# TEACHING CRIMINOLOGY THROUGH INTERVIEW-BASED ASSIGNMENTS

MARK ISRAEL*

## INTRODUCTION

My first semester of teaching at the Flinders University of South Australia in 1993 was tough. One student described my mode of lecturing as less interesting than listening to the ducks that frequented the campus lake.[1] However, since then, I have attempted to change my practice in a way designed to create a more stimulating environment for students, one which might also support a more active engagement with the ideas and practices of criminology. Student evaluations of my work have improved significantly.

It seemed to me that one way of encouraging students to engage with criminology was by asking them to operate in the world beyond the confines of the university. I hoped that an assignment that integrated work on and off the campus could also be used to increase student independence, provide students with a self-critical awareness of the limits to their own knowledge and enable them to gain an appreciation of the frontiers of knowledge in criminology.

In this article, I explain a program of teaching criminology through interview-based assignments that I developed at Flinders University. I also outline some of the pedagogical and ethical difficulties that have been associated with the program.[2]

## ACTIVE LEARNING

Teaching students how to do something without allowing them to put it into practice may be a poor way of encouraging learning.

For example, in a conventional research methods topic assessed by examination, students may be tempted to smile nicely at lecturers, learn the 79 facts needed and then promptly forget which researcher did what in which book. Writers on higher education such as Paul Ramsden[3] call this a "surface" as opposed to a "deep" strategy for learning and have found that as students become older, there is a general move from a surface orientation towards a deeper approach.[4] Lecturers might have hoped that tertiary education would play a key part in this shift, but unfortunately a whole gamut of studies have showed that universities seem to encourage their students to buck this trend. For example, Gow and Kember found that "the likelihood of a student adopting a deep orientation seems to decline as the student progresses through a course of study".[5] Put starkly, the further students went in their undergraduate degrees the better they were at passing topics and the less interested and the less enthusiastic they were about what they were studying.

Within law faculties, several lecturers have called for changes in teaching practices. For example, Marlene Le Brun and Richard Johnstone[6] argued that Australian law schools should run programs which fostered the development of deep approaches to learning. They wanted students to become "resourceful, lifelong, and autonomous learners" who were "critical and creative … self-reliant, self-determining, and self-motivating".[7] Of course, such arguments have not been specific to law schools.[8] In a 1992 report, the Higher Education Council urged Australian universities to equip all their graduates with what they termed "higher level generic skills",[9] which included qualities of critical thinking, problem solving, independent thought, ethical integrity, and the ability to identify, find and manage information. These skills were seen as necessary not just for students to respond to current needs but also for them to be able to accommodate change by acquiring, renewing and upgrading their knowledge, skills and attitudes throughout their lives.[10] While the authors of the report accepted that discipline-specific knowledge and skills were important (and might be the only way to develop generic skills), they concluded that employers were unlikely to value highly those students who left university without the ability to continue with their learning.

The teaching approaches and assessment practices that we adopt seem to be crucial in helping students to develop the skills for lifelong learning. The National Board of Employment Education

and Training (NBEET)[11] found that the staff, students and graduates that they interviewed felt that the following approaches were most likely to achieve that objective: self-directed learning; experiential learning; problem-based learning; and reflective practice. These approaches have been used as the basis for whole curricula, or simply as a minor part of a particular topic. However, their adoption throughout tertiary education appears to have been patchy.[12]

Each of the approaches identified in the NBEET report required a change in the relationship between student and teacher.[13] Students moved from being passive learners dependent on the teacher to being active learners, independent of the teacher. In turn, teachers shifted from playing the role of an expert providing information to novices to acting as a resource for self-directed learners who could think critically for themselves.[14]

Le Brun and Johnstone[15] recognised that some lecturers who adopted these approaches had to contend with opposition from students on several grounds: some students were not interested in directing themselves;[16] others lacked the preparation for such a shift.[17] Some lecturers also faced difficulties if their move took place without the support of their colleagues — either because of their peers' resistance to change[18] or because they worked in institutional structures that limited the possibilities for collective change.[19] Despite the possibility of such opposition, Le Brun and Johnstone claimed that a "quiet revolution" was taking place in legal education, changing who decided both what was learned and how it was learned. In the rest of this paper, I examine how assessed interview-based research might form part of a response to changing attitudes to teaching and learning.

