Power and prejudice:
A phenomenological study with criminology instructors on the intersubjectivities and invariances of conflict

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Abstract:

Criminology is presently contested in ways beyond ethical and political argument, often ranging to implicit ontological wrangling. This thesis is an attempt to more explicit these and other issues. This project investigates phenomenological intersubjectivities and invariances with contemporary conflicts in criminology by considering the experiences and expressions of its practitioners. A brief account of the researcher's metaphysical and pretheoretical suppositions grounds a subjective starting point for this qualitative inquiry. Key pieces of literature were drawn from Nietzsche, Husserl, and Schutz while also considering them as subjective figures themselves. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with ten active instructors from KPU's Criminology Department. Thematic content analysis was used to process initial interview data; phenomenological methodology informed further analysis of initial findings and themes. What recurring issues in present criminological practice seem to give rise to major conflicts and interpersonal disagreements within the discipline? From these, what might be invariant factors for understanding conflict in general? What can address persistent conflicts or reduce detrimental consequences? Major normative divergences were found regarding disciplinary and pedagogical priorities. Is the disciplinary, departmental, or criminologist's priority to teach, to "just" do research, or to find solutions to societal problems and thereby recommend actions? Agonistic positions on structural and societal matters, e.g. the role of police in society, presented key themes for conflict in criminology. These include strong intersubjective and intergroup prejudices and concurrent breakdowns in communication and cohesion. A species of false dichotomy was identified and offered as a source of communicative ambiguity and interpersonal prejudice. A recommendation of "domain-specifying" inquiry is submitted as a way to mitigate prejudices in pursuit of intersubjective understanding.

Keywords:

phenomenology, criminology, metacriminology, Husserl, Schutz, intersubjectivity, conflict, prejudice, inquiry, empowerment

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I am grateful for having learned and lived while on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded lands of the Coast Salish peoples.

I dedicate this work to the eternal children—the future of humanity. May they grow up in a more understood and understanding world.

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There are no mysteries, only missed understandings and missed directions.

> “What can be said at all can be said clearly. … May others come and do it better.”
>
> Ludwig Wittgenstein (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* [TLP], 1922, Preface)

Introduction

Pretheoretical Background

A middle-class couple in their early thirties agree they need a new car but cannot agree whether to get a compact that costs $20,000 or a dreamier one that costs five times as much (the more expensive one would take out about half of their savings and investments). One is a "spender" and the other a "saver." The conversation quickly becomes heated and they start to talk about everything, quickly becoming removed from talking about any differences between the two cars. One thinks they "don't need it," the other has been waiting years to drive a luxury car. Instead of anything to do with cars, they are talking about themselves. To some third-person observer, the couple aren't even on the same page, much less seeing eye-to-eye.

At least for me, this is a problem as they don't seem to be acknowledging or responding enough to that problematic and unnecessary pattern of behaviour, despite it adversely affecting themselves and the other, who they love. Most importantly, I believe we have all, at various times, been in the position of third-person observer or as a one of the arguing couples over any variety of matters. In the latter, it can easily seem incomprehensible why the other person is so uncomprehending. This holds even if we accept, in the abstract, that they are "good" people and have good intentions. Good intentions, though necessary, are insufficient. Knowledge, if I may, as well as the work necessary to gain it—and thus at least a modest consequentialism—are required to be able to actualize intentions into intended outcomes.

Lastly, these matters, such as which car to buy, what policy to adopt, whether masks should be mandated or not, even what attitude or interpretation to hold towards something—what people

should believe or interpret something to mean—are all, by themselves, concrete and external "matters of fact," *a posteriori*, which by themselves are emotionally neutral. David Hume (1711 – 1776), who coined the phrase,[1] compared a sapling that topples and kills its "parent" tree to parricide[2] to exemplify the so-called is–ought problem, the difficulty in passing from neutral descriptive statements of "what is" to normative statements of "what ought to be." In a more recent century, in Ludwig Wittgenstein's (1889 – 1951) sole publication on ethics, he discussed exclusively the matter of the gap between facts and values.[3] If descriptive matters just are, how can any descriptive fact give rise to a should statement? How can one car be inherently and necessarily be better or worse than another? Or styles of government? Yet such matters seem by themselves sufficient to get people riled up and arguing over… what, exactly? And why?

This is a notable limitation as I, formally and perhaps idiosyncratically, find Hume's problem dissolved by rejecting the metaphysical distinction altogether: there are no such things as neutral descriptive statements, conveyances, or even thoughts. I attempt to bracket my formal view for the current investigation into the intersubjective experience of conflict among criminology instructors.

