevens, Karen White, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 3, 28:37 – 28:52.

46 Denis Mellier. *Philosophies du roman policier*. “L’illusion logique du récit policier.” ed. Colas Duflo. (ENS diff. Ophrys, 1995) 79.

47 Alec Hardy, Lee Ashworth, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 23:51 – 24:45.

b – A not-so-nice detective

The detective in *Broadchurch* is not always assimilated to a positive hero. Alec Hardy is sometimes characterized as a morally corrupted police officer. We can underline this especially when he is at work. In the first episode of the first series, we first see him reproaching another police officer with calling him for someone who had the tank of his tractor syphoned⁴⁸. Alec, in this precise case, does not seem interested in such an insignificant matter. He appears bored as if a tiny town like Broadchurch did not deserve the great detective that he is, which is once again, a way to show his self-assurance, as previously mentioned.

Besides, in the same episode, he is shown screaming at his team in the police station, saying: “For God's sake! Bloody Twitter! These people's lives have been destroyed and now our incompetence has made it worse. Think what we have to do now to rebuild trust there. Who told the journalist?”⁴⁹ He often swears and curses against his team. There is another good example of that in the first episode of the second season. Alec is screaming at one of his colleagues through the phone because he has not related the piece of information the detective wanted quick enough, even though, at this moment in the diegesis, Alec has been removed from the police as a professional detective because of his health⁵⁰. Therefore, his position as a detective does not really justify his behaviour as an angry sleuth. He is referred to as “shitface”⁵¹ by his colleagues. His reputation inside the police station is not that of a nice detective inspector, but he rather has the reputation of the big bad boss. Moreover, he is not from Broadchurch originally, and he seems to use anger to build up his place inside the police station.

Furthermore, his relationship with Ellie as a co-worker is also a good example of him losing his temper quite often. He sometimes diminishes her because of her strong feelings and emotions. There are a large number of scenes in which the two of them are arguing on subjects that matter more or less. He tends to lower her as if to remind her that she occupies a lower position professionally speaking. However, going on with the

48 Bob Daniels, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 4:50 – 5:27.

49 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 33:07 – 33:26.

50 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 22:57 – 23:07.

51 Brian Young, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 3:03 – 3:14.

series, the relation between Alec and Ellie becomes more pacified. Alec is often sarcastic with her and manages to see her as an equal rather than as a pupil or just as a police officer from a small town. They joke together, especially at the end of the first season:

“Alec Hardy: What are those?
Ellie Miller: Grapes.
Alec: What did you bring grapes for?
Ellie: I thought you might choke on the seeds.
Alec: They're seedless.
Ellie: Oh don't be a smartarse.”⁵²

This kind of dialogue helps with the comic relief in the series, and also involves that even though Alec and Ellie might argue a lot in the show, they still support each other. In the second season, Alec does not really lower down Ellie in this season, he even goes to her to ask for her help⁵³. They still argue because of their different views on the Sandbrook case, but in the end, Ellie appears to be more professional than Alec on certain points.

The place where Alec Hardy generally excels at being a mean detective is obviously during interrogations. In the first season, we can count up to twelve custodies, eleven of which both Alec and Ellie are present at and interrogating suspects. In most of them, Alec is leading the interrogation and often goes straight to the point.

“Alec Hardy: No, no, no. Let's not insult each other's intelligence. Your son has been killed. So I'm a bit of a loss as to why you would mislead us. [...] Why are you lying about where you were on Thursday night?
Mark Latimer: How's me being here is helping you find Danny's killer?
Alec: We cannot rule you out until we know where you were. [...]
Ellie Miller: Mark, just tell us about Thursday.
Mark: I've already told you, haven't I? I told you about the hut, and you're saying I'm lying, and I'm not!
Alec: Mark, my son dies I'd tell the police officer everything, I just would. Why did you ask Nigel to invent a false alibi?”⁵⁴

During this custody of Mark Latimer, we clearly see the difference between the bad cop played by Alec and the good cop played by Ellie.

The problem with Alec is that he has a real issue with trust. He does not have

52 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 1:33 – 1:49.

53 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 27:47 – 28:25.

54 Alec Hardy, Mark Latimer, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 3, 17:11 – 19:45.

faith in any of the characters that he interviews and always considers them as potential suspects. This fact is shown especially in the second season, in which he knows the different characters very well as he has already run a former investigation on them, which gives him one more reason not to trust them. He clearly states that he does not believe Lee Ashworth when the latter tells him that he has nothing to do with the disappearance of Lisa Newbury⁵⁵. Though this lack of trust might appear as a good quality for a detective so that he has an objective point of view on a potential suspect, this unwillingness to believe other people also leads him to lose his temper. We have a clear example of this in the fifth episode of the second season:

Alec Hardy: This is now the third version of that night that you've come up with. Why couldn't you tell me this before? [...]

Claire Ripley: Now I feel like I'm being questioned.

Alec: Too bloody right! You were my key witness, and now you're saying you were lying all along!

Claire: No I'm not lying.

Alec: What then?

Claire: I was just trying to protect him.

Alec: Him, or yourself?

Claire: That's not fair!

Alec: So this is now, definitively, this is what happened that night.

Claire: Yes.

Alec: Really? Claire?"⁵⁶

Many of the interviews that are run by Alec often show him losing his temper. He often appears as a rude character, he is often foul-mouthed, not only with suspects he interviews but also with random people whom he has never talked to, as for instance the board at the end of Joe Miller's trial. Once the latter has been found not guilty, Alec calls the board of examiners "twelve ordinary, stupid, easily swayed, hard of thinking assholes."⁵⁷ The extent of his anger against people is quite clear in this passage, as is his tendency to swear as soon as he gets angry. He appears as a kind of antisocial person, that goes along very well with the fact that it is hard for him to trust someone who thinks differently than he does.

The detective does not fly off the handle for no reason and sometimes, he lets his personal point of view and convictions get in the way. We can find three subjects on

55 Alec Hardy, Lee Ashworth, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 3:27 – 3:57.

56 Alec Hardy, Claire Ripley, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 11:41 – 12:29.

57 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 3:49 – 4:04.

which Alec gets angry because of his own views: spiritualism, religion and the media. The first of them, spiritualism, appears only in the first season. Alec faces Steve Connelly, an electrician who claims he is receiving messages that dead people want to transmit to the living world. Even though he takes the time to hear what the electrician has to say, Alec is being rather ironical and sarcastic and he shows that he does not believe Steve. The detective says to him: “I want you to know that nothing offends me more than cranks wasting police time.”⁵⁸ We know therefore that he does not believe in mediums, and he becomes mean with Steve, not taking him seriously as a psychic and almost making fun of him during custody. The detective’s own beliefs are getting in the way. This is something inspired from the realism of detective stories, in which a rational approach is used. For instance, we can mention one of Doyle’s stories, “The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire”, in which Sherlock Holmes says to Watson:

“You are right, Watson. It mentions the legend in one of these references. But are we to give serious attention to such things? This agency stands flat-footed upon the ground, and there it must remain. The world is big enough for us. No ghosts need apply.”⁵⁹

Alec Hardy, as a detective, uses the same deductive approach as Sherlock Holmes, without paying attention to a possible spiritual approach.

The same goes when the detective has to deal with religion, especially when he comes to be face to face with Reverend Paul Coates. Once again, this is an issue that appears more in the first season, as Alec does not have any real confrontation with Paul in the second season.

“**Alec Hardy:** I watch this happen every time. A terrible event, and church piles in gleefully. And suddenly, people are paying attention. For the rest of the year, you're just that building nobody goes in.

Paul Coates: You have no concept of faith, do you? I didn't muscle in. People turned to me. People who wouldn't normally think about religion. They ask me to speak, they ask me to listen. They needed me. Do you know why? Do you know why they came to me? Because there was a fear that you couldn't address, a gap that you couldn't plug. Because all you have is suspicion, and an urge to blame whoever is in closest proximity.”⁶⁰

58 Steve Connelly, Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 37:03 – 38:29.

59 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes*, “The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire.” 1921-1927. <<https://sherlock-holm.es/stories/pdf/a4/1-sided/suss.pdf>> Accessed July 26, 2017.

60 Alec Hardy, Paul Coates, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 29:15 – 29:44.

According to Alec, the British Church is corrupted, and he does not believe in religion or in anything related to it. We also know that he does not really care about offending the church during this investigation, contrary to his superior⁶¹. He is close-minded about religion and he is not going to let it interfere with the inquiry.

Lastly, as we mentioned, Alec Hardy also has strong feelings against the media. In both seasons, he expresses disagreements with the journalists, especially with the youngest reporter, Olly Stevens. In the first season, the detective asks him to “stay out of [his] way”⁶². This animosity against the young journalist will remain throughout the second season. In his quest for further information, Olly comes to Alec to ask him about Lee Ashworth and the detective sends him away by saying: “You people [the journalists] think you're saving the world when you just make it harder to live in.”⁶³ Alec does not like people who are too curious and always eager to get involved in an investigation, which is the definition that we could apply to some of the journalists in the show. Finally, as for the journalists, the detective has also been bitter about the media since the Sandbrook case.

“Karen White: Come on, five minutes, couple of quotes, tell me where you've been, what you've been up to.

Alec Hardy: After what you did to me last time?

Karen: Legitimate investigation...

Alec: You turned me over. You will never have anything out of me as long as I am breathing.”⁶⁴

Alec Hardy refuses to relate to the media and wants them as far away from his investigation as possible. He has been sullied once at the end of the Sandbrook trial and refuses to see that happen again neither during the investigation on the murder of Danny Latimer nor during the lawsuit against Joe Miller. This animosity and lack of beliefs that the detective has might result in the anger we previously mentioned.

61 Alec Hardy, Elaine Jenkinson, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 16:50 – 17:04.

62 Maggie Radcliffe, Olly Stevens, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 36:00 – 36:30.

63 Olly Stevens, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 2:30 – 3:19.

64 Karen White, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 3, 42:15 – 42:45.

c – Desire for solitude

One of the characteristics of Alec Hardy's behaviour is that he is not much inclined to spend time with people. This gives place to several scenes, especially in the first season, where the detective's unease to accept something that is offered to him creates a rather comical situation. We have different instances of Alec being offered a meal⁶⁵ or invited to have a drink with colleagues⁶⁶, but each time, the detective either does not understand why he is offered something or simply refuses it. We, therefore, understand that he has a problem with hospitality and generosity. He is not used to people being kind to him and thus does not know how to react in such situations. As we mentioned at the beginning of our analysis, the detective in literature also appears as a lonely man diminishing people and not allowing much place to kindness, as in the case of Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Poirot. Therefore, being an unsociable person seems to be a characteristic for the detective. To go even further, we discover that Alec is also against calling people by their first names, clearly showing how much he likes to shut himself away from other people. He says:

“Why does everyone use first names so much like they all work in marketing? Why do people insist on doing that? I mean, if you look at a person, I look at you... You know I'm talking to you. I don't need to say your name three times just to congratulate myself on remembering it to create some... sort of false intimacy or...”⁶⁷

In the series, Alec's loneliness is also underlined through the way the show has been edited and shot⁶⁸. In the first season, we do not have many shots of the detective on his own that are relevant to show his loneliness as a human being, but in the second season, as we can see in the appendix, the shots of the character on his own are numerous. If we consider pictures (2), (3) and (4), which are chronologically ordered, we can even notice that as the show is going on, we see the character from further and further away. He appears smaller and smaller and is never centred in the landscape as if he was not the main focus of the scenery. He looks as if isolated from the rest of the city, in his hut or in a field. This narration through pictures gives us an account of the

65 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 28:13 – 28:32.

66 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 30:47 – 31:40.

67 Alec Hardy, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 25:24 – 25:50.

68 Appendix 1.

feeling of the detective and a direct glimpse at his mental state. As he is more and more isolated in the screen shots, he is also lost in the Sandbrook investigation, which leads him to detach himself from the rest of the community. Moreover, as far as the production of the series is concerned, we also have to mention that the actor who plays the part of Alec, David Tennant, is Scottish. Even though it does not appear in his physical feature, his accent is quite different from the traditional British accent. Therefore, Alec is also Scottish, as noted by Ellie when she asks: “What kind of a Scot are you?”⁶⁹ The fact that Alec is not British, contrary to the major part of Broadchurch inhabitants, also contributes to his isolation.

Alec's desire for solitude is also stressed for the viewer thanks to the gap of awareness between what the viewer knows and what the characters who are around the detective know. As viewers, we have access to Alec's mind through specific images. Indeed, we have access to his nightmares, for instance. One of the nightmares shows the detective walking on Broadchurch beach, and seeing four of the suspects ready to be taken away by a wave, as he is telling them to “get away from the water”⁷⁰. Moreover, the way this passage is edited helps to understand that it is a nightmare. We have discrepancies, as the detective walking towards the cliffs and then away from them. The blue colouring is also different from that we are used to in the whole of the show. The four men, Steve Connelly, Nigel Carter, Paul Coates and Mark Latimer, are impassive, they do not move and their facial expressions are quite neutral, which contrasts with the detective screaming. The waves in the background appear as if ready to take away the four men. Finally, the fact that the nightmare ends with Alec in the same position as the others, back to the water, helps to understand how he places himself in the investigation, that is to say that he questions himself as much as he questions the different suspects. These nightmares are specific to Alec, and he does not give any explanation about them, neither does he talk about them to anyone. Only the viewer knows what is going on in the detective's mind, even though he is not given a clear explanation. On this point, the detective of the show is opposed to detectives in literature, as for them, as we said, their mind is quite closed to the reader. We also have access to the detective's memories, which can be assimilated to analepses. We have at least one shot of himself as a young boy on Broadchurch's beach.

69 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 28:13 – 28:32.

70 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 0:54 – 1:33.



1: *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 1:12

We, as viewers, consequently know that Alec has already been in Broadchurch prior to being named detective inspector at the police station. We have different instances of his own memory, one of them being at the end of the first episode in the second season⁷¹, in which we see the detective at Sandbrook, probably after the disappearance of the two girls. All these elements help us to draw a sketch of the importance of Alec's past life, which will be studied later on in this analysis. The viewer is the only one who knows about these elements and can, therefore, try to guess what these memories or nightmares are referring to.

Finally, we have also access to the detective's mind because of Alec's health. The detective is ill in the series, but not many people have access to that, only the viewer does. Hence, we have either access to his vision being blurred or to him taking drugs, especially in the first season⁷². We also witness the detective collapsing several times and ending up in the hospital, which is a clear weakness for him, especially when for instance, it occurs while he is running after the culprit⁷³. As the series is going on, more and more people are aware that he is sick. We learn that he has had heart arrhythmia for eighteen months at the same time as Ellie does⁷⁴, and that he cannot be cured without taking the risk of dying during the operation. We also find out that he had a will written

71 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 43:55 – 44:10.

72 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 15:25 – 16:03.

73 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 44:41 – 45:45.

74 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 1:53 – 2:55.

for him by Jocelyn Knight⁷⁵, whom he does not tell that he is sick when asked why he needs to write that will. He just answers: “just putting things right” without even mentioning his condition. His sickness is assimilated to a flaw in his aim to be such a brilliant detective, therefore, his choice not to let people know is legitimate and understandable, especially once we know that he loses his post as a detective inspector once his superior is aware of his condition at the beginning of the second season⁷⁶.

This tendency to give us, spectators, a glimpse of the detective's state of mind and intimacy is specific to the TV series, because in literature, as far as Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Poirot are concerned, the narrator is another character, one who cannot enter the detective's head. As for Father Brown, the narrator is extradiegetic and therefore, does not really have access to what is going on in the priest's head. Being able to see what is going on in the detective's head might be specific to the TV genre, and we can find the same process of allowing the viewer an access to the detective's mind in the TV series *Sherlock*⁷⁷, as pointed out by H  l  ne Machinal:

“Gatiss et Moffat ont en quelque sorte pris un parti inverse, au sens o   un certain nombre d’informations sont d’embl  e donn  es, non pas    Watson ou    la police, mais au spectateur. On retrouve donc la sc  ne de crime analys  e par Sherlock mais ses pens  es ne sont plus imp  n  rables car certains   l  ments d’observation sont soulign  s par du text qui appara  t en sur-imposition de l’image, une technique par ailleurs r  currente dans la s  rie.”⁷⁸

d – Before Broadchurch

Another aspect brought up by the TV series is the importance of the detective's former life, that is to say, what happened before the beginning of the diegesis. First, we have some hints about Alec Hardy’s childhood in the last episode of the first series:

Ellie Miller: Sir, why'd you call me all the way down here? What is going on?

Alec Hardy: I was here before. On this beach. I came here as a kid. With a tent. Some campsite near the cliff. I tried looking for it when I first came.

Ellie: You came on holiday to Broadchurch?

Alec: Didn't remember I was here till the day I arrived. It freaked me out. Those

75 Jocelyn Knight, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 26:22 – 27:53.

76 Alec Hardy, his superior, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 1:15 – 1:38.

77 *Sherlock*, Mark Gatiss, Steven Moffat, BBC, 4 seasons, 2010 – present day.

78 H  l  ne Machinal, *Sherlock Holmes, un nouveau limier pour le XXIe si  cle*. “De Babbage    Wiener: adaptation, variation, cr  ation dans la s  rie *Sherlock* de Gatiss et Moffat.” (Presse Universitaire de Rennes, 2016) 141.

bloody cliffs still there. Still the same. I used to sit under them and get away from my parents arguing. They kept bickering till the day Mum died. Last thing she ever said to me, she said: 'God will put you in the right place even if you don't know it at the time.'"⁷⁹

While learning about Alec's childhood holidays, we also learn about his parents. It is the only mention of them that we have in both these seasons. One point worthy to note is the fact that he quotes his own mother quoting God, even though he has a negative approach to religious beliefs in the series. We know that his mother was religious and that she died when he was apparently quite young, probably a child or a teenager. Therefore, we might conclude that the death of a possibly pious mother gave him this reluctance towards religion. We are also allowed to know that he has been married and that he has a fifteen-year-old daughter⁸⁰. Even though there are not a lot of allusions to his former wife in the first season, except when he talks about the Sandbrook case, his daughter is more often referred to. He calls her and leaves her the following message:

“**Alec Hardy:** Hey, it's me. Just checking out with your voice-mail, as usual. Listen, if you get a chance, give me a call. It's been a long time. I mean, I know... I know you're busy with school and home and... all the other things you do but... I do think about you, everyday. Sorry. Not getting sappy. Sorry. You had my word on that. We could do video call, couldn't we? I'd like that. You could be my first video call. Before you forget what I look like. Right, well, that's me. That is Dad, signing off. I love you darling. Please give me a ring.”⁸¹

For the first time in the show, the detective allows the viewer a glimpse at his feelings and appears as a worried father, who is far away from his daughter and who is not overjoyed by this idea. He also seems to be a protective father, who wants to be involved in the education of Daisy. He proves out to be both in the second season⁸². Finally, about Daisy, we can also draw attention to the dedication of her father to her, when at the end of this season, he says that now he wants to leave Broadchurch to live closer to his daughter⁸³. To come back to his wife, Tess Henchard, she is introduced as a new secondary character in the second season. She is a detective sergeant and she used to work with Alec before he came to Broadchurch. The only element about Tess that we

79 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 8:04 – 8:54.

80 Joe Miller, Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 26:34 – 27:16.

81 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 31:56 – 32:33.

82 Alec Hardy, Tess Henchard, Daisy Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 39:24 – 40:18.

83 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 42:47 – 42:57.

have in the first season is the fact that she and Alec divorced because of her affair with one of their colleagues⁸⁴, the affair that led to the collapsing of the Sandbrook case. In the second season, she is introduced because Alec needs help from another detective to re-open the Sandbrook case. Throughout the second season, we can observe a shift in the relation between Alec and Tess. At first, both of them appear quite hostile at the idea of working together again and she even goes up to refuse to help him. But as the show is going on, and as both of them meet again, we can detect a kind of nostalgic feeling in the words of the detective, as he says to her he wishes they “could go back, still be a family⁸⁵”. In spite of what we said before about Alec being an angry lonely man, this new facet of his personality makes him a father and husband, or former husband, full of tenderness. He cares for his close relatives, and even though his family does not appear in the first season, they are part of the narrative in the second one and take a valuable place in the life of the detective.

However, the importance of his private life in the show, or his sickness and his family, are facets that we do not find in literature. The detectives that we have in books are characterized by their gifted mind and deductive methods, but not so much by their surroundings, relatives or private occupations. Even though as readers, we tend to feel close enough to the detectives, in the end, we do not know many things about their personal family life. We know, for instance, that Sherlock Holmes is not a lonely child, as he refers to his “brother Mycroft”⁸⁶ but that is the only thing that we learn about his family in the entire canon of Conan Doyle. As for Hercule Poirot, he might sometimes refer to experiences from his childhood or from his youth, but we do not have precise references of his parents or family. The same also goes for Father Brown, who does not tell a lot about himself. However, as far as the adaptations of these literary stories are concerned, there is an emphasis on their private life, as for instance, Mycroft who becomes a recurrent character in the TV series *Sherlock*.

As a whole, we can say that the character of Alec in *Broadchurch* is partly defined by his mental portrait. As opposed to the detectives in literature, the fact that the viewer is allowed a closer and more personal approach to the detective in the series

84 Olly Stevens, Alec Hardy, Maggie Radcliffe, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 37:45 – 38:40.

85 Tess Henchard, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 6, 10:39 – 10:53.

86 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes – The Complete Novels and Stories Volume I*. “The Greek Interpreter” 1893. (Bantam Classic, 2003) 683.

helps him to be able to define him through his personality. He is even given a glimpse of the evolution of the detective, making him a round character who evolves through the episodes.

3 – Professional and physical description of the detective

Nevertheless, Alec Hardy is not exclusively defined by what is going on in his mind or the way he reacts in front of several situations. As suggested by this analysis, Alec Hardy is before anything else a detective from a 21st century TV show.

a – Alec Hardy as a professional detective

Alec can easily be compared to detectives in literature because of his background as a police worker. As we said in the beginning of our analysis, the different literary detectives that we chose are not properly working for the police in so far that they do not have a proper police training.

“In this respect, they [Dupin and Holmes] are amateur detectives, in the true sense of the word 'amateur', practising their profession more as a hobby than as a means of making a living like the professional private eye or the police detective of the police procedural.”⁸⁷

In his precise definition of the amateur detective, John Scaggs points out the fact that in literature, detection is often exercised as a hobby. In *Broadchurch*, Alec Hardy is not an amateur detective. He is employed by the Broadchurch Police as a DI, that is to say, he is the one who will run the investigation. Detection is not a hobby for him, but a concrete job. He is employed and, to use the words of Scaggs, he is a “police detective of the police procedural”.

The fact that Alec is a real professional detective also justifies the mention of the Sandbrook case. In literature, we barely have references to other investigations the detective has dealt with, apart from the one he is presently dealing with in the novel or short story at stake⁸⁸. The Sandbrook case appears as a good instance of a pre-diegetic

87 John Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*. “Mystery and detective fiction”. (Routledge, 2005) 40.

88 Except in Conan Doyle’s canon, in which Watson sometimes refers to cases that have not been dealt with in the diegesis of the short stories but that were supposedly solved by Sherlock Holmes.

investigation, as it occurred several months before the death of Danny Latimer. In the second season, the mention of Alec's implication in the Sandbrook case is rather obvious. This second season is divided into two, one of the parts deals with the trial of Joe Miller, and the other one with the return to the past, that is to say to the reopening of the Sandbrook case. Therefore, it evolves around Alec's progression in the investigation. But in the first season, there are many references made to Alec's former case, and it is often linked with the preconceived ideas that people have about the detective not being adequate for the job in Broadchurch. For instance, Elaine Jenkinson, the Chief Superintendent of the Police Station, doubts that Alec is suitable for the Latimer's case because of Sandbrook:

“Elaine Jenkinson: Given the nature of this case, it probably makes sense to hand it on to another lead officer.