## THE ASSIGNMENT

For each of the last five years, I have asked students to conduct original research based on qualitative interviews, a form of research where people are permitted to answer questions for themselves and in their own terms.[20] The interview-based assessment that I set required students to interview someone who was or who had been involved in crime or the criminal justice system. Interviewees were not necessarily seen as representing some part of the larger social world,[21] however, students were encouraged to contemplate the

ambit of the claims that they made for their material and consider to what extent the views of their interviewees might represent a larger group. Students wrote 3500 word reports which related their experience in the interview to relevant criminological literature. The reports formed a major part of assessment for two of the topics that I taught in criminology (*Crime and Society* and *Criminal Justice*).

In 1995 and 1996, students were asked to reflect on their attitudes towards these topics by completing anonymously a Student Evaluation of Teaching exercise organised by the Adelaide Centre for University Education (ACUE). ACUE measured, among other things, whether a lecturer stimulated students' interest in the topic, had enthusiasm for teaching, considered the ethical aspects of the topic and if students ended up with a positive attitude to the topic. ACUE used a one-dimensional seven-point linear scale, which ranged from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). In each measurement, the mean score of students' responses to the topic and the assessment was higher than six out of seven (with standard deviations of less than one). The survey also asked whether students found the topic challenging and whether their ability to work independently had increased. In these two cases, the average scores in 1995 varied between 5.5 and 5.9. Scores for 1996 were similar. Finally, I asked a colleague to conduct a discussion-based qualitative evaluation with just under half of the students who had taken the topic. Unlike the ACUE evaluation, this focussed specifically on the assessment. Like the ACUE evaluation, my colleague reported that the results of the evaluation were "overwhelmingly positive".[22]

> Even many aspects of the assignment which were liked least tended to be viewed as "challenging" and as leading to personal and professional development. Clearly the students saw this assignment as providing a different academic experience which was on the one hand "refreshing", but on the other also intellectually stimulating, demanding and developing.[23]

Overall, students' discussion of the value of interview- based assignment fell into three categories. Some welcomed the possibility of learning a new way of investigating an issue, others valued the possibility of discovering social worlds about which they knew little, while a third group used the opportunity to explore their own social milieu. Students placed most importance on the

fact that they were applying "real life people and situations to the literature". They found that they "learned new skills in conducting the interview" and enjoyed the "human contact and interaction" that the assignment required.[24] Some commented on the value of gaining an insight into how ''real" research was done.[25] One student wrote that "the research paper, although very time consuming, was a well appreciated break from the same, old, dry essays that I usually have to do,[26] while another stated that "I found that the interview gave me an insight into real life experiences that no literature could".[27]

Other students explained that they enjoyed the challenge and "novelty" of being asked to work in what they perceived as the "real world". When asked what they thought were the best aspects of the topic, several noted that they enjoyed being given the responsibility to motivate themselves and choose their own topic for research. One student interviewed a rape counsellor and wrote that:

> [t]his paper has allowed me to investigate a topic of personal interest ... When we were assigned this interview paper I saw it as an opportunity to try and resolve some of my unanswered questions.[28]

Many said that this had encouraged them to work harder than they might have done otherwise: "I liked the fact that I could choose my own research topics ... I found I learnt more about the topics I researched than the comparable work I would have to cover for an exam."[29] Most encouraging was the student who expressed a sense of achievement at having completed the assignment: "It was a challenging task which at first looked insurmountable, but when completed was extremely rewarding."[30]

When I established these topics, my major concern was to encourage an interest in and understanding of sociological ideas among students who had very little background in social sciences. In Crime and Society, students investigated how criminologists measured the extent of crime, explored some of the major theories about crime, reviewed the literature on several forms of crime, assessed the impact of crime on its victims and on society in general and considered the way the media portrayed crime. In *Criminal Justice*, students examined a wide range of activities and processes that make up the Australian criminal justice system. The topics placed historical and contemporary issues within their broader political contexts and reviewed the specific impact of

various forms of discretionary decision- making on different classes, ethnic communities and genders.

Students took these two topics as part of a wide variety of courses: some were studying law; many were taking a Bachelor of Arts degree within which they might complete a major in Legal Studies; a few were enrolled in other degrees (perhaps even at another university). Consequently, some had no previous knowledge of law at all and most had no background in sociology or criminology. Some of the students were in their second year of university, others in their third, while some already had a degree and were taking the topic as part of a Graduate Diploma in Legal studies.[31] As a result, the topics were designed to be free standing and assumed no prior knowledge or skills beyond those generic communication and analytical skills that might generally be expected of any social science or arts-based second year student.[32] Marks for the interview-based assignment represented 60 per cent of a student's overall grade for the topic.

