

A person is walking away from the viewer on a long, narrow wooden pier that stretches into a misty, overcast sea. The pier has a metal railing with vertical posts and horizontal wires. The water is calm and reflects the grey sky. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

# REFLEXIVITY IN CRIMINOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Experiences with the  
Powerful and the Powerless

Edited by Karen Lumsden  
and Aaron Winter



# Reflexivity in Criminological Research

*Also by Karen Lumsden*

BOY RACER CULTURE: Youth, Masculinity and Deviance (2013)

*Also by Aaron Winter*

DISCOURSES AND PRACTICES OF TERRORISM: Interrogating Terror (*co-editor*, 2010)

NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE EU INTERNAL SECURITY STRATEGY (*co-editor*, 2013)

# Reflexivity in Criminological Research

## Experiences with the Powerful and the Powerless

Edited by

Karen Lumsden

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Summary: "Doing research with criminals or deviants has inspired much academic reflection, particularly in respect of the risks and dangers which researchers may face in these contexts, as well as the ethical, legal and moral dilemmas they provoke. This collection contributes to, advances and consolidates discussions of the range of methods and approaches in criminology through the presentation of diverse international case studies in which the authors reflect upon their experiences with both powerless and/or powerful individuals/groups. Reflexivity, and the need to be reflexive, permeates all criminological research and the chapters in this collection cover various aspects of this, including gaining access to the field, building relationships with the researched, the impact of the researcher's identity on the research (including gender, class and race), ethics, risk, bias and partisanship, policy implications, and how to disseminate findings and 'give voice' to the researched. A range of research settings are drawn from including those typically involving the powerful, such as state institutions, courts and prisons, to those typically conceived of as powerless, such as deviant and dangerous individuals as well as subcultures including boy racers and hooligans. Research participants defined as vulnerable, for example victims of crime, are also considered. This comprehensive collection explores a variety of methods including interviews, participant observation, virtual ethnography and feminist research. Acknowledging the fluid nature of power relations and dynamics, this volume will be a valuable resource to scholars of criminology and sociology." — Provided by publisher.

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# 1

## Reflexivity in Criminological Research

*Karen Lumsden and Aaron Winter*

The discipline of criminology can and often does involve doing research *for* the powerful, those social control agents and organisations responsible for the creation and maintenance of definitions, labels and boundaries of crime and markers of criminality. According to Barbara Hudson (2000, 177),

[o]f all the applied social sciences, criminology has the most dangerous relationship to power: the categories and classifications, the labels and diagnoses and the images of the criminal produced by criminologists are stigmatizing and pejorative. The strategies of control and punishment which utilize those conceptions have implications for the life-chances, for the opportunities freely to move around our cities, and for the rights and liberties, of those to whom they are applied.

Hence, a reliance on ‘state and legally defined conceptions of crime’ is ‘perhaps the biggest hurdle to be faced in the search for a series of self-reflexive replacement discourses in which transgression might be understood without reference to crime, harm reduced without recourse to criminalisation and social justice achieved without recourse to criminal law’ (Muncie 2000, 7). Jock Young (2011, 180–81), a pioneer in the development of critical criminology founded in the 1970s–1980s as a challenge to the dominance of positivist and normative criminology, also conveys this sentiment in his call for a ‘criminological imagination’, claiming that

[t]here are two criminologies: one grants meaning to crime and deviance, one that takes it away; one which uses an optic which envisages the wide spectrum of human experience: the crime and law-abiding, the deviant and the supposedly normal – the whole round of human life, the other a lens that can only focus on the negative, the predatory, the supposedly pathological.

For Young (2004, 13), we are confronted with an 'orthodox criminology which is denatured and desiccated. Its actors inhabit an arid planet where they are either driven into crime by social and psychological deficits or make opportunistic choices in the criminal marketplace'. Loïc Wacquant is also critical of the 'science-politics nexus in criminology', which he claims is forged through the

hierarchical articulation of the academic field, of which the criminological domain is a sector, the bureaucratic field, the political field and the journalistic field – in short, by the changing location and uses of justice scholarship in the patterned space of struggles over instruments of rule that Bourdieu calls the *field of power*.