Alec Hardy: No.

Elaine: It's nothing to do with your ability. We just don't want Sandbrook to become a thing.

Alec: I was completely exonerated.

Elaine: Alec, you came down here to lie low.

Alec: I came down here to do whatever the job requires.

Elaine: But in terms of public perception, you may be vulnerable. I'm giving you the chance to step back. Nobody will blame you.”⁸⁹

Even though people might think that the Sandbrook case was a low point in his career, Alec has decided to use this case as a driving force, a sort of motivation to solve the case he is working on in the first season. In the end, Alec will only explain the case he has worked on before Broadchurch in the seventh episode of the first season when he finally agrees to tell the journalists why this case was such a failure⁹⁰, that is to say why he covered his wife and lost his job in Sandbrook. This centrality of one of the detective's previous investigation is thus not something that we find in literature. Here in *Broadchurch*, this previous enquiry becomes one of the centres of attention in the second season. Alec Hardy is a professional, therefore, the investigations with which he was faced in the past are part of his curriculum vitae and they play a part in his being offered a job in another town and with another police team.

However, in the second season of the series, Alec has lost his position as a DI. He still works for the Broadchurch Police, but instead of being directly on the field, he

89 Elaine Jenkinson, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 24:10 – 24:33.

90 Olly Stevens, Alec Hardy, Maggie Radcliffe, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 35:41 – 36:18.

does other jobs, as for instance teaching new recruits the work of a police agent. He does not like it, as proven through this exchange with the Chief Superintendent:

“Alec Hardy: At fixed intervals, during the probationary period, you'll have a review. Conducted by the Learning Development Officer. This will establish whether or not you have met the required standards to be an efficient and effective police officer.

Chief Superintendent: Why the hell did you say yes to this job if you don't enjoy it?

Alec: Not that bad, am I?

CS: You'll demotivate our entire intake. The boredom drips off you.

Alec: I was good at my job.

CS: Yeah, and you're no longer fit for it. So get good at this one or do something else.”⁹¹

On that point, and even though he is still part of the police hierarchy, he could be compared to Hercule Poirot. As we said, the Belgian detective was once part of the police forces, but he retired. Therefore, exactly as Alec, notwithstanding that they both had a professional training, they are both no longer to professionally investigate on cases anymore. However, in both cases, they still behave as if they were detectives, as Alec is still thinking about the Sandbrook file after losing his position, almost as an “amateur detective” who does it for his own fulfilment without a lucrative aim, except giving justice to the families and clearing his name.

Finally, as a detective, Alec Hardy appears to have a different method than that of the literary figures we mentioned before. In literature, we can say that our literary detectives are gifted with what has been called, essentially based on Sherlock Holmes, the science of deduction. Holmes proves to be good at deduction as he does not really need anyone to find his own clues. His method, based on phrenology and physiognomy, is clearly inspired by Lombroso⁹², whose aim is to prove that there is a link between the appearance and the mental portrait of a man, based on the idea of determinism, which is as we said, one of the main characteristics of a detective story. Doyle gives to his detective this ability, and on several occasions, Sherlock Holmes proves that he is following this approach linking the physical features of a body to the mind of the person to determine his/her profile, as here, in *A Study in Scarlet*:

“Even across the street I could see a great blue anchor tattooed on the back of the

91 Alec Hardy, Chief Superintendent, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 0:56 – 1:40.

92 Cesare Lombroso, *L'Uomo delinquente*, Volume II. (Félix Alcan, 1895)

fellow's hand. That smacked of the sea. He had a military carriage, however, and regulation side whiskers. There we have the marine. He was a man with some amount of self-importance and a certain air of command. You must have observed the way in which he held his head and swung his cane. A steady, respectable, middle-aged man, too, on the face of him – all facts which led me to believe that he had been a sergeant.”⁹³

In *Broadchurch*, however, this is not the way used by Alec Hardy to come to a conclusion in his investigation. In that sense, the TV show appears to be based on concrete facts rather than on observations. To demonstrate this, we will essentially look at the first season of the series. Alec discovers the investigation, and everything linked to it. However, contrary to our literary detectives, he bases his case on clues that are given to him by scientific experts most of the time. We can note the presence of a pathologist who determines scientifically the reasons for the death of Danny Latimer:

“Superficial cuts and bruises to the face. Traces of domestic cleaning fluid on the skin. Cause of death was asphyxiation. He was strangled. Bruising to the neck and windpipe and at the top of the spine. The pattern of bruises suggest large hands, I'd suggest er... male. It erm... it would have been brutal. The angle suggests he would have been facing his attacker. Er... He would have known.”⁹⁴

The analysis of the pathologist is based upon his own scientific and professional observations that he relates to the detectives. Several times, Alec is also helped by the SOCO (Scenes of Crime Officer), Brian Young who finds pieces of hair⁹⁵ or other material clues. Therefore, we can say that Alec Hardy uses an approach to the investigation based on facts, that are often offered to him by experts. As a detective, he uses these clues and facts, and interprets them to come up to a conclusion, as he does when he learns the shoe size of the murderer⁹⁶ and uses it to come to a kind of conclusion when asking Joe Miller his shoe size⁹⁷. As viewers, we are aware of what Alec Hardy knows, and therefore, we are placed at the same level of knowledge as the detective, as opposed to detectives in literature, who tend to be placed on a superior level than that of readers. However, the fact that the detective only interprets clues that are given to him may sometimes be a disadvantage because these clues need to be from

93 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *op. cit.* “*A Study in Scarlet*” 21.

94 Dr. James Lovegood, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 26:16 – 26:41.

95 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, Brian Young, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 2:42 – 3:47.

96 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 43:02 – 43:14.

97 Alec Hardy, Tom Miller, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 7:10 – 7:35.

a reliable source, which the newspapers are not when they influence Alec on his point of view over Jack Marshall⁹⁸. Even though he uses a different approach than that of the literary detectives, Alec Hardy remains a reliable source most of the time in the series.

b – The detective's physical appearance

As we saw earlier in this part, in literature, detectives are not precisely described, as the physical appearance of the detective is not of prime importance. However, even though physical description in literature is not always of first concern, it is still part of the portrait of the detective.

In *Broadchurch*, as it is a TV product, there is no place for description as precisely as in literature. The viewer is only faced with the direct image of the detective and can only trust his own eyes. We can say that Alec Hardy appears as a rather ordinary Scottish man. He is average tall and has a classic morphology. His physical appearance does not make him noticeable. He has a stubble, which a lot of men actually have in the 21st century. As for his outfit, we can notice that he often wears the same kind of clothes, that is to say, a white shirt with a grey or navy blue tie, dark pants and a kind of black trench coat or suit jacket. The fact that he tends to wear the same kind of



2: *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 28:11

98 Alec Hardy, Maggie Radcliffe, Ellie Miller, Olly Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 9:30 – 10:08.

clothes everyday is something that Ellie makes fun of, when ironically asking to the detective: “Different suit?”⁹⁹ Therefore, even though Alec says that he does not like the town, he still wants to be a part of the group as he does not stand out. He is not trying to emancipate himself by trying to look physically different or superior to other characters.

⁹⁹ Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 43:53 – 43:58.



3: *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 44:03

However, thanks to the flashbacks in the second season, we are given a glimpse at what Alec Hardy looked like some time before becoming a DI in Broadchurch, that is to say when he was in Sandbrook. In the picture above, we can see Alec Hardy at the beginning of the Sandbrook investigation, that is to say approximately three years before the diegesis. On this shot, Alec appears obviously younger and different than what he looks like in the diegesis. He has well-combed hair and no beard. He had a cleaner and more tidy appearance. As for his outfit, he wore the same kind of clothes that he does in the diegesis, but the wrinkly shirts that he wears at the present time have replaced the well-ironed shirt that he used to wear at the beginning of the Sandbrook case. Also, he has given up on the well-buttoned suit jacket, which used to give him a more formal appearance.

In the end, while comparing these two shots of the detective, we understand the importance of his physical appearance which in fact helps us to understand the evolution of the character. He was a less disturbed man before the Sandbrook trial, he was married, lived with his wife and daughter and he was a detective in whom an entire family had put their trust. In the second picture, we have a man who does not seem worried about his personal and professional life. As we studied the character of Alec Hardy through this first part, we know that between the Sandbrook case and the Broadchurch case, he has gone through a divorce, the Sandbrook case was a failure and

he moved to a new town that he dislikes, far away from his daughter. All these elements might explain his neglected appearance as a reflection of his mental state. This noteworthy evolution through physical appearance is specific to the TV medium as in literature, the physical appearance of the detective does not really evolve from one story to another. We could possibly talk about the description of Hercule Poirot in the last novel of Agatha Christie, which occurs many years after *The Mysterious Affair At Styles*. The detective is described by his fellow companion as such:

“My poor friend. I have described him many times. Now to convey to you the difference. Crippled with arthritis, he propelled himself about in a wheeled chair. His once plump frame had fallen in. He was a thin little man now. His face was lined and wrinkled. His moustache and hair, it is true, were still of a jet black colour, but candidly, though I would not for the world have hurt his feelings by saying so to him, this was a mistake. There comes a moment when hair dye is only too painfully obvious. There had been a time when I had been surprised to learn that the blackness of Poirot's hair came out of a bottle. But now the theatricality was apparent and merely created the impression that he wore a wig and had adorned his upper lip to amuse the children!”¹⁰⁰

The passage of time has damaged the detective but it is purely a matter of aging, and not a change in Poirot's life, as it is for Alec in *Broadchurch*. Therefore, we can say that because of the format in literature, that is to say going from one story to another, we do not really expect changes as far as the physical appearance of the detective is concerned. But in a TV series, that change is imposed on us, and we are able to interpret it based on the context around the character.

Finally, when we talk about the physical appearance of the detective in the TV show, we should not forget that his physical appearance is before anything else a choice based on the physical appearance of an actor, here David Tennant. The choice of this actor has not been randomly made, as he is quite a famous actor in Britain and even in the world. He is especially famous for his leading role as the Tenth Doctor in the British show *Doctor Who*¹⁰¹, in which he plays a rather comical part, different from that in *Broadchurch*. In an interview dated back from 2013, just before the show was aired, David Tennant describes his character as a: “flint-hearted emotionally retarded outsider.”¹⁰² Therefore, we can guess that the actor took possession of the detective, and

100 Agatha Christie, *Curtain: Poirot's Last Case*. (Collins, 1975) 14.

101 *Doctor Who (2005)*, Sydney Newman, BBC, 10 seasons, 2005 – present day.

102 David Tennant, Olivia Colman, *Daybreak* (Youtube) (March 4, 2013)
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjJFBrTbFrw>>

adapted his attitude to fit what was asked by the director. The fact that the viewer is faced with an actor and with a concrete physical image leaves him with less potential for imagination than in literature.

In the end, the character of Alec Hardy is almost as singular from the point of view of his mental portrait as from the point of view of his professional and physical portrait. He has a different method from that of the detectives in literature, mainly due to the fact that he is a TV detective and not a literature detective.

As a conclusion, we can say that in this case, the archetypical detective in literature has indeed inspired a detective on a TV show. Still, there are some differences that remain between literature and television. Chibnall created a round character, full of history and complexity. He also took some freedom to make him more accessible to the viewer. However, Alec is not the first detective on television, others came before him, and to stay in the course of our analysis, we could mention the instance of Sherlock Holmes in *Sherlock*. The detective, in this case, is also a round character, the viewer is allowed glimpses of his private life, as his relationship with his brother or his implicit attraction for Irene Adler. The story of the detective outside the investigation part of each episode is quite important. However, contrary to Alec, the viewer is not always allowed an access to Sherlock Holmes' mind. If we were to compare these two detective shows, we could say that as viewers, we have a different access to the detectives. In *Broadchurch*, even though he appears as a cold character, we still feel a kind of empathy for him. In *Sherlock*, even though we have access to some bits and pieces of his private life, we still are kept at a certain distance so that we cannot find out the result of the investigation before the detective does. As viewers, we are further from the detective than in the case of *Broadchurch*. This instance shows how different detectives can be from one crime show to another, and we are going to see that these differences apply not only to the detective but also to the entire genre of the crime series.

II – Adaptation: the evolution of detective stories

An adaptation is by definition “[...] made by adapting something else, especially a text for production on the stage, radio, etc.”¹⁰³. Therefore, it can go from one medium to another. We can also talk about evolution, as mentalities have changed since the early days of literature and even of the first crime show. We are hence going to study the shift from book to screen in the specific case of the detective genre and even more specifically by talking about the case of *Broadchurch*.

1 – From book to screen

When talking about adaptation and especially regarding our subject, the shift can be made from a medium to another. Here, it would be from book to screen, a shift that is relevant as it is based on the evolution of time and ideas. But why and how has the television medium been able to replace literature thanks to this idea of adaptation?

a – The appeal of adaptation

In her book *A Theory of Adaptation*, Linda Hutcheon gives us an overview of what adaptation is all about. We are going to base our analysis and our understanding of adaptation mainly on what she has written about this subject. As we mentioned at the very beginning of this part, an adaptation is generally defined as being a process that transfigures a text into another medium. To complete this definition, Hutcheon adds that: “The adapted text [...] is not something to be reproduced but rather something to be interpreted and recreated, often in a new medium.”¹⁰⁴ Indeed, the aim of adaptation is not to reproduce precisely a text already existing, but rather to be inspired by an already-existing work and to give it a new interpretation. As far as our literary corpus is concerned, the three detectives that we have chosen to talk about have been the subject of several adaptations. For instance, Sherlock Holmes is the main focus of the BBC series *Sherlock*¹⁰⁵, Father Brown was also the eponymous character of the new TV series

103 “Adaptation.” *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. (1993) 13.

104 Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*. (Routledge, 2006) 84.

105 *Sherlock*, Mark Gatiss, Steven Moffat, BBC, 4 seasons, 2010 – present day.

*Father Brown*¹⁰⁶ and Hercule Poirot was the hero of the series *Agatha Christie's Poirot*¹⁰⁷, a show that has been aired for around twenty-five years. These are only a few instances, but these three literary characters were also adapted in other media, as films or plays. In *Sherlock Holmes, un nouveau limier pour le XXIe siècle*, H el ene Machinal justifies the recent adaptation of the canon as a way to both strengthen the mythical dimension of the detective figure and make a contribution to the revival of the canon¹⁰⁸. These are indeed the two main aims of adaptation as a whole, and not only in the case of *Sherlock*. Adaptations are made for the audience not to forget about a character or a story.

Therefore, we can say that adaptations are something that people like to watch, in the case of a book made into a screen production. Linda Hutcheon justifies this interest for adaptations:

“Part of this pleasure [the appeal of adaptation], I want to argue, comes simply from repetition with variation, from the comfort of ritual combined with the piquancy of surprise. Recognition and remembrance are part of the pleasure (and risk) of experiencing an adaptation; so too is change.”¹⁰⁹

As stated by the author, the success of adaptations is linked to the comfort desired by the audience. They already know the main part of the story they are to watch. There is also a kind of game that takes place between the viewer who knows he is watching an adaptation and who is familiar with the adapted source. However, another key aspect mentioned by Hutcheon that makes adaptation attractive is what she calls “the piquancy of surprise”, that is to say the attraction to novelty. A work can be adapted several times without ever being the same. There are changes that appear from one adaptation to another, even though the adapted work remains the same. Directors, in the case of movies or TV series, have their own liberties to create something close to the original text, but also innovative. Here, the evolution of society plays a key role, as the context in which one adaptation is created matters, as it can be an inspiration for the adapter.

106 *Father Brown*, Rachel Flowerday, Tahsin Guner, BBC, 5 seasons, 2013 – present day.

107 *Agatha Christie's Poirot*, Clive Exton, ITV, 13 seasons, 1989 – 2013.

108 “Dans le cas de la s erie *Sherlock*, l’adaptation n’a peut  tre jamais autant repos  sur l’hybridation et la mutation, deux processus qui contribuent   la fois   la survie de la source et au renforcement de la dimension mythique de la figure.” H el ene Machinal, *Sherlock Holmes, un nouveau limier pour le XXIe si cle*. “De Babbage   Wiener: adaptation, variation, cr ation dans la s erie *Sherlock* de Gatiss et Moffat.” (Presse Universitaire de Rennes, 2016) 134.

109 Linda Hutcheon, *op. cit.* 4.

“The context of creation and reception are material, public, and economic as much as they are cultural, personal and aesthetic. This explains why, even in today’s globalized world, major shifts in story’s context – that is, for example, in a national setting or time period – can change radically how the transposed story is interpreted, ideologically and literally.”¹¹⁰

An adaptation can therefore tell the same narrative as a written text, for instance, but the story might be placed in another context. Here again, the instance of *Sherlock* is relevant, as the 19th century canon has been transposed into the 21st century London, and all the changes that it involves.

“Le siècle change donc et nous voilà au XXIe, mais est-ce là la véritable nouveauté qu’introduit la série ? Certes, le fiacre est remplacé par des taxis, les fumeries d’opium par des squats de sans-abris, le télégramme par des textos, mais le 221B Baker Street, Mme Hudson, Sherlock ou Watson changent-ils réellement ?”¹¹¹

The question asked by Hélène Machinal illustrates what has been said before. The essence of the adapted text remains, even though the context is different. Also, as mentioned by Hutcheon, “the audience too interprets in a context”¹¹². Therefore, the context in which an adaptation is created is as important as the context in which it is received.

To conclude on adaptation, we can one more time use the word of Linda Hutcheon, by saying that adaptation is “repetition without replication, bringing together the comfort of ritual and recognition with the delight of surprise and novelty”¹¹³. There is an infinity of adaptations that can be made based on the same source work. In the case of our dissertation, *Broadchurch* is not an adaptation directly inspired from a book¹¹⁴. It is however inspired from other literary detectives, as we previously mentioned, but also from other shows, as we will develop further.

110 Linda Hutcheon, *op. cit.* 28.

111 Hélène Machinal, *op. cit.* 135.

112 Linda Hutcheon, *op. cit.* 109.

113 *Ibid.* 173.

114 However, a year after the diffusion of the first season, Chris Chibnall, *Broadchurch*’s director, and Erin Kelly worked together to write *Broadchurch* the book as an adaptation of the first season of the TV series.

b – Screen over books

In our 21st century society, we cannot help but notice the impact of screens on our everyday life. This is a shift in our society that has been going on for several decades now. In 1988, this notion of “screen culture” has been defined by Pierre Chambat and Alain Ehrenberg as such:

“Désormais, *tout semble pouvoir être visualisé sur écran* : toute activité, toute relation, n'importe où, n'importe quand. La multiplication des supports-écran est telle que leur distribution est susceptible de former un *continuum* comparable à ce qu'est l'imprimé depuis deux siècles. Avec l'universalisation de ce nouveau support, se profile la mise en place progressive d'*une culture de l'écran, qui est autre chose qu'une civilisation de l'image, à l'instar de la culture de l'imprimé, qui n'est pas une civilisation de l'écrit.*”¹¹⁵

We can notice that this definition, even though written in 1988, is still valid today in 2017. The expansion of screens is still going on. Back when Chambat and Ehrenberg were writing this article, people were not yet losing interest in printed forms of entertainment, screens were just another way for them to distract themselves whereas books and printed newspapers still had a major place in the households. Today, the shift from paper to screen is such that from now on, even books and newspapers have their own place on screen thanks to e-book reader or TV news. This is a good instance to underline a characteristic of our current society, in which “social networking and gaming”¹¹⁶ are the main activities of children.

The imposition of screens is also due to the fact that screen productions offer a new way to receive a work.

“In the telling mode – in narrative literature, for example – our engagement begins in the realm of imagination, which is simultaneously controlled by the selected, directing words of the text and liberated – that is unconstrained by the limits of the visual or aural. We can stop reading at any point; we can re-read or skip ahead; we hold the book in our hand and feel, as well as see, how much of the story remains to be read. But with the move to the mode of showing, as in film and stage adaptations, we are caught in unrelenting, forward-driving story. And we have moved from the imagination to the realm of direct perception – with its mix of

115 Pierre Chambat, Alain Ehrenberg, “La culture de l'écran.” *Le débat*, n°52. November December 1988. 110. (Emphasis in italic made by the authors.)

116 Nick Knight, “The Age of Inactivity: How Laziness is Killing Us.” *The Independent*. June 26, 2015. <<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/features/the-age-of-inactivity-how-laziness-is-killing-us-10347541.html>> Accessed June 6, 2017.

both detail and broad focus. The performance mode teaches us that language is not the only way to express meaning or to relate stories. Visual and gestural representations are rich in complex associations [...].”¹¹⁷

There are differences between reading and seeing. As far as the television medium is concerned and the different ways that we have to watch a TV show or a movie, that is to say when it is aired on television or later on a DVD, we do not know when it is going to end, compared to a book in which, as Hutcheon mentioned, we are aware of the number of pages left before the end of the book. Not seeing the end coming acts as an element of surprise for the viewer, especially when the end is unexpected.

We said that one of the most important differences when going from book to screen is the way the narrative works. Showing and telling are two different medium used to tell stories. The criteria are not the same, as explained once again by Hutcheon:

“[...] to tell a story, as in novels, short stories, and even historical accounts, is to describe, explain, summarize, expand; the narrator has a point of view and great power to leap through time and space and sometimes venture inside the minds of characters. To show a story, as in movies, ballets, radio and stage plays, musicals and operas, involves a direct aural and usually visual performance experiences in real time.”¹¹⁸

The viewer and the reader have two different roles to play in relation with the production they are in front of. Whereas the reader is obliged to follow what is imposed by the narrator, the viewer is more autonomous in his interpretation of what is going on on the screen. He sees scenes put up by the director, but he can choose to focus on certain elements. This shift involves a different way of receiving screen production, as explained by Machinal in the case of *Sherlock*:

“L’adaptation implique donc aussi une mutation du rôle joué par le prisme narratif. Nous ne lisons plus la prose d’un Watson-narrateur qui nous dit ce qu’il voit sans le comprendre car il écrit l’enquête dans le temps diégétique de son déroulement. Au contraire, c’est le spectateur qui acquiert une position privilégiée dans le processus herméneutique.”¹¹⁹

In this case, we see that the role of the viewer is different from that of the reader, if not superior to the reader. Even though in the case of detective stories, the reader always has

117 Linda Hutcheon, *op. cit.* 23.

118 *Ibid.* 13.

119 Héléne Machinal, *op. cit.* 143.

to play a part and to run his own investigation, he is still compelled to follow what the narrator says. When the narrator is part of the story, the reader has to follow what he says, without really knowing if that narrator is trustworthy or not. In the case of two of the detectives used in our corpus, the narrator is a character from the narrative, moreover, he is the companion of the detective. The reader is learning about the story through his eyes, but he could question the morality of this second character. In the cases of Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Poirot, Watson and Hastings both appear to be reliable and convincing, so the reader goes for what they are saying. But in other narratives, it can be tricky to know whether one should trust the narrator or not, as in *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* by Agatha Christie. In this detective novel, the reader learns at the end that the narrator happens to be the murderer. In the last chapter, the narrator/murderer gives an account of what he did to the victim and why:

“Poor old Ackroyd. I’m always glad that I gave him a chance. I urged him to read that letter before it was too late. Or let me be honest – didn’t I subconsciously realize that with a pig-headed chap like him, it was my best chance of getting him *not* to read it? His nervousness that night was interested psychologically. He knew danger was close at hand. And yet he never suspected *me*.”¹²⁰

In this precise example, the reader is misled through the entire novel, that is to say roughly two hundred and thirty pages. We cannot say that it is something that is proper to literature and that it would never happen in a TV series or in a movie because these can be filmed from a single point of view and the problem will be the same. However, as we mentioned before, the viewer can generally see and distinguish more elements when he watches something on a screen than when he is reading a book and has to create his own image of the scene and of the characters. With a screen production, instead of the narrator, the viewer might be following several characters. In the end, he is faced with only what the director allows him to see. For instance, in detective movies or shows, sometimes, the emphasis might be made thanks to a zoom or a close-up on clues that will have an importance in the course of the narrative, as the floor boards in the second season of *Broadchurch*¹²¹. By following a director who is obviously not part of the narrative in a movie or a show, the spectator is allowed to have a more objective approach to the characters and the plot that are at stake. In the end, the reader and the

120 Agatha Christie, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*. [1926] (Harper Collins, 1999) 233.

121 Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 33:47 – 33:59.

viewer have different roles to play when faced with a written or a screen production. Even though, the reader appears freer as far as his imagination is concerned whereas the viewer has a concrete image in front of his own eyes. However, if we consider the trust issue, the viewer might be more able to have his own opinion, based on what he sees and not on what he has been told.