Students took the lead in choosing and researching their subject area. They had less choice about research methodology. The interview-based assignment required them to ask semi-structured and open-ended questions as they investigated the way their particular interviewees understood the world. There were several advantages in choosing a semistructured approach. For example, as other researchers have pointed out, the research tool was more likely to encourage interviewers to consider their relationship with their interviewee and their subject material than a standardised questionnaire.[33] The method also had the potential to provoke an analysis of the plausibility and credibility both of the account provided by the interviewee and the representation of that account by the interviewer.[34] Of course, the interview had its limits as a research method. Some of these problems have been well explored. For instance, ethnographers and oral historians have had a long-standing interest in the way that distortions enter into the narratives provided by an interviewee. Sometimes mistakes of memory, deliberately misleading or distorted recollection, or poor understanding can undermine the accuracy of the account.[35] Other issues have not been investigated in such depth. For example, little work has been done on how interviewees perceive their own accounts. In responding to these difficulties, students were asked to do what most empiricists involved in oral history have done: assess

material in terms of internal consistency, cross check it with other sources and place it within a context provided by other interviews, other documentary evidence and a theoretical framework.[36]

Many students approached their interview data with a healthy scepticism and this was stimulated further by group discussions: why do you think that your interviewee said what he or she said; why might you believe them; why might you doubt what they say; why should anyone else believe your interpretation of what your interviewee said? Many students were not be able to answer all these questions, but I believed that more of them were willing to interrogate far more critically the oral evidence that they themselves had gathered than they might have been prepared to do with a written text. Of course, it would have been unrealistic to expect students to master all these methodological complexities at their first attempt and it was important to provide them with adequate support if they encountered difficulties.

## STUDENT EXPERIENCES

Students discovered that interview-based research could be very time consuming. They needed to gain an understanding of how to undertake qualitative interviews, and an appreciation of some of the methodological and ethical difficulties associated with qualitative interviewing. Students planned for the assignment in several ways: they read various accounts of interviews undertaken by various criminologists and took part in a series of workshop-based discussions on the process of interviewing. These discussions and an accompanying manual divided the process of interviewing into several constituent parts and shadowed the work of students before, during and after they conducted the interview. The materials *examined* why students were asked to undertake an interview; how they might prepare for an interview; how they might conduct an interview; how they might write up an interview; what ethical dilemmas they might encounter; and how they might cope with disasters.

With greater autonomy came greater opportunity to make mistakes and it was important that students were able to construct a research plan that was ethically defensible and methodologically robust. I taught research ethics as an integral part of research practice rather than an adjunct to a course on methodology. In the

training manual that they received on interviewing as well as in the discussions on research that followed, students were asked to contemplate some of the more important ethical issues that they might need to confront while undertaking interviews.[37] I shall return to the ethical issues later in this paper.

While students began to develop a series of generic skills in interviewing and research, they also had to apply this understanding to a specific area of interdisciplinary study, criminology. Qualitative interviews have been used by criminologists in several ways: to study the way that the criminal justice system works, particularly those aspects which were not likely to be amenable to highly structured survey and questionnaire methods;[38] to describe particular experiences;[39] to formulate and subsequently test theory;[40] and to challenge existing conceptions and theories.[41] These applications were not beyond the reach of undergraduate students.

For example, a *Crime and Society* student used an interview with a sex industry worker to challenge a contentious claim made about the effects of pornography. The student became interested in finding out if anyone involved in the pornography industry was prepared to contest claims by the American-based Feminist Anti-Censorship Taskforce (FACT). FACT maintained that sexually explicit material caused little direct harm to the women involved in making the material and minimal indirect harm to victims of sexually violent crime. The student interviewed an ex-sex industry worker who was strongly opposed to the FACT line. The interviewee claimed that pornography might cause real harm to women like her and that this harm could be brutal.

Given the limited amount of contemporary criminological research on South Australia, an interview could be a particularly useful tool for investigating whether research undertaken in a different time or place might be relevant to that state today. For example, a *Criminal Justice* student wanted to know whether police attitudes to rape victims had changed in South Australia over the last 20 years. The student decided to look at interaction between police officers and female survivors of rape and sexual assault. She had found that feminist and criminological literature from the 1970s and 1980s had described police treatment of rape survivors as hostile, callous and indifferent. She interviewed a counsellor who worked in a support service for victims of rape and sexual

assault to find out whether the counsellor thought that the relationship had altered. The student discovered that the interviewee believed that significant changes had occurred in some of the attitudes of some sectors of the police and indicated some possible explanations for these changes. However, she found that her interviewee was still aware of incidents where some police officers continued to view some types of rape with undue scepticism or refused to offer the survivor any choice in how the incident would be handled.

