

Post-Social Criminologies

Some Implications of Current Political Trends for Criminological Theory and Practice

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(Consider) the unbelievable naivety of social and socialist thinking, for thus having been able to reify as universal, and to elevate as an ideal of transparency such a totally ambiguous and contradictory — worse, such a residual or imaginary — worse, such an already abolished ... 'reality': the social (Jean Baudrillard 1983:86).

There is no such thing as Society. There are individual men and women and there are families (Margaret Thatcher 1993:626).

The long period from the 1890s through to the 1980s was one in which political rationalities were broadly ordered under an overarching discourse of the 'social'. Such social regimes as welfarism, Keynesianism, social liberalism, various social democratic and democratic socialist visions unevenly left their mark on the governmental regimes of the West. For such rationalities, in the wake of the 'discovery of the social' (Donzelot 1979), the principal objects of rule and the ways of engaging with them were constituted in terms of a collective entity with emergent properties that could not be reduced to the individual constituents, or that could not be tackled adequately at the level of individuals. Social services, social insurances, social security and the social wage were constituted to deal with social problems, social forces, social injustices and social pathologies through various forms of social intervention and social engineering. The social appeared as a unified and unifying space of rule (usually national): political regimes of the social ordered and evaluated the objects of rule in terms of their relationship to *society* — whether as functional/dysfunctional, antisocial or prosocial, integrated or isolated etc. Where 'society' became 'fragmented' it was assumed that *disorder* was present or at hand: for much of this century 'the social became a sort of a priori of political thought; order would have to be social or it would cease to exist' (Rose 1996).

This was the era in which social models of criminology became particularly central and influential, a time in which the reality of the *social* determination of crime was taken for granted across much of what passed for criminology.¹ This is obvious when we think in

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1 Of course I realise that there are many other discourses in criminology, medical, biological, psychological, and so on, and it is not my intention to suggest that these are less criminological than criminologies that focussed in the social 'sociologically'. Rather, a case can be made that these were ordered as technologies within a regime of the social. While their internal problematics were by no means necessarily social, during this era their role was defined extensively in terms of policies of social planning. Thus, for example, psychological criminologies were drawn into this social orbit, becoming techniques or elements of broader social policies, practised and implemented extensively within the domain of social work to resolve social problems and restore social order.

terms of the commanding place occupied by the theoretical frameworks of social ecology, anomie theory, social pathology and social disorganisation approaches, subcultural theories and so on. Even those in the often hostile and radical analyses seeking to restore 'individual agency' and to debunk social determinism (such as Howard Becker and David Matza) placed their subjects in a 'real' context of 'the social construction of crime' which framed and took over the lives of the free spirits of crime after their act of choice had launched them into a collision course with the state and society.

Subsequently the dominance of the social was deepened and extended as an academic race developed in the 1960s and 1970s to surpass the 'inadequate' accounts deployed in the war between sociological determinists and the social interactionists. Critical and Marxist criminologists sought to develop and install a 'fully social' criminology in which the forms of lawmaking, law breaking and law enforcement — rather than only one or the other of these — were to be brought together in the unity of the social (Taylor et al 1973). The direction of what was undoubtedly the most dynamic area of criminological theory appeared to accept the social so comprehensively and completely that the only way forward involved the extension and intensification of the social. These shifts were directly (if sometimes ambiguously and ambivalently) linked to a politics of the social.

The expanding influence of social criminologies, both in the long term of the twentieth century, and in the shorter and intense period of the sixties and seventies, was clearly linked to the expansion of the social as *a virtually hegemonic category of governance*. In the fields of health, medicine and psychiatry, education, economic policy, transportation, housing — an almost endless array of fields — the social increasingly appeared as a pivotal theoretical and governmental concept. The government of crime increasingly took its impetus from this overarching meta-rationality, whether in the context of state government (the considerations influencing sentencing, the location of crime prevention within social justice frames, the welfarising of sanctions and so on (Garland 1985, 1994)) or in that of the array of disputing regimes of government being debated and imagined in the discipline of criminology. In this sense, criminology took its place in an array of competing social governmental rationalities which together rendered problems intelligible and soluble from a particular 'social' perspective, and thus as subject to rule in particular ways.

