

Making Criminology†

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Criminologists have devoted a great deal of effort to studying the ways in which criminal justice, health, business enterprise, mass media, welfare, and other institutions create the realities of crime. They have spent comparatively little time examining their own institutional positions, and how they too participate in the construction of crime and its regulation. In this paper I build upon earlier work (Ericson and Carriere 1994) to suggest some ways in which we might fruitfully analyse the institutional nexus of criminology. Consideration is given to the role of criminology in the academic institution and in various institutions beyond the academy. These considerations in turn provide the basis for contemplating the future of criminology.

Criminology in the academy

The primary locus of criminology is the institution of higher learning. This locus does not mean that criminology is in any way isolated or separate from the 'real world'. To the contrary, as I shall argue shortly, criminology gets its life, legitimacy and *raison d'être* through being a vital part of other institutions. However, the academy is home base, and its dimensions require consideration at the outset.

The most obvious sign that criminology is a multi-institutional, multi-professional, multi-disciplinary field is the fact that it is organised in so many different ways within the institution of higher education itself. In each local university context, the organisation of criminology depends on the particular people involved and how they make their subject fit within structures prevailing at their institution. Indeed the variation is so great that I can only point to a few illustrations.

Law faculties often provide a home for criminology, especially in Europe, but also in Australia and to a lesser extent in North America. This locus is related to the identification of criminology with the criminal law institution and legal profession. It also reflects the fact that most criminology is driven by questions of reform, and is therefore comfortable in a faculty environment that has a political and normative edge. An additional consideration in many contexts is the relative legitimacy of law faculties compared to other faculties within a university. I recall a conversation with the Director of a leading Institute of Criminology who was considering the urgings of some colleagues to move the Institute from the law faculty to the social science faculty. In the context of his particular university, he felt that the law faculty offered much greater legitimacy and therefore long-term stability. He also pointed to the fact that all of the faculty members of his Institute but one had professional law degrees. He saw this as an additional strength in legitimising the enterprise, although

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many of these faculty members were in fact critical social scientists who had long ago rejected their professional legal training.

Another example is provided by the history of criminology at the University of California, Berkeley. The field was organised for many decades in a multi-disciplinary Department of Criminology. When this Department took a turn to the left in the 1960s and incurred the wrath of Governor Ronald Reagan and his colleagues, it was closed down. However, a strong criminology group soon re-emerged in the form of a Jurisprudence and Social Policy program in the Faculty of Law. It was apparently much more palatable to make criminological inquiry part of traditional law faculty concerns with jurisprudence and social policy, rather than social science concerns with theory and praxis.

Criminology has frequently been accommodated in social science faculties, especially in North America. Indeed, in universities where social science faculties are strong, law itself is sometimes deprofessionalised and treated as an area study within social science (for example, the Department of Law at Carleton University, Ottawa). Most often, however, criminology has been housed within sociology departments. The criminological concern with deviance, control and order is obviously consistent with traditional sociological concerns with the problem of order. The criminological concern with justice and welfare provision was also consistent with sociology and social administration departments — for example, at the University of Chicago and London School of Economics — that focused on marginal populations most at risk of criminality. As I shall suggest later, it may be that sociology is losing ground in criminology both because the deviance — control — order framework is losing ground, and because social administration under neo-liberal forms of governance is being transformed.

Criminology is also formed within interdisciplinary faculties. Graduate schools sometimes provide a suitable home for the field, for example the Centre of Criminology at the University of Toronto. Some universities establish interdisciplinary faculties that include criminology, as was once the case for the Department of Criminology at Simon Fraser University. In some instances interdisciplinary faculties are organised around particular institutions and values, and include criminology in these terms. For example, criminology at Arizona State University is organised within the School of Justice Studies, College of Public Programs.