(2011a, 441–42 original emphasis,  
see also Bourdieu 1990)

The current criminological context involves a renewed and growing dominance of and push for positivist and normative criminology and crime science, and the related push for applied and evidence-based research, which further includes increased professionalisation, use of metrics<sup>1</sup> and the impact agenda in the United Kingdom, the pursuit of knowledge transfer opportunities, enterprise activities and funding. This is within the wider societal context of a return of conservative law and order politics in several countries during the recession, as well as growth areas such as security and terrorism studies post-9/11 and 7/7, which have provided state/system supportive research and consultancy opportunities and funding for criminologists. It is within this context that the contributors to this collection reflect on their experiences of 'doing' criminological research with powerful and/or powerless groups. We argue that evidence-based research and engagement with the criminal justice system or other powerful institutions must be done in a tempered, critical and reflexive manner, as the chapters in this collection shall demonstrate. Reflexivity in social research draws our attention to the ways in which knowledge is produced not just by the academic, but in collaboration (and often conflict) with the researched and those in positions of power who grant us access to, or seek research on, various 'criminal' or 'deviant' groups and also often fund criminological research thus having a vested interest in our results and in their application. Reflexivity not only provides an extra layer of critical distance and engagement – one that ironically promotes subjectivity as a way of interrogating the un-interrogated hidden biases, conflicts of interest and assumptions of so-called objective scientific research – but is a process, permeating all aspects of the research from selection of the research topic, search for funding, access to and engagement with participants and settings, data collection, analysis, interpretation, dissemination, application of findings and our theoretical and methodological location

in the disciplinary field of criminology itself. As Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000, 6) argue

The research process constitutes a (re)construction of the social reality in which researchers both interact with the agents researched and, actively interpreting, continually create images for themselves and for others: images which selectively highlight certain claims as to how conditions and processes – experiences, situations, relations – can be understood, thus suppressing alternative interpretations.

Hence, this book provides examples of the multiple ways in which knowledge is created with the researched and the influence of the researcher's social background and location, including gender, race, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, embodiment and other sites and positions of power and privilege or lack thereof, on the research process, relationships with respondents and thus the interpretation and representation of the social worlds in question. We argue that criminologists must openly acknowledge, reflect upon and share their experiences of research in various settings, crucially highlighting instances where internal or external power dynamics are at play and problematising such relations and knowledge production. It is crucial that as criminologists we reflect upon the research we do, whom we do it for and to what purpose it will be used. Chan (2000, 131–32) claims that the task for criminologists is to

relentlessly contest inappropriate performance indicators or evaluative criteria. The proliferation of contract research and the rise of criminologists in the private sector must be subject to close scrutiny, because, more than anything else, there is a distinct danger that the acceleration of these trends will spell the end of critical – reflexive – criminology.

### **Doing criminological research with the powerful and the powerless**

Foundational studies of crime and deviance such as William Whyte's (1943) *Street Corner Society*, Ned Polsky's (1967) *Hustlers, Beats and Others*, Laud Humphrey's (1970) *Tearoom Trade*, Ken Pryce's (1979) *Endless Pressure*, Patricia Adler's (1985) *Wheeling and Dealing*, Howard Becker's (1963) *Outsiders*, Dick Hobbs' (1988) *Doing the Business*, Jock Young's (1971) *The Drugtakers* and Elijah Anderson's *Code of the Street* (1999) and *A Place on the Corner* (2003) (to name just a few) provide valuable insights into the challenges the authors faced in the course of their research. Doing research with criminals or deviants has inspired much academic reflection among

sociologists of crime and deviance, particularly those using ethnographic methods. These accounts highlight the risks and dangers which researchers may face in these contexts, as well as the host of ethical, legal and moral dilemmas they provoke. This is also reflected in the work of sociologist Stephen Lyng (2005) and cultural criminologists such as Mike Presdee (2001), Keith Hayward, Jeff Ferrell and Stephen Hamm (see Ferrell and Hamm 1998; Parnell and Kane 2003; Vaaranen 2004; Ferrell and Hayward 2011), who suggest that ethnographers engage in 'edgework', which involves experientially immersing themselves in the risky activities and behaviours of the culture in question. Weber's notion of *Verstehen* is adopted within the context of criminological research to denote 'a process of subjective interpretation on the part of the social researcher, a degree of sympathetic understanding between social researcher and subjects of study' (Ferrell 1998, 27).