In the end, screen productions are more popular than books nowadays. However, even this sphere of fictional productions is twofold: cinema and television shows. The latter has been growing extensively these last years. According to IMDb, the number of shows produced went from 1,756 between 1996 and 1997¹²² to 6,751 between 2016 and 2017¹²³. We can see that in twenty years, the number of TV series produced has almost been multiplied by four. The reason behind this exponential growth of the number of shows produced is justified by a growing popular interest in television shows. These days, people might prefer to watch TV series than movies and this might be because of the proximity created by TV series. As explained by Jean-Pierre Esquenazi¹²⁴, the perk of a TV show is that it creates a kind of privacy with the viewer, as he watches the show on a television post, on his computer or even today, on his phone or his tablet computer. The viewer does not need to go to the show, the show comes to the viewer. He feels intimate with it as each week, he meets again the same characters. Another aspect that makes the TV product really popular is the fact that in some cases, the narrative can be really close to reality, and the plot can help the viewer to relate and create a link between what is happening in the show and his everyday life. However, the fictional aspect can also maintain the viewer at a certain distance¹²⁵. As explained by Bambi L. Haggins:

122 “Most Popular TV Series Released 1996-01-01 to 1996-12-31.” *IMDb*. <http://www.imdb.com/search/title?year=1996,1996&title_type=tv_series&sort=moviemeter,asc> Accessed June 8 2017.

123 “Most Popular TV Series Released 2016-01-01 to 2016-12-31.” *IMDb*. <http://www.imdb.com/search/title?year=2016,2016&title_type=tv_series&sort=moviemeter,asc> Accessed June 8 2017.

124 “La première grande réussite du genre sériel, *c’est d’être parvenu à nous proposer des mondes fonctionnels qui réussissent à partager notre intimité.*” Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, *Mythologie des séries télé*. (Le Cavalier Bleu, 2009) 8.

125 A recent example might be the way some TV series reacted to the election of Donald Trump. For instance, *The Good Fight* was first written based on the fact that Hillary Clinton would be elected as president, but as she was not, 75% of the script content had to be rewritten. Also, in the seventeenth episode of the third season of *Jane The Virgin*, several characters are dealing with problems of immigration and people speaking Spanish in America, something that they directly link to the new president of the United States.

“[...] the work of the media theorist Alice Hall, who describes a range of elements that establish how “real” a series *feels* to an audience: whether the events could have happened (“plausibility”); whether the characters are “identifiable” (“typicality”); and, the “gold standard” of television realism, whether the story is based on actual events (“factuality”)”¹²⁶

In the end, a screen product is more attractive to people nowadays mainly because of its concrete image and even when transferred into a completely fictional world, its proximity to the viewer’s life.

c – TV shows

We are now going to focus exclusively on the concept of TV series, putting aside all the other screen products we might have mentioned before. In his book *Les séries télévisées, l’avenir du cinéma ?*, Jean-Pierre Esquenazi explains that television shows as a genre are an equivalent to what serial books were during the 19th century¹²⁷. Indeed, this format of entertainment allows a kind of continuity similar to that we could have found in serial publication in magazines as the Sherlock Holmes stories for instance. The difference lies in the fact that they are produced on screen and therefore, deliver a direct image to a reader that has become a viewer. A few years back, TV shows were, as mentioned in their very denomination, specific to the television medium. However, new independent companies began to specialize in streaming and video-on-demand, as Netflix or Amazon Studios, streaming a lot of different movies, shows, and even their own productions. Therefore, what we still call today “TV series” are now also streamed on computer or mobile phone as much as they are on television. The mobility of this new kind of entertainment is also responsible for its expansion, even though, as mentioned by Ethan Thompson and Jason Mittell, people still watch TV on their television sets:

“However, television is (and always has been) more than just a furniture, and now in our era of convergence among different technologies and cultural forms, there

126 Bambi L. Haggins. *How To Watch Television. “Homicide.”*, ed. Ethan Thompson, Jason Mittell. (New York University Press, 2013) 17.

127 “La série comme genre correspond exactement aux exigences de la programmation télévisuelle ; elle est l’exemple d’une programmation idéale, comme l’a été par exemple le roman feuilleton pour les premiers journaux populaires du XIX^e siècle.” Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, *Les séries télévisées, l’avenir du cinéma ?* (Armand Collin, 2014) 26-27.

is more TV than ever. New or emergent form of television work alongside the residual or “old”, and it’s important to remember that the majority of viewers still do most of their watching on traditional television sets.”¹²⁸

As we mentioned above, the influence of shows, their growing number and their extensive presence in our everyday life is more than noticeable. We will base ourselves on a French TV program. We ran a study to measure the importance of TV series in programs on television in France. We considered the three main channels in France, that is to say those that generally have the best audience: TF1, France 2 and M6. We counted the number of fictional TV series. In other words, we did not take into account all the different shows that belong to reality TV. To comment on the graph in Appendix 2.1, we can see that the number of episodes aired per day in France is quite high. We notice the importance of airing TV series for TF1, which broadcasts around sixty-six episodes per week. Each of these channels is different, they all broadcast different kinds of TV series. The fact that so many episodes are aired per week is detrimental to other TV programs, as documentaries, games or the news. It might also result in a change in the target audience, as a younger audience might be more attracted to shows than the elders. Once again, as we mentioned, people like to watch TV series because it appears as a kind of weekly date between the viewer and the characters that he is watching. As people are keen on watching this kind of programs, it is therefore logical for channels to multiply the number of shows televised every day or every week. As Thompson and Mittell mention, we live in a “media-saturated world”¹²⁹.

Finally, we can also evoke the number of fictions in television shows nowadays. As we said before, the number increased tremendously in the last ten years, as mentioned by Clélia Cohen.

“Et leur montée en puissance [celle des *showrunners*] n’est peut être que proportionnelle à l’inflation exponentielle du nombre de séries produites chaque année. John Landgraf [...] a tiré la sonnette d’alarme l’été dernier, affirmant qu’un seuil intenable avait été franchi, si bien que la bulle allait forcément exploser : rien qu’aux Etats-Unis, plus de 400 séries à voir sur les écrans de tous bords [...] en 2015, contre 211 en 2009, soit une augmentation de 94% en cinq ans !”¹³⁰

128 Ethan Thompson, Jason Mittell, *How To Watch Television*. (New York University Press, 2013) 5.

129 Ethan Thompson, Jason Mittell, *op. cit.* 4.

130 Clélia Cohen. “Série je t’aime, série je t’adore.” *Libération*. February 12, 2016. <http://next.liberation.fr/cinema/2016/02/12/serie-je-t-aime-serie-je-t-adore_1433097> Accessed August 22, 2017.

And this number is still growing today. The variety of these shows allows a freedom of creativity that could be limitless, even though most of the shows belong to genres, as we will see later on in the case of the detective genre. However, even though one might think that the number of series could be increasing because everything has not been done yet, some shows that are supposedly completed are taken up again to create sequels, spin-offs or adaptation to a movie format. Here, we can find three different instances. The first one would be to take a show that has been completed and create a sequel in which the narrative is placed several years later¹³¹. This kind of renewing for a TV show is something new, it is more and more frequent today to find it and it is something that appeals to the audience that saw the original show in the past, but it is also a way to attract a new kind of audience. Another way to refresh an already completed series is to create a spin-off¹³². In the television dialect, a spin-off is a new serial production based on another popular show or a character from a popular show¹³³. Finally, the last way to make a show come back is to make it into a movie¹³⁴. The choice to go from television to cinema is quite original, as it involves a change in format, but also in the targeted audience. However, choosing to make it a movie also means that producers are aware that they would not need to create a very long sequel, at least, not as a long as for shows that derived into new shows, as the movie generally acts as a conclusion for a TV series.

Hence, where is the limit to shows? If we take these examples, almost every series could have a sequel, a spin-off or a movie derived from it. This is the reason why we can talk about a perpetual renewing of TV series, and it also justifies this growing interest in them, making it a medium more popular than books, especially for younger audiences. However, in the case of this study, we are going to focus on a specific genre that is not always inclined to this kind of renewal: detective shows.

131 It was the case for *Gilmore Girls* and its revivals, *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*.

132 “Benefit or product that is produced incidentally from a larger process, or while it is being developed.” “Spin-off.” *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. (1993) 1232.

133 We can take the example of *Friends*, which is one of the most popular sitcoms ever created. In 2004, that is to say the same year as the popular show ended, a spin-off called *Joey* was created based on one of the main characters, Joey Tribbiani (Matt LeBlanc) and his career as an actor in Los Angeles. It is a sequel of the original series, but it was rather a failure.

134 It was the case for *Veronica Mars*, which became a movie in 2014 with the same director as the one who had been working on the show.

2 – Detective shows and their narrative architecture

As we studied the detective genre in literature, we are now going to see the specificities of the genre when brought onto the screen. Even though it uses some elements specific to literature, it also introduces new elements, that are often linked to the evolution in time, from the 19th century fiction to the 21st-century television.

a – Popularity of detective shows

A fact that concerns the TV series industry is the supremacy of American productions. As far as the movie corporation is concerned, it is well known that American products are by far more famous because of Hollywood. To show this dominance of American production as far as shows are concerned, we can once again take a French TV program, as we did in Appendix 2.2. In this comparison, we can see that even though we took the instance of television in France, more than half of the fictional series aired are not French but American. Based on this analysis, there are nineteen American shows aired in France per week on the three channels that record the biggest part of the audience. However, American shows are luckily not the only ones to be popular.

“Cela ne veut pas dire que seules les séries américaines méritent attention. On sait combien par exemple les *telenovelas* brésiliennes ont su gagner les coeurs sud-américains mais aussi africains ; on connaît la qualité de la production britannique (dont la française pourrait également s’inspirer) et même la qualité plus qu’honorable de nombreuses séries allemandes (*Le Dernier Témoin, Derrick*).”¹³⁵

Recently, other countries started to produce great TV series, and British productions are effectively quite qualitative. We could mention *Sherlock*, *Black Mirror*¹³⁶ or *Misfits*¹³⁷. They are more and more recognized worldwide and they sometimes even inspired a remaking of the same storyline by American productions, which is relevant in the case of our research paper as *Broadchurch* inspired *Gracepoint*¹³⁸, a show that takes up the

135 Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, *Mythologie des séries télé*. (Le Cavalier Bleu, 2009) 41.

136 *Black Mirror*, Charlie Brooker, Netflix, 3 seasons, 2011 – present day.

137 *Misfits*, Howard Overman, E4, 5 seasons, 2009 – 2013.

138 *Gracepoint*, Chris Chibnall, FOX, 1 season, 2014.

investigation that occurs in the original series to place it in California¹³⁹.

We also have to mention the wide variety of detective shows produced in the world. As the question of genre in TV series is hard to define, considering that productions are often a mix between one genre and another, it would be hard to define the precise number of detective shows ever produced since the expansion of the serial genre on television. However, there are ways that we can use to prove the importance of crime fiction. The first one would be to prove the multiplication of TV shows that are based on the same original idea, therefore becoming a franchise. We can here use the instance of *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*¹⁴⁰, which gave way after some years to *CSI: Miami* in 2002, to *CSI: NY* in 2004 and to *CSI: Cyber* in 2015. In these different series, the structure of each episode is quite identical. Only the team of forensics and the location of the murder are different.

Another example that can allow us to measure the good reputation of the genre thanks to what we mentioned before is the spin-off. A good example of that is the link between the shows *The Closer*¹⁴¹ and *Major Crimes*¹⁴². In the final episode of *The Closer*, we are faced with the chief of the investigating team, Brenda Johnson, leaving and handing over the reins to Captain Sharon Raydor, who will become the new chief of the investigating team in *Major Crimes*. Also, the investigation that takes place in the last episode of *The Closer* introduces two characters, Rusty Beck and Philip Stroh, who will be part of the narrative in episodes of the second show, especially Rusty who becomes a recurrent secondary character in *Major Crimes*.

Finally, to account for the popularity of detective shows and their multiplication throughout the years, we can also note the variety of shows dealing with investigations. Up to this point in our analysis, the different detective shows we have mentioned are rather similar, considering that all of them deal with a team of investigators working on a different case in each episode. However, and especially these recent years, there has been a real diversity that has established itself in the genre, and this great variety of detective series can also result in a kind of trivialisation of crime itself.

139 In *Gracepoint*, the investigation is exactly the same as in the British production, up to the first or last names of the different characters and the murderer's revelation, except that the season ends on a cliffhanger regarding the implication of Tom Miller in the murder of Danny.

140 *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, Anthony E. Zuiker, CBS, 15 seasons, 2000 – 2015.

141 *The Closer*, James Duff, TNT, 7 seasons, 2005 – 2012.

142 *Major Crimes*, James Duff, TNT, 6 seasons, 2012 – present day.

“(talking about *CSI*) Rarement le récit policier n’est apparu aussi contrasté et souvent aussi inquiétant : certains épisodes repoussent la banalité du mal et l’indifférence à autrui de façon presque démesurée.”¹⁴³

Marianne Colbran, in her work *Media Representations of Police and Crime: Shaping the Police Television Drama*, often refers to the fact that most producing teams of police shows are in touch with professionals, that is to say police officers or experts. However, it is not always the case, and sometimes, even though the procedure might seem professional, it might not be so close to what would really happen. For instance, when talking about *Broadchurch*, the entire plot was based on something that could not really happen:

“**Chris Chibnall:** *Broadchurch* was at the end of the day built on an incorrect premise. That wouldn’t be a case that would be dealt with by a local station. So I started from that point and said to our adviser ‘I know this wouldn’t happen, but for the sake of the story, let’s imagine it would and take it from there’. So in that sense, it wasn’t meant to be completely accurate from a procedural point of view and, yes, story did take precedence over authenticity there.”¹⁴⁴

We have a proof that even though some crime shows might want to deal with cases that would be close to reality and give a sense of proximity to the viewer, the procedure is not always faithful to what would happen in our life if something like a bloody murder was to happen. It is therefore necessary to establish a difference between fiction and reality when talking about detective shows, as even though they are sometimes based on true stories, they are still fictional productions.

b – What to find in a detective show

After mentioning several instances of detective shows, we are now going to see what the typical characteristics of the genre are, even though they might not apply to every crime show and, as far as we are concerned, they might not apply to the show at the centre of this corpus, *Broadchurch*. If we take the majority of shows belonging to the genre, we can say that one of their specificity is the fact that they are easy to watch and that the viewer does not always need to have a continuity from one episode to

143 Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, *op. cit.* 32.

144 Marianne Colbran, *Media Representations of Police and Crime: Shaping the Police Television Drama*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) 203-204.

another. This format of show is what Esquenazi calls “séries nodales”, defining them as such:

“Le type le plus évident des séries immobilières est composé par les producteurs dont chaque épisode narre une aventure avec son ouverture et sa conclusion, selon une formule immuable.”¹⁴⁵

Indeed, in most detective shows, each episode consists of an entire narrative. In each episode, there is a case that is dealt with from the beginning to the end by the team of investigators. The fact that a viewer can watch a random episode of a show he has never seen before without being completely lost in the narrative is one of the advantages of detective shows. However, some detective shows do not only focus on working on a case in each episode but they have also narrative arcs¹⁴⁶ that are going to evolve throughout a whole season or several seasons; and some even choose not to follow this pattern at all, as in *Broadchurch* for instance.

It is hard to trace back the first detective show ever aired on television, but we could consider *Dragnet*¹⁴⁷ and its leading role of Sgt. Joe Friday as the initiator of the genre. The presence of a lead character is mandatory in a crime show. This character is generally the main detective or an expert in a specific area. He or she often has a strong personality that makes him or her recognizable. As a detective, he is often the one who is supposed to restore order in a community by solving a problem through an investigation. Usually, this strong lead character is never left alone. He may be accompanied by another character with whom he forms a working pair, as it is the case in *Broadchurch*. This kind of duo is more than likely to have been inspired by the detective novel and their pattern of the detective and his sidekick. The detective can also be surrounded by an entire team. The role of the team is to feature several characters, who are linked to specific fields.

Another important motif of detective shows is the investigation. If we consider what Esquenazi calls “séries nodales”, the inner construction pattern of the investigation from one episode to another, or from one investigation to another is often the same, that

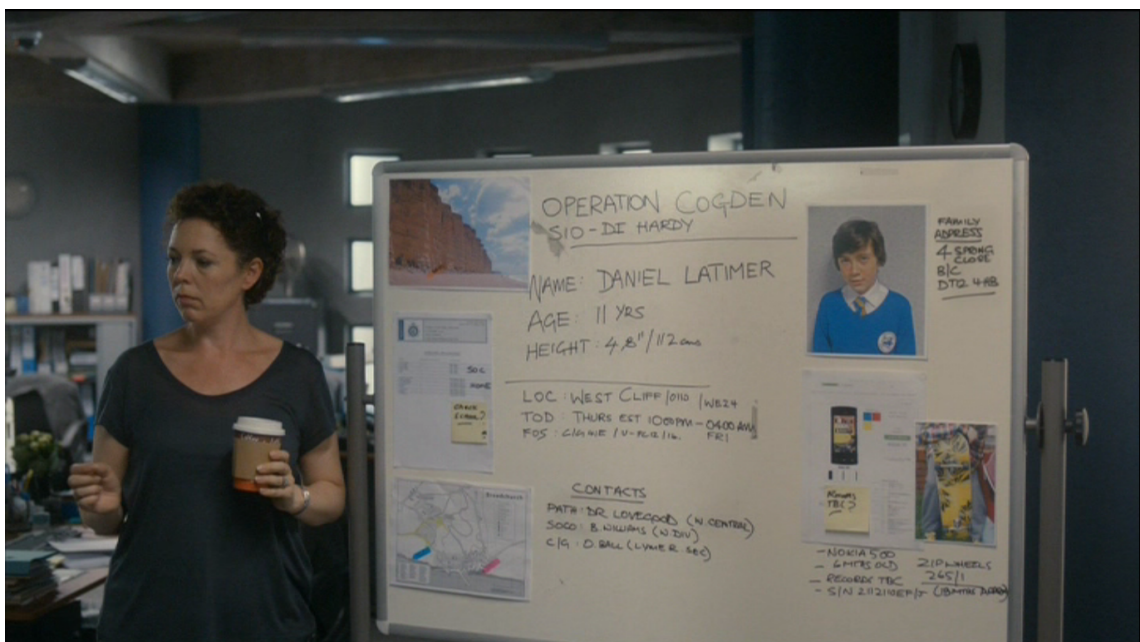
145 Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, *Les séries télévisées, l'avenir du cinéma ?* (Armand Collin, 2014) 108.

146 From the French “arc narratif”. It is defined as such: “narrative arc refers to the chronological construction of plot in a novel or story.” Mark Flanagan. “Narrative Arc – What is Narrative Arc in Literature?” *ThoughtCo*. April 27, 2015. <<https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-narrative-arc-in-literature-852484>> Accessed August 22, 2017.

147 *Dragnet*, Jack Webb, NBC, 8 seasons, 1951 – 1959.

is to say there is a case to work on with not so many clues. The team tries to find clues and witnesses to interrogate. Eventually, they discover that they have been misled somewhere in their investigation. In the end, they finally manage to find and to arrest the guilty party, so justice is restored by the end of the episode.

Finally, the last aspect that appears to be important in a detective show is the presence of the murderer or of the culprit. As we said before, the aim of production in a detective show is to prevent the viewer from finding out who the criminal is before the investigators do. Therefore, as viewers, we generally are not often faced with the murderer. He or she appears to be part of the diegesis at some point, we might have seen him really quickly during the investigation, but he has not been a prime suspect through the entire procedure. Even though it has a different structure from classical crime shows, it is the case in *Broadchurch*. In the first season, the murderer, Joe Miller (Matthew Gravelle) is presented in the diegesis only as the husband of one of the detectives, he is never suspected and barely even seen on screen. In a similar way, in the second season, in which three characters happen to be criminals, one of them, Ricky Gillespie (Shaun Dooley) only appears from the fourth episode of the season. Even though once one watches the show a second time, some insignificant details take a major importance, it is almost impossible to find out who the murderers are before the duo of detectives. The presence of the murderer, or in this precise case, his absence, is



5: *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 7:18

created to mislead the viewer. We can thus conclude that there is consequently first the viewer's desire to find the guilty party, but there is also a deep curiosity based on the proceeding behind the investigation and the way the team or the detective will come up to the conclusion of the case in each episode.

c – Modern variations brought to detective shows

Up to this point, we tried to underline a basic structure of detective shows. In truth, the general pattern of crime shows especially applies to series that were produced before the 1990s. After this period of time, detective shows were still centred on investigations, but productions added narrative arcs to them, concerning the police team in particular. As Marianne Colbran¹⁴⁸ mentions in her book, it creates a shift in the aim of a detective show, but also, to go back to Esquenazi, it contributes to the trivialization of crime itself. The viewer does not focus exclusively on the investigation and the importance of imprisoning a criminal, but he develops an interest in each of the team members. In her book, Marianne Colbran makes the contrast clear by talking about the production of *The Bill*¹⁴⁹. In this precise example, the production was at first focusing on creating episodes each centred on an investigation. But there was a shift throughout the 1990s. They introduced new characters who could be developed throughout the episodes. In contemporary crime shows, the presence of narrative arcs is mandatory because of the viewer's desire to have this proximity with the characters from the series.

“La régularité de la série, le retour des mêmes personnages procurent une grande familiarité avec l'univers fictionnel. L'on devient certain d'y retrouver à la même place décors, objets, personnes, tout comme ceux qui nous sont le plus chers. Certes, on ne maîtrise pas les évolutions de la série, mais on ne maîtrise pas non plus son propre futur. La série, capable de poursuivre son histoire pendant plusieurs années, génère des univers fictionnels qui semblent échapper à la clôture du roman et du film.”¹⁵⁰

The appetite of viewers for finding an evolution throughout the narrative of a show forced the production of crime series to develop the background of characters who are at first supposed just to be investigators or detectives and nothing else.

148 Marianne Colbran, *op. cit.*

149 *The Bill*, Geoff McQueen, ITV, 26 seasons, 1984 – 2010.

150 Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, *op. cit.* 40.