Criminology has also been created within various professional faculties in addition to law faculties. At one time, Marvin Wolfgang organised criminology at the University of Pennsylvania within the Wharton School of Business. At Harvard, criminology is formed within the Kennedy School of Government (a unit that in other university contexts would be regarded as a school of public administration). Last but not least, criminology is constituted as a professional school in its own right, in the form of criminal justice programs, or even more specialised offshoots such as police science programs. This professionalisation of criminology occurred in the United States in the 1960s, but it has also become common in Britain in the last decade.

The myriad manifestations of criminology within the academy may lead one to ask, 'What's in a name?' (Hunt 1990). One is reminded of the Preface to Foucault's (1972:xv) *The Order of Things*, in which he remarks upon how his conceptual ordering was shattered by reading that a Chinese encyclopedia classified animals as '(a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camel-hair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies'. A Western encyclopedia might classify criminology as '(a) law, (b) justice, (c) power, (d) order, (e) legitimation, (f) welfare, (g) business, (h) government,

(i) a discipline, (j) undisciplined, (k) disciplinary (a form of power/knowledge), (l) *et cetera*, (m) population health, (n) a dog's breakfast'. With so many manifestations within the academy, criminology's conceptual ordering is equally shattering. In my experience criminologists typically cringe when they are asked by acquaintances who are not insiders to explain what criminology is. They cringe because they find it uncomfortable to be so unclear about the boundaries of criminology.

Of course academic criminology does not isolate itself within the walls of particular universities. It is part of a wider institution of academic knowledge production, including research funding opportunities, publication outlets and professional associations. These facets of academic knowledge production have a significant influence on how criminology is made, packaged and sold.

Research funding in criminology has always been heavily dependent on contracts with government agencies. These contracts are enabling to the extent that the reform agenda of the sponsoring agency accords with the reform questions posed by the criminologist. They become more constraining when the criminologist wishes to ask research questions driven by a theoretical puzzle internal to the academy, or to seriously criticise the policy framework prevailing in the agency concerned. Social science research councils offer one source of funding to escape the constraints of contract funding, but in many jurisdictions, including Canada at the present time, their budgets are contracting. Moreover, they are increasingly allocating their resources to thematic areas they define in collaboration with government departments interested in particular questions of policy.

In contrast to considerable constraints on the research funding and knowledge production side, criminologists seem to have few problems with publication or knowledge distribution. The number of criminology journals — often highly specialised into sub-fields such as policing, corrections, victimology, theory, and so on — is staggering. Moreover, there are even more journals in other fields and disciplines that publish criminological work. Publishers of criminology books and monographs also abound, creating a highly open and pluralistic media market for criminological knowledge. The proliferation of publication in academic criminology is related to a number of factors, including in particular the growth in the field itself and its popularity with students. It is also related to the way in which the academy measures the accomplishments of its scholars in terms of print output, the most recent manifestation of which is the peculiar research ratings exercise in United Kingdom universities which forces everyone to augment their publication paper show. The book and journal publication industry itself also plays its part, an industry in which concentration of ownership is so great that mass media concentration pales in comparison. This concentration does have the effect, however, of stiff competition among the major players for journals and books that allow them to enhance a market niche. It is ironic, for example, that Routledge, a leading publisher in critical cultural studies including criminology, is owned by Thomson Corporation, one of the most powerful multi-national media conglomerates in the world. Routledge happily publishes radical left critiques of the very cultural industries that Thomson owns and promotes, as long as these critiques sustain a profitable market (Boynton 1995).

Academic criminology also forms and participates in many professional associations that help constitute and discipline the discipline. Some of these associations are sub-areas within other disciplines, such as law and sociology. Others are hybrids across disciplines, such as law and society associations. Still others are peculiar to criminology, such as the American Society of Criminology. If ever one wishes to experience the potpourri of criminology, its encyclopedic character as captured in my earlier classification, I recommend attendance at an annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology.