Refiguring the social

Viewed from the end of the century, it becomes possible to see that in many ways the furious oppositions between and among the various 'state ideologies' and 'criminological theories' are remarkable for their common confinement within the governing domain of the social. Such a perspective has become possible partly because so much of this is changing. During the last two decades the social has been increasingly challenged and extensively displaced by political rationalities of rule that in Rose's (1996) terms declare 'the death of the social': that seek to govern through individuals, families and a multitude of quasi contractual, quasi voluntary collectivities such as the 'community' (O'Malley 1992; O'Malley and Palmer 1996).² Such post-social political rationalities constitute their

2 I prefer to use the term 'refiguring the social', for many of the post-social politicians do not reject the social per se, but rather the sense of the social as the primary focus, as a totality to be managed overwhelmingly by state interventions (for only it had the resources, scale and legitimacy). Thus while writers such as Rose, heralding the 'death of the social' are prone to reproduce the epigram of Thatcher's with which this paper opens, she herself claims that this has been misinterpreted. Her meaning, she argues, was that: 'society (is)

subjects not as members of an overarching social whole, shaped by social conditions and to be governed through social interventions, but as autonomous individuals, responsible for their own fate, invested with personal agency and thus with personal responsibility for their actions. Relations of individual competition and cooperation, epitomised in the figure of 'the market' (primarily competitive) and 'the community' (primarily cooperative), provide the preferred models for governing the terrain formerly dominated by the now discredited social.

The unity and determinacy accorded to the social is, in the emerging scene, fractured or even shattered: in place of society are individuals, families, 'the market' and voluntary associations (for example, Thatcher 1993:626); in place of social forces are individual enterprise and community initiatives; in place of social services and security there are individual practices of prudence, foresight, competence, responsibility and enterprise (O'Malley 1996a). Despite the focus on the individual, there is still a place for collectives — such as the community — in this emergent rationality. But here, voluntary, contractual and quasi-contractual relations are imagined to be formative, so that individuals remain the driving force. Here, the 'community' becomes the key figure — formed between equal and voluntary parties, acting either for individual advantage but in a relation of mutual benefit, or out of an individual sense of responsibility for others (O'Malley and Palmer 1996; Rose 1996; O'Malley 1996b).

Where individuals and communities alone cannot sustain government, then a *residual* space is left for the ('downsized') state, but its role no longer is considered as the expression of the social, so much as the provider of particular forms of expertise and resources to be accessed (ideally) in market terms. 'User pays' models emerge in state contexts, and the contractual language of *customers* and *partnerships* displaces the social framework of governance through relationships of state clientism. Models of market-like accountability are applied to state services (for example, audits, cost benefit analyses). Market-competitive relations are formed between state agencies and private sector agencies, and many areas retained for state suzerainty are operationally contracted out to the private sector (O'Malley and Palmer 1996).

The progress of post-social political rationalities is, of course, uneven. A particularly abrasive version was salient in Britain by the early 1980s; in Australia and Canada it is only now beginning to blossom vigorously in (for example) Victoria and Ontario. While most salient in 'conservative' party platforms, its presence in more progressive parties is visible among parties of 'the Left' (most recently in the changed policies of British Labour). But it is a mistake to see political rationalities as confined to the state and the political parties. Reforming regimes along these lines inhabit every institution from the police to the universities, from regimes for 'the economy' to regimes of 'the self': *they are governmental precisely in the sense that they can be deployed as blueprints for the governance of almost anything.*

In this paper I wish to argue that this shift in governmental rationalities is, not surprisingly, also reflected in major shifts in core areas of criminological theory and practice —

not an abstraction, separate from the men and women who composed it, but a living structure of individuals, families, neighbours and voluntary associations. I expected great things from society in this sense because I believed that as economic wealth grew individuals and voluntary groups should assume more responsibility for their neighbours' misfortunes. The error to which I was objecting was the confusion of society with the state as the helper of first resort' (Thatcher 1993:626).

not as (state) cause and (criminological) effect, but as the register of relations between two linked areas of governance framed by a common umbrella of a post-social political rationality. This linkage, as with those discussed already in the era of the social, does not imply a necessary alliance between the various approaches involved, and may embrace virtually lethal struggles as contestation emerges over what governance through individuals should look like conceptually and how it should be practised.