Since 1993, criminology students at Flinders have investigated a wide range of topics and people. They have interviewed victims and staff of victim support organisations, people who had been convicted as murderers, armed robbers, drunk-drivers, white collar criminals, as well as unconvicted sex industry workers and drug users and dealers, and criminal justice personnel such as police officers and aides, prison, parole and crime prevention officers, lawyers, magistrates and judges. However, there was always a danger that the interviews could become little more than a voyeuristic trip through deviance unless students were able to develop a critical self-awareness that allowed them to reflect on their actions both during and after the interview.[42]

I have found that the process of reflection could seem less artificial to students if it was an integral part of any assessment based on the exercise. As a result, I encouraged them to write about their attitudes to the research process in their research report. In these reports as well as in the ACUE questionnaires, students noted that they had welcomed the opportunity to learn about the experiences of people they know little about. For example, one Law student taking *Criminal Justice* interviewed a woman whose daughter had been murdered in Adelaide. The mother had subsequently helped set up a support group for the families and friends of murder victims and had indicated her willingness to speak to students about her experience. The student chose to speak to her because "never having been a victim of crime myself, I really had no idea of how a victim of crime felt about the criminal justice system … I wanted such an insight because as a future lawyer, understanding a victim's view will make me a better lawyer."[43]

A *Crime and Society* student interviewed a 40 year old man about three assaults that the man had suffered. The student, however, found that the interviewee, an ex-soldier, felt that the

assaults paled into insignificance compared to the victimisation that he considered he had experienced when he served in Vietnam. The students used this information in several ways, one of which involved investigating an ongoing debate within victimology as to what constituted victimisation.

Several students interviewed Aboriginal people. Organisations such as the Aboriginal Research Institute at the University of South Australia have argued that special care should be taken by researchers to be sensitive to the values and customs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.[44] A *Crime and Society* student interviewed a fellow student about his experiences of racism and found that the interviewee "had a very positive attitude to the interview because he believes it is one way to make a difference … the interview was opportunity for him to inform more people about Aboriginal issues and to bridge the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people". The interviewee spoke about how a member of his family had died in police custody, questioning whether a white person would have been equally likely to die in such circumstances. The student noted that the interview had allowed her to hear about the experiences of Aboriginal people at first hand:

> Through the interviewee I was able to listen to experiences that most people can only read about in the literature. I believe that this experience has broadened my understanding of Aboriginal culture and spirituality. Furthermore, it has given me a greater insight into the problems that Aboriginal people have to face on a daily basis. The interview forced me to reflect and examine my own views.[45]

Some of the interviews looked at the consequences of South Australian State Government policies for Aboriginal communities. In 1994, a *Criminal Justice* student interviewed an Aboriginal Program Development Officer. The officer spoke about the over-representation in prisons of Aboriginal people from his home community located outside Adelaide. His explanation focused on the history of dispossession of his people. For the student,

> Speaking with [him] brought home to me the enormity of the problems which face communities like [his]. So much control has been exercised over the lives of community members for so long, they have faced so much hostility, their needs in respect of health, education and lifestyle have been ignored, and most of all they have been dispossessed of their land ... If a community like [this one] is not able [to] take control of its own destiny … then the historical patterns of the past are destined to be repeated, resulting in the continual imprisonment of Aboriginal people

at an unacceptable rate.[46]

Many students were interested in investigating the experiences and attitudes of their own social groups. Some of the most fascinating accounts were written by students who already knew their interviewees. These are two examples. In 1988, two brothers, both schoolboys, were standing in a bank when it was held up by an armed robber. When the younger brother, Jon, took one of my topics in 1995, he asked me if he could interview his elder brother. Jon was nervous that the work was too close to home. He was not worried that his brother might be unable to give an account of what it was like to be a victim. He also thought that neither of them would find the interview particularly traumatic. He was concerned that a university lecturer might not consider a brother to be an authentic subject. After discussing his proposal with a counsellor at a local victim support service, Jon interviewed his brother and found that the details of the robbery were still vivid in both of their minds. They compared what each other remembered of the incident. Unlike his younger brother, the interviewee did not believe that he had been a victim of crime because he felt the crime had not been directed at him. The interviewee used part of this material to question some of the wider definitions of crime adopted by victims of crime support services.