I have repeatedly emphasised the diversity of academic criminology in terms of university organisation, paradigms, research funding, publication outlets and professional association. However, I am not suggesting that criminology is therefore a pluralistic and level playing field. Like all fields, it is subject to perpetual struggles over jurisdiction in terms of a division of expert knowledge and labour (Abbott 1988). Criminological jurisdiction is won and lost in terms of the above-mentioned elements. It rises and falls according to how it is located in university organisation (powerful and prestigious faculties); paradigms (the success of abstraction about crime and security in taking jurisdiction from others and creating new jurisdiction); research funding (access to and influence over major foundations and other funding agencies); publication (prestigious publishers, and a hierarchy of preferred journals), and professional associations (association with professional power, such as law and medicine).

As an uneasy mixture of explanatory, descriptive, political and normative discourses (Nelken 1994), criminology is always a hotly contested terrain full of turf wars. This contestation is to be expected because, as I elaborate later, criminology is a site for the division of expert knowledge among a wide range of professions.

Criminology is a site for the articulation of various normative positions regarding an effective politics of crime control and social reform. For right realists, criminology is synonymous with the institution of criminal law and the effective politics of law and order favoured by those who control that institution. For left realists, criminology is victim consumerism. For example, victimisation and fear of crime surveys are used to constitute community interests and to argue how the criminal justice system can meet those interests more adequately. For liberalism, the task is to assess specific crime prevention programs and technologies in terms of whether they meet the criminal justice 'holy trinity' criteria of due process, efficiency and humaneness.

Criminology is also a contested site for academic paradigms, which in turn accord with wider institutional paradigms and interests. For example, within sociology alone there are many competing paradigms — the Hobbesian problem of order, structural, interpretive, post-structural and post-modern — that ebb and flow in various academic contexts and conflicts. The champions of these paradigms are essentially involved in battles over their preferred forms of abstract knowledge, as these relate to professional power, access to research funds and publication outlets, university-based status, and so on. One does not have to look far to see these battles percolating into professional association and research publications. For example, the November 1995 *Newsletter* of the American Law and Society Association includes a critical exchange of letters and comments concerning the perceived dominance of interpretive theorists at the Association's annual meetings, to the exclusion and detriment of positivists. Many scholars struggle to essentialise criminology within their preferred paradigm and attendant epistemology. For example, John Hagan (1989) proselytises 'structural criminology' by attacking what he terms 'sociological discontents' among criminologists. Criminology is neither other academic disciplines nor an effective politics of crime control, but his brand of positivistic sociology.

If Sociology is the scientific study of social relations, then the approach outlined in this volume is not only a structural criminology, but a sociological criminology as well. The sociological tradition has long been ascendant in criminology [see Gibbons, 1979], but today is under attack. The attack comes on the one hand from those who see criminology as its own 'fully autonomous discipline' [for example Thomas, 1984], and on the other hand from those in other disciplines [for example Wilson, 1975] who believe their own or some grander combination of disciplines provides a better approach to the study of crime and delinquency. The structural approach outlined in this volume is inherently opposed to the separation of criminology from sociology, arguing instead that the structural foundations

of sociology make its explanatory role necessary for an understanding of crime and delinquency. The policy analysis of crime leaves off where the sociological study of crime and delinquency began. Sociologists, it seems, may still be uniquely suited to pursue the causes of these behaviors regarded by others as disreputable (Hagan, 1989:257–8).

Hagan attempts to render subservient or disqualify alternative methods and disciplines. He does so through the use of metaphors of war such as ‘attack’ which are aimed at securing his ontological terrain. The activities of ‘discontents’ are characterised as subsidiary, unreasonable or eccentric. In the face of such academic essentialism and imperialism, Foucault (1980:565) asked rhetorically: ‘Should the actual question not be what forms of knowledge do you want to disqualify, if you ask me ‘is it science’?’ Positivists such as Hagan ‘find themselves treating as their object what is in fact their condition of possibility’ (Foucault 1972:364).