In this sense, the emergence of a new rationality for governance may be registered by the emergence of new foci which are centres of political and theoretical work, which will be shared by many different models of governance — in the present case, the rationalities and programs of political administrations, and the various criminological perspectives and theories. In this paper, I propose to take a few examples of such sites that reflect the refiguring of the social, namely: the place of the 'community' and the local; the centring of individual responsibility and empowerment and its implications for governing offenders, and the valorisation of victims of crime. Each of these may be described as sites of new forms of contestation which register the refiguring of the governance of crime in post-social politics, and which generate new ambiguities, lacunae, theoretical and political alignments and fractures which bring into question some of the familiar contours of criminological politics, thus creating a sense of 'fragmentation in the discipline'.

Some criminological sites of post-social politics

The salience of the victim

Thirty years ago, the fascination with the offender was so complete that victims all but disappeared from much criminological consciousness. If the term 'victim' was deployed at all, it was most often thought in terms of the romantic offender as victim of the state. During the intervening years, and especially from the early 1980s, victims have begun to occupy a new salience, both in criminology and criminal justice. Most criminologists will be familiar with the argument that this 'discovery' of the victim may be aligned with the ascendance of a conservative politics which has sought to mobilise a 'law and order' politics by turning attention to the fear and harm inflicted by offenders. Despite the fact that the focus on the victim undoubtedly has been deployed in this way, to focus on this explanatory mode is to miss many important points.

First, the suppression of the victim in the 'era of the social' is difficult to disentangle from the overarching importance of the state as the primary agent of social policy and practice. In many important ways, the state represented the social — for it and only it could be representative of the collectivity; only the state had the legitimacy and resources to tackle the causes and effects of social problems. The definition of crimes as a social problem thus focused attention not on the individual victim, but on the state — both as the symbolic victim of offences against the collectivity, and as the agent responsible for social rectification (O'Malley 1996a). Relationships of crime and justice were thus almost solely relationships between offender and the state.

The subsequent discrediting of the social thus exposed the relationship between victim and offender by qualifying the place of the state as the symbolic victim and as the locus of appropriate agency. Linked to this, the post-social centring of individuals, together with the increasing salience given to voluntary relations, places more emphasis on the nexus between offender and victim. As well, both offender and victim (as will be seen shortly) are responsabilised in many ways that render the offender increasingly accountable to the victim, and render the victim both as an active agent in law enforcement and as an individual responsible for pursuing her or his own interests in security. The plethora of legal

changes reflecting this shift in thinking indicates that more is at stake than simple 'law and order' politics, which traditionally have emphasised the importance of the coercive institutions of state power. State legislatures in Australia, for example, already are implementing schemes that render the offender more directly liable to the victim, and which go some way toward rendering the appropriate legal procedures more 'civil' in form. While it has already become the norm for victim restitution to be a routine concern of the courts in sentencing (that is, over and above statutory schemes of state restitution), victim restitution schemes currently under consideration, for example, propose that courts must grant compensation rather than fines where this is possible, thus directly substituting the individual as victim for the state as victim, and outlines the mechanism for the calculation of restitution in terms reminiscent of the claim and counterclaim for material damages by plaintiff and defendant (Parliament of Victoria 1993). The recent embracing of variations on the themes of informal justice — especially those involving victim-offender reconciliation, and family conferences — generates a similar refocusing. While considerable emphasis may be placed on reintegration, in virtually all relevant models, the salience of the offender's direct and personal responsibility to the victims is paramount, and the issue of compensation normally directly negotiated (Sandor 1994; White 1994).

As noted, this shift toward rethinking crime as a relationship between individuals also reflects a change in valorising of the victim and potential victim as 'stakeholders' in law enforcement. On the one hand, shifts toward 'partnership' models of policing imagine the potential victim as an active agent in a relationship of equality with police. Policing is seen as only one side of a 'partnership' against crime, in which the members of the public contribute their own expertises and exercise their own responsibilities: passing information to police, securing their persons and property, advising police of local conditions relevant to enforcement. On the other hand, marketised relations begin increasingly to be mobilised, creating the victim and potential victim as 'customers' of the police. Through such vehicles as audits of satisfaction with police, surveys of the fear of crime, and even the much tainted police-community consultative bodies, the relationship of paternalistic clientism reflective of the social state are eroded, and the victim/potential victim given a place quite distinct to that of the passive recipient of welfare community policing of the 1960s (O'Malley and Palmer 1996).