Some non-white, bilingual and bicultural students had considerable advantages in obtaining access to — and providing informed accounts of — the experiences of members of previously undocumented groups: those of some non-English-speaking, Aboriginal, Asian and rural Australians. One *Criminal Justice* student interviewed an elderly woman from her own small Eastern European community. As a welfare worker in that community, the student had met her interviewee's husband when he was ill in 1990. While visiting him, she spoke with his wife and found that the wife was the survivor of a rape that had been committed several months previously. After discussing her proposal with a counsellor who worked at a local support service for survivors of rape, the student contacted the elderly woman again. Having agreed to tell her story, the woman explained how she had had a terrible time with a criminal justice system that had been very poorly prepared to meet the needs of non-English-speaking clients. Although the interviewee had been in Australia for over 40 years, she spoke very little English. The student was able to conduct the interview in the

woman's native language. In her paper, the student wrote about the problems that she believed had been caused by inappropriate support services, differing cultural responses to rape and culturally inappropriate behaviour by police.

Another student in *Crime* and Society interviewed his Italian-Australian grandfather. They spoke about how the old man had felt when his house had been burgled while he was away in a nursing home. The interview dealt with the grandfather's sense of helpless when he heard about the invasion of his home. The grandfather said that if he had been there he would have wanted to beat up the burglar. The grandson commented on the threat posed by the burglary to his grandfather's sense of masculinity.

Very little has been written about the experiences of Deaf people in the criminal justice system. One Deaf student[47] interviewed a Deaf man who had been convicted of murdering his wife and her parents after they had taken his son away from him. The interviewee explained how the actions of his in-laws had finally provoked the triple murder. The interview was conducted in Auslan (Australian Sign Language). The student placed the interviewee's explanation of the crime and his experiences in court within a discussion of deafness and Deaf culture. He argued that the problems faced by Deaf people within the legal system should not be compared to disabled people but rather to non-English speakers. He pointed out that Deaf people may not understand much of the court proceedings and might find it impossible to communicate with anyone else in prison, in effect placing them in solitary confinement.

The interview-based assignment was constructed to encourage students to become active learners by developing an interest in criminology and relating intellectual debates in the subject to their social world. However, devising the assignment also stimulated changes in my own practice. In the next section, I examine the changes prompted in my own work as a lecturer.

## CHANGES IN MY OWN PRACTICE

I have spent much of this paper discussing the impact of the assignment on students. It has been harder for me to reflect on the difficulties that I faced in changing my own practice. In his book Learning to Teach in *Higher* Education, Paul Ramsden[48] described

three different "theories" of teaching that he believed were common among teachers in higher education. Ramsden's first theory focused on the work of the teacher and portrayed teaching in terms of telling or transmission. In Ramsden's second, student-focused theory, the teacher saw his or her role as being to organise student activity. A skilled teacher needed a large tool-bag of teaching techniques and skills into which he or she could delve to find the right way to cover the required material for all students at all times. Ramsden's final theory saw teaching as the art of making learning possible. He linked teaching and learning in a "context-related, uncertain and continuously improvable"[49] approach that recognised individual differences between students in an effort to help all students to change their understanding. Clearly, Ramsden favoured the last theory with its view of learning as a "collaborative experience, calling for encouragement, structure, and support, but most productive when students push themselves, investing their own creative energy and sweat."[50] I have been trying to adapt my teaching practices to reflect this third view of teaching — the use of interview-based assessment was part of this shift.

The biggest difficulties for me concerned first, the increased pressures on my time necessitated by a change in my teaching and, second, the need to ensure that the research undertaken by students was ethically defensible. Student-centred learning can be resource intensive. Students may make significant demands on a lecturer's time, perhaps more than might be case in topics that employ more conventional assignments. As a result of the interview-based assignment, demands were also placed on interviewees themselves, and it would be difficult to attempt the exercise if students did not have ready access to both a large number and wide variety of interviewees. Propitiously, our university lay within the metropolitan area of Adelaide, a city which held all the administrative and judicial offices of a state capital. In addition, students were able to use the mid-term break to work elsewhere, taking advantage of trips to country South Australia or to other states. Of course, the exercise would have been more difficult to run in a smaller town or in a more dangerous environment, or with a more tightly proscribed category of interviewees.