Struggles over criminological terrain should not be dismissed as esoteric debates peculiar to the academy. Rather, they are an inevitable and necessary feature of the division of expert knowledge in an interdisciplinary field. Multiple criminologies are inevitable. There will never be a master discipline of criminology. There will never be a master discipline (for example, sociology, psychology, law) within criminology. There will never be a consensus built on the notion that individual pieces of the puzzle will somehow fit together to provide a coherent whole to the field. Again, the (dis)order of things disciplinary was perceptively analysed by Foucault, who observed

The frequent difficulty in fixing limits, not merely between the objects, but also between the methods proper to psychology, sociology, and the analysis of literature and myth ... All of the human sciences interlock and can always be used to interpret one another: their frontiers become blurred; intermediary and composite disciplines multiply endlessly; and, in the end, their proper object may even disappear altogether (Foucault 1972:357–8).

Criminology beyond the academy

Criminology is inter-institutional. Each approach to criminology in the academy articulates with particular institutions and professions in terms of membership, values, questions asked, methodologies, reform interests and so on. As such criminology does not stand apart from the institutional and professional worlds of crime and regulation it analyses, but participates in and helps to form those worlds.

In producing discourses about institutions involved in crime and regulation, criminology inevitably constitutes their practices and is in turn constituted by them. Criminology’s speeches and publications are meant to persuade particular audiences (Gusfield 1981), to create knowledge as a capacity for action that will move people to think and act in specific ways. The rhetoric of criminology is often explicit (Bennett 1981). As mentioned earlier, most criminologists begin their inquiries with questions of reform and an effective politics of crime control on behalf of preferred institutions. In doing so they explicitly accept the institutional template of their sponsors. Whether right, left or liberal, their goal is better technologies of crime management.

Whether explicit or not, the rhetorical force of criminology on regulatory institutions is omnipresent. Even academics who otherwise claim a detached analytical stance wish their analyses to have rhetorical force on the world. Consider the following statement by John Beattie, an historian of crime and criminal justice in seventeenth and eighteenth century England (Beattie 1986), who nevertheless hopes that his work, and that of other time-and-place historians, has an influence on present-day criminal regulation and policy.

As crime, especially violent crime, has appeared to increase sharply in Western Europe and North America over the last 30 years or so, the history of crime and of policing and punishment has taken on a particular urgency. This wider public concern surely helps to explain why historians have become interested in studying crime and past societies' responses to it, and why there has been a recent explosion in writing on the criminal law and the administration of justice (Beattie 1991:23).

The historian's influence may be more indirect than, say, a feminist analysis of victimisation in contemporary domestic settings, but the desire to influence is evident. The same desire is apparent among the grand theorists who have influenced criminology. For example, Foucault was a penal reform advocate, and his advocacy shaped *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977). In turn, *Discipline and Punish* was seen by Foucault as 'a history of the present' designed to have people radically rethink the fundamental question 'why prisons?' Consider also Robert Merton (1968), a sociologist of science and knowledge who drifted into criminology for specific theoretical purposes and then drifted out again. His theory of blocked opportunity structures and strain leading to crime and delinquency had an enormous influence on other criminologists, and in turn on a wide range of 'war on poverty' reform programs in 1960s America.

Cultural theorists, who analyse the rhetorical force of representations of crime and punishment in public culture, also write with their own rhetorical force. They show elegantly what all of us know from reading newspapers and novels, and watching television and films: crime and punishment provide ways of reading culture that move people to moral reflection and action. For example, Garland (1990) moves us from considerations of utilitarian penal efficiency to considerations of how we should read and use punishment to express culture and morality. Sparks (1992) moves us from the negative effects of television on crime and violence to what it means to talk about rational fears of victimisation, and the role of the mass media institution in this meaning. Wagner-Pacifi (1986) moves us from the terror of terrorism to its qualities as social drama that in turn influence how the drama of real-life terrorism actually gets produced and unfolds.

Criminology cannot get away with representing itself as a distanced form of scientific knowledge. It loses credibility if it tries to do so because it is the non-scientific institutional authority positions the criminologist represents that gives her the credibility to claim a privileged standpoint. At the same time it is not easy for the criminologist to make open declarations about what I am indicating here: that the field is highly relative and biased institutionally. Such a declaration might antagonise potential institutional audiences and sponsors, and undermine the persuasive force of 'academic' and 'scientific' accounts. Institutions do not allow a great deal of individual authorship. They prefer to do our thinking for us (Douglas 1986). The success of any move within an institutional discourse and practice depends on criteria internal to the institution: good moves are defined internally in the course of producing the discourse and practice (Nelken 1994:24, referring to the ideas of Stanley Fish).