Hopefully, it should be becoming clear that these developments can by no means be reduced to a simple 'law and order' politics, or even a 'politics of the Right'. Many of those *initiating and supporting* such changes/programs cannot be understood in such terms — John Braithwaite and Stephen Mugford in the case of victim-offender reconciliation, Adam Sutton and Rick Sarre with respect to the community role in policing, are clear examples. Witness, too, the involvement of many criminologists of unimpeachably 'progressive' credentials in the development of 'victimology' (for example, Walklate 1989). It is also clear that this shift toward valorising victims and their injuries has been a core component of feminist politics and research (for example, Jocelyne Scutt, Sandra Egger, Kathleen Daly) and a large segment of those clearly identifiable with a socialist politics, most notably the Left Realists.

But to locate the diverse political sources with which this increased salience of the victim can be aligned is also to recognise that the shared acceptance of this *post-social* focus on victims does not imply any simple *concordance* between the Left and the Right. The *mode* of valorising the victim in much state discourse on crime clearly has been subjected to scathing and bitter critique within criminology. In particular, feminists have homed in on the fact that frameworks and programs originating from police and bureaucratic sources reduce the issue to one of the personal responsibility of the victim. Thus Elizabeth Stanko (1987, 1990) condemns arguments that women must contribute to their own individual

safety by avoiding dangerous public places, by taking additional precautions in the home, and by purchasing personal security commodities. Instead she seeks to retain the victim-focus, but to deploy this in order to generate an alternative criminological politics for the government of gendered violence (for example, by drawing on the 'indigenous' security knowledge of women). Likewise, an acceptance of increased victim responsibility does not imply that the market necessarily is the best means of delivering this, as is implied by the common emphasis on purchasing insurance and security hardware and services. Many critics from the Left — while accepting key aspects of the shift in focus, have decried the user-pays, fortress-mentality individualism implied in state and private sector models (Sutton 1994; Young and Matthews 1992). However, it is clear that at this point criminologists are having to forge new arguments for which a good deal of traditional critical criminological theory — which revolved overwhelmingly around the state-offender nexus — has been of comparatively little use.

What this example suggests is that the emergence of a post-social political environment thus not only displaces the privileged place of the state — as the agent of the social and as the agent for governing the social — but thereby also creates political relocations and realignments. In a large measure, and for reason of its privileged place, much of the politics of the social, and much of the criminology of the social, orbited around the state and critiques of it. As long as the politics of the social predominated, the alignment of Left and Right in their suspicion of the state was always hypothetical — it rarely occurred that they were required directly to address their intersections on such matters as opposition to state intrusiveness, of welfare as creating dependency, for the state stood between them. The refiguring of the social and thus of the state has produced new collisions, areas of direct confrontations and the potential for new (and perhaps repugnant or unanticipated) convergences. The old alignments of Left and Right become more problematic, when — as in the figure of the victim — opposing positions not infrequently find themselves running in the same direction, seeking similar goals, while former allies discover that the discrediting of the social brings into focus differences that were formerly rendered less salient because refracted through the relation to the state.

Responsible Offenders

The process of valorising and empowering the victim has as its necessary counterpart changes in conceptions of the offender. By now, many of these conceptualisations are more than familiar. In formal policy, the refiguring of the social has implied a much reduced place for the social determination of crime and the social placement of many features of criminal justice. As Foucault (1980) has remarked, the erosion of social determination removes exculpatory conditions from the criminalised actors, exposing them to increased personal responsibility. Again, this has been widely read as an effect of 'law and order' politics, and again this clearly is not irrelevant. We are all familiar with the outburst from diehard politicians about the prisons being full of social workers, 'society' being to blame for offenders' actions, and the need for strong punishment instead of therapy and training privileges (Brown 1989). In this, there is little new. But again, the integration of shifts in this direction with a wide variety of other current changes show how misleading it would be to reduce the move currently underway to one of traditional conservatism.

First, there is a clear and evident nexus between the emphasis on individual responsibility of offenders and broader models of the empowered and prudent individual generally characteristic of post-social politics. These models are — as seen above — applied to the victim and potential victim as much as to the offender. Moreover, such changes are in any case not simply to be located in areas of law and order but also for example in multiple ethics of 'care of the self' — with respect to physical and psychological health and fitness;

employment and employability; security against age, accident or loss; and so on (for example, Greco 1993; Walters 1994; O'Malley 1996a; Rose 1996).