The assignment also raised considerable ethical concerns and I was forced to confront my practices as a researcher and a teacher and indicate to students what I thought were the ethical difficulties

of conducting research into illegal behaviour. I was fortunate to receive the support of the university ethics committee[51] which advised on the creation of the training manual. Among other things, the manual that I wrote confronted the various ethical dilemmas that I thought students in criminology were likely to face. In discussions based on the materials in the manual, students were expected to consider how to avoid exploiting their subjects;[52] how to be sensitive to the needs of informed consent,[53] how to respect confidentiality and cultural sensitivity and how, in some circumstances, to undertake research *for* rather than simply on subjects.[54] They also contemplated the precautions that they might need to take to ensure their own safety.

The ethics of conducting research into illegal behaviours have been poorly explored within criminology. In general terms, there have been two main responses. Ethical absolutists have developed absolute principles which they argue should be adhered to in all situations. As a result, several organisations (including the American Sociological Association) have constructed professional codes of conduct for their own members and may even impose sanctions on those who violate them.[55] However, the use of codes has been criticised as a way of closing discussion on crucial methodological issues.[56]

Other researchers have advocated a more flexible approach, a form of situational relativism. They have argued that researchers should take into the field the same kinds of ethical and moral "tools" that they would use in everyday life and use them in a pragmatic way to come to a decision that meets the needs of a particular situation.[57] It may be less burdensome for researchers to follow a code of ethics than to think through each problem that arises on its own merits. By sharing their experiences with each other, students were encouraged to develop some appreciation of the methodological and ethical difficulties associated with qualitative interviewing.[58]

My university has preferred to employ ethical guidelines rather than any rigid code, though it has required postgraduate students and staff to obtain clearance for research projects. Despite the decision of our university ethics committee to support the program, at least one colleague continued to oppose allowing students to conduct research outside the university. This placed extra strain on me on those occasions when students did make mistakes of

judgment.[59]

<p align="center">CONCLUSION</p>

Over the last three years, I have continued to change the way in which I taught criminology. I have used an assessed interview-based assignment to try to support active learning. Students have been encouraged to develop an understanding of the tools and resources available to them, apply this understanding to a specific area, and be self-motivated and reflexive. My attempts at encouraging and supporting students' efforts have not been entirely successful. For example, not every student has left the topic convinced that interview-based assessments contributed much to his or her tertiary education. There may have been many reasons for this, but sometimes it might have been because the goals of providing a protective environment and increasing student autonomy had come into conflict. As Philip Candy pointed out, students can become unhappy if they are forced to take more responsibility for their learning and may lose a lot of confidence in their own abilities as a result.[60] In the case of this assignment, some students did make mistakes and probably resented the space that they were given to make them. Other students may simply not have believed that interview-based assessments were appropriate for a specific topic at their particular stage of development. Other teachers who are interested in using this form of assessment might have to accept that some students prefer to be taught in a more conventional manner. Nevertheless, I believe that interview-based assignments can offer something to the teaching of criminology and, if nothing else, I would hope that the results of employing such assignments might be more interesting for both students and lecturers than listening to the ducks on the university lake. 60 P Candy, *supra* note 16.

1  Anonymous letter to the author, 1993.

2  I intend dealing with the legal and ethical issues in more detail in another paper.

3  P Ramsden, *Learning to Teach in Higher Education* (London: Routledge, 1992); P Ramsden, Effective Teaching in Higher Education, in J Bain, E Lietzow, & B Ross eds *Promoting Teaching in Higher Education: Reports from the National Teaching Workshop* (Brisbane: Griffith University, 1993).

[4] D Kember, L Gow, R Chow, I Siaw, P Barnes, & J Hunt, Approaches to Study of Students whose First Language is not English: Preliminary Findings, in V Bickley ed, *Teaching and Learning Styles within and Across Cultures: Implications for Language Pedagogy* (Hong Kong: Institute for Language in Education, 1989); L Gow, & D Kember, Does Higher Education Promote Independent Learning? (1990) 19 *Higher Educ* 307.

[5] Gow, & Kember, *supra* note 4, at 313. See also J Biggs, *Student Approaches to Learning and Studying* (Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research, 1987); D Watkins, & J Hattie, A Longitudinal Study of the Approaches to Learning of Australian Tertiary Students (1985) 4 *Hum Learning* 127.

[6] M Le Brun, & R Johnstone, *The Quiet (R)evolution: Improving Student Learning in Law* (Sydney: Law Book Company, 1994).

[7] *Id* at xiii.