These works mainly focus on research with those perceived or labelled as 'deviant', who are often already marginalised subjects based on their lack of power (socially, economically, politically or in terms of youth, class, race, ethnicity, gender or sexuality), or, to put it more bluntly, those groups who are *powerless* – the 'underdogs' (Gouldner 1973), in the face of the criminal justice system and state authorities. Thus, it is imperative that criminologists and sociologists working in the area of crime reflect on the relationship between 'deviance' not only as a label, but also as it relates to wider issues of social power, particularly when such research requires – as it often does – engagement with and the involvement of institutions and participants identified as *powerful*: institutional mechanisms of control, regulation and surveillance (including prisons, courts, police, security services and social work settings). This can present three main issues or challenges, particularly if that research is being done for or on behalf of the *powerful*.

The first of these is the issue of becoming (or not becoming) complicit in the mechanism of power and the construction and application of such labels and, by effect, the further stigmatisation and marginalisation of powerless subjects. The second issue is that of trust and access to the *powerless*. In that, if such subjects belong to a group or subculture that has historically been labelled as 'deviant' and/or criminalised (such as black youths or the Muslim community), are involved in criminal activity or stigmatised social, cultural or sexual practices, have negative experience with the law enforcement and the wider criminal justice system or have fears about contact with it, they may not trust the researcher who is doing work for or with agencies within that system and may withhold participation or be less than candid. It is worth noting that the relationship between 'deviant' or criminalised research participants and the criminal justice system may not only affect the research in terms of a lack of trust and participation by the researched, but if the researcher is conducting research on a politically charged topic such as extremism and terrorism, he/she may find themselves coming under

scrutiny from the police or security services for meeting with members of a 'suspect community' or group or under scrutiny by that community or group if conducting research for the state. The level of scrutiny, access and trust from either party may also be contingent on the race, ethnicity or religion of the researcher in relation to the community or group in question. The third issue is that of access to the *powerful* and autonomy. Researchers investigating topics under the remit of criminology which engage with or involve the *powerful* have tended to remain quiet regarding their experiences (see Ashworth 1995; Richards 2011). In many cases this is because such research is on the 'deviant' or criminal/crime and not the system or agency, merely using the latter as a source of expertise and data, thus leaving it unexamined or even hidden behind a normative blind spot. It could also be posited that explicitly reflecting on experiences when conducting research in these politically controlled and sensitive contexts is more problematic, as access to certain settings and participants could be restricted, denied or curtailed, and the research might be funded by governments or official bodies with a vested interest in how findings are publicly disseminated. This may particularly be the case when the agency or body involved is – although in a position of power – under great political and public scrutiny like the police or deals with issues of national security.

Hence, as criminologists, how can we openly and honestly reflect on research which is being done *for and on behalf of the powerful* without compromising valuable relationship and resources? And what do we do when our research questions and agendas involve the voices of *both powerful and powerless* groups and potential conflicts arise? How do we navigate, negotiate and reflexively approach the ways in which these scenarios affect the research, access to research participants and data, funding, credibility, integrity, ethics, dissemination and impact?

The chapters herein contribute to this gap in social methods' reflections on criminologists' experiences with the powerful, while highlighting the benefit of adopting a reflexive approach overall in criminological research. In the social sciences, the question is no longer whether we should 'be' reflexive, but how do we go about 'doing' or practising reflexivity (Finlay 2002), while crucially avoiding reducing this to mere navel-gazing whereby our reflections centre solely or primarily on us as the researcher? We must remember that knowledge is co-produced with the researched, who can have an influence on it not only through who they are and the information they provide, but also through how they affect funding and allow or limit access, and thus the role of the researched must be included in our accounts and reflections. Moreover, as noted above, often those in powerful positions have their own agendas and ideas about how this knowledge should be constructed, disseminated and applied in the 'real world'. This highlights the problematic nature of positivist criminological research and the growing impetus in criminology towards crime science and the evidence base. Crucially, in addition, power

relations and dynamics between the researcher and the researched (whether powerful or powerless) are fluid, contextual and often unpredictable, challenging and shaping our identities and resulting in the co-production of knowledge and findings. As a result, reflexivity is an essential tool for aiding how we 'do' criminological research and furthering awareness of how we situate ourselves, and our methods practices, within the disciplinary field of criminology.