Equally important, the identification of this shift as a product of 'law and order' politics conceals the fact that the valorisation of the rational choice offender has also been a feature of a number of critical criminologies, ranging from the post-structural through Left Realist and feminist. In the latter, for example, a range of positions locate male sex offenders quite specifically in rational choice terms, whether as part of a collective or individual enterprise in gender exploitation and subordination. Such arguments, in turn, have been linked — as in discourses of neo-liberal criminology — with claims for the deterrent effect of salutary punishment, the risk-reductions associated with immediate arrest, injunction, remand and imprisonment, and the symbolic importance of marking such offences with 'serious' penalties (for example, Scutt 1983; Clark and Lewis 1987 and more recently Scutt as reported in the *Age* 10 February 1996).

Again, my point here is not to make the absurd claim that such manoeuvres reveal the conservatism of supposedly critical criminologies. Rather it is to stress the extent to which the arrival of the post social is creating both new and distinctive sites for contestation. In turn, this is producing a muddying of some old distinctions between Left and Right around which social criminological theory revolved. For example, the sixties generated an opposition between 'conservative' positivist social determinism and the free agent of critical, anti-determinist criminologists, often rendered as a romantic rebel exercising the epitome of freedom from causation. In the politics of the post-social, however, the rational choice actor has been valorised, to not dissimilar ends, by criminologies approaching from quite distinct political directions. The future of criminology, this suggests, is increasingly likely to feature the rethinking of new alignments and new distinctions in such areas. For this reason, rather than any overarching change such as 'postmodernity', I will later suggest, criminology is likely to become apparently increasingly fragmented. But criminology was always in fragments. Rather than becoming increasingly fragmented, it seems instead that the lines of fragmentation are becoming less familiar, old lines are less relevant and new lines less certain. Unfamiliar fragmentation, rather than increased fragmentation, may be a better description of the future of criminology.

'The community': the local as voluntary

The discovery of the community in contemporary political discourse has been commented upon adversely by many critical social theorists (Bryson and Mowbray 1981), who regard this as part of a cynical exercise by forces of conservatism. It is viewed frequently as ushering into discursive being an entity that has not existed 'on the ground' for many decades. The assumed aim of the exercise is to set insiders (law abiding, consensual community members) against outsiders (predatory and hostile offenders), and thus to foster a 'law and order' politics (McNamara 1992; Wilson 1986). Again, there are undoubtedly instances where this has occurred, but there is much that is lost in this interpretation.

First, it fails to recognise the important place that voluntary organisations occupy generally in post-social political discourses. The community in this context appears as a voluntary organisation of citizens, mobilized in their own interests in a mutually beneficial fashion. Such models allow for collective action without invoking the discredited imagery of the state and its compulsions, and without the assumptions of inefficiency that accompany the latter — for (so the story goes) unlike state agencies which serve the interests of state employees, voluntary associations formed by rational choice actors will be abandoned if their perceived effectiveness or value fails (O'Malley 1996a).

Second, it also fails to see that this is a site which a post-social politics positions as one of recuperation — as an area of active revival of initiative, ‘empowerment’ and responsibility in the wake of the deadening effect of state welfarism. Thus there is plenty of evidence that ideologues of the post social have few illusions that communities simply ‘exist’ and can simply be mobilised (O’Malley and Palmer 1996). Discourses of community policing and neighbourhood watch, for example, put stress on the need to motivate and mobilise, on the need to educate and inform — to ‘empower’ the citizenry — in order that they become both competent and willing to take up their roles. Community, in other words, is *not* nostalgically or cynically thought of as Bryson and others expect, but is explicitly thought as something to be brought into being as a forum for, and means whereby, responsabilised individuals can pursue their interests and practise independence. Third, it again fails to recognise the importance of a further element in the post-social political, namely the focus on the local. In part, this appears as an aspect of the movement away from the totality of the state and the social (Thatcher 1993). But more than this, it links with the stress on marketisation — for the local appears as the site where ideas of the ‘responsive’ market and the ‘accountable’ state intersect in such devices as local audits of police service.

Again, it is essential to recognise that none of these foci is exclusively or unproblematically locatable within discourses of the Right. The erosion of the state as the centre of the social has brought many lines of critical theory into some kind of close contact with issues of accountability and responsiveness to the local, and to recognition of the need to stimulate and mobilise at the local level. It will be recalled that among the earliest criminological calls for increased accountability of the state to the local ‘community’ appeared in the work of socialist criminologists — in many ways precursors of Left Realism — such as Ian Taylor (1982). It must be evident, likewise, that the subsequent focus of Left Realists on police accountability and responsiveness to the local has relied upon many of the ideas currently mobilised in ‘conservative’ political discourses of the post-social, a fact which has led to considerable (if often misguided) condemnation of Left Realists for being heralds of a new conservatism on the Left (Gilroy and Sim 1985). More recent struggles engaged in by critical criminologists continue to focus on these issues — witness, for example, the disputes over the location and identity of the organisations and individuals who are taken to be representative of the ‘community’ in local crime initiatives (for example, Biondo and Palmer 1993)