Perhaps as good a definition of a criminologist as any is someone who uses abstractions of crime and security to establish institutional and professional jurisdiction over social problems. Consider how medicine has used its disease metaphor to colonise the definition and treatment of delinquency, child abuse, dangerousness and so on (Hacking 1995). Consider how urban planners have used metaphors of crime as blight (Schon 1979), and the association of 'broken windows' with fear of crime (Wilson and Kelling 1982), to bulldoze communities and remake them. Consider how sociologists have used abstractions of blocked educational and occupational opportunities for youth as a means of enhancing educational and occupational access (Cloward and Ohlin 1960).

All of these efforts can be read as attempts to establish institutional and professional jurisdiction over problems. Through such efforts, criminologists participate directly in how the discourse of the criminal law institution does or does not relate to other institutional discourses in the fundamental regulatory tasks of allocating resources (for example, guaranteeing and protecting relationships; intervening to enforce policies and programs), resolving conflict (for example, by providing policies and principles for doing so) and keeping the peace (for example, establishing rules of behaviour and enforcing violations with sanctions).

Criminologists make their institutional and professional choices, and then help their preferred choice to draw the necessary boundary and get the job done. It is the boundary that defines the institution and profession as much as the specialised knowledge that it encloses. That is, the unity and totality of the specialised knowledge is a creation of the firmly drawn and well guarded boundaries among institutions and professions.

Criminology obviously de-centres the criminal law institution. However, that institution remains a significant focus in the field. Research that examines wrongdoing and regulation in other institutions still uses criminal law as a template: Should the activity be criminalised? Could it be criminalised? Why is it or is it not criminalised? What are the effects of criminalisation? A lot of this research effort is directed at defining the institutional and professional boundaries of criminal law and its place in the division of expert knowledge and labour of crime risk management. This boundary definition and border patrolling work transpires in terms of fundamental positions on ideology (the aforementioned right, left and liberal positions on what the criminal law is for), political interests (whose interests the criminal law serves, for example, the propertied, professional law enforcement, the victimised, the underdog) and guiding metaphors (for example, order, justice, management).

At the same time most criminology contributes to the realisation that the criminal law institution usually has nothing to do with the ways in which crime is dealt with. Most crime is unknown to criminal law enforcement agencies, although it is known to other institutions such as family, education, business and health. Even when crime is known to criminal law enforcers, it is most often dealt with by distributing the knowledge of it to other institutions to deal with the problem more directly (Ericson 1994; Ericson and Haggerty forthcoming). On the rare occasions when culprits are known to criminal law enforcers, most are diverted into other institutions.

There are many institutions that are more important than criminal law in defining and responding to crime. The early history of criminology can be largely read as a series of claims by the health professions as to why they should have jurisdiction over crime and criminality (Garland 1988; Morris 1988). Inspired by the European Social Defense movement (Wooton 1959), the model was not of crime-responsibility-punishment, but rather symptom-malaise-treatment. The influence of this model was profound. For example, juvenile delinquent legislation constituted young offenders in a 'condition of delinquency' that required treatment, rather than as persons who should be criminally prosecuted for a crime. 'Dangerous offenders' were designated as having diminished or no responsibility, and therefore to be more medicalised than criminalised (see the article by John Pratt in this issue). More recently, many other areas have been medicalised — from the non-medical use of drugs (for example, LeDain 1973) to domestic violence (Hacking 1995) — and the dominance of the medical institution over criminological jurisdiction remains strong.