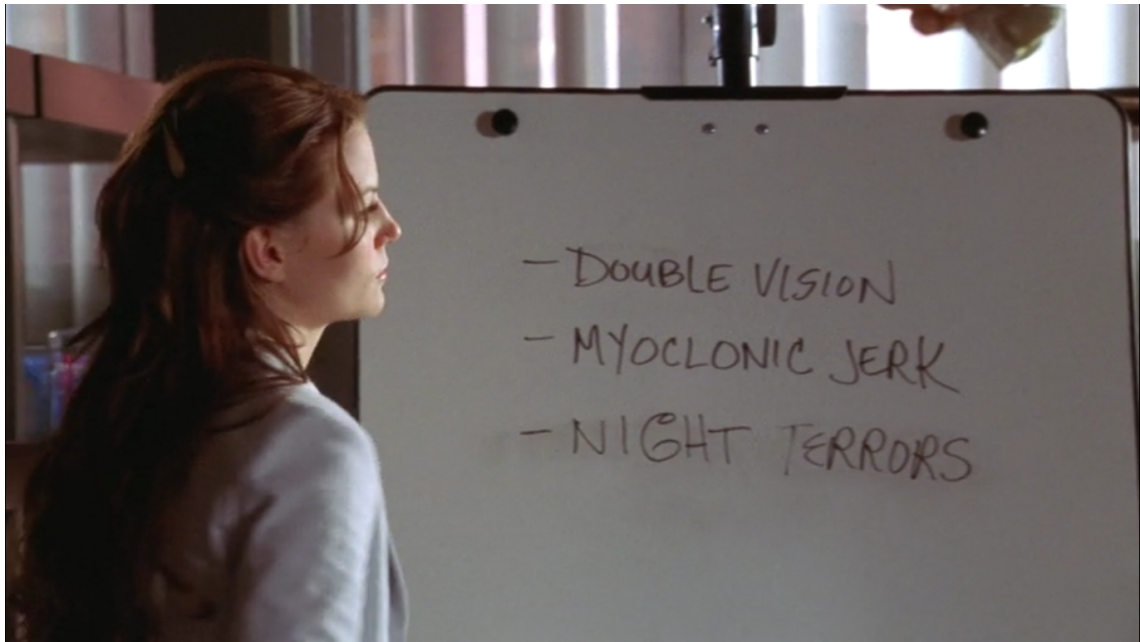
Another aspect of crime shows evolution is linked to the variety of the genre. Some shows have managed to distinguish themselves from traditional crime series while still belonging to the detective genre. As part of the creation of a show, producers manage to create a blending of genres to create something singular. A good example of that would be *House M.D.*¹⁵¹.

“*House M.D.*, série policière et médicale, en constitue un excellent exemple. Son producteur, David Shore, ne cache pas ses sources : son personnage principal est directement inspirée par celui de Sherlock Holmes et les références aux romans de Conan Doyle ne manquent pas. Et il est vrai que le Dr House (Hugh Laurie) est comme son illustre prédécesseur misanthrope, se drogue avec régularité, ne supporte pas ses collaborateurs, tout en ayant un besoin crucial de leur présence, et surtout résout des énigmes : toutesfois, ses ennemis ne sont pas des malfaiteurs mais des virus et des microbes.”¹⁵²

The character of the detective, as we introduced him in the first chapter of our work, inspired other characters who, even though they are not detectives for the police, are still shaped like investigators. The instance of Dr. Gregory House is quite striking. Also, each episode is centred on the case of a patient, who becomes the “victim”. House works with his team of “forensics” who are trying their best to find out a solution, or in this case, a cure. In many episodes, the team directly goes in the field, searching the house of the patient to find clues that would help them to draw a diagnostic.

151 *House M.D.*, David Shore, FOX, 8 seasons, 2004 – 2012.

152 Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, *op. cit.* 160.



4: *House M.D.*, Season 1, Episode 2, 7:50

Finally, House and his colleagues are used to gathering everything that they found on a whiteboard to come up to a conclusion. As we can see in the preceding pictures, the fact that House and his team are using a whiteboard brings them closer even to the method used by detectives who are used to gather clues to reach a solution for an enquiry. It is the case in *Broadchurch*, especially in the first season, but also in the second season, when Ellie builds up a kind of whiteboard to work on the Sandbrook case¹⁵³.

Another recent variation of the detective series can be *13 Reasons Why*¹⁵⁴. In this show, the detective is more or less Clay Jensen (Dylan Minnette) who runs his own investigation to understand the suicide of his friend Hannah Baker (Katherine Langford). The detective becomes a sixteen-year-old teenager who discovers a new history in each episode, each story bringing him closer to the truth behind the death of Hannah. The point that we are trying to make thanks to those instances is that in recent TV shows, the investigation dimension might be less clear than in what we called classical detective shows as the part of the detective might not be played by a proper detective. However, the fact that the detective becomes another character than someone linked to the police suggests a return to what was done in literature in the 19th century; the detective was not a professional and did not work officially for the police. We go

153 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 23:55 – 25:58.

154 *13 Reasons Why*, Brian Yorkey, Netflix, 1 season, 2017 – present day.

back to the amateur detective.

At last, the final aspect that is linked to the modernisation of detective stories is the use of technologies. In shows dated back to the 2000s onward, the development of technologies is deeply present, as it is in our everyday life. In the different fields that need experts in crime shows, we see appearing more and more computers and software programs that are used to study or obtain new clues. In *CSI* for instance, the forensics need to use technologies, specific fields science and new software programs on computers to progress in their investigation. The emphasis is even on how they use these new elements.

In the end, we can say that the typical architecture of detective shows appears to be easier to apply to detective shows that are not recent. The production shift mentioned by Marianne Colbran creates a kind of contemporary category in detective shows, that is to say a category in which the personal history of the detective(s) matters. However, we are going through a constant evolution of the genre.

3 – *Broadchurch* as a different detective show

Now that we have described what a classic crime series was like, we need to see if *Broadchurch* does fit in this architecture or if it stands on its own, developing a new kind of crime show within the genre itself.

a – Broadchurch is not a “série nodale”

We found out that most of the detective shows are part of a category that Esquenazi calls “série nodale”. However, this definition does not apply to *Broadchurch* as this show is not based on episodes that could stand on their own. The narrative goes from one episode to another. Therefore, we are going to try to determine what kind of show *Broadchurch* is. In his book, Esquenazi proposes a division of shows into two categories, the “série nodale”, that we have previously mentioned, but also what he calls “série chorale”:

“Les séries chorales possèdent (I) une multiplicité de personnages et donc une

multiplicité de points de vue possibles. Elles tissent (II) un réseau complexe de récits fragmentés sur un ou plusieurs épisodes (arcs narratifs). Leur développement implique (III) une extension continue de leur univers fictionnel: la myriade d'interactions entre les personnages et la multiplication d'arcs narratifs emplissent indéfiniment le monde des séries chorales."¹⁵⁵

We can say that according to Esquenazi's definitions of these two kinds of shows, *Broadchurch* might be closer to a "série chorale" than to a "série nodale". In this show, each episode does not have its own opening and a clear conclusion. On the opposite, a big part of the episodes ends up on something that will come back at the beginning of the following episode. Moreover, the episodes are not alike in their construction, they each deal with precise matters that drive the construction of the plot.

However, we now have to wonder whether *Broadchurch* is faithful to the definition of "série chorale" or whether it is something else. The first point would be the variety of characters in the series. As it depicts the life of a small tight community, many characters have a more or less important role to play in the plot. In the first two seasons, we have around forty characters who are to take part in at least one of the two investigations. This multiplicity of characters creates many links inside the community. To follow the definition, we can also say that the plot is divided into several narrative arcs, creating a kind of map with story lines that are crossing one another.

However, we could deny the correspondence with the last part of the definition, that is to say the eternal continuity of the show. Even though there are a lot of different characters, the number of different plots are not to be multiplied endlessly. The frame of the show is quite strict, in the sense that one season lasts the time of an investigation. Each season has its own introduction, development and conclusion, and it does not need a sequel or further explanations. If we focus on the investigation, *Broadchurch* is constructed as an anthology series¹⁵⁶, as a new season means a new enquiry. Even though new characters are introduced in the second season, as Claire Ripley, Lee Ashworth or the Gillespies, they are only used to introduce the new investigation¹⁵⁷ and

155 Jean-Pierre Esquenazi, *op. cit.* 131.

156 "Unlike with conventional TV shows, episodes (or seasons) in anthology series are connected thematically." Elena Nicolaou. "What is an anthology series – Shows like *Black Mirror*." *Refinery29*. April 4, 2017. <<http://www.refinery29.com/2017/04/147712/best-anthology-tv-series>> Accessed August 23, 2017.

157 In the third season of the show that deals with the rape of a woman in her forties, we also have quite a number of characters introduced, but once again, they are here as witnesses or suspects in the investigation.

are doomed to disappear once the case is solved. *Broadchurch* can therefore be close to the definition of anthology series, but not quite. Indeed, even though the investigation from the second season does not use the first season's investigation, the rest of the show's narrative focusing on the community is a chronological evolution between the first and the second seasons. There is not a renewal of the cast or of the context as in other anthology series such as *American Horror Story*¹⁵⁸ for instance.

Therefore, we can say that if we want to base our analysis on Esquenazi's definitions, they do not precisely apply to *Broadchurch*, even though, in the end, the show still stands close to the anthology pattern.

b – Lack of spectacular elements

We noted already that the recent crime shows are quite spectacular. We are now going to see how *Broadchurch* and its construction manage to once again differ from other shows by creating something that does not necessarily have to be breathtaking.

The first thing that creates a feeling of simplicity and of proximity is the fact that the plot takes place in a community. In the *CSI* franchise, the investigations take place either in Las Vegas, New York, Miami or Washington D.C. which are all from the fifty most populated cities in America¹⁵⁹. The show at stake in our study occurs in a fictional town, which is the first difference with a lot of crime shows. In the first episode, the very first minutes are simply showing the life in the small community, using a sequence-shot to present briefly the majority of the characters¹⁶⁰. As *Broadchurch* is a fictional town, one could not estimate its population, but we know that it is way inferior to the cities in which *CSI* occurs. As we said in the first chapter of our analysis about literature, the multiplicity of crimes goes with the fact that detective stories often take place in a megalopolis to provide an urban setting. Therefore, as *Broadchurch* is not such a huge place, it goes well with the idea that murders are not part of the population's everyday life, procuring to the viewer a new way of relating to the narrative. In the second season, the investigation takes place in Sandbrook, which is also a fictional town.

158 *American Horror Story*, Ryan Murphy, FX, 7 seasons, 2011 – present day.

159 "Top 50 Cities in the U.S. by Population and Rank." *Infoplease*. <<https://www.infoplease.com/us-us-cities/top-50-cities-us-population-and-rank>> Accessed June 22 2017.

160 *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 1:57 – 3:39.

The direct consequence of a small town not being used to strong criminality is the lack of police force. At the beginning of the investigation on the murder of Danny Latimer, the lack of a forensics team appears to be a problem:

“Alec Hardy: How’re doing on the house to house?

Ellie Miller: We’ve got five uniform allocated, two probationers, one who can’t drive and one who’d never taken a statement before last night.

Alec: That’s all they’ve given us?

Ellie: It’s a summer weekend. You’ve got three music festivals and two sporting events within a hundred miles, so all the officers are attached to them until Monday.

Alec: Don’t tell the family. Uniforms are moaning they’re having to take calls.

Ellie: We’re getting more phone lines put in.”¹⁶¹

As they want to conduct a house-to-house to collect as much information as possible about the night of the young boy’s death, the two detectives, Alec and Ellie, are faced with a lack of persons qualified as police workers. Contrary to traditional crime shows, here, the police team is minimal. Therefore, they are not used and almost not trained to face this kind of situation. An instance of the way police officers are used to working in *Broadchurch* is Bob Daniels (Steve Bennett), a police constable who appears only a few times in the show. In the first season, Bob appears as a kind of bodyguard in front of the Sea Brigade Hall to protect Jack Marshall against the men of the town¹⁶². In the second season, he plays the mediator between Alec and Lee after receiving an allegation from the latter¹⁶³. These two examples show that any uniformed officer is not to take part in the investigation of a murder. This is something that we do not often see in other detective shows. Here, Bob Daniels, whose first name might be a direct reference to the “bobbies”, is a form of allegory for the average policeman in a way.

As we said, the lack of team members in *Broadchurch* implies a simple investigation. The technologies which appear in other series used to find a criminal are not really present in the show. Therefore, forensics are also lacking. In the first season, we can notice the presence of Brian Young (Peter De Jersey), a Scene of Crime Officer, or SOCO. He is professionally opposed to the character of Bob Daniels. He is often present in the first season, but not so much in the second one, in which we see him once,

161 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 6:16 – 6:39.

162 Bob Daniels, Nigel Carter, Jack Marshall, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 31:16 – 31:49.

163 Bob Daniels, Alec Hardy, Lee Ashworth, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 22:37 – 23:55.

and he does not really have to play the part of a forensic¹⁶⁴. He is taking fingerprints in Alec's hut, but it is rather a favour to Ellie than part of his job. Furthermore, the talk that he has with Ellie is quickly romanticised, when she asks him to go for a drink. Therefore, in the second season, even though he makes an appearance, he is not to be considered as a forensic. However, in the first season, he is the one who gives much of their information to the duo of detectives. For instance, he is the one who studies the burning boat and finds fibres of clothes and strands of hair¹⁶⁵. In the same scene, Brian also says about the hair that they "sent a sample back for matching analysis", which is a good transition to say that as far as the investigation is concerned, many analysis of clues happen off-screen. Here, it is the analysis of the strand of hair, but in another scene, we also have Alec asking for a professional to restore a damaged hard-drive¹⁶⁶ and then receiving the results of this analysis by the end of the episode¹⁶⁷. Therefore, all the process is left aside to the imagination of the spectator. The investigation is not centred on the process of getting information, as it is the case in *CSI*, but rather on how to interpret and use information to come to a conclusion.

Finally, to conclude on this comparison between *Broadchurch* and the typical Hollywood crime shows, we can also notice the scarcity of shocking images in the show. Even though we are to deal with investigations into murders in the first two seasons, we are not often to see corpses. In the case of Danny Latimer in the first season, we do not see his entire body neither when his father goes to recognize him at the morgue¹⁶⁸ nor when the pathologist gives his report to the detectives¹⁶⁹. In these two scenes in which the young boy is the main focus of discussion, we do not have close-ups or zooms on his corpse. The same applies to other deaths in the show, for example Jack Marshall¹⁷⁰: the emphasis is not on his body, even though we have a close-up on his face. In the second season, we have to face the scene of Alec finding Pippa's body several times, as in the fourth episode for instance¹⁷¹, but the image is quite blurred and we never get to see her face. In the end, the only clear images that happen to be close-ups on dead characters are in the flashbacks, in the last episode of each season, when the

164 Brian Young, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 5:46 – 6:30.

165 Alec Hardy, Brian Young, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 2:56 – 3:48.

166 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 34:36 – 34:50.

167 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 45:25 – 45:36.

168 Mark Latimer, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 21:32 – 23:20.

169 James Lovegood, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 26:15 – 26:41.

170 Jack Marshall, Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 44:55 – 45:34.

171 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 22:25 – 23:15.

culprit finally confesses. This is the case in the first season when Joe kills Danny and we have a close-up on the boy's face while he stops breathing¹⁷², and it is also the case with Lisa Newbury in the second season, when her head is smashed against the floor by Ricky Gillespie¹⁷³. The latter scene might be one of the most troubling scenes of the series as it is the first one in which we are faced with a lot of blood flooding out of the girl's head on the floorboards.

In the end, we can truly assess that the aim of *Broadchurch* as a crime show is not to impress the audience by giving them a sensational story and images, but rather to have them feel closer to the narrative by using simple elements and not focusing on dramatic elements. Chris Chibnall says about the show: "The purpose of it was to be emotionally true and well, we've all seen police procedurals, but what would it be like to be in the middle of one."¹⁷⁴

c – A different narrative

As we saw, *Broadchurch* appears to differentiate itself from crime series. It stands on its own and deals with a new perspective on investigation. Nevertheless, there are also differences in the construction of the narration.

Even though the investigation is at the centre of the show, there are also other aspects that appear almost as important as the enquiry itself. Indeed, it appears that the investigation forms only a third of the show. Chris Chibnall confessed to Marianne Colbran while she was writing her thesis: "I think there are three parts to the story in *Broadchurch*. There's the police investigation, there's the story of the Latimer family and of the whole community but there's also the media investigation."¹⁷⁵ This is another way for the series to distinguish itself from the traditional crime show, with a single cop-and-robbers narrative. Here, we have three different narratives at the same time, three narrative arcs that are linked together at some points in the diegesis. The investigation brings new elements that are going to create a disruption in the community, and the media are going to react in a more or less efficient way in front of these changes. We will focus on these different narratives later in our research.

172 Joe Miller, Danny Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 16:48 – 17:30.

173 Ricky Gillespie, Lisa Newbury, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 20:55 – 21:18.

174 Chris Chibnall, *Broadchurch*, "Success and Series Two", 0:37 – 0:43.

175 Marianne Colbran, *op. cit.* 202.

We will, however, come back on the fact that the Latimer family and their evolution form a narrative. In her book, Marianne Colbran categorizes *Broadchurch* as a victim-led drama. She defines this category of crime show as such:

“There have also been a clear trend for victims to become the focus of news stories over the last three decades (Reiner *et al.* 2000;2001), paralleling the centrality of victims in the criminal justice system (Hoyle 2012). This trend has been mirrored in a new direction for the police procedural, in which the effect of loss and grief on the victim’s family plays as large a part in the narrative as does the actual investigation.”¹⁷⁶

The victim-led drama appears as innovative in the genre of crime shows. As Colbran mentioned, it has been influenced by the evolution of news in our everyday life, that tends to focus more and more on the victims when a criminal case happens. As the victim’s family becomes a big part of the narrative, the emphasis wobbles between the investigation and how the family receives information from the detectives, or from the media. Even though this construction of the narrative might seem innovative, *Broadchurch* is not the first show that proposes a focus on the mourning of the family. *The Killing*¹⁷⁷, a Danish series, also focuses on the mourning of the Birk Larsen family after the rape and murder of their daughter, Nana. In this show, a duo of detective, Sarah Lund (Sofie Gråbøl) and Lennart Brix (Morten Suurballe) are investigating her death, but most of the plot focuses on the grief of her parents, a middle-class couple living in Copenhagen. As viewers, we have access to everything that they are going through because of the death of their daughter, from the preparation of her funerals to the father’s desire for vengeance. Therefore, in this show, we also have a divided narrative, and as in the show used in our analysis, it is divided into three main narratives: the investigation and the family’s reaction, as we mentioned, but also a third narrative arc that focuses on the mayor election about to happen in Copenhagen and the campaign of Troels Hartmann (Lars Mikkelsen). However, even though it is hard not to think about *The Killing* when watching *Broadchurch* and vice versa, Chris Chibnall was not directly inspired by this show. As mentioned by Marianne Colbran, he was inspired by the time he spent working on *Law & Order*¹⁷⁸ and the importance of the scenes that focus on the victim’s relatives:

176 Marianne Colbran, *op.cit.* 18.

177 *The Killing* (or *Forbrydelsen*), Søren Sveistrup, DR, 3 seasons, 2007 – 2012.

178 *Law & Order*, Dick Wolf, NBC, 20 seasons, 1990 – 2010.

“Chris Chibnall: It’s the scene of the grieving relative who stands over the body in the morgue or identifies the body and goes ‘Oh, it’s my son, or my brother, or my husband or my wife, or my niece and this is why I loved them, and this is what they were like’. And as X [the showrunner of *Law & Order*] always said, that’s the scene that makes the audience care.”¹⁷⁹

Even though he was familiar with the Danish show, his ambition was to do “something we’d never seen in British crime drama – the impact on the family”. He was indeed a pioneer by implanting this kind of series in British television.

However, this tendency to change the direction of the initial narrative might be seen as an important change in the genre. The fact that the main focus is not always on the crime and on the investigation themselves can cast doubt on whether it is still a crime show or not. Other genres could apply to the show, as for instance the soap-opera, defined as a “radio or TV serial dealing with the events and problems of characters’ daily lives, often in a sentimental way.”¹⁸⁰ In the case of *Broadchurch*, and considering the narrative centred on the Latimer’s family, we can notice that it goes well with the definition of a soap-opera. It deals with the different problems that they have inside their home, the death of their son, their eldest daughter having a relationship with an older boy, Mark cheating on his wife and their reactions to the trial of their son’s murderer in the second season. A lot of their personal life is displayed to the viewer and that is something that is not usually expected to be part of a crime show. Yet, in her book, Marianne Colbran justifies the choice of Chibnall for this shift in the narrative as an evolution from traditional crime shows:

“In the same way, as the creator of *Broadchurch* suggested, the showrunner of *Law & Order* in the US was also a ‘cultural barometer’. In this case, a shift in law and order politics in the US (Reiner 1994) to encompass an emphasis on the victims’ rights was picked up by the showrunner and was seen as a way of breathing fresh life into the police procedural – a development upon which, in turn, the creator of *Broadchurch* drew in developing his own series in the UK.”¹⁸¹

In the end, the reason behind bringing an emphasis on the grieving family is part of the evolution of the genre, and the desire of making it more contemporary to the viewer. The emphasis on the victim’s relatives is something that we see in the news, so why not

179 Marianne Colbran, *op.cit.* 200.

180 “Soap-opera.” *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English.* (1993) 1212.

181 Marianne Colbran, *op. cit.* 201.

in a show? Therefore, there is no need to describe *Broadchurch* as a soap-opera because in the end, this tendency to incorporate a new kind of narrative based on the family is something that is quite modern.

We can say that, indeed, *Broadchurch* has a different construction. However, this distinction is, in the end, something that is part of the evolution of the genre. Even though a crime show generally obeys rules that make it belong to this category, these rules change and evolve through time.

d – Importance of the personal background of the detectives

Broadchurch is, as we said, a show that tends to focus on something else than only the investigation. Yet, even inside the investigation, our two detectives also have their private life exposed through the series.

First, we can talk about Alec. As we have seen in the first part of this analysis, the stress is regularly put on his private life. We will not come back on all the aspects of the detective that we have already dealt with, but we will recall that it is important for the viewer to have this background of Alec Hardy, even though it is not something that helps within the investigation itself.

But Alec is not the only detective in the show. He is co-investigating with Ellie Miller, a woman originally from *Broadchurch*, who had her post as a D.I. taken by Alec while she was on holidays. Even though she is one of the main detectives of the show, or rather a detective trainee, Ellie also has her personal life as a part of the narration. This is something that we can see from one of the very first scenes of the show. In this scene¹⁸², she appears as a mother and a wife, walking down the street with her husband, Joe, and their sons, Tom and Fred, the latter being in a pushchair. This scene takes place before the tragic event of finding Danny's body, that is to say that Ellie is a simple police officer at this point and does not have to play the part of a detective yet. Before being a detective, she is a mother and a wife, as we are going to see right now.

First, we can see in the show that she is a mother of two sons: Tom who is Danny's age, that is to say around eleven, and Fred, who is a toddler. Since the very beginning, she is dedicated to her children and this applies to the entire show. However, the fact that Tom was so close to Danny creates a very thin barrier between Ellie being a

182 Mark Latimer, Joe Miller, Ellie Miller, Tom Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 2:00 – 2:12.

mother and a detective, as we can see in the second episode:

“Ellie Miller: How are you doing, lovely?

Tom Miller: Ok.

Ellie: You had nightmares.

Tom: Did I?

Joe Miller: You were shouting in your sleep.

Tom: What was I saying?

Ellie: Couldn't make it out. You said 'Danny' at one point.

Tom: Will I have to talk to the police?

Ellie: Yeah, at some point. But not today, I don't think. Unless you can think of anything that might help us.

Tom: No. When I have to talk to them... Can I be with you?