In sum, the point is that the centring of the local, as with other foci noted above, should be understood not simply as a move to the Right, but as symptomatic of changes in contemporary criminology which make problematic certain traditional theoretical and political alignments. This consideration could be extended to other areas of change. For example, consider the contest that has emerged around concepts such as ‘empowerment’ — formerly a preserve of the ‘Left’ — but now adopted and promoted by police and neo-liberals in the community context (Weir 1996). Or again, consider the practices and models of situational crime prevention, which have emerged not simply as an exercise by ‘the Right’ but an area in which progressive criminologists recognise both potentials for positive developments and issues related to rethinking social justice (James 1996; Sutton 1994).

In the last part of my argument, I wish to turn to a further feature of the post-social political environment which bears on this reshaping of the criminological contours: namely, the changed relations of expertise characteristic of ‘advanced liberalism’ (Rose 1993).

Changes in the relations of criminological expertise

The liberal profession, as Osborne (1993) has noted, gained a special degree of autonomy because of its claimed relationship to Truth. While other areas of life could be licensed and governed directly by the state, the role of professionals in generating and practising truth by implication created a space into which a liberal state should not intrude. Regimes of the social continued this pattern, although in some instances key professions in the arena of social policy (medicine and law being frequent examples) were subjected to some degree of increased state regulation in order to focus them more specifically and pointedly on the social dimensions of their fields (for example, via national health schemes, legal aid and so on). For a variety of disciplines not professionally organised as such — included among which were criminologies — the universities provided the institutional form of independence from state rule appropriate to their special relation to truth. Relations of 'academic freedom' and 'tenure' were the symbolic touchstones of this regime.

In this context, during the era of the social, a sharp division opened out between the university based professionals and the practitioners and professionals working in state bureaucracies: one of the most familiar contours of criminology in the era of the social was linked to an increasingly sharp distinction between 'administrative' criminology and criminology as practised in the academy. Crudely put, the latter saw itself as championing the offender crushed by the power of the state and social forces, and regarded administrative criminology as a part of the 'state apparatus', while much academic criminology tended to be regarded as hopelessly out of touch, too abstract and captured by radicals. I would suggest that the emergence of post-social politics has ruptured, or at least attenuated these comfortable polarities. The sources of rupture are not difficult to identify.

First, and perhaps most crucial, the move toward rendering the state more independently accountable, and increasingly in market-like terms, has delivered a greatly increased volume of state-originated consultancy-based work to academic criminologists. It goes almost without saying that such work tends to reduce the formerly quite pronounced gap between academic and administrative criminologists, being a form of privatisation of work formerly carried out in the state sector. Yet it is by no means the case that those academics engaging in consultancy evaluations and policy research are those who could be identified as atheoretical, conservative or 'administrative' in orientation.³

Second, as universities also begin to partake of marketising drives and drives toward accountability, so they *propel* academic criminologists in the direction of seeking and gaining consultancies and grants. Promotions, appointments and job security increasingly depend on thus engaging with the kinds of work in evaluation and policy formerly the domain of administrative criminology to a degree previously unimaginable.

Likewise, university research grants are beginning to occupy a new terrain. As part of the increasing pressures for external auditing and market practices, academics increasingly are *required* by their institutions to apply for national competitive grants. The granting agencies, in turn, are increasingly influenced by demands for accountability, and this in turn, implies 'relevance'. Increasingly, organisations such as the Criminology Research Council, the Australian Research Council and the Victoria Law Foundation focus their

3 For example, almost every member of the Melbourne University Criminology Department has been thus engaged in the past two years — including Alder, James, Polk, White and Sutton, to name a few, who range across a considerable theoretical spectrum.

funding activities on specific issues or kinds of issues, shaped by policy considerations and matters of 'current concern', rather than leaving it to the 'academic practitioners' of the discipline to determine the direction of funded research. Moreover, 'waste watch committees' — or the threat of their findings — generate Ministerial examination of successful applications in terms of similar criteria, with the aim of politically vetting applications that have merely passed academic scrutiny.