When social welfare was more at the forefront of state initiatives, criminologists played a significant role in conceptualising and rationalising the effort, and in implementing the associated programs. The aforementioned relation between strain and opportunity theories,

and various 'war on poverty' and 'opportunities for youth' programs, provide a case in point (Merton 1968; Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Cohen 1955; Morris 1957; Downes 1966). With the shift toward neo-liberal governance and 'downsizing' the welfare state, criminologists have, with some exceptions (for example, Carlen 1996), duly abandoned this institutional arena, or concentrated their efforts on research that aids the process of welfare program de-selection and regulation. Age-old questions resurface of who are the deserving poor, and of the extent to which the criminalisation of welfare fraud and other survival tactics should be used to underpin the overall integrity of what is left of welfare systems.

A number of criminologists (for example, Reichman 1986; Simon 1987, 1988; O'Malley 1991) have recently highlighted how insurance is an important governing institution with respect to crime and its prevention. As O'Malley (1991) demonstrates, the extremely low clearance-by-arrest rate for residential burglary means that the police are basically information brokers for the insurance industry, and that the operative law is the law of the insurance contract rather than criminal law. More broadly, the institution of insurance has become increasingly pervasive as contemporary risk society assumes an insurance logic in a wide range of institutional contexts (Ericson and Haggerty forthcoming). When it comes to offering technologies of probability calculus that express a strict utilitarian morality of loss reduction, insurance has everyone beat. Criminologists conducting surveys of risk of criminal victimisation, and who wish to put their results to the most stringent test, would do well to show them to insurance experts to see if they could use them to create reasonable actuarial tables and compensation levels. My guess is that their data would be useless in this regard.

Business enterprise has been shown to be another highly influential institution with respect to crime definition and regulation. Private policing, with its focus on a utilitarian morality of loss prevention (Shearing 1992), appears more significant than public policing with its focus on a public morality of criminal law. In the corporate sphere, the main emphasis is on keeping out of criminal law jurisdiction by using loss prevention rather than criminal enforcement strategies, and by implementing compliance and regulatory mechanisms when enforcement does seem necessary (Tonry and Reiss 1993; Pearce and Snider 1995). While some criminologists are on the side of compliance law enforcement and the minimisation of criminal law enforcement, others struggle to extend the jurisdiction of criminal law in the corporate sphere (Pearce and Toombs 1990, 1991; Hawkins 1990, 1991).

The mass media are arguably the most pervasive institution in shaping crime, law and justice. As a result, criminologists are giving renewed attention to this institution (for example, Ericson, Baranek and Chan 1991; Sparks 1992; Schlesinger and Tumber 1994). They seek an understanding of how the mass media frame particular events and issues as criminal or not; who influences that framing; and, the consequences of that framing. They see the mass media as direct participants in processes of law enforcement (Ericson, Baranek and Chan 1989; Altheide 1995:ch 6). As addressed earlier, they also examine the way in which the mass media use crime and punishment to construct morality plays about political culture, influencing not only what people do but also who they are (Katz 1987; Sparks 1992). Their analyses of mass media are typically intended to contest media framing of crime and punishment. Of course criminologists are also direct players in the mass media and its constructions of crime and regulation (Daly 1995; Chan 1995). They serve regularly as expert authorised knowers in the news. Indeed, research on the role of criminologists as news sources would be revealing of their place in the division of expert knowledge about crime. It would indicate how their frames fare in comparison to those of others (for example, police, politicians, reform advocacy groups, doctors and journalists themselves), their place in the knowledge hierarchies involved in making crime, law and justice.

The future of criminology

The future of criminology is assured because crime will continue to be central to struggles over institutional and professional jurisdiction. As emphasised previously, most things criminally proscribed are not only a threat in their own right, they are at the core of the most fundamental issues in society. Crime thrives as a metaphor for social ills of all types, and as a basis for reform agendas and action. Criminologists will continue to thrive as experts working on behalf of their favoured problems, metaphors and reforms.