### **Reflexivity in criminological research**

Reflection can be viewed as 'interpretation of interpretation' (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000, 6). Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992; see also Wacquant 1989; Bourdieu 1990) highlight different varieties of reflexivity including ethnomethodological ethnography as text, social scientific studies of the sciences, post-modern sociology, critical phenomenology and double hermeneutics. These

different uses of reflexivity or reflection ... typically draw attention to the complex relationship between processes of knowledge production and the various contexts of such processes as well as the involvement of the knowledge producer.

(Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000, 5)

'Reflective research' has two basic characteristics which include consideration of the importance of interpretation and reflection, turning attention 'inwards' 'towards the person of the researcher, the relevant research community, society as a whole, intellectual and cultural traditions, and the central importance, as well as problematic nature, of language and narrative (the form of presentation) in the research context' (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000, 5–6). The reflexive turn in the social sciences draws attention to the researcher as part of the world being studied and to the ways in which the research process constitutes what it investigates (Taylor 2001, 3). It reminds us that those individuals involved in our research are 'subjects', not 'objects', and hence 'they should not be treated as would a chemist treat a chemical substance or a geologist would treat a rock. The objects of criminological inquiry are not inanimate' (Jupp 1989, 130). For Michel Foucault (1976), the products of social research reflect its social character, rather than representing some world that is independent of it. Therefore, different 'regimes of truth' are established in different contexts, reflecting the play of diverse sources of power (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995).

Feminist researchers have made a number of convincing arguments as to the importance of reflexive research. As Gelsthorpe and Morris (1990, 88) point out, the feminist principle involves 'viewing one's involvement as both problematic and valid and of recording the subjective experiences of

doing research, for these experiences underpin the creation of knowledge'. Theoretical developments in feminist criminology have begun to permeate mainstream criminology, and the benefits of research methodologies favoured by feminist criminologists are gradually being recognised by other streams of criminology (Mason and Stubbs 2010; and see for instance work by Smart 1976, 1989; Carlen 2002; Cain 1990; Britton 2000; Chesney-Lind 1989; Daly and Chesney-Lind 1988; Daly and Maher 1998; Gelsthorpe 1990, 2010; Gelsthorpe and Morris 1988, 1990; Mason and Stubbs 2010; Heidensohn 1996, 2012). For Gelsthorpe and Morris (1988, 97 original emphasis) it is important to recognise that a singular 'feminist criminology' cannot exist, for feminist criminologists 'reflect the tensions and differences which exist within [criminological] perspectives'.

Moreover, (feminist) criminology faces the challenge of formulating theory and carrying out empirical studies which prioritise 'race, class, and sexual inequality', 'rather than relegating one or more of them to the background for the sake of methodological convenience' (Britton 2000, 72–73). However, it is still the case that more generally, despite the proliferation of publications on reflexivity in disciplines such as sociology, gender studies and anthropology, the discipline of criminology has thus far largely glossed over reflexivity in discussions of research methods (for exceptions see Jupp 1989; Jupp et al. 2000; Nelken 1994; Gadd et al. 2000; Hudson 2000; King and Wincup 2007; Davies and Francis 2011).

The significance of the feminist intervention and promotion of reflexivity is often also cited in relation and comparison to race and ethnicity. They are related in a list of 'subgroups' or sites of otherness, inequality and identity (and identity-politics) that require critical intervention and representation and would benefit from reflexive approaches in research. Feminism has dominated such work, but, as a result, is often brought in to cover or frame the reflexive intervention or work for all the 'others' as illustrated earlier. Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2012, 227–28, original emphasis) refer to the 'study of subgroups' and argue that

[e]thnicity is an emerging topic, but we cannot *yet* call it a strong theme in social science research. On the other hand, gender now indisputably occupies a leading position in our research area ... the dominating thrust in contemporary research can be accused not only of male domination and inadequate reflection in terms of gender, but also of a predominance of white (Western) middle-class contributors and the overly powerful influence of their (our) culture.