Ellie: I don't think so.”¹⁸³

In this scene, we clearly see the difficulty that she has to draw the line between her role as a mother and her role as a police detective investigating her son's friend's death. Even though we do not have a lot of scenes in the first season where Ellie has to be only a dedicated mother, in the second season it is different. She appears very hurt because after Joe has been arrested, Tom decided to live with his aunt, Ellie's sister Lucy, rather than with his mother. She is taking the blame for losing her son¹⁸⁴. She is deeply affected by being far away from him, especially because he is the one who does not want to see her. However, even though she is hurt, she appears as a strong woman and decides to take her role as a mother back at some point. Her marriage has been taken away from her, but she is not ready to lose her son. Therefore, she appears as a strong mother to command Tom to come back to live with her:

“Tom Miller: I don't want to talk to you.

Ellie Miller: Sit down. Sit down! Do you see what you put Mark and Beth through? He wouldn't be up there if it wasn't for you. I know you want to protect your father but he is a murderer and a shit and he deserves none of your feelings for him. Look what you ended up doing! You lied, on oath, in a court of law and I hope you're ashamed! Are you? Are you?!

Tom: Yes. Yes, Mum.

Ellie: Right. Well, you are coming home with me tonight and we're going back to the house.

Tom: No we're not, 'cause...

Ellie: Yes, we are because I am your bloody mother! If I have to drag you kicking and screaming, I will! Your father has done enough damage and I will not let him destroy us too! *Do you understand?*

183 Ellie Miller, Tom Miller, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 1:54 – 2:36.

184 Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 26:04 – 27:05.

Tom: Yes, Mum.

Ellie: Right. That's... good."¹⁸⁵

In the show, especially in the first season, Ellie also appears as a dedicated wife. She is married to Joe Miller, who will end up being the murderer of Danny Latimer, which will obviously create a shift in the relationship between the detective and her husband. Nevertheless, in the first season, they appear as a loving couple¹⁸⁶. There is a kind of irony once the viewer knows who the murderer is by the end of the first season, when remembering all these scenes, full of love and tenderness between the detective and the murderer. We will come back on this proximity between both of them later in this analysis. As we mentioned, once she discovers that “the man [she] trusted most in the world had killed the son of [their] best friend”¹⁸⁷, there is an obvious turning point in their relationship. She de-humanizes him, first when she gets to see him while he is being arrested by beating him up¹⁸⁸. She understands and quickly realizes what a monster she has been married to for several years. Her rancour against her former husband remains until the end of the second season:

“Ellie Miller: Shut up! Just shut up, you piece of shit!

Joe Miller: I'm sorry.

Ellie: You are not sorry! If you were sorry, you'd have pleaded guilty. You heard what she said. You are leaving and you are never coming back. And you will never see either of your children again.

Joe: You can't do that...

Ellie: Oh, I can do that. If you try and see them, if you follow them, if you go to their schools, if you contact them in any way, I will kill you. And unlike you, I will face the consequences. You are dead to us. *Do you understand?*”¹⁸⁹

Through this talk between Ellie and Joe, we can notice that she decides to remove his right to be a father, as he does not deserve it any more considering what he has done. Also, her tone is quite the same as the one she uses when she reprimands Tom in the sixth episode of the same season, especially when asking “Do you understand?”. Therefore, we can say that Ellie Miller is easily affected by what is going on in her life. Even though she is a good and efficient detective, she is a devoted mother before

185 Tom Miller, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 6, 19:24 – 20:20.

186 Joe Miller, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 28:31 – 28:41.

187 Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 39:19 – 39:25.

188 Ellie Miller, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 28:48 – 29:39.

189 Ellie Miller, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 39:35 – 40:15.

anything else.

In the end, we can discern the importance of the detectives' personal life in this show. The narrative around the investigation is important, and giving a background to people who are strictly supposed to work gives a new dimension to the show.

Broadchurch appears as a different show when we compare it to traditional crime series. Even though it is not entirely innovative, it introduces a new way of dealing with a single investigation while focusing on other elements, as the victim's family, the media, town life or the life of the detectives.

In this part, we managed to see how television has contributed to a shift in the crime genre, especially through adaptation. Even though *Broadchurch* might not be considered as an adaptation as it was not based on a pre-existing work, it still gathers many elements that have themselves been taken from literary pieces, as the character of the detective for instance, mentioned in the first part of our analysis. We also witnessed the diversity of detective shows, as they have evolved since their creation. Finally, we also saw that even though considered as a crime drama, *Broadchurch* was also something else because of the construction of its narrative. We can here take the example of what Marianne Colbran says about her experience working on *The Bill*:

“Whereas in the early days of the show, writers were asked to come up with stories solely about police work, now the writers were asked to come up with story ideas that were about policing but also posed some kind of dilemma personally for the police characters.”¹⁹⁰

Indeed, traditional crime shows, that only deal with police work, are no longer trendy, and *Broadchurch* is a good instance of that. Its narrative is not really centred on a point of focus, but mainly different storylines. We took the instance of Ellie Miller's private life, but in the end, we notice that almost each secondary character has its own storyline, which gives each and every one of them an importance in the series. Therefore, even though it is considered as a detective show, the series proposes different narratives that are not at all linked with the investigation. For instance, in the second season, an important part of the narrative focuses on the trial of Joe Miller, the murderer of the first

190 Marianne Colbran, *op. cit.* 94.

season. However, as viewers, we have had access to his confession. We therefore know that he is guilty. At the same time, there is also another investigation going on, the Sandbrook case. The fact that the show has narratives which do not deal with the investigation distances it from the original literary detective stories it might have been inspired from. This second season is a proof of the cohabitation of several narratives within the same show, something that appears to work for the audience and is quite specific to *Broadchurch*.

III – Construction of the story in *Broadchurch*

Up to this point, we claimed that *Broadchurch* was unlike other classical detective shows because of its narration and the way it focuses on other things than the investigation that the detectives are dealing with. In this part, we are therefore going to enumerate and study the particularities of the show, so as to try and reveal its singularity from a technical and narrative point of view.

1 – Narration techniques in *Broadchurch*

The narrative techniques in a TV series are different from the ones used in literature. Indeed, we are no more faced with words but with pictures and sounds, and the major part of the narration relies on them.

a – Filming technique and the editing

As part of the audiovisual world, the process of editing has an importance in a TV show. It is indeed thanks to the editing that a producer might convey a message, a feeling, something to communicate to the viewer in addition to the narrative plot. In *Broadchurch*, the editing has its importance. The story is generally told in a chronological order, even though in the second season, we are coming back to an investigation and murders that took place prior to the death of Danny. As far as the chronology is concerned, we can also notice the use of flashbacks. However, they are not used in the same way in both seasons of the show. In the first season, they are not that repetitive. The main analepsis that we have is that of the last episode, which follows what Joe Miller is supposedly confessing to the police¹⁹¹. It goes back “59 days earlier”, as specified by the title card. It is a very long scene, in which we have an explanation for the reason of the murder, how it happened and what the murderer did to hide his implication in the crime. Therefore, this flashback serves the unfolding of the narrative and is part of the conclusion of the investigation. It closes the story of the crime (as opposed to the investigation).

191 Joe Miller, Danny Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 14:19 – 21:30.

In the second season, the use of flashbacks is different. In the last episode, we also have the same kind of analepses in which the murderer confesses. Except that time, the flashback is interrupted by scenes from the diegesis, showing the reaction of the detectives.

16:24	Diegesis	Lee Ashworth confessing
18:50	Analepsis	
20:17	Diegesis	
20:34	Analepsis	
20:39	Diegesis	
20:43	Analepsis	
21:20	Diegesis	
21:26	Diegesis	Claire Ripley confessing
21:40	Analepsis	
27:30	Diegesis	
27:38	Analepsis	
31:12	Diegesis	
31:23	Diegesis	Ricky Gillespie confessing
32:27	Analepsis	
32:36	Diegesis	
32:41	Prolepsis	
32:52	Diegesis	

6: Analysis of the confession scene in *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8

In this chart, we clearly see the difference with the first season, in which we have the flashback and then the interrogation between Joe and Alec. Having both the diegesis and different analepses allows us to understand that in the second season, the murderers are not deliberately confessing, but they are asked by the police to do so. The unique use of the prolepsis is also quite significant, as it allows us to see the forensics digging up Lisa's body, meaning that the investigation is closed. The narrated time is therefore the same for the narrative concerning the crime and that concerning the investigation. In the second season, we also have recurrent flashbacks scattered throughout the episodes that are referring to the confession scene of Lee, Claire and Ricky. We have for instance

Claire who is slapping Lee in the third episode¹⁹², or Lee in front of the furnace¹⁹³. As viewers, we know that these are flashbacks and are therefore not part of the diegesis once we have seen the confession scene of the last episode, from which the flashbacks are extracts. However as they are taken out of their original context, they can mislead the viewers to drive them far from the final solution of the investigation. Therefore in the second season, the flashbacks are used as a conclusion to the plot and to the investigation, whereas in the first season, the unique flashback has a purely illustrative function, showing what the guilty party is saying.

In the show, we also have quite a display of characters. Contrary to detective stories in which we are only following a story told by a single narrator who is part of the story, here, in *Broadchurch*, we are not consistently accompanying Alec and Ellie. We have scenes without the detectives, which allow us to have access to certain elements before them, an access that we are forbidden to have in literature. We are not inside their mind, as viewers we are free to run our own investigation. As we are going to see, there are a lot of narrative arcs differing from the main investigation, and the freedom that we have as viewers authorizes us to have our own interpretation of what is going on on screen, but also to link some elements between them, even though they first appear to have nothing to do with the investigation. We have different points of view, but in the end, we are neutral and omniscient. We know everything, or rather, we know everything that the director wants us to know. Still, it is not easier for the viewer to guess who the murderer is before the detective than for the reader, considering that the director as the author try to mislead respectively the viewer and the reader.

As we mentioned, we are often allowed to follow different characters in the show. It is especially the case in the scenes taking place in the courtroom in the second season, even though the focus is generally on the person who answers questions from one of the barristers and the barrister. We still get to see other people's reactions.

“Marianne Jean-Baptiste: It is very intense in those scenes. And of course you have to keep the emotional world going because even when you're not on camera, people are reacting to what's been said.”¹⁹⁴

192 Claire Ripley, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 8:14 – 8:21.

193 Lee Ashworth, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 7, 36:00 – 36:05.

194 Marianne Jean-Baptiste (actress playing Sharon Bishop), *Broadchurch*, “The Making of *Broadchurch*.”, 10:50 – 11:01.

As in the interview room at the police station, we get to see people reacting to what is going on. It is important to have good actors in the show, to be able to read things on their faces. It is indeed a crucial matter in the courtroom to see what people are thinking when something they were not aware of comes out. There is a *mise en abyme* here, as the viewer reacts to the characters reacting to what is going on in the court room. For instance, we get to see the faces of Beth, Mark, Ellie, Alec and Joe when Susan Wright asserts that she saw her son Nigel carrying Danny's body at the end of the fourth episode¹⁹⁵.

Finally, when talking about the editing and the production of the show, we cannot do without mentioning the aesthetic of *Broadchurch*. It includes both the soundtrack and the filming techniques. In Marianne Colbran's book, Chibnall talks about the reason behind this singular style.

“Chris Chibnall: So I had about seven photographs of the landscapes and then I played the music over those slides so it was pretty much like a presentation in iTunes, but it was a good way to communicate tone and you can't always get that from the script.”¹⁹⁶

The atmosphere created both by the landscapes and the soundtrack is what helps to convince that the show stands out. In both seasons, the music pieces used are mainly musics by Ólafur Arnalds¹⁹⁷, an Icelandic composer. His music is mostly played with classical instruments, such as a violin or a piano. It helps with the dramatic atmosphere carried out by the plot. Moreover, one of his song featuring in the show, called “So Close”, is often played in the closing credits. The lyrics are quite relevantly linked to the show, talking about secrets and things hidden from someone. It also talks about regrets about finding the truth, when it says “But when my truth of you come near, so close, I wish my life, I never come near.”¹⁹⁸ In the last episode of the first season, Alec talks to Ellie about his regret of being right when finding out about Joe¹⁹⁹. With the music also comes the photography of the show. The landscapes are important, as the beach, the wide field of grass, or even the cliffs, which help to create a dramatic dimension

195 Sharon Bishop, Susan Wright, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 44:33 – 44:57.

196 Marianne Colbran, *Media Representations of Police and Crime: Shaping the Police Television Drama*. (Basingstoke, Hampshire New York, N.Y, 2014) 205.

197 Ólafur Arnalds, *Broadchurch Original Music Composed by Ólafur Arnalds*. 2013 – 2015.

198 Ólafur Arnalds, *op. cit.* “So Close”. <<https://genius.com/Olafur-arnalds-so-close-lyrics>> Accessed July 12, 2017.

199 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 45:03 – 45:45.

because of its hugeness in front of man. They create a specific frame which is proper to *Broadchurch*. It goes along with the music. The style of the photography is characterized by not too colourful shots, often in grey and blue tones. Most of the scenes are wide shots because it allows the director to include the landscape into the frame while making it as important as the characters, when not more important when the characters are off-centred. Lastly, the recurrent use of slow-motion also helps to accentuate this feeling of nostalgia. Indeed a few scenes in the show are shown in slow-motion, emphasizing the facial expression of a character or a landscape. This goes well with the general dramatic tone of the show.

b – Themes, symbols and references in Broadchurch

As viewers are faced with a concrete image on screen while watching the show, there are symbols and themes that often come back from one episode to another, and even from one season to another. This is where the role of the viewer stands. One needs to make ones own investigation, but also to detect symbolic clues that might help with having another understanding of the show. The first instance that we have of a recurrent symbol happens to be the theme of the sea or water in general, and the symbolic it conveys. It is obviously linked to the location of the town, as Broadchurch appears to be a kind of small seaside resort. However, water also happens to be a symbol representing Alec Hardy, who is supposedly a foreigner to this town. He is linked to water as both of the cases he works on in the two seasons have something to do with water: Danny was found on the beach and Pippa was found in a river in Sandbrook. Jack Marshall is also found on the beach, his body is wet because of the sea water. Also, the detective is living in a hut near the kind of river that goes around Broadchurch, therefore even his home is closely linked to water. Finally, Alec seems haunted by water. We have access to a nightmare that he has in the first season in which he sees several characters almost being taken away by waves²⁰⁰. In the second season, at some point, we also get to see the detective during one of his dizzy spell, during which he is falling into a puddle²⁰¹. If water is indeed a symbol closely linked to death, we can read Hardy is falling in the water as a hint that he is close to dying. Also, in the same scene, he hallucinates and

200 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 0:48 – 1:36.

201 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 24:24 – 25:59.

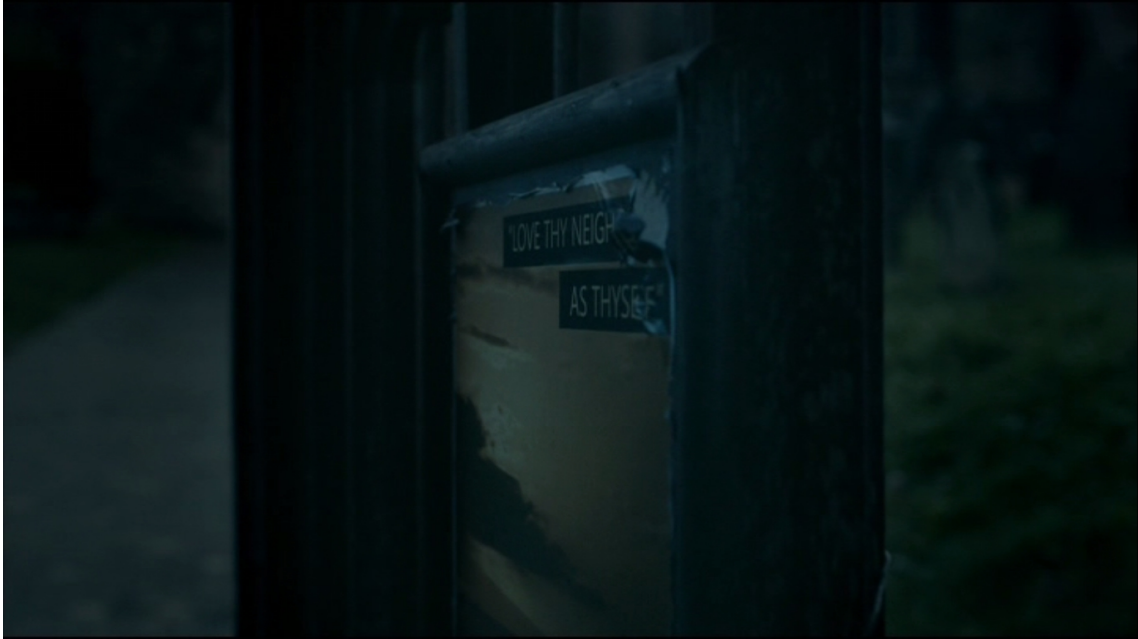
imagines water dripping from his fingers, a scene that recalls another scene with Danny, in the very last episode of the first season, when blood is dripping from his fingers²⁰². We can therefore assert that water is a symbol linked to death, especially for the main detective of the show.

Also, as far as the landscapes are concerned, we can say that they convey a tragic feeling. We already mentioned that water as a whole was seen as a dangerous element in the show. Broadchurch is a fictional town likely to be situated in the south of England. Therefore, the climate is not always sunny, but rather cloudy. The clouds are reinforcing this feeling of danger linked to water. One of the main elements as far as landscapes are concerned is the cliffs. At the very beginning of the show, the detectives are wondering whether Danny would have jumped from these cliffs²⁰³, and when Jack Marshall dies, it is suggested that he killed himself by jumping from the cliffs. All these elements are contributing to the dramatic feeling created by the aesthetic of the show.

202 Danny Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 16:12 – 16:15.

203 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, Brian Young, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 14:04 – 14:49.

There are some cultural references in *Broadchurch*. One of these very brief moments is at the very beginning of the first episode. This poster reads “Love thy neighbour as thyself”. It is one of the first shots of the show. It is a reference to the Bible, and the second greatest commandment after loving God (Matthew 22, 34-40). The fact that this poster is partly scrapped, especially on the word “neighbour”, tells a



7: *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 0:18.

lot about the plot. It shows that even though Broadchurch might be a religious community, the relations between people are going to become damaged by the investigation. It is what happens once everyone has learned about the murder of the boy. Therefore, we can guess from the very beginning that the links inside the community are about to be as damaged as the poster.

Another cultural reference that says a lot about the plot is when Jack Marshall says he was reading *Jude The Obscure* on the night Danny died in the first season²⁰⁴. *Jude The Obscure* is a book by Thomas Hardy published in 1895. In this story, two aspects are relevant if we link them to the story of Jack Marshall. The first one is the fact that in the book, one of the characters, Richard Phillotson, is a school master who marries a younger woman. In *Broadchurch*, Jack Marshall explains when he tells his entire story that he was a music teacher and he married one of his pupils. The second element is the message behind the novel. It conveys the idea of destiny, that once one is

204 Alec Hardy, Jack Marshall, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 12:46 – 13:05.

doomed to something, he cannot escape it. This is the case for Jack Marshall. He was arrested unfairly many years before the diegesis, but in the end, he cannot escape his past, and it even leads him to suicide. It is not a coincidence for the creator to have chosen this precise book and connected it to Jack Marshall, but once again, this is left to the viewer's interpretation.

On a lighter note, there are other cultural references in the show. For instance, in the fourth episode of the second season, Ellie says to Alec "Look at us! Thelma and Louise! You can be Susan Sarandon."²⁰⁵ This is a reference to Ridley Scott's movie of 1991. As Thelma and Louise, Ellie and Alec are taking a road-trip to Sandbrook. The difference lays in the fact that Thelma and Louise killed someone and Ellie and Alec are trying to find who killed the two girls. Lastly, we can also talk about the fact that in the first episode of the second season, Susan Bishop says she is "waiting for the right thing"²⁰⁶ when talking about the choice of a case to defend. It is something that is obviously an indirect nod to Sherlock Holmes who also carefully chooses the case he is working on in the novels, but also in the BBC series, *Sherlock*. These regular references scattered in the show are a way to reinforce the realism of the series by referring to an already existing cultural world that the viewer is familiar with. Therefore, as the viewer knows these references as much as the characters, he feels immediately closer to them. The viewer is thus included into the narration.

c – Comic touches in a tragic plot

It seems indisputable to say that the general tone in *Broadchurch* is quite tragic, as we are dealing with murders of children. However, the show appears to also have elements giving it a sort of comical tone.

“Richard Stokes: You need to have moments of humour. There needs to be that contrast in shades on tone otherwise it doesn't work as a long piece of drama. And those moments that David and Olivia can sometimes find, Chris will write them but them it's up to the actors to build on them.”²⁰⁷

Being mainly tragic, *Broadchurch* does indeed need this cohabitation with some

205 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 20:39 – 20:48.

206 Abby Thompson, Sharon Bishop, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 24:52 – 25:17.

207 Richard Stokes (associate producer), *Broadchurch*, “The Making of *Broadchurch*.” 6:04 – 6:19.

comical moments. This humorous relief that we find just a few times in the show is a way to avoid focusing only on the tragic aspect of the murders and of the investigation.

As mentioned by Richard Stokes, who is one of the producers, a part of the comical effect presented in the show lays on the shoulders of the two main co-actors, David Tennant and Olivia Colman. On screen, the scenes between Alec and Ellie are sometimes quite funny, even though at first, if we consider the beginning of the first season, these two are not really getting along. A friendly and conniving relationship settles between them through time, and with this comes laughable scenes.

“Ellie Miller: Toast? Don’t you get breakfast included?

Alec Hardy: Haha! What did you do last night Miller?

Ellie: Dressed up as Lady Gaga.”²⁰⁸

“Ellie Miller: How is this my life now?

Alec Hardy: I’m sorry. Do you want a... hug?

Ellie: What? No! No, what’s the matter with you?

Alec: I want to help.

Ellie: Hug it out?

Alec: People do that.

Ellie: Well, not you.

Alec: Try not to be alone today Miller.

Ellie: I am alone, sir.

Alec: You don’t have to call me sir any more.

Ellie: I know. *She stumble on the cleaning sign.* Christ! Did you put that there?”²⁰⁹

The duo formed by the two detectives works really well on screen. They are laughable because of their differences. For instance, in the last example, the scene is quite tragic as Ellie is talking about losing her husband who is a criminal, and her son who does not want to see her anymore. But it becomes an awkward situation because of Alec trying to act like somebody who is used to hugging people, which he is not.

However, Alec and Ellie are not the only characters to help with the comical relief in the show. In the first season, we have one character who acts as a really funny person, almost a kind of clown. Pete Lawson (Marcus Garvey) is the Family Liaison Officer for the Latimer’s family, that is to say that he is the one in contact with the police to pass on information to the family during the investigation. We did not mention him up to this point because he is a very secondary character. From his introduction in

208 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 15:22 – 15:28.

209 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 15:31 – 15:59.

the second episode, he is already a goofy and clumsy character. He seems quite proud and happy to announce to the Latimer family that they are the first family he is taking care of, which is quite odd²¹⁰. He often intervenes in moments of silence, which is once again a bit inappropriate, and he says things he is not supposed to say, for example asking for the food people are sending the family for their grief²¹¹. He brings a touch of ludicrousness into rather serious scenes. Lastly, we can also say that other characters sometimes bring touches of humour thanks to comical situations. For instance, we can talk about the scenes that focus on Olly's relationships, with either Karen or Abby, or even the scenes between him and Maggie and the age gap between them.

In the end, even though we have to deal with investigations into murders, the production team manages to include some scenes that are not about the investigation at all. These scenes or elements make the viewer think of something else than the investigation, such as thinking about a hidden message thanks to references, or just having a good laugh because of certain scenes. However, the investigations remain the most important part of the show.