[8] In 1990, the Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training criticised the whole range of university professional education courses on the grounds that they were narrow, divorced from any appreciation of a wider social context, eschewed critical thought and provided no training for lifelong learning.

[9] National Board of Employment Education and Training, *Higher Education: Achieving Quality Report of the Higher Education Council* (NBEET 1992) (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1992) 20.

[10] National Board of Employment Education and Training, *Developing Lifelong Learners through Undergraduate Education Report No 28* (NBEET 1994) (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994).

[11] *Id.*

[12] While problem-based learning (PBL) seems to have developed first in North American medical schools, the approach has been extended to other areas of health science, occupational health and safety, environmental science, commerce and business management, engineering, teacher education, police studies and in vocational programs for the unemployed. PBL has also been employed in agricultural and veterinary science, nutrition, social work, architecture and law However, with very few exceptions, use of PBL has not extended beyond professional and occupational training. Nevertheless, if problem-solving takes a more proactive form and students are involved in creating and framing problems, there seems to be little reason why it could not be adopted outside those disciplines.

[13] S Kurtz, M Wylie, & N Gold, Problem-Based Learning: an Alternative Approach to Legal Education (1990) 13 *Dalhousie LJ* 797; D Boud, *Developing Student Autonomy in Learning* (London: Kogan Page, 1988); D Watkins, & M Regmi, An Investigation of the Approach to Learning of Nepalese Tertiary Students (1990) 20 *Higher Educ* 459.

[14] Department of Employment Education and Training, *Policy Discussion Paper on Higher Education* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1987); J Baird, Quality: What Should make Higher Education "Higher"? (1988) 7 *Higher Educ Res & Dev* 141.

[15] Le Brun, & Johnstone, *supra* note 6.

[16] P Candy, Evolution Revolution or Devolution: Increasing Learner Control in the Instructional Setting, in D Boud & V Griffin eds, *Appreciating Adults Learning From the Learners' Perspective* (London: Kogan Page, 1987) 159–178; Kurtz et al, *supra* note 13.

[17] P Candy, *Learning at University and Learning at Work: Crossing the Glass Bridge* (Queensland University of Technology: Academic Staff Development Unit, 1993).

[18] W Birch, Towards a Model for Problem-Based Learning (1986) 11 *Stud in Higher Educ* 73.

[19] J Biggs, Teaching for Better Learning (1990) *Legal Educ Rev* 133.

[20] M Fitzgerald, G McLennan, & J Pawson eds, *Crime and Society: Readings in History and Theory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981); J Lofland, & L Lofland, *Analyzing Social Settings* (Belmont, Ca: Wadsworth, 1984); V Minichiello et al, *In-depth Interviewing: Researching People* (Melbourne: Longman-Cheshire, 1990).

[21] G McCracken, *The Long Interview* (London: Sage, 1988).

[22] V Beasley, Report on the Qualitative Student Evaluation of the Interview-Based Assignment used in the Topic *"Criminal Justice",* 1995.

[23] *Id.*

[24] These categories were generated by the students in a group discussion with the evaluator.

[25] K Charmaz, Translating Graduate Qualitative Methods into Undergraduate Teaching: Intensive Interviewing as a Case Example (1991) 19 *Teaching SOC* 384.

[26] Anonymous *Crime and Society* student in Student Evaluation of Teaching, 1995.

[27] *Criminal Justice* student, interview report, 1995.

[28] *Crime and Society* student, interview report, 1996.

[29] Anonymous *Criminal Justice* student in Student Evaluation of Teaching, 1995.

[30] *Criminal Justice* student, 1995. Qualitative Assessment Exercise in Beasley, *supra* note 22. This sentiment was also expressed in the Counter Calendar produced by the Students' Association at the end of the year.

[31] Many of the students came to university straight from school, but there was also a high proportion of mature-aged students. Of 30 students studying *Criminal Justice* in 1995, nine were male, 21 female; 24 were full-time and six part time; six were aged 19, eleven 20–24, three 25–29, eight 30–39 and two were over 40 years old; seven were taking a Law degree, 19 were BA students (some of them were taking a major sequence in Legal Studies), three were enrolled on a Graduate Certificate in Legal Studies and one was studying Aboriginal Studies at another university. As pressures to increase student enrolments increase, the diversity of students is projected to expand even further to cover students from the two other universities in South Australia.

[32] I Hay, D Bochner, C Dungey, & K Sievers, *Making the Grade: Studying Effectively at Flinders University* (South Australia: Flinders University, 1996).