While the authors are correct that there has been a relative lack of work in the area, it would be wrong to merely subsume or subordinate race and ethnicity under another framework, particularly one that is not designed around, addresses or reflects on the racial order or the politics and

complexity of race and ethnicity (including in relation to gender) as subject positions and subject matter. In 'Race and Reflexivity', Mustafa Emirbayer and Matthew Desmond (2012, 589) do acknowledge a problem, arguing that '[e]ver since its inception, race scholarship has paid too little heed to the cardinal principle of reflexivity'. Although they recognise some strides in the last 40 years, they claim that 'far too much work today fails to incorporate a rigorous stance of reflexivity into its analyses of the American racial order' (Emirbayer and Desmond 2012, 589). While they highlight the American case, general claims about the state of the discipline are made without discussing examples from elsewhere. What concerns Emirbayer and Desmond particularly is where reflexivity has

been conceived in too narrow and underdeveloped a fashion: what the vast majority of thinkers typically have understood as reflexivity has been the exercise of recognizing how aspects of one's identity or social location can affect one's vision of the social world.

(Emirbayer and Desmond 2012, 577)

They argue that 'our understanding of the racial order will remain forever unsatisfactory so long as we fail to turn our analytic gaze back upon ourselves, the analysts of racial domination, and inquire critically into the hidden presuppositions that shape our thought' (Emirbayer and Desmond 2012, 574). What Emirbayer and Desmond propose is that reflexivity goes beyond the identification and analysis of the researcher's location in the racial order and is 'directed at three levels of hidden presuppositions: the social, the disciplinary, and the scholastic' (Emirbayer and Desmond 2012, 574). Such an approach would, they argue, enable a better understanding of racial structures and practices, the elaboration of ways to think about and address racial injustice and more thoughtful ways of understanding and appreciating racial differences (Emirbayer and Desmond 2012, 590).

The authors call for a collective undertaking, 'one which requires not merely the subjective conversion of the race scholar, but an objective transformation of the social organization of race scholarship, a restructuring of the enterprise' (Emirbayer and Desmond 2012, 591). In order to achieve this, they call for sanctions, such as the loss of scientific prestige, difficulty getting work published and public critiques 'when one fails to take into account advances in reflexivity already accomplished by others' (Emirbayer and Desmond 2012, 591).

In response to Emirbayer and Desmond, in 'A Race to Reflexivity', Sudhir Venkatesh (2012, 635) asks 'how one would institutionalize this sort of policing', an apt metaphor for a book on reflexivity and criminological research. Venkatesh is critical not only of this strict regulation, but also of their lack of acknowledgement of reflexive race scholarship by the authors.



In response to their statement that reflexivity is a matter of ‘engaging in rigorous institutional analyses of the social and historical structures that condition one’s thinking and inner experience’ (Emirbayer and Desmond 2012, 591), he cites several omitted examples, including those in the area of criminological research, most notably Stuart Hall’s and Paul Gilroy’s work on the role of the state in racialising the discourse on crime in Britain and Aaron Cicourel’s and John Kitsuse’s studies of school tracking and juvenile justice (Venkatesh 2012, 635). There is also more recent reflexive work by researchers who engage reflexively with not only the issue of race and ethnicity and the criminal justice system and wider social structure, but also the methods, discipline, research enterprise and scholarship itself. Moreover, this work addresses race and ethnicity in the American context as well (which Emirbayer and Desmond claimed is in need of reflexive analysis) and in relation to other sites and positions of identity, subjectivity and power(lessness) such as class, as opposed to merely subsuming race and ethnicity within one of them, for instance, Loïc Wacquant’s *Urban Outcasts* (2008) on the ghetto and *Deadly Symbiosis* (2011b) on prison and ‘race’. This body of work is interlinked with Bourdieu and Wacquant’s (1992) call for a ‘reflexive sociology’ (highlighted earlier), which extends to criminology (Wacquant 2011a).