2 – The investigations

As we defined *Broadchurch* as a detective show, it appears as quite legitimate to have a major part of the narrative focusing on the inquiries run into the different murders that happened in the two seasons. It is the central point of the show, even though this central point extends beyond the investigation with, for example, its aftermath.

a – The victims

Even though they are not that present in the whole of the series, the victims are close to being the most important element of the plot as the investigation evolves around them. In this part, we will not consider Jack Marshall as a victim, as his death was not

210 Ellie Miller, Pete Lawson, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 9:24 – 9:47.

211 Liz Ropper, Chloe Latimer, Mark Latimer, Beth Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 3, 4:46 – 5:03.

part of an investigation, considering that he killed himself. However, we will come back to this precise case later in our analysis. As they are already dead at the time of the diegesis, we do not get to see them that often, even though their parts are capital in the narration. The victims in the show are Danny Latimer (Oskar McNamara) in the first season and Lisa Newbury (Eliza Bennett) and her cousin, Pippa Gillespie (Hollie Burgess) in the second season. They are all quite young, as Danny is eleven, Pippa is twelve and Lisa is nineteen²¹².

We will start by focusing on the cases of Danny and Pippa. The common feature is their young age. They are children. Their childhood is put forward in two different ways. First by including elements that are to remind us of childhood, this is used especially in the first season. We can see Danny on his skateboard going somewhere on the night of his death²¹³. He is a pupil, as his mother is going to his school event thinking she will find him there in the first episode, before realizing he has been killed²¹⁴. Finally, Danny's sister Chloe puts a monkey cuddly toy on the beach, a soft toy belonging to her brother that she puts on the beach as a sign of grief²¹⁵. Therefore, in the case of Danny, we can see that most of the elements that give a feeling of childhood to the viewer are integrated into the main diegesis.

The treatment of Pippa's image and references to childhood in the second season are different. Indeed, in the second season, we do not get to hear the voice of the girl until the very last episode for instance. Contrary to Danny, the access that we have to Pippa's youth is achieved through flashbacks, often shown in slow-motion to emphasize the nostalgic value of these memories. In the course of this season, we get to see her doing some activities that are mainly part of childhood as playing with a racket and a ball²¹⁶, jumping on a trampoline²¹⁷ or playing hide and sick with her cousin Lisa²¹⁸. All these elements, whether they are from the first or from the second season of the show, are a way to accentuate the fact that these victims were young children and it creates a contrast between the happy memories people have of Danny and Pippa and the tragedy of the murders, the brutality and lack of empathy with which they were killed by

212 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 31:33 – 31:43.

213 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, Danny Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 44:00 – 44:18.

214 Beth Latimer, Danny's teacher, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 5:37 – 6:37.

215 Chloe Latimer, Dean Thomas, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 29:27 – 30:06.

216 Pippa Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 31:49 – 31:53.

217 Pippa Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 21:19 – 21:25.

218 Lisa Newbury, Lee Ashworth, Pippa Gillespie, Ricky Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 20:16 – 20:56.

someone very close to them. It reminds us of the tragedy of infantile deaths and has a direct strong impact on the mind of the viewer, but also inside the show. We often see the detectives struck by the young age of the victims, as Alec, in the very first episode, who says: “Oh God! Don’t do this to me” and puts his mind together while discovering Danny’s body on the beach²¹⁹. The disappearance of a child is something that anyone would be affected by. In her book, Marianne Colbran refers to the case of Sarah Payne²²⁰, a case in which the fact that a crime was committed on a child helped to change a lot of things, as in the law for instance²²¹.

In the second season, Pippa is not the only victim, we also have the case of Lisa Newbury. As we mentioned earlier, she is older than the other two. Therefore, we might not consider her death as that of a child, but rather of a young woman. She is involved in a romantic relationship with Lee. She is babysitting her cousin Pippa and has to play the part of her mother, or at least of her big sister. One instance of that which we have in the show is when we see Lisa braiding Pippa’s hair while looking at Lee²²². In the end, the character of Lisa is different from the other victims presented in the show, but she might have been strongly inspired from the victim of the first season of *The Killing*, Nanna Birk Larsen²²³. The two girls are the same age. They are both looking after younger children, as Nanna is often responsible for babysitting her two brothers. They are both having sexual relationships with older men. As Lisa was killed by her uncle, Nanna was murdered by her father’s best friend, a man she would probably have considered as her uncle. Finally, about their physical appearance, they resemble each other as young women with blond hair and blue eyes. The character of Lisa in *Broadchurch* might have been a way for the producer, Chris Chibnall, to pay a tribute to the Danish show.

Lastly, we are going to see the impact that these investigations into children murders have on the narrative. We saw that to involve children in the cases on which the detectives are working in the show has become something recurrent in the first and second season²²⁴. The focus on children emphasizes their gullibility in front of someone

219 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 8:31 – 9:19.

220 Sarah Payne was an eight-years-old girl who was abducted and killed by a paedophile in 2000 in West Sussex, England. It led to the creation of the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme, also called Sarah’s Law, for people to check if someone in contact with their child is a sex offender.

221 Marianne Colbran, *op.cit.* 18.

222 Lee Ashworth, Lisa Newbury, Pippa Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 23:15 – 23:28.

223 *The Killing* (or *Forbrydelsen*), Søren Sveistrup, DR, 3 seasons, 2007 – 2012.

224 In the third season of *Broadchurch*, even though the victim is a middle-aged woman, in the end, the

who does not have good intention toward them. In the different cases that we mention, the victims generally do not really know what is coming for them. In the first season, Danny starts to realize that what he is doing with Joe is wrong, that is to say meeting in secret for hugs. He threatens to jump from the cliff, but finally goes back with Joe. He wonders why Joe is locking the door behind them²²⁵. He slowly understands why Joe wants them to meet, but does not get why with him. He faces his murderer and argues with him without knowing he is going to die.

A similar pattern is also valid for the death of Lisa. In the scene preceding her murder, she is having sex with Lee, before being caught by her uncle. As Danny, she realises that something is wrong with Ricky, argues with him and accuses him of voyeurism and jealousy, leading the man to kill her.²²⁶ In our last case, the death of Pippa is treated in a different way. There is no anger nor argument between her and her murderers, Claire and Lee. After Pippa thinks she heard what happened to Lisa, she goes back to bed with Claire, who gives her a liquid contained in Ricky's flask, a mix of alcohol and Rohypnol, saying it is supposed to calm her down to sleep. Of course, the young girl does not have a clue to what she is drinking, thinking it is just a medicine to calm her down. Once asleep, Lee suffocates her with a pillow, she does not know that she is about to die before falling asleep. The death of Pippa might be the one that demonstrates how choosing children as victims helps to have naive victims, that are not aware of what is happening or of what is going to happen to them. It is also a proof of cowardice on the part of the murderer, even though the three murders we have to deal with were not planned and happened spontaneously.

b – The murderers

As we studied the victims present in the show and who constitute a part of the investigation, we are now going to focus on the different murderers. In the first season, we have Joe Miller (Matthew Gravelle), who killed Danny. In the second season, we have a trio of murderers: Claire Ripley (Eve Myles) and Lee Ashworth (James D'Arcy), who killed Pippa, and Ricky Gillespie (Shaun Dooley) who killed Lisa. As the victims

involvement of children in the same as the person responsible for the rape happens to be a teenager.
225 Joe Miller, Danny Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 16:25 – 16:47.
226 Lisa Newbury, Ricky Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 21:02 – 21:06.

have the common feature of being quite young, each of these murderers is an adult, probably around forty years old. The contrast between the young age of the victim and the maturity of the killer is quite obvious. The difference between children and adults implies a difference in term of strength, especially in the case of Joe and Ricky. Indeed, strangling someone or smashing a head against the floor hard enough for it to bleed out requires a certain power that both men happen to have. Therefore, in front of such strength, as young beings, the victims were doomed and not only because they did not see their death coming, but also because they are defenceless in front of the killers.

As we mentioned in the case of Joe and Ricky, the act of killing the person they are facing is something quite spontaneous, the murder was not premeditated, it happens because of an altercation between them and the victims. However, when considering Claire and Lee killing Pippa, it is different. The reason behind the murder of the young girl is that she thinks Lee killed Lisa. Therefore, they want to get rid of her to avoid her telling someone else about the implication of Lee, even though he is not responsible for Lisa's death. Moreover, both Lee and Claire are already accomplices in the murder of Lisa as Ricky threatens to denounce them to the police. Therefore, Claire is slowly planning Pippa's death. She is first giving her what is in the flask, as asked by Ricky and against Lee's opinion who wants to go to the police²²⁷. She gives the flask to the girl and encourages her to drink a lot from it. She then goes to Lee and even though they do not clearly state what they are about to do, we understand, thanks to the editing and to the look in their eyes, that Lee is going to kill Pippa.

“Claire Ripley: I've buried your hip flask in the woods here. I know exactly where but nobody else will be able to find it. If you feel like you want to talk to the police or you blame us for any of this, remember. I know where your hip flask is, that contains traces of what killed Pippa. It's just a precaution, that's all. Nothing else.

Ricky Gillespie: You've thought it all through, haven't you?

Claire: I've got to think of the future.”²²⁸

Whereas Joe and Ricky are not aware that they are going to become murderers at the beginning of each scene, Lee and Claire have time to premeditate what they are doing to the young girl. Claire is the one that orchestrates what is going to happen, and she asks Lee to finish the job for her by killing Pippa, a way for Claire to make the implication of

227 Lee Ashworth, Claire Ripley, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 23:00 – 23:13.

228 Claire Ripley, Ricky Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 30:28 – 30:48.

her partner even more obvious. The fact that Claire happens to be the mastermind behind all this case is quite ironical, because as early as the first episode of the second season, she acts as the victim, saying things about Lee as for instance “You don’t know what he’s capable of.”²²⁹

The different murderers whom the viewer has to deal with are different, as they proceed differently. But in the end, they still remain random men and women. Therefore, the guilt of killing someone tends to surface at some point in the investigation. Two of the four murderers are faced with the weight of guilt. In the first season, Joe surrenders by the end of the show. He has tried to surrender a first time by breaking into the hut where he killed Danny to attract the detectives²³⁰. Later on, in the last episode, he will say that he wanted to confess while going back to the hut.

“**Alec Hardy:** Two nights ago, why did you call from the hut?

Joe Miller: I couldn’t take it any more. I caused Jack’s death too. I knew you’d check the number. I wanted it just to be you, to confess. Then I saw Ellie so I ran.”²³¹

The guilt of Jack’s death, who killed himself because of the turn that the investigation took at some point, also leads him to surrender. Joe was ready to confess, but not ready to face his wife about what he has done. In the last episode of the first season, he finally gives up after putting the signal back on Danny’s phone for the detective to track him²³². At the end of this scene, he says: “I’m sick of hiding”. The weight of his guilt drives Joe to confess.

We have a similar case in the second season with Lee. He first appears to help the detective in the third episode of the second season, when he pretends to have done researches about the case to find the murderer and advises Alec to dig deeper into Ricky Gillespie²³³. He almost offers the guilty party on a silver plate to the detective, even though he has an agreement with Ricky not to tell the police as Lee is guilty of the death of Pippa. In the end, Lee is the one who tells the police about what happened that night²³⁴. He confesses and does not hesitate to denounce Claire and Ricky, as we

229 Claire Ripley, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 18:38 – 18:52.

230 Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 43:59 – 44:45.

231 Alec Hardy, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 23:48 – 24:09.

232 Alec Hardy, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 9:52 – 14:11.

233 Lee Ashworth, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 30:33 – 30:52.

234 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, Lee Ashworth, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 18:27 – 18:55.

understand from the flashbacks shown to illustrate what Lee is saying. By seeing his face, we understand how hard it must have been to keep such a secret for that long, and we also understand the fact that he had to run away to France after the collapsing of the case, to avoid being near Sandbrook, Claire and Ricky. In the end, the fact that these two murderers happen to feel guilty enough to confess is a kind of last glimpse at their humanity, as if they were ready to face what they have done. However this aspect of Joe is annihilated once he pleads “not guilty” in the second season²³⁵. Eventually, he is asked by people from the community to leave the town at the end of the last episode, as in the ritual expulsion of the scapegoat²³⁶.

Lastly, even though we mentioned earlier that the murderers are not central in the narrative on purpose, there are many clues scattered throughout the show to help the viewer. These clues are hard to see when watching the series for the first time, but once the viewer knows who the criminal is, some details become quite obvious. In the second season, there are not that many clues as we often see Claire and Lee in the diegesis, we already know that they have something to do with the disappearance of the two girls, especially thanks to the analepses. However, the implication of Ricky is a surprise. We have some indications that might help to lead the viewer to reach the conclusion of Ricky being responsible. At some point, Alec asks Ellie “Why would a father not want an investigation to restart into the death of his own daughter?”²³⁷ Once one knows that Ricky is partly responsible for the death of Pippa, and fully responsible for the murder of Lisa, the answer to Alec’s question appears quite clear. Also, later on in the same episode, we see that Ricky has a picture of a field of bluebells in his office²³⁸. We often have glimpses of a bluebell’s field during the show when Sandbrook is mentioned or when we have access to memories linked to Lisa or Pippa. By the end of the show, after the revelation in the last episode, we know that Claire and Ricky went to this precise bluebell’s field to bury Ricky’s flask.

As for Joe in the first season, the hints in the show are more implicit and quite ironical. The first thing is that we often see Joe surrounded by children, either his own, Tom and Fred, or even in the skate park²³⁹. In this scene from the third episode, he might

235 Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 12:18 – 13:28.

236 René Girard, *La violence et le sacré*. “Oedipe et la victime émissaire.” (Pluriel, 2010)

237 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 41:35 – 41:46.

238 Ricky Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 45:20.

239 Joe Miller, Tom Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 3, 22:31 – 23:14.

appear as a worried father, but he might also feel the guilt of seeing his own child being asked question by his friend about the murder of the boy he killed himself. There is also, in the sixth episode of the first season, a discussion in the skate park between Ellie and Joe that has a completely different meaning once the viewer knows Joe killed Danny:

“Joe Miller: Hello!

Ellie Miller: I was worried when I woke up. I didn’t know where you were till I got the note.

Joe: Yeah, well, Tom was up at like, six and he wanted to come down here. Apparently they do this every morning now before school. [...]

Ellie: Are you having fun?

Joe: Anything to lighten the mood, eh? How are you doing? You were a bit... distant yesterday.

Ellie: I was just looking ‘round that bar at the wake, thinking ‘It’s someone here. Why can’t I see it?’ The longer it goes on, I’m just starting to suspect everyone.

Joe: When you say everyone...

Ellie: Well, nearly everyone.

Joe: Shame, cos’ I am available for rigorous questioning in our bedroom every evening. And you might want to bring your handcuffs because I might be quite a troublesome prisoner.”²⁴⁰

In this extract, we can see that the criminal is almost confessing to his wife. The irony of the situation once one knows Joe is the murderer is quite striking, and the same goes with another scene between Joe and Alec. In the fourth episode, while Alec is invited to dinner at the Miller’s house, the detective manages to spot the fact that Joe is “a bloody liar”²⁴¹ and he laughs at it. Finally, at the end of the sixth episode, Joe also recognizes Danny’s skateboard very fast and freezes when he sees it²⁴², meaning that he must be used to seeing this skateboard, which is an indirect way to tell us that he was used to spending time with Danny.

In the end, we can say that the murderer does not have to be an important part of the narrative for the viewer’s investigation to go on. Each of the criminals presented in the show is different, but in the end, there is always a point in the storytelling when the viewer is able to guess who the killer is. This is different from what we said about detective stories, in which it is important for the reader not to guess who the murderer is before the detectives and especially before the end of the book.

240 Joe Miller, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 13:10 – 14:04.

241 Alec Hardy, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 27:49 – 28:11.

242 Tom Miller, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 37:59 – 38:44.

c – What happens after the investigation?

One of the originalities of *Broadchurch*, is the fact that it also focuses on everything that happens around the investigation. In most detective shows, the plot generally ends once the criminal has been identified and put in jail. However, in this show, the story goes beyond the investigation. We have two different cases at stake, and we are going to deal with each of them and see how another plot emerges out of the investigation.

We are first going to study the impact of the Sandbrook case. Even though this case becomes the centre of attention in the second season, we are to remember that it is first and foremost the reason why Alec comes to Broadchurch in the first season. The first impact that we can notice is therefore the impact on the detective who was in charge of the case. In the first part of our analysis, we already mentioned the fact that Alec was deeply hurt by the failure of the Sandbrook trial and his not finding the guilty party. He is using the case of Danny as a way to repent, as he tells his friend in the third episode²⁴³. He also confesses to Ricky:

“Seriously? My daughter was the same age as Pippa when this happened. My heart went to you. I knew how you felt. I couldn’t let you down. That’s what I always thought. Two years, never letting go! I nearly killed myself over this, and you’re gonna ‘no comment’ me?!”²⁴⁴

The fact that Alec was that invested in the Sandbrook case made him the efficient detective that he is to work on the murder of Danny. However, in the first season, he is also the one who tells Ellie not to be too much invested and too close to the investigation. He is trying to teach her to stand outside of the community, to be objective to be a good detective²⁴⁵. Even though he might seem rough, he tries to teach her not to make the same mistakes he made at Sandbrook. And it is working, as Ellie appears as a much stronger woman throughout season one, and she is able to run the investigation on Sandbrook almost on her own in the second season.

When talking about Sandbrook, we also have to note the consequences it had on the Gillespies, on Claire and on Lee. First, the Gillespie couple, that is to say Ricky and

243 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 3, 29:45 – 30:33.

244 Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 32:00 – 32:17.

245 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 29:28 – 30:39.

Cate, suffered from the death of their daughter and niece, but also from the mistrial of the case. We have a first look at the life of the couple in the first season when Cate meets Beth.

“**Cate Gillespie:** I used to assume grief was something inside you could fight and vanquish but it’s not. It’s an external thing. Like a shadow. You can’t escape it. You just have to live with it. And it doesn’t grow any smaller. You just come to accept that it’s there.”²⁴⁶

We understand that the loss of a child, according to Cate, is something that one can never recover from. The editing shows scenes of Mark and Chloe Latimer in their everyday life, with Cate’s voice as a voice over. We understand that this way to deal with grief is probably something that will also apply to the Latimer family. In the exact same scene, she also refers to the divorce between her and Ricky, and to the fact that she has slowly become an alcoholic, as a consequence of her mourning. Her divorce and her tendency to drink are two elements that will come back in the second season. In the fourth episode, when Cate is finally part of the diegesis, Alec tells her that he is “sorry to hear about [her] and Ricky”²⁴⁷ while she is sipping her glass of red wine in the middle of the afternoon.

The mistrial of the case also had an impact on the presumed suspect, Lee, and his partner, Claire. We learn at the beginning of the second season that Lee has fled to France at the end of the trial, to stay away from Sandbrook²⁴⁸. As for Claire, since the end of the trial, she has been under unofficial witness protection, being looked after by Alec, which is the reason why he brought her to Broadchurch. The impact of the Sandbrook case is therefore displayed in front of the viewer. The consequences of such a case and a mistrial are something that we would never find in traditional detective stories as the one mentioned at the beginning of our analysis. In both seasons, the two investigations are presented to the viewer, and even though Sandbrook might not have the prime importance in the first season, it is still part of the diegesis.

As we have the consequences of the Sandbrook case in the second season, we also have what comes next once the criminal has been found, that is to say the trial. The construction of this season is original as it is the narrative continuity of the first season

246 Cate Gillespie, Beth Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 21:04 – 24:47.

247 Alec Hardy, Cate Gillespie, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 32:39 – 33:47.

248 Lee Ashworth, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 3:54 – 4:40.

but also a come-back to something that happened before the first season and Danny's murder. Joe Miller's trial takes an important place in the narrative of the second season. In each episode, we have at least one if not several characters called to the witness box to answer the questions of the barristers. Whereas in the first season, the narrative could be split into three specific focuses, that is to say the investigation, the community and the role played by the press, in the second season, it is rather split into two: the Sandbrook case and the Broadchurch trial.

To focus on the trial, we can start by saying that the viewer and some characters present in the courtroom already know that Joe Miller is guilty. However, this does not make the battle between the defence and the prosecution less interesting. As the trial goes on, as viewers, we slowly come to question the morality of the lawyers who take the defence of Joe, Sharon Bishop (Marianne Jean-Baptiste) and Abby Thompson (Phoebe Waller-Bridge). Spectators thus slowly witness the mistrial of the case when Joe Miller is found to be not guilty²⁴⁹. This trial is proof that arresting a criminal after he confessed is not enough to have him punished and put in prison. Contrary to the majority of detective shows and detective stories in literature, we have the aftermath of the investigation, and unfortunately, even though the detectives did their best, it does not mean that there will be a "happy" ending for the victims and their relatives.

Lastly, we have to see the impact that the investigation and the trial have on the Latimer family, and the way they are dealing with grief, trying to rebuild themselves. The first thing that we can notice is the difficulty for the couple formed by Mark and Beth to deal with what is happening together. We learn that Mark was having an affair with Becca Fisher, that he was with her on the night of Danny's murder and that he is still seeing her²⁵⁰. As Beth gradually understands, the couple is destroyed. Each of them is dealing with the grief of Danny's death on his/her own. The only thing that links them both together is the coming of a new baby²⁵¹. On the one hand, Mark is dealing with grief by going back to work quite early after the death of his son, to keep his mind busy. In the second season, we also see him sharing moments and playing video games with Tom, as a way to compensate the loss of his son²⁵². On the other hand, in the second season, Beth wants to have a charity in Danny's name.

249 Joe Miller, Judge Sonia Sharma, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 1:08 – 2:42.

250 Becca Fisher, Mark Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 3, 42:49 – 44:34.

251 Beth Latimer, Paul Coates, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 22:00 – 23:39.

252 Mark Latimer, Tom Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 36:04 – 37:08.

Beth Latimer: Oh I'm not gonna stop. There's gonna be a charity in Danny's name.

Paul Coates: Well, the three of us were talking before we got here and... there's a small group. They're new, but they do the most challenging work.

Beth: What sort of work?

Paul: They work with known sex offenders. Those who've targeted children. They provide support, to stop offenders reoffending.

Maggie Radcliffe: Rehabilitate for the long term.

Beth: So Danny's legacy would be helping the sort of man who murdered him?

Paul: If you want to prevent children being targeted, you stop the people targeting them. This is where the help is needed, because this is where most people are too afraid to go. But you're different, Beth. You're brave.

Beth: I'm not. I can't do that. I'm not that forgiving."²⁵³

Even though she refuses, she will end up agreeing to meet those men. This is a way for her to deal with what happened to her child. This is also a social facet of the show which points to prevention and rehabilitations as more important than repression. The Latimer family also counts Chloe, the daughter, whom we do not get to see much in season two, but who deals with the loss of her brother by getting away with her boyfriend Dean in the first season²⁵⁴. Finally, the last member of the Latimer family is Liz. She is Beth's mother, and brings a religious aspect to the show. She is often seen with Paul, and would like other people around her to feel as deeply involved in religion as she is²⁵⁵. She does not seem to be destroyed by grief in the first season, as she says herself: "I'm the strong one in all of this."²⁵⁶ She is a strong support for her daughter and son-in-law. However, Liz dies between the first and second season²⁵⁷. We do not know much about her death, only that Beth and Mark decided to call their daughter Lizzie after her grandmother.

In the end, we can see that the aftermath of an investigation is presented to the viewer, either in the case of Danny's death or in the Sanbrook case. The impact that such a traumatizing investigation might have on the victim's relatives is something that we tend to find neither in other detective shows nor in literature.

253 Beth Latimer, Olly Stevens, Maggie Radcliffe, Paul Coates, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 36:46 – 38:03.