Finally, expertise in the post-social is more generally marketised, and all of these changes may be seen to reinforce and partake of this shift (Rose 1993). In some respects we have already noted this in relation to the marketisation of aspects of state practice: privatisation of prisons, of security services and of all manner of related aspects of police and 'welfare' work serve as examples of the exportation of formerly state centred expertises to market relations. Perhaps more pertinently, we are also witnessing a general marketisation of many aspects of professional work. In the area of law, for example, newly competitive relationships are emerging as accountants, alternative dispute managers, property conveyancers, and so on, encroach into the former monopoly preserve of the legal profession. The legal profession itself is subjected to market-based reforms by state governments (notably Victoria) with a neo-liberal agenda. The movement of criminologists into the market relations of contracts and consultancies, and the quasi-market relations of competitive grant-seeking, should thus not be seen as an isolated phenomenon, but part of the broader post-social agenda.

In short, pressures created in the post-social environment are beginning to eliminate a once clear distinction between administrative and academic criminology, tending to push the latter in the direction of the former, and thus creating unfamiliar alignments and fissures, reinforcing the sense that criminology is fragmenting. Despite appearances, such effects of this shift, I suggest, should not be thought of as rendering criminology 'less theoretical', but rather, as tending to further move criminology *away* from its longstanding commitments to the social and social theory, and *toward* many of the features that I have characterised as typical of 'post-social criminology'. In particular, pressures toward engaging with the local and specific (as the site of most evaluation work) and tendencies toward requiring certain kinds of evaluation (most concretely cost benefit analysis) associated with short-range projects, put emphasis on measures and concerns with short-term range and focused effects. Such evaluative work is at odds with the long-term and dispersed effects associated with policies driven by broader social concerns and articulated with social theory. At best, they make little connection with social theories. At worst, they are almost bound to find that, in their terms and within their time-frames, programs based on social theories produce few measurable benefits.

Conclusion: postmodernity explaining itself into being?

The guiding assumption behind this paper is that the nature and implications of political rationalities may be understood without peering behind them to locate their historical mainsprings. Indeed, it may be argued that there are distinct advantages to thinking of the future of criminology in these political terms. Among other things, it encourages us to think more flexibly and agnostically in terms of the political contingencies involved: rather than seeing the development of criminology as an effect of some systematic forces, it may be seen as more contingent and open ended. Equally important, it allows us to see the future of criminology as political and thus as conditionally open. This, I would suggest, is a vision paradoxically closed off by recent accounts which link changes in criminology with the rise of postmodernity or other shifts in fundamental features of order (for example, Feeley and Simon 1994, Ericson and Carriere 1994). I would suggest that a difficulty in such

accounts is that of a naive and unreflexive realism that assumes that the social and the post-social (or postmodern) are unproblematic realities which, in their evolutions, *determine* the shape of criminology.

Social theorists from Durkheim on took the social for real. The state political rationalities of the time likewise made this assumption — Bismark and Lloyd George did not need to read Durkheim to discover the social (O'Malley 1995). Now, theorists of the post-social (postmodern, post-structuralist etc) and the state ideologues of post-social political rationalities both understand the social totality as an illusion — or at best as a thing of the past. Baudrillard and Thatcher thus are in bed together. But in their shared assumption that their observations relate to real or non-discursive phenomena rather than to a political construct, they are also carrying on the unreflexive theoretical business started by their counterparts (Durkheim and Bismark) who believed that their observations were reflections of the reality of the social. A new generation of 'post-social' theorists, deploying the same kind of logic applied by those they condemn, explains the rise of the post-social political rationalities in terms of the emergence of a *real post-social* (Ericson and Carriere 1994; Lash 1991; Baudrillard 1983).

For this reason, but not this reason alone, I have preferred to remain silent about 'post-modernity' and its effects on criminology — or on governance in general — and to analyse instead the nature and implications of the nexus between emerging post-social developments in criminological thinking and the rise of post-social political rationalities. Perhaps more importantly, to render criminology merely an effect of determining social forces, as do Richard Ericson and Kevin Carriere (1994), seems to be profoundly disabling. Even if, realistically, we may not be able to turn back the hands of the political clock (those of us who might wish to), the placing of criminology in the realm of the political renders the terrain of the discipline far more contingent and thus contestable. While this paper has not undertaken the task of thinking through the implications of the emerging contests in any systematic fashion, hopefully it will have indicated how others are beginning to carry this through and why it seems such a complex and disconcerting pursuit.

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