Returning to the wider need for, and challenges of, reflexivity in criminological research specifically, Nelken (1994, 9) points out that ‘claims that criminology need [sic] to be more reflexive do not always refer to the same thing and rarely spell out all the implications of this requirement’. The overshadowing of reflexivity is in part a reflection of the disciplinary factions, state-driven criminology (Barton et al. 2007) and related shift towards positivism that was discussed at the beginning of this introduction (for criticisms of this shift see Wacquant 2011a; Young 2000, 2011; Cohen 1988; Hudson 2000; Garland 2001; Chan 2000; Maguire 2000). Hence, focusing primarily on qualitative studies (Brookman et al. 1990) (and specifically on ethnographies of crime and deviance), reflexivity has thus far largely been the terrain of feminist criminologists, critical criminologists (Schwartz and Hatty 2003; Nelken 1994), sociologists of crime and deviance (Hobbs 1988; Young 1971, 2011; Cohen 1988), cultural criminologists (Presdee 2001; Ferrell and Hamm 1998; Ferrell and Hayward 2011) and sociologists of race and ethnicity (for instance see Anderson 1999, 2003), ironically further forging interdisciplinary walls within criminology itself. Thus, this edited collection is a call for a more nuanced and open dialogue, with critical reflections on how criminologists engage with, and do research on, or on behalf of, the powerful and the powerless, particularly in the current academic climate of universities in countries such as the United Kingdom, which as mentioned pushes for measurable and immediate research impact, visible enterprise activities, knowledge transfer and thus engagement with police, criminal justice agencies and the state for access to resources and funding.

In this wider context it is even more urgent that we communicate the need for, and benefits of, a reflexive approach to our students.

Reflexivity in this sense is conceived of as an active process, not a personal quality of the researcher, and it covers all aspects of the research process. Reflexivity is not about navel-gazing, merely placing the researcher at the centre of the work, but is instead a means of acknowledging and further emphasising the co-construction of knowledge and understanding that occurs between researchers and their participants. As Adkins (2002) and Skeggs (1997, 2004) point out, reflexivity tends to inscribe a 'hierarchy of speaking positions' in social research and the 'narration of the self' is given authority in the research practice rather than reflexivity. Thus, how we 'give voice' to those involved in our studies and how we interpret and represent their social worlds are crucial issues for criminological researchers who wish to adopt a critical, open and honest interpretation of their research and the challenges they faced along the way. Hence, '[r]eflexivity is not a self-indulgent exercise akin to showing photographs to others to illustrate the "highs" and "lows" of a recent holiday, rather it is a vital part of demonstrating the factors which have contributed to the social production of knowledge' (Davies and Francis 2011, 284).

## **Book structure**

*Reflexivity in Criminological Research* contributes to, advances and consolidates discussions of the range of methods and approaches in criminology through the presentation of diverse international case studies from the United Kingdom and wider Europe, Australia, America, India and South America, in which the authors reflect upon their experiences with both powerful and/or powerless individuals/groups. Chapters are interdisciplinary, written by criminologists and other social scientists working on crime, deviance and/or criminal justice. As noted, reflexivity enhances our understandings of a diverse range of research experiences and relationships. Hence, the chapters in this collection cover aspects such as gaining access to the field or setting, building rapport and relationships with the researched, the impact of the researcher's identity on the research (including gendered interactions, race and ethnicity, bodily presentation, social class and emotions), how space in the research context structures our interactions with the researched, risk and danger in the field (and their relationship to wider ethical debates), bias and partisanship, policy implications, how we disseminate our findings and 'give voice' to the researched and, finally, reflections on attempts to shape the discipline of criminology itself via various forms of research innovation. The chapters cover a range of criminological research settings from the powerful, such as courts, prisons, legal professionals, criminal justice agencies, the police and the media, to the powerless such as individuals and subcultures labelled as 'criminal' or 'deviant', including

criminals and criminalised subjects, prison inmates, online gambling subcultures, youths and subcultures such as boy racers, football hooligans, those belonging to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community, racial/ethnic minorities, immigrant communities and research participants defined as vulnerable, such as victims of sexual assault and other crimes. The fluid nature of power relations and dynamics is acknowledged in, and through, the authors' experiences with the researched and encounters of barriers to research projects and/or the dissemination of research findings. We also explore ethics, risk and danger in criminological research and finish with consideration of the future of criminological research itself, drawing on examples such as international innovative justice research and participation in policy nodes.

The chapters cover a range of qualitative research methods including interviews, participant observation, ethnography, feminist research, virtual ethnography and also one instance of quantitative research. Each section contains a short Editors' Introduction, to tease out the central themes covered in the chapters, highlighting how the author's reflections add to our understandings of criminological research and power relations, and address and contribute to the collection's themes and thesis.