254 Chloe Latimer, Dean Thomas, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 23:54 – 25:02.

255 Liz Roper, Paul Coates, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 35:39 – 36:33.

256 Liz Roper, Karen White, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 8:17 – 9:05.

257 Beth Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 12:20 – 12:30.

As a conclusion to this chapter about the investigations in *Broadchurch*, we are allowed to say that they form an essential part of the story. It focuses on the victim, and each season's finale focuses on telling everything that happened on the very night the crime was committed, aiming attention at the murderer and his victim. The process is also important, considering that the viewer has access to the same elements as the detectives. However, the narrative also concentrates on what comes next and on the impact it has on the relatives, and on a larger scale, on the entire community, as we are going to see.

3 – The community

The essential aim of setting the plot in a small town like Broadchurch is to reflect the impact of a murder investigation on a very tight community. This is also the reason why we have numerous secondary characters in the show. We are now going to study the implication and integration of the community in the narrative.

a – Importance of the community and secondary characters

As previously mentioned, there are a lot of different characters in this show who have to play an important part in the plot at some point. The secondary characters are almost the same from the first to the second season, even though the importance of their roles might be altered. Also, in the latter, new characters are introduced: the different members of the Sandbrook case, that is to say the Gillespie couple, Claire and Lee, but also the barristers for Joe's trial, Jocelyn Knight and Sharon Bishop, as well as their respective assistants, Ben Haywood and Abby Thompson.

One of the main characters that we did not really mention in the course of this analysis, at least not really as a character, is the town of Broadchurch. In an interview, Jodie Whittaker says: "Broadchurch is the lead character. It was in season one and it is in season two. The geography, the community and the energy of it are the story."²⁵⁸ Even though one might not define a town as a character, it appears that in this particular case, Broadchurch has indeed an important role to play. It is defined by very specific elements and components, that make it what it is. Actually, if one was to put the exact

²⁵⁸ Jodie Whittaker, *Broadchurch*, "The Making Of *Broadchurch*", 0:05 – 0:17.

story of *Broadchurch* in another setting, it would not work the same. The town defines the plot, by being this little community which gathers many characters that have different jobs, different lives, but all know each other²⁵⁹. A little community that is even ready to welcome a foreigner, as Alec is in the first season. There is also quite a strong relationship between the town and the murderer of the first season, Joe Miller.

“Paul Coates: Joe, you can’t put everyone through a trial. You confessed. The evidence against you is clear.

Joe Miller: Not just me. Everyone.

Paul: Joe, you are the only one on trial here. You killed a child. Just you. No-one else.

Joe: Nobody’s innocent, Paul. Everyone’s hiding things.”²⁶⁰

Joe blames the influence of the town on him, and on his surroundings, that is to say that people who orbit around him are responsible for the person he has become. He does not accept being considered as a child murderer, and places the responsibility on the town. This is another reason why *Broadchurch* can be considered as a character, because of its strong influence on what is happening. The town stands as a kind of allegory for community and society.

“Matthew Gravelle: At that point, it is a bit like everyone is guilty. It doesn’t actually mean that everybody is, but it does kind of open up the Pandora’s box of what’s inside *Broadchurch*.”²⁶¹

This comparison between the town and the Pandora’s box²⁶² helps to understand the fact that the murder of Danny will end up shaking the entire town, revealing problems and secrets that were supposed to stay hidden. Up to the end of the show, the link between the town and Joe is quite strong, as even though he blames the town for what is happening to him, he ends up excluded from the town by the community²⁶³.

The town offers to the audience a wide representation of the British middle class.

259 Mark Lamiter, Joe Miller, Ellie Miller, Tom Miller, Susan Wright, Paul Coates, Olly Stevens, Maggie Radcliffe, Steve Connelly, Becca Fisher, Nigel Carter, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 1:59 – 3:25.

260 Paul Coates, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 27:07 – 27:47.

261 Jodie Whittaker, Matthew Gravelle, *Broadchurch*, “The Making of *Broadchurch*”, 7:59 – 8:25.

262 “In Greek legend, a box containing all the evils, which Zeus gives to Epimetheus (‘afterthought’) on his marriage to the Greek Eve, Pandora (‘all-gifted’). She opens the box and the evils escape to plague the world, leaving only Hope (which also escapes, in some versions). This was Zeus’s revenge on man for having obtained the gift of fire from Prometheus.” “Pandora’s box” *Payton’s Proper Names*. (1969) 337.

263 Paul Coates, Joe Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 8, 40:31 – 42:06.

The idea of representing a little community goes with the representation of quite a variety of people. We are faced with different jobs: lawyers, journalists, plumbers, detectives, newspapers seller, hotel owner... They all come from quite a simple background, representing the middle class. In this variety of people, we are also faced with modernity, brought by the fact that there is a homosexual couple, that appears in the second season of the show. We also become aware of the past relationship of Maggie Radcliffe and Jocelyn Knight. Actually, we have a first reference to this past relationship in the fifth episode of the second season, when Jocelyn refers to a past relationship, saying she had “missed the person she was supposed to be with”²⁶⁴. Considering the different scenes we, as viewers, are assisting to between Jocelyn and Maggie, it appears quite implicit that this is a reference to Maggie. However, even though we have plenty of scenes between the two of them, as for instance when Jocelyn asks the journalist to read to her because of her sight problem²⁶⁵, it is not before the seventh episode that this relationship appears explicitly to the eyes of the viewers. We finally have an explanation for their relationship that dated back to fifteen years before the time of the story, and a kiss between the two women.²⁶⁶ This kiss has triggered a lot of reactions on the night the episode was aired. People’s opinions varied a lot, as some were happily surprised that Chibnall decided to include a lesbian relationship in the show. But others did not understand this kiss and its function in a show such as *Broadchurch*, as we can see in this article from *The Mirror*²⁶⁷. Therefore, bringing an LGBT aspect to a show is a sign of modernity and acceptance, even though the reaction some viewers had on the night the episode was aired did not agree with this new aspect.

Finally, to bring out the importance of the secondary characters in the show, we have to talk about the construction of the narrative. In each season, we have moments in which one of the secondary characters is faced with either the detectives Alec and Ellie in the first season, or the barristers Sharon and Jocelyn in the second. In the first season, these moments are the interviews at the police station, in which the detectives are asking questions to the secondary character in order to find out more about either the investigation or something linked to a sub-plot. We see many characters going through

264 Jocelyn Knight, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 26:54 – 27:46.

265 Jocelyn Knight, Maggie Radcliffe, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 20:55 – 21:18.

266 Jocelyn Knight, Maggie Radcliffe, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 7, 29:34 – 31:21.

267 Fay Strang, “Broadchurch lesbian kiss: Viewers surprised by ‘random’ romance between Maggie and Jocelyn.” *The Mirror*. February 17, 2015. <<http://www.mirror.co.uk/tv/tv-news/broadchurch-lesbian-kiss-viewers-surprised-5177850>> Accessed July 10, 2017.

police interviews in the first season: Mark Latimer, Tom Miller, Becca Fisher, Jack Marshall, Paul Coates, Susan Wright, Nigel Carter and in the last episode, Joe Miller for his confession. In the second season, the secondary characters are summoned as witnesses in court for the trial, and here again, we have many of them: we find again Susan, Nigel, Tom and Mark, but Beth Latimer and Lucy Stevens are also there as witnesses against Joe, and the two detectives, Alec and Ellie, are also giving their own summary of the case. In the second season, we have custodies of the three culprits in the last episode, that is to say Claire, Lee and Ricky.

These moments that we find throughout the entire show until the very last episode of each season are a way for the viewer to have access to new elements, which have different aims in the show. Some of them are there to help with the investigation, as for instance the custody of Becca Fisher in the first season that is helpful to exonerate Mark as she was with him on the night of Danny's murder²⁶⁸. Other custodies are also used to give us elements on a sub-plot that is not directly linked to the investigation, as for instance, the interview of Susan Wright, which gives us many elements about her past. It is partly linked to the investigation as it explains the behaviour she had in front of Danny's body²⁶⁹. Finally, in the second season, some of the interviews in court, that is to say most of the interviews run by Sharon, the lawyer for the defence of Joe Miller, are also meant to mislead the viewer, by leading towards wrong information. One of the most striking instances of that is the interview of Ellie by Sharon, when she accuses her of having an affair with Alec, even though the viewer knows for sure that it is not true²⁷⁰. By "distorting the truth", the barrister for the defence manages to bring the interview to new conclusions that are not what is expected by the viewers, but also not the conclusion expected by other characters, bringing the investigation of the first season to a whole new level. We can therefore say that the importance of the secondary characters is not to be undervalued as in the end, each of the secondary characters has a role to play in the progress of the narrative.

b – Parenthood as a main theme

268 Becca Fisher, Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 3, 33:32 – 34:17.

269 Susan Wright, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 9:45 – 12:20.

270 Sharon Bishop, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 42:02 – 44:36.

The importance of the community also implies that we have other matters at stake in the show than the investigation. There is an entirely different story going on inside the community which is based on the different links and relations between all the secondary characters. When we try to find out what is the most important theme that comes back several times in the show inside the community, we can notice that the theme of parenthood and the relations between parents and their children are recurrent in the life of a major part of every character.

In this part, we will not come back on the aspects that we already mentioned linked to the theme of parenthood, we will only recall that both the detectives are devoted parents. Also, Alec has lost his mother, as Beth lost hers in the second season. With this small summary of what was mentioned earlier with the main characters of the show, we can already see the importance of parenthood in most of the plot. And it also appears in many of the stories, more or less important, concerning our secondary characters.

The first plot about parenting that we are going to mention is that between Susan Wright and Nigel Carter. In the last-but-one episode of the first season, we learn that Susan has children, and that some years before, she was pregnant, but because of what went on with her husband, social services took the baby away from her²⁷¹. Therefore, we understand that she has a son or a daughter she never met. Implicitly, at this point, the viewer can guess that this baby is Nigel because of the numerous conflictual scenes that she has with him, as for instance:

“Susan Wright: You can’t live without me, can you?

Nigel Carter: I ain’t staying. There’s things happening that I need to see to. So I want you to take that and go.

Susan: What’s that?

Nigel: Five hundred quid.

Susan: Five hundred? Is that what I’m worth?

Nigel: It’s all I could get. You see that van? I got a crossbow in that van. I ain’t messing about.

Susan: We need to find a way of working this out... Together.”²⁷²

With this kind of scene, it is indeed quite easy for the viewer to create a link between Nigel and Susan’s missing baby. It is only later on²⁷³, still in the seventh episode, that it

271 Susan Wright, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 10:05 – 11:48.

272 Susan Wright, Nigel Carter, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 29:13 – 30:00.

273 Nigel Carter, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 26:02 – 26:45.

is made quite clear that the different confrontations that we viewed between Nigel and Susan are due to the fact that she is his mother. She considers herself as his mother, but he does not consider himself as her son. The only woman he considers as his mother is the woman who raised him, and this is the reason why when Susan comes to tell him that she is dying, he rejects her, saying that he is not his family²⁷⁴. The relation mother/son between Susan and Nigel is quite complex. However, we can still draw a parallel between Susan and Ellie. In the first season, after interviewing Susan about her life, Ellie tells her that she does not understand how she could not know about what her husband was doing to their daughters²⁷⁵. There is dramatic irony in the following exchange between the two of them, as Ellie does not know anything about what Joe has done to Danny in the first season.

“Ellie Miller: Did you enjoy yourself, lying in there?

Susan Wright: It’s not my husband in the dock. I suppose you knew all along.

Ellie: No!

Susan: Of course you did. We all know. We all turn a blind eye.

Ellie: Not me – that’s not what happened.

Susan: Of course not! You just keep telling yourself that.”²⁷⁶

As we can see, the exchange is reversed as this time, Susan blames Ellie for not knowing about her husband’s activities. But the parallel does not stop there. Another element that is a common point between the two women is rejection. As we saw, Nigel does not want to recognize Susan as his mother. In the second season, the same happens to Ellie.

When talking about parenthood and more especially about fatherhood, there is another parallel that can be drawn between two other characters that are Jack Marshall and Mark Latimer. As Ellie is blaming Susan in the first season, Mark is also unsure about Jack’s pseudo paedophile tendencies. However, when we compare the stories of Jack and Mark as fathers, they are quite similar. Both of them lost their son, as Jack explains to Mark when everyone is going after him²⁷⁷, an extract in which Jack says: “We’re the same, Mark.” And indeed, they are in the end. Jack has wrongly been accused of paedophilia because of what was said in the newspapers²⁷⁸. In the same way,

274 Susan Wright, Nigel Carter, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 38:09 – 39:22.

275 Ellie Miller, Susan Wright, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 7, 34:20 – 34:36.

276 Ellie Miller, Susan Wright, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 9:39 – 10:09.

277 Jack Marshall, Mark Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 32:12 – 34:21.

278 Jack Marshall, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 36:20 – 37:02.

Mark recognizes in court that meeting alone with Tom without telling anyone might look “a bit odd”²⁷⁹. In both cases, the reason why they might be seen as paedophiles is that they are looking for a compensation for the presence of their missing son, Jack with the sea brigades and Mark with Tom Miller. Both these men are trying to cope with the loss of their son as they can, on their own. They both appear as grieving fathers, who do not know what to do to overcome the death of their boys²⁸⁰.

Finally, in the rest of the show, we can also find other elements linked to family and parenthood, even though they might not be as stressed upon as the parallels we mentioned before. The first mother/son relationship that we can mention is that between Lucy and Olly Stevens, the sister and nephew of Ellie. We do not have many elements about this relationship. However, there is one scene where it appears quite clearly that Olly is the one who tries to reason with his mother²⁸¹. Indeed, as people are taking their electrical appliances out of Olly and Lucy’s house, we understand that they are lacking money and that it is because of the mother, as Olly complains that she does not understand the kind of trouble they are in. Even though this idea of bankruptcy will have an importance in the second season, as far as their mother/son relationship is concerned, we do not have many more elements.

In the second season, we have small subplots that are dealing with motherhood too. The first one would be the relation between Sharon Bishop and her son, Jonah, who is a convict in prison²⁸². She appears as a devoted mother, as she visits him quite often and tries to help him as best as she can. She is destroyed by the fact that she has to see her son in jail without being able to do something to get him out²⁸³. She is a concerned mother, as Jocelyn Knight appears as a concerned daughter. Jocelyn has also a strong link with her mother, even though she does not talk a lot about it in the show. She is taking care of her mother and is paying for her nursing home²⁸⁴. Later in the season, she learns that her mother died from a fall²⁸⁵. However, even though as viewers, we are aware of this aspect of Jocelyn’s life, she never refers to it, and does not let the loss of

279 Jocelyn Knight, Mark Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 6, 16:09 – 16:23.

280 In the third season, we have an even more striking element that allows us to create this parallel between Jack and Mark, that is that Mark tries to kill himself, when Jack killed himself in the fifth episode of the first season.

281 Olly Stevens, Lucy Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 35:14 – 35:39.

282 Sharon Bishop, Jonah Bishop, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 14:57 – 16:06.

283 Sharon Bishop, Jonah Bishop, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 32:00 – 33:02.

284 Jocelyn Knight, her mother, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 16:08 – 17:20.

285 Jocelyn Knight, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 6, 44:02 – 44:27.

her mother disarm her for the trial. Finally, the last reference to motherhood that we might have in the show is that concerning Claire in the second season. By the end of the latter, we learn that she had an abortion after the disappearance of the two girls, because Lee was arrested and she would not have been able to deal with a baby on her own²⁸⁶. This is something that is only mentioned by the end of the season, as Lee did not know anything about this. So in the end, when considering each secondary character of the show, we can notice that almost all of them have a link with parenthood or being the son or the daughter of someone else, present in the show.

c – The media, a third narrative arc

The importance of the police-news media relations in the show is something that we are not used to seeing in detective shows. In *Broadchurch*, Chibnall innovates by giving a real crucial role to the journalists that are working on the different cases in each season. In her book, Marianne Colbran mentions that:

“[...] the creator [of *Broadchurch*] explained that his interest in police-news media relations pre-dated these events [British scandals linked to revelations by the press] and was triggered reading Nick Davies’ *Flat Earth News* (2008), a study of the British newspaper industry. He explained that one of the things that fascinated him was: ‘what makes one case newsworthy and not another one equally deserving press attention.’”²⁸⁷

In this part, we are going to present how this aspect of the show is necessary to its singularity.

The first thing that we have to say is that the show features three different journalists. The first two of them that we are introduced to are Maggie Radcliffe (Carolyn Pickles) and Oliver Stevens, called Olly (Jonathan Bailey). They are both working at the *Broadchurch Eco*, the local newspaper. They are therefore from Broadchurch. We have some information concerning their background, we mentioned already that Maggie is, by the end of the second season, in a relationship with Jocelyn Knight. Concerning Olly, he is the nephew of Ellie Miller and calls her “Auntie Ellie”²⁸⁸. About his personal life, Olly is quite young, and he is also untrustworthy when

286 Lee Ashworth, Claire Ripley, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 7, 16:09 – 18:15.

287 Marianne Colbran, *op.cit.* 201.

288 Olly Stevens, Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 15:15 – 15:43.

it comes to love relationship. In the show, he has sexual relations with two different women: Karen in the first season²⁸⁹ and Abby in the second²⁹⁰. In both cases, we are talking about a one-night stand motivated by the ambition of the young man, as Karen and Abby bring him new information for his work and articles he might publish. Finally, the last journalist is Karen White. She only appears in the first season of the show. She is a journalist from London, working for *The Daily Herald*²⁹¹. It is not the first time she has to work on the case of child's murder as she covered the Sandbrook case in the past. As Alec, she is an outsider to the town. Even though she appears as a great journalist, she does not belong to Broadchurch, and it is hard for her to find her own place as a trustworthy journalist inside the town.

As we have three journalists, we also have three different ways of working as journalists. We will try to define these three different methods based on what we are allowed to see in the show. First, we are going to focus on Olly. He is the young one, and probably the most ambitious. Indeed, at the very beginning of the show, we learn that he has already sent applications to all the important English newspapers, as the *Daily Mail* for instance²⁹². He is often linked with the social media²⁹³. Indeed, we are allowed a glimpse at his Twitter account a few times in the show, and during the trial in season two, he also refers to a live blog²⁹⁴ that he is going to run to keep the world informed about what is going on in the courtroom. His ambition goes higher than simply working for the local newspaper. He likes to take initiatives, and does not hesitate to meet people to ask them for exclusive information. He also uses his family relationship with his aunt who works for the police to be the first informed when something happens:

“Ellie Miller: When did you last see the boat?

Olly Stevens: Eight weeks ago.

Ellie: The whole thing?

Olly: The motor and everything.

Ellie: Why'd you leave the motor on it?

Olly: Dad always did.

Ellie: And I always told him not to.

289 Olly Stevens, Karen White, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 13:53 – 15:23.

290 Abby Thompson, Olly Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 7, 33:59 – 34:27.

291 Karen White, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 31:32 – 32:26.

292 Maggie Radcliffe, Olly Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 13:13 – 13:42.

293 See Appendix 3.

294 Olly Stevens, Paul Coates, Maggie Radcliffe, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 19:00 – 19:25.

Olly: Do you think it could be the boat that was burned?

Ellie: It's late, Oliver. Thank you for reporting it. I've given a picture to SOCO. Leave it with me. You can go now.

Olly: But if you find it was, can I have the story? Don't announce it, give it to me. If it was our boat – my boat. Dad's boat."²⁹⁵

We understand that for him any way is legitimate to get the exclusive material. In the second season, not only does he cover the trial, but he also takes the initiative to get involved in the covering of the Sandbrook case, and more specifically to get information about Lee Ashworth moving in Broadchurch²⁹⁶. This scene is a proof of the craftiness of the young journalist, as even though he does not get to have the interview he wished for, he manages to have several pictures of Lee which will be enough for him to publish an entire article about the man, even though he was threatened by Lee for wanting to have an interview. Finally, his ambition is also shown by the fact that in the first season, he tends to side with Karen, who is a journalist nationally recognized.

Karen is the second journalist that we are going to study. As we said, she a journalist for a newspaper based in London. She obviously has different techniques as a journalist. Instead of looking for new clues and getting ahead of the police in the investigation, Karen tries to get closer to the Latimer family. She first goes to Chloe²⁹⁷. She acts as if she has come across her by coincidence, even though she planned on giving Chloe Danny's cuddly toy back. She wants to gain Chloe's trust, and behaves like a friend. Later on in the show, she goes to Danny's grandmother, Liz²⁹⁸. Once again, she tries to win the grandmother's trust by giving her advice on getting the best help. But we know that as a journalist, she also wants to write things about the family. She proves this controversial facet of her job in another scene from the same episode:

“Karen White: Hello?

Len Danvers: Twenty-seven unanswered calls and finally she picks up. Come on then, explain why I shouldn't sack you.

Karen: I've taken leave, that's all. I'm owed loads and I've got a good story.

Len: I specifically told you not to go. We're gonna use an agency.

Karen: The police is struggling. I don't think this is gonna be done in a day or two.

Len: Why do I care? Why will our readers care?

Karen: Model family, two kids. Dad's a plumber. Quiet estate, idyllic market

295 Ellie Miller, Olly Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 35:54 – 36:20.

296 Olly Stevens, Lee Ashworth, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 23:55 – 25:03.

297 Karen White, Chloe Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 25:07 – 26:41.

298 Liz Roper, Karen White, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 8:17 – 9:05.

town – definition of normal.

Len: The mum – how photogenic?

Karen: Very photogenic. English rose.

Len: Get me an exclusive with her, nice photo, and I'll look at it.

Karen: Okey."²⁹⁹

The controversy linked to Karen's character appears quite evident here. She does not really want to get close to the Latimer family, she just wants them to trust her enough for her to be allowed an exclusive interview. When she sells her article to her boss, she never mentions the fact that she is close to them and feels for them, she only refers to how photogenic Beth is. As we said, she is also close to Olly, who sees her as a way to rise to the top. On the other hand, Karen uses him to get a stronger foothold inside the community.

Finally, the last journalist that we are presented with is Maggie. She is different from Olly and Karen, and is often opposed to their ideas or to their initiatives. She is first opposed to Karen being in Broadchurch, and refuses to give her an office on the premises of the *Broadchurch Eco*³⁰⁰. She does not like the idea of having a London journalist around while covering the case. We understand that truth be told, she does not like Karen at all, when she says to her: "You've brought a shit-fight frenzy down on us now"³⁰¹, reproaching her with the investigation her and Olly led about Jack Marshall, on which we will come back. In the second season, she also happens to be quite opposed to Olly's ways of using social media to have people informed. She does not agree with him about the live blog because she prefers to inform people once she has examined the information herself. She lectures him about always being on his phone³⁰². She also sermons him about posting too freely online, in the precise case of his article about Lee Ashworth. Finally, she reprimands him when she sees that he has created two front pages for the *Broadchurch Eco* based on if Joe is found guilty or not guilty at the end of the trial³⁰³. We can say that Maggie appears as a wiser character than the other two journalists. She is Olly's boss, and is trying to instil in him the traditional values of journalism, not the flashiness of the job. She further proves to be a good journalist by running her own investigation, as for instance everything she has found about Susan

299 Karen White, Len Danvers, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 4:13 – 5:00.

300 Karen White, Maggie Radcliffe, Olly Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 2, 3:06 – 4:12.

301 Maggie Radcliffe, Olly Stevens, Karen White, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 25:21 – 25:42.

302 Maggie Radcliffe, Olly Stevens, Beth Latimer, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 2, 27:19 – 27:38.

303 Olly Stevens, Maggie Radcliffe, *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 7, 37:25 – 37:40.

Wright³⁰⁴. She runs her own investigation, and does not hesitate to confront Susan about what she has found³⁰⁵. However, in the end, she does not use her findings for the newspaper, but rather to help the police, delivering Susan to the detectives. Since the very beginning of the show, Maggie had claimed that the *Broadchurch Eco* was working with the police³⁰⁶, even though Olly proves the opposite. Maggie is a more experienced journalist than Olly and even than Karen, knowing the limitations of the job.