If one accepts the argument that we are living in a risk society — a society governed by institutions that organise in terms of knowledge production for risk management (Ericson and Haggerty forthcoming) — it seems the role of criminologists as experts on risk will expand. In risk society a model of risk-surveillance-security displaces the conventional concern with deviance-control-order. The concern is less with labelling deviants as outsiders, and more with developing institutionally-specific knowledge of everyone to ascertain and manage their risk. The concern is not so much control of deviants in a repressive sense, but the surveillance of institutional populations to assign them to their respective risk categories. The concern is not only with order in terms of a predictable spatial environment, but also with a plethora of security mechanisms to help manage populations of healthy and productive 'human resources'. This model fragments problem definition and management into each specific institution and profession. The emphasis is on the responsibility of each institution to look after its own for its own instrumental purposes. There is also an emphasis on the responsibility of each individual to look after herself, to be her own political economy for her own instrumental purposes.

Criminology perpetuates this institutional fragmentation into forms of self-governance in both its applied and theoretical work. Applied work is directed at very local and specific risk management studies on behalf of particular institutions. Theoretical work, embracing postmodern social science in one form or another, also supports institutional fragmentation and ideologies of self-governance. Postmodern theory rejects grand-, totalising- and meta-theory as programmatic guides to action. In doing so it undermines theoretical warrants for broad political projects and social interventions, and leads to the privileging of highly local and institution-specific discourses of risk. These local, institution-specific discourses create the utilitarian, single problem, single cause, single solution frame of risk expertise that ignores systemic aspects and their consequences. Neo-liberal self-governance seems to include a neo-liberal governance of theorists themselves. As Nelken (1994:26) observes, 'If scholars cannot rely on theory to legitimise anything more than local and defensive interventions, they can be held responsible for their own theoretical productions'.

The secure place of criminology in the division of expert knowledge and labour among risk institutions and professions in turn ensures a vital place for it in the academy. Criminology has expanded greatly in the academy, and will continue to expand, for several interconnected reasons. First, it plays a vital role in the perpetual debates over institutional and professional jurisdiction both inside and outside the academy. Second, its expertise is a valued commodity that accrues resources to the university in terms of research grants, prestige, and claims of being of practical value to the community of taxpayers who support the university. Third, it is multidisciplinary, a feature many universities are promoting, especially around social problem areas (environmental studies provide a similar example). Multidisciplinary helps universities restructure away from conservative and expensive departments based on disciplines, and to appear more practical and relevant in addressing social problems. Fourth, criminology is popular with students. It is seen as practical in comparison to their social sciences. It also has familiarity because of students' own experiences with delinquency and struggles for identity, and because of their vicarious experiences with crime

through mass media. Fifth, criminology expands through the institutionalisation and professionalisation of itself. University and college-based departments of criminal justice help to provide credentials and status to the 'lower' (non-legally trained) occupations of the criminal justice system. There is iatrogenesis caused by criminology professionals who carve jurisdiction for themselves and their students.

In spite of its inevitable entanglements with myriad institutions and professions, criminology in the academy still has a special place and relative autonomy (Nelken 1994). Academic criminologists usually have considerable time to develop their ideas and research, compared to the immediacy of practical action in other criminal justice institutions. Their requirements of closure, authoritative certainty and practical action are also different. Practical actors in criminal justice must work efficiently toward finality and clear-cut solutions, accompanied by expressions of authoritative certainty. Therefore they often act on partial or weak accounts and eschew more abstract explanations. In contrast, academic criminologists work to cultivate deliberate ambiguity and to play with abstractions. They have the freedom to do so because of their relative autonomy from other institutional contexts of practical action and their ability to act at a distance. They also have different audiences to persuade compared to practical actors directly involved in regulating crime. In turn they have a different role in institutional and professional legitimation processes. Indeed, the best thing about criminology is its multidisciplinary ability to slip and slide among various institutional and professional discourses and practices. The cacophony of competing discourses in the division of expert knowledge about crime is what makes criminology vital. As Alan Hunt (1990:658) observes, 'It is the field of academic study sufficient unto itself, ignoring and contemptuous of cognate disciplines, that is in terminal crisis. The fact that criminology is unsure of its precise location and its relation to the wider project of social science is what keeps it relevant and engaged'.

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