### **Part I: Research relationships**

Part I begins with a discussion of *Research Relationships*. In Chapter 2, Nicola O'Leary examines the role of researcher reflexivity when exploring a community which has experienced collective victimisation in the wake of a serious and high-profile crime. Much of this reflexive account deals with how the researcher gained access to the field and negotiated (and renegotiated) relations in an unfamiliar and at times unreceptive environment. Julie T. Davies and Eleanor Peters in Chapter 3 also highlight the problematic process of gaining and sustaining access to individuals or groups, but in this case via powerful institutions such as prisons. They consider issues of power, ethics and hierarchy in conducting research with vulnerable populations who are incarcerated or subject to criminal justice sanctions in the community. In Chapter 4, Rimple Mehta focuses on the role of the mango tree in the female ward of a prison for both men and women, in shaping the relationship between the researcher and Bangladeshi female prisoners in a correctional home in Kolkata, India. Through the example of a mango tree, she highlights the role that space plays in shaping relationships in the field. In Chapter 5, Stephen Case and Kevin Haines present 'Reflective Friend Research', a paradigm founded in a long-standing research partnership between researchers, practitioners and young people. They argue that researchers functioning as critical friends offer evidence-based recommendations for radical, systemic changes to traditional practices of knowledge generation, engagement and integrating research findings into practice. Nurturing long-term reflective relationships with researched parties can facilitate

levels of access to research participants, data sets, internal documentation and knowledge generation processes seldom enjoyed by positivists conducting research on research subjects rather than with research participants/contributors.

### **Parts II and III: Researcher identities, subjectivities and intersectionalities**

The second and third parts of the book focus on *Researcher Identities, Subjectivities and Intersectionalities*. Here, we focus on the role of *Gender and Class* and *Race and Ethnicity* in research and, particularly, shaping relationships with research participants. In Part II, the authors focus on the role of *Gender and Class* in their research. In Chapter 6, Emma Poulton identifies the methodological challenges and concerns which she had to (re)negotiate and manage as a female academic researching the hyper-masculine subculture of 'football hooliganism'. According to Poulton doing gendered research (especially with deviant subcultures) can sometimes require the researcher (male or indeed female) to demonstrate that they have the metaphorical 'balls' in terms of handling particular situations and power relations – including sometimes feeling powerless. In Chapter 7, Oona Brooks draws on feminist literature to offer an account of her research with young women about safety in bars and clubs in Scottish cities. She discusses how consideration was given to addressing potential imbalances of power between the researcher and the researched. The feminist identity of the researcher directly influenced the focus of the study and the interpretation of findings. In Chapter 8, Emily Luise Hart explores how her pregnancy impacted on a series of qualitative semi-structured interviews with female prisoners. The researcher's visible pregnancy gave access to particular insights that may not have otherwise been possible, for instance aiding access to sensitive data, helping to establish a positive rapport and supporting the development of a trusting relationship in the interview setting. In Chapter 9, Elias le Grand provides us with an account of his fieldwork experiences with working-class youths in a deprived South London suburb. He explores how writing the ethnographic self can inform our understanding of the performance of class and masculinity in the field. In this case, reflexive analysis of the interactions between the middle-class researcher and the young working-class respondents elucidated the classed dynamics of masculine performances and how these are tied to the embodied knowledge of cultural codes.

In Part III, the authors focus on the role of *Race and Ethnicity* in their research and the need for reflexivity in this area. Although the focus is on race and ethnicity, several highlight the ways in which other sites of identity, subjectivity and powerlessness overlap and intersect with race and ethnicity in their research, most notably sexuality and gender. In Chapter 10, David Glisch-Sánchez discusses his research on hate crimes against LGBTQ Latinas and Latinos and examines the power relationship between researcher