Lastly, now that we described the different techniques used by the journalists in the show, we should talk about the controversial case that they are covering in the fourth and fifth episodes of the first season, concerning Jack Marshall. In the fourth episode, Olly decides to investigate on Jack Marshall, as he has managed to find some elements about him and informs his superior³⁰⁷. Even though there is no mention of the name of the man or of what he did, we quickly learn what it is about when Maggie and Olly share what the latter has found with the two detectives³⁰⁸. From this point onward, Olly is free to find as many elements as he wants about Jack, and to publish them in the news as he informed the police.

“Olly Stevens: I’m sorry, there’s no easy way of asking this. Do you have a conviction for underage sex?

Jack Marshall: Why, you little bastard...

Olly: I’m not trying to stitch you up...

Jack: Who told you? The police?

Olly: I can help you put your side of the story across...

Jack: You’re all as bad as each other – gossiping and accusing.

Olly: Okey, I think you should let go of me.

Jack: You’ve known me how long? When did I ever do anything improper?

Olly: Okey, if we could go inside and talk...

Jack: So you can trick me into incriminating myself? Is that what that bitch you boss wants?

Olly: That’s a bit... How can I incriminate you if you’re innocent?

Jack: They’ve trained you to be a clever weasel, haven’t they? Go on. Get away. Go! Weasel! Go! Go!”³⁰⁹

As Olly confronts Jack, the young man acts as if he was not responsible for the rumours about his elder. Therefore, the way Jack calls him, “weasel”, is quite justified. After that,

304 Maggie Radcliffe, Susan Wright, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 18:09 – 18:41.

305 Maggie Radcliffe, Susan Wright, Olly Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 39:27 – 40:05.

306 Maggie Radcliffe, Olly Stevens, Alec Hardy, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 35:54 – 36:24.

307 Olly Stevens, Maggie Radcliffe, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 2:17 – 2:42.

308 Maggie Radcliffe, Ellie Miller, Alec Hardy, Olly Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 9:43 – 10:09.

309 Jack Marshall, Olly Stevens, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 23:29 – 24:42.

Olly appears quite proud to be in charge of writing an article about his findings on Jack Marshall for *The Daily Herald* thanks to Karen³¹⁰. Meanwhile, the detectives are also running their own investigation on the man. They summon him for an interrogation to ask him about his conviction for underage sex³¹¹. Jack does not tell anything about it, only that it has nothing to do with Danny, leaving an open door for interrogations on behalf of the detectives. However, he will finally end up telling the whole true story to Alec and Ellie, that is to say that he was a convict for underage sex, but it was not because he was a paedophile, it was because the woman whom he later married was fifteen at the time it happened³¹². The controversial aspect of this narrative arc stands in the fact that the journalists launched a real enquiry and displayed false facts about Jack Marshall without ever questioning him. As viewers, even though we do not have access to Jack Marshall's mind, we clearly see that he appears destroyed when seeing the front page of newspapers about him, whether it is about the untrue story of him being a paedophile³¹³ or when it is about his true story, about his young wife and son³¹⁴. As his private life becomes part of public knowledge, he is deprived of his privacy. Moreover, he is being harassed by paparazzi outside his own shop³¹⁵. All these elements lead to his suicide³¹⁶. This entire part of the plot can be assimilated to the butterfly effect³¹⁷. Initially, Olly has just made some research on Jack Marshall, and it ends up leading him to his death. The implication of the newspapers and of the journalists is undeniable, contrary to what Karen says:

“[...] **Karen White:** After they found Jack Marshall I couldn't stand being here, I couldn't face being part of the frenzy.

Olly Stevens: So you ran?

Karen: Yeah. Hid, with a mate in Wales for four days. It wasn't our fault Olly.

Olly: Let's just keep telling ourselves that.

[...] **Maggie Radcliffe:** Are you sure you should be here?

Karen: I felt I should pay my respect, yeah.

Maggie: Should have done that while he was alive. Or come to wash the blood off your hands?

310 Olly Stevens, Karen White, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 6:09 – 6:50.

311 Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, Jack Marshall, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 11:56 – 13:32.

312 Jack Marshall, Alec Hardy, Ellie Miller, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 26:35 – 27:52.

313 Jack Marshall, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 4, 11:16 – 11:28.

314 Jack Marshall, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 43:14-43:43.

315 Jack Marshall, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 24:47 – 25:21.

316 Jack Marshall, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 5, 44:52 – 45:15.

317 “The effect of a very small change in the initial conditions of a system which makes a significant difference to the outcome. [...]” “The butterfly effect.” *The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. (2000) 162.

Karen: You know what? Spare me the sanctimonious shit. Jack Marshall made his own decision, took his own life.

Maggie: He was hounded.

Karen: And what did you do? Did you bring him in? Did the police protect him? No. Your little town turned on him quite happily.”³¹⁸

In this scene, Karen does not want the blame to be on her or on the newspapers. She refuses to be held responsible for Jack’s death, even though she was the one to suggest that Olly should publish an article about Jack Marshall in *The Daily Herald*, which started the entire line of events happening because of that. In Marianne Colbran’s book, Chibnall confesses:

“When I was just starting to work on this idea [the media investigation], I kept thinking of all those cases like Joanna Yates, where the media come up with their list of suspects before the police have ever really had a chance to work through the case. But I think I wanted to reflect the world of the news media as well, the pressures on them, the cutbacks, the lack of time and the need to always come up with a scoop, an exclusive, something to fill the space and get the readers.”³¹⁹

With the instance of what happens to Jack Marshall, it appears quite clear that the creator of *Broadchurch* takes a side to denounce what he thinks about newspapers and journalists getting involved in a police investigation. He denounces the fact that in the case of *Broadchurch*, the journalists, especially Olly and Karen went ahead of the police investigation, publishing articles with missing elements, as for instance accusing Jack Marshall of being a paedophile without knowing the full story. Chibnall also blames the journalists for running an investigation only based on press articles and testimonies from people who do not know about the real story of Jack Marshall, who is never asked for anything by the journalists. He also goes against violation of privacy, showing how oppressive the paparazzi and journalists might be when it comes to obtaining exclusive information. Chris Chibnall explains that they “talked to, and particularly with crime reporters and about working on news desks and restrictions on resources. [...] It was all absolutely taken first hand from reporters working at the local and national level.”³²⁰ As he based himself on professional sources, what Chibnall has done with the media investigation in *Broadchurch* is something that we could find in our everyday life, that is to say media investigations that accuse someone of something without having all the

318 Olly Stevens, Karen White, Maggie Radcliffe, *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 6, 4:47 – 6:32.

319 Marianne Colbran, *op.cit.* 202.

320 Marianne Colbran, *op.cit.* 203.

elements that the police have. In the end, the creator of the show accuses the newspapers of taking the job of the police and suggests that in a case as serious as that of Danny Latimer, they should let the police do the investigation.

We can therefore say that in *Broadchurch*, the community and the secondary characters have a substantial importance. They sometimes help with the investigation, they help to develop secondary narrative arcs, or in the case of the journalists, they are also used to tackle a real problem, as the place of the newspapers in murder investigations.

To conclude on this final chapter, we can state that the construction of the narrative in *Broadchurch* is singular. As we have previously mentioned, it stands out because of it being a victim-led drama, which is different from other detectives shows. But its construction, its atmosphere and the fact that the focus is sometimes getting further and further away from the investigation is rather inventive. According to Marianne Colbran and to one of her interviews of Chris Chibnall, this creative freedom was essentially given to the creator by the network, ITV. Chibnall says:

“The big note that came from ITV at all times was just be bolder, be more authored, push it. They never saw it as a ratings winner. They didn’t want it to be that, they wanted it to be just really classy, was what they said. [...] And so their notes were really just ‘We love what you’re doing and just push it further and don’t censure yourself because you’re on ITV.’”³²¹

The freedom Chibnall was given when creating the show allowed him to construct his own idea of a good detective show. He modelled it according to what he believed in. The lack of censure from networks is something that becomes more and more popular these days, which is the reason why we see shows that are really different but which still belong to the same genre, and it is the case of the detective genre. Therefore, sorting shows in different categories and genres appears as something more and more controversial. In the case of *Broadchurch*, even though we asserted that it is a detective show, it can be considered as a drama too, because of the several narrative arcs that add-up through the series.

321 Marianne Colbran, *op.cit.* 205.

Conclusion



1: *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 8, 0:56

Broadchurch as a detective show stands as something unique. In the course of this analysis, we saw that, indeed, it was inspired from literary detective fiction on some points. The male detective in the show is a kind of combination between Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot and Father Brown, but anchored in the 21st century. Therefore, Alec Hardy is an adaptation of the literary detective who has undergone some changes to make him a believable character for our time, a round character with a complete background. And, in the end, we can say that we have the same changes in the show. If we are to compare the TV series to the different detective novels and short stories, we have a common basic structure, that is to say that of the investigation in which everything is done for the viewer not to be able to solve the case before the detectives. The change stands in the rest of the narrative, that is to say the fact that there are different plots, and that the focus is not solely on the investigations. As for the detective, the difference between literature and screen production is that in the TV show, we have something else than the investigation: the background of the town and the tight community formed by the numerous secondary characters.

Therefore, to answer the question asked at the very beginning of this research, the different detectives in British literature inspired crime shows of the 21st century by

forming a kind of outline for the main character of the genre. Even though Alec Hardy in *Broadchurch* is not a direct adaptation of a literary detective, the character still follows some fundamental rules that were introduced by literary fiction. Therefore, we find the pattern of the lead detective who is always accompanied by someone, or the fact that the detectives are suspecting different characters, one after the other, or the criminal that is found only at the very end... However, the change of medium and the evolution of time and ideology require something new, something more contemporary to have the viewer feel as close to the narration as the reader did in the late 19th – early 20th century. To talk about the different detectives of our literary corpus, Sherlock Holmes was adapted with a 21st century point of view in the 2010 BBC adaptation, *Sherlock*, recreating the atmosphere of London nowadays.

However, even though the narrative pattern is different, the aim of detective stories in literature and in a TV show as *Broadchurch* might be similar. Detective stories started to be published at the end of the Victorian era, a time when public opinion was preoccupied with the Darwinian theory of evolution. A lot of people at the time refused to be considered as ape's descendants. There was a complete rejection of the theory, and a kind of fear emanating from the population at the time. Doyle's short stories were anchored in this time. Indeed, the criminals are often assimilated to animals. As by the end of each short story, the criminal is rejected from society, it is a way to reflect the rejection of the Darwinian theory, excluding animality from society. Hence, even though detective stories are fiction, they still convey a message that goes well with the society and context in which they are published.

In the case of *Broadchurch*, we mentioned in the last part of our analysis the role of the press in the narrative. We also mentioned the true desire of the director, Chris Chibnall, to denounce the fact that nowadays, newspapers and journalists tend to get involved into criminal investigations, often publishing their own hypothesis and conclusions on a case without consulting professionals such as detectives for instance. Another case in which the TV show denounces something and of which we did not talk in our analysis is the case of the third season, aired in 2017. In this season, there is no murder but the rape of a 40-year-old woman, Trish Winterman (Julie Hesmondhalgh). As the other two seasons focus on the grief of the family after losing a child, this season focuses on the reconstruction of the woman after such a trauma, and the accompanying

of the woman by professionals. Moreover, at the end of each episode, during the closing credits, there is a voice over which says: “If you’ve been affected by issues raised in tonight’s episode, you can visit itv.com for support and information.”³²² The “issues” in question being rape, we find a message directly addressed to the viewer by the production of the show, and even from the broadcasting channel, ITV. There is a strong desire for this crime show to be something else than just a piece of entertainment, but something that can help people, providing prevention and help for potential victims of rape. As for the role played by the newspapers in the first two seasons, it raises a real issue of our contemporary society, and on this point, we can say that there is another common point between the literary detectives of the Victorian period and this contemporary detective show: the ambition to convey a message beyond the narrative, a message that would echo actual problems that readers and viewers could be familiar with.

Table of Appendixes

Appendix 1: Alec Hardy's loneliness through editing.....	121
Appendix 2.1: Comparison of the number of episodes aired on the three main channels in France per day.....	123
Appendix 2.2: Comparison of the original country of shows aired on the three main channels in France per week.....	124
Appendix 3: Olly Stevens and the social media.....	125

³²² *Broadchurch*, Season 3, Episode 1, 45:57 – 46:07.

Appendix 1: Alec Hardy's loneliness through editing



2: *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 1, 0:47



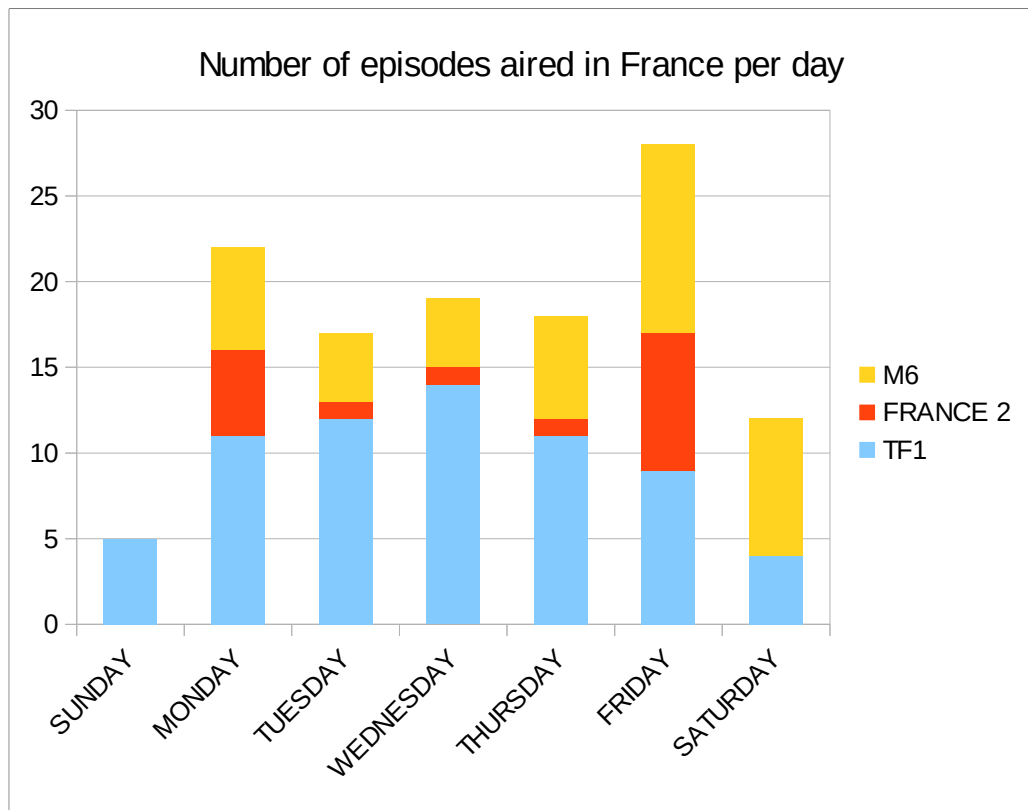
3: *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 3, 13:53



4: *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 5, 26:10

Appendix 2.1: Comparison of the number of episodes aired on the three main channels in France per day*

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	TOTAL
TF1	5	11	12	14	11	9	4	66
FRANCE 2	0	5	1	1	1	8	0	16
M6	0	6	4	4	6	11	8	39
TOTAL	5	22	17	19	18	28	12	121



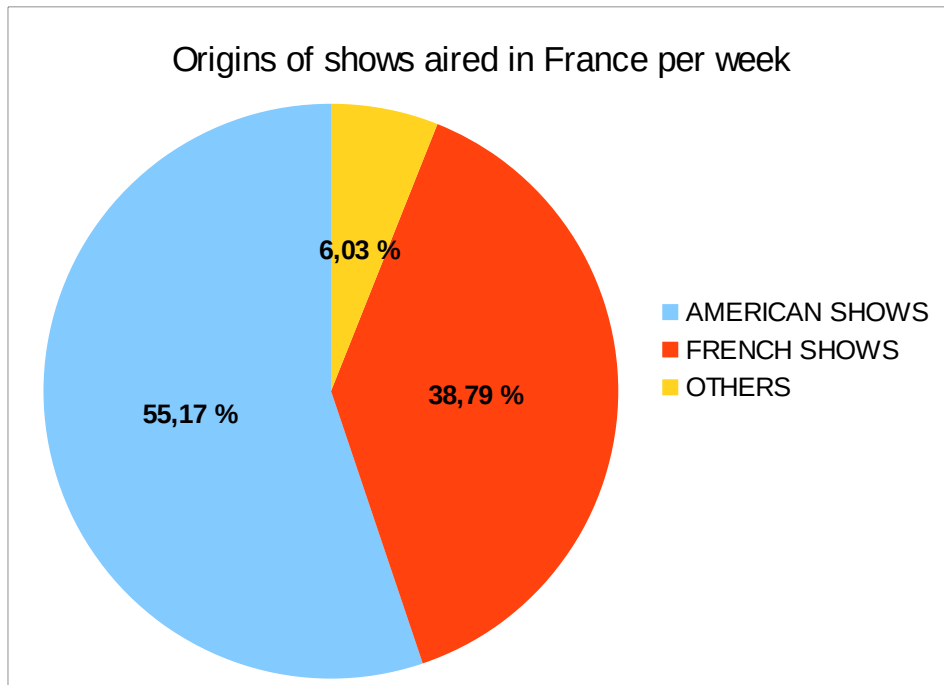
*based on TV Magazine, n°22.384 (June, 4th to June, 10th 2017)

Appendix 2.2: Comparison of the original country of shows aired on the three main channels in France per week*

AMERICAN SHOWS	
<i>NAME</i>	<i>EPISODES</i>
Desperate Housewives	10
Criminal Minds	9
The Young and the Restless	5
Hawaii Five-0	5
NCIS Los Angeles	4
Colony	3
Lethal Weapon	3
Law and Order: Criminal Intent	3
Rosewood	3
CSI : Crime Scene Investigation	3
House M.D.	2
Rush Hour	2
Battle Creek	2
Grey's Anatomy	2
Law and Order: Special Victims Unit	2
Perception	2
Law and Order	2
The Good Wife	1
Supernatural	1
AMERICAN SHOWS	64

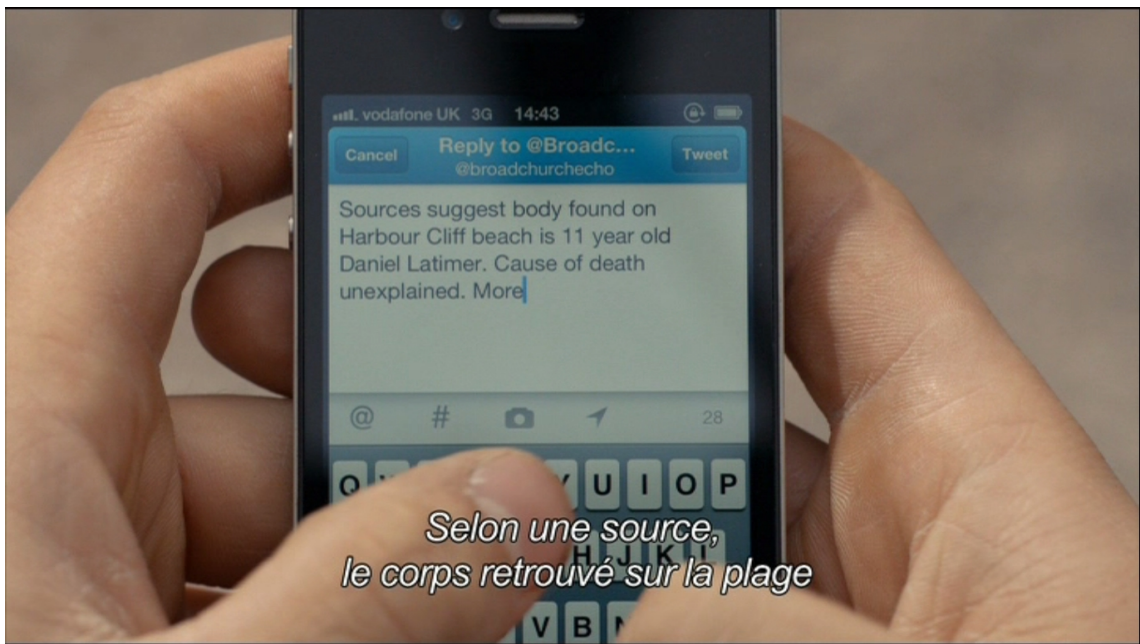
FRENCH SHOWS	
<i>NAME</i>	<i>EPISODES</i>
Petits secrets entre voisins	15
Scène de ménages	13
Nos chers voisins	5
Candice Renoir	4
Alice Nevers, le juge est une femme	3
Fais pas ci, fais pas ça	3
Camping Paradis	2
FRENCH SHOWS	45

OTHERS	
<i>NAME</i>	<i>EPISODES</i>
Death in Paradise (UK/FR)	4
Private Eyes (CAN)	3
OTHERS	7

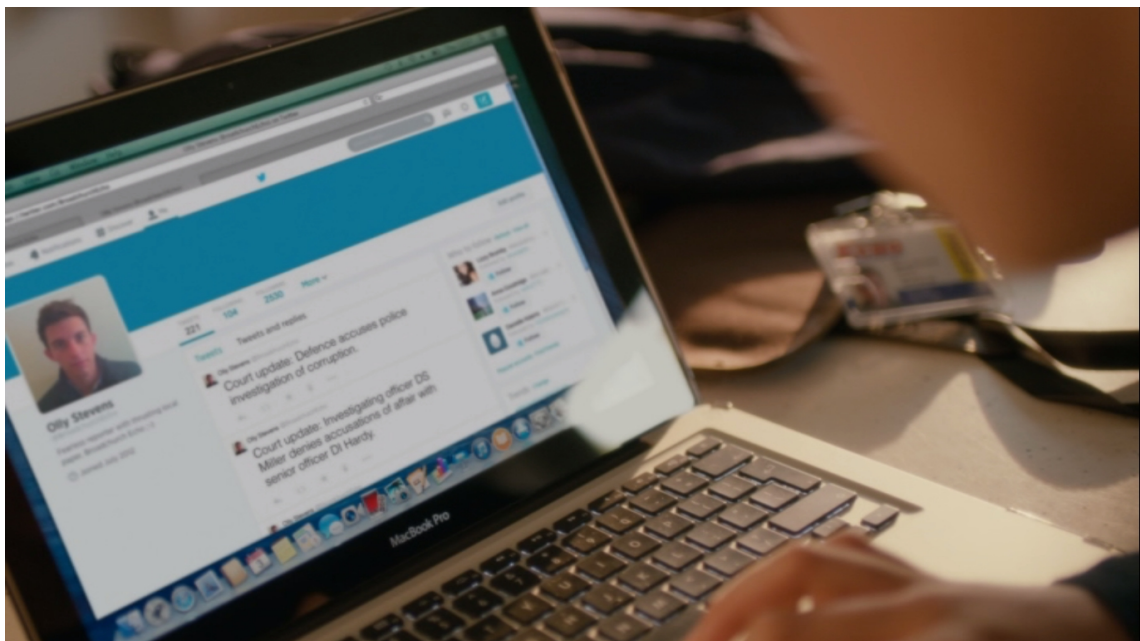


*based on TVMagazine, n°22.384 (June, 4th to June, 10th 2017)

Appendix 3: Olly Stevens and the social media



1: *Broadchurch*, Season 1, Episode 1, 31:02



2: *Broadchurch*, Season 2, Episode 4, 10:50

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