[33] P Green, *The Enemy Without: Policing and Class Consciousness in the Miners' Strike* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990).

[34] M Hammersley, *What's Wrong with Ethnography?* (London: Routledge, 1992).

[35] K Plummer, *Documents* of *Life: an Introduction to the Problems and Literature of a Humanistic Method* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983).

[36] T Keegan, *Facing The Storm. Portraits of Black Lives in Rural South Africa.* (London: Zed Books, 1987); P Thompson, *The Voice of the Past. Oral History* 2nd ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[37] This paper does not develop these issues. For more information see: JL Fitzgerald, & S Daroesman eds, *Ethical and Legal Issues when Conducting Research into Illegal Behaviours* (Parkville, Vic: University of Melbourne, 1996); M Bulmer ed, *Social Research Ethics* (London: MacMillan, 1982); C Glesne, & A Peshkin, *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: an Introduction* (White Plains, NY: Longman, 1982); M Punch, *The Politics and Ethics of Fieldwork* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1986); National Health and Medical Research Council, *Ethical Aspects* of *Qualitative Methods in Health Research: An Information Paper for Institutional Ethics Committee* (Canberra: AGPS, 1995) as well as Flinders University and University of South Australia guidelines (copies available from author).

[38] M Cain, *Society and the Policeman's Role* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973); R Graef, *Talking Blues: The Police in their Own Words* (London:

Fontana, 1990); S Brown, *Magistrates* at *Work* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991).

[39] T Parker, *The Unknown Citizen* (London: Hutchinson, 1963); T Parker, *Five Women* (London: Hutchinson, 1965); T Parker, *The Twisting Lane: Some Sex Offenders* (London: Hutchinson, 1969); Graef, *supra* note 38.

[40] C Shaw, *The Jack Roller: A Delinquent Boy's Own Story* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1930); M Foucault, *I, Pierre Riviere, Having Slaughtered my Mother my Sister and my Brother: a case of Parricide in the 19th Century* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978).

[41] P Carlen, *Criminal Women* (Cambridge: Polity, 1985).

[42] D Boud, & S Knights, Designing Courses to Promote Reflective Practice, paper presented to HERDSA Annual Conference, University of New South Wales, July 1993.

[43] *Criminal Justice* student, interview report, 1995.

[44] Aboriginal Research Institute, *Ethics in Aboriginal Research* (Adelaide: University of South Australia, 1993).

[45] *Crime and Society* student, interview report, 1995.

[46] *Criminal Justice* student, interview report, 1994.

[47] I have followed the student's use of "Deaf" with a capital.

[48] Ramsden, *supra* note 3.

[49] *Id* at 116.

[50] *Id* at 1981.

[51] The university ethics committee was not geared to handling undergraduate research proposals; however, they did vet the manual and approve the aim of the topic and the process of instruction and have given advice from time to time when problems have arisen.

[52] B Mitchell, & D Draper, *Relevance and Ethics in Geography* (London: Longman, 1982); National Health and Medical Research Council, *Ethical Aspects of Qualitative Methods in Health Research: An Information Paper for Institutional Ethics Committee* (Canberra: AGPS, 1995).

[53] National Health and Medical Research Council 1995, *supra* note 37.

[54] A Oakley, Interviewing Women, in H Roberts ed, *Doing Feminist Research* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981) 30–61; R Le Heron, Safe Research? Some Thoughts on a Recent Trend in Social Science Research Towards Ethical Accountability (1992) 48 *New Zealand Geographer* 87.

[55] American Sociological Association, *Code of Ethics* (Washington DC: American Sociological Association, 1989).

[56] See HS Becker, Against the Code of Ethics (1964) 29 *Am Soc Rev* 409; R Homan, The *Ethics of Social Research* (London: Longman, 1991).

[57] This approach has rarely been advocated by criminologists in writing. However, such a position was favoured by several participants in the United Nations Criminal Justice Information Network-List in discussions that took place between 20–24 July 1995. Copies of mailings with author.

[58] K Charmaz, *supra* note 25.

[59] For example, in one instance, a student was brow-beaten by a state government official into releasing confidential information on an offender. This matter has still not been resolved. I have incorporated the incident into my training. In another case, a student who was not enrolled in my topic was caught in a brothel by the police. She claimed that she was conducting research for my topic. This led to a useful conversation with the head of the South Australian Vice Task Force where we agreed to create a protocol of research which would allow accredited researchers to work with sex industry workers free from police interference.