and research participant. He also looks at wider issues and challenges for researchers working in this area, most notably the social and institutional mechanisms that create criminological scholars as institutional agents of the state and academic discipline and institutions. He discusses how reflexive practices are commonly reduced to the indexing of differences across various categories of identity, such as race, ethnicity, sexuality and national origin. He argues that collective reflexive practice must incorporate a deep understanding of how the intersections of socially significant identities intersect with our roles as institutional agents. In Chapter 11, Breea C. Willingham provides a reflexive account of how being an African American woman with male relatives incarcerated in the American penal system presented unique challenges when conducting research on incarcerated African American fathers. She argues that a reflexive approach creates not only challenges but also opportunities for researchers like her to tell powerful stories of powerless and marginalised groups and individuals, as well as highlight the ways in which the researcher often may not only serve either the powerful or powerless, but also share overlapping social positions and experiences with either. In Chapter 12, Meghan E. Hollis outlines her experiences of researching minority police officers during a three-year ethnographic study of a police department in a north-eastern coastal metropolitan city in the United States. She highlights difficulties accessing the experiences of the non-white and/or female police officers, examining the position of the researcher as a white female. In Chapter 13, Monish Bhatia discusses his research on the United Kingdom's immigration policies and procedures on asylum seekers and 'illegal' migrants. He examines the role of emotional reflexivity in research and the ways in which it can offer an effective navigation tool for researchers, driving critical criminological knowledge and exposing state and structural violence and injustice against asylum seekers and 'illegal' migrants. Bhatia highlights the ethical and methodological dilemmas faced while conducting sensitive qualitative research with oppressed and marginalised populations. He argues that emotions are epistemologically relevant and should not be hidden or left undisclosed from the text, but rather addressed appropriately to enhance the value and credibility of the data collected. In Chapter 14, Clare E. Griffiths discusses a quantitative research project that sought to capture the perspectives of an established local community and a transient immigrant community on crime and disorder in their local neighbourhood in an English city, after a period of increased migration and debates about it. She reflects on incidents that raised questions for the random and objective principles of a quantitative research project and shows how special considerations are needed when researching such 'hidden' populations. In Chapter 15, Michael Wearing discusses how qualitative criminology helps to frame 'law and order' agendas of state surveillance. Focusing on research on child sexual assault in remote Aboriginal communities in Northern Australia and in the crime biographies of life course, he

interrogates the positivist creation of subjectivities in qualitative research as legitimating false constructions of the 'other'.

#### **Part IV: Risk, ethics and researcher safety**

Part IV moves to discussions of *Risk, Ethics and Researcher Safety* in criminological studies in the United Kingdom and South America. In Chapter 16, Ruth Armstrong, Loraine Gelsthorpe and Ben Crewe candidly describe the ethical compromises of a UK postgraduate conducting ethnographic work with prisoners and ex-prisoners in the United States. They question whether being ethical is synonymous with following ethical protocols to the letter or whether taking risks might respect the values that underpin ethical regulations more than trying to rule out these risks entirely. They also reflect on the discomfort of undertaking and supervising these risks and describe the importance of trust, honesty and 'ethical sensibility' in the process of fieldwork and research reporting. Then, in Chapter 17, Stephanie C. Kane provides an account of the gendered cultural process through which crime affectively circulates in the community, beyond victims, perpetrators and agents of social control through widening spheres of social relations. She shows how reflexive methods clarify the contingent process of knowledge production and amplify criminology's cultural imagination. A knife assault witnessed on a globally popular beach in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, illuminates the 'political unconscious' of crime and its dynamic relationship to place. Serendipitously in the scene of a crime, a distressingly mundane act of violence enhances communicative trust between co-witnesses, the ethnographer and her interlocutor.

#### **Part V: Power, partisanship and bias**

Part V highlights the role of *Power, Partisanship and Bias* in research involving those in *powerful* positions, such as legal professionals, courts, criminal justice agencies, politicians, the police and the media. As Hughes (2000, 235) observes, '[a]ll social science has a political dimension, in the non-party-political sense. All aspects of research necessarily involve the researcher in both the analysis and practice of power and, in turn, have the potential to generate conflicts of interest between a whole host of interested parties'. In Chapter 18, Gemma Birkett describes her research with criminal justice professionals in the British government. She addresses the distinct issues involved in interviewing female policy elites and considers the difficulties encountered in the dissemination of political research findings. In Chapter 19, Kate Fitz-Gibbon also focuses on her research experiences with powerful groups. She argues that at the time when academia is increasingly recognising the importance of policy application and the transfer of research into practice, interviews with legal practitioners provide an opportunity for criminologists to validate and support research findings with the experiences of those working within the field. In Chapter 20, Vanina