However, I attempt to premise the classical presupposition that there may exist neutral statements and that people, messages, and data can be completely neutral, that they can stick only to the facts and share only neutral descriptive statements both in individual instances and "overall," i.e. neutral in any one statement and in the totality of what that person states, shares, and omits. In hopes of preventing this limitation from being fatal (rendering too much invalid), I

[1] Hume claimed that what can be known is either "matters of fact" or "relations of ideas." The former represents what we call empirical and accessed through the senses, like; the latter is known by reasoning and inference.
[2] In Hume's (1740) *Treatise,* 3.1.1.24.
[3] In Wittgenstein (2014).

attempt to adopt the perspective of one who does (and wants to) premise the possibility—and even preference for—value neutrality or at least value agnosticism in statements; more modestly, and while attempting to minimize value judgment, I attempt to take the perspective of someone who "needs" some statements to be neutral. From the remainder of the document, the reader can and should judge whether I am capable of doing this, and if not, where in particular the demand is unacceptable.

Continuing on, in all situations when the discussion of a descriptive matter seems to get people vehemently quarreling, acting with animosity, or just very upset, I assume there is a relevant normative factor, a micro-level value (though it need not originate nor propagate at the micro-level only). The difficulty here is to formally describe the connection clearly, cogently, and reliably (e.g. in an attempt to directly describe with words, without metaphor or other techniques that can excessively presuppose the very matter to be conveyed). This skill is one that I personally have never seen fostered or taught in any school, anywhere, I believe it requires emotional awareness (honestly observing oneself), a willingness to be open (transparency), a degree of optimism (epistemic modesty), social generalizability (a non-individualistic view; to take multiple perspectives) and to do so in a coherent and plausible way (vocabulary, logic, and metaphysics).[4] I am aware of no sociocultural contexts, or societies, in which these are prioritized or valued. Adding to this, difficulty may be greater for some individuals than others,

[4] Is it even possible to teach all of these in a system where grade school—though not necessarily all teachers—is effectively authoritarian? Are kids really expected to "do as I say, and not as I do—and not as everyone else around you will continue to do"? It seems logically incoherent when much of what is "said" is plainly unclear and contradictory: "Be good, but you will not know how nor even what good is." On a personal note, that command sums up my grade-school interactions with all administrators and roughly half of the teachers.

such as when the expression itself may be antithetical to one of their values, e.g. when doing so is viewed (not by "choice") as unwisely "showing one's cards."

It is worth mentioning that this view is not indicative of more than just that; I strongly caution against reading the gamut of connotations from the proverbial phrase into actual people for this is precisely the kind of prejudice I find problematic. Despite my attempts for radical transparency and egalitarianism, I recognize there are many things that I would not be comfortable with disclosing, some possibly being relevant here. I thus depend on others who are comfortable raising those things and bringing them into public discourse, taking on the potential apparent risks that I am not willing to. Likewise, I hope that I am able to vocalize and bring attention to topics and matters for those who prefer to remain silent on them but nonetheless wish for others to recognize and acknowledge them. This is enabled only by diversity and appreciation for diversity, which shows its universal importance regardless of what anyone may voice about it. Without this appreciation (which is not necessarily at the micro-level), it is not even possible to vocalize critique, evincing a great irony and descriptive incoherence in the stronger strands of intolerance.

Returning from this aside, I remind that, in Western societies, stigmatized failings that deserve punishment are only for things that individuals can "choose," not for things outside a "reasonable" range of what people can supposedly control. It also seems to be an accepted fact in Western societies now that people are limited in how much we can control our feelings and

values.[5] Herein lies a conundrum: if people could control or choose certain values, then they would have no qualms about "showing their cards" because they can just show something that can change if it is met with disapproval. Say you are a learner driver, and you show your ignorance by driving on the wrong side of the road; the driving instructor jolts in her seat, points out this is "wrong," perhaps even admonishing you. Ok, a quick adjustment is made: "I should drive on the right." But some things about ourselves, especially any of our positions connected to so-called core values, are harder if not impossible to change. Therefore, if people cannot control or change certain values, then they should have no qualms about "showing their cards" because they would not be stigmatized for the things they cannot control.

In the latter, people do have qualms, for people—all of us—are stigmatized and punished.[6] So, if people cannot choose some of their values, then why are they punished for having them? I exposit as it is a bit more complicated: What is necessary for punishment is for people to *indicate* those values—you can detest your grade 5 principal all you want, but you will only get in trouble when express it, e.g. by flipping off the principal and getting "caught." Therefore, such a culture is one that compels people to "hide their cards"—obfuscate, mislead, and act disingenuously—while at the same time indicating that they are doing any of those things, while at the same

[5] This is seen in Canadian criminal law, where provocation is a valid albeit partial defense for the charge of murder. Notably, this is often explained as a recognition of "human frailty" (Yusuf, personal communication, 2020). Note that this explanation is still steeped in values, rather than a bracketed, if "naturalistic," neutrality. This implicitly states that to become provoked, angry, and *criminal* is a matter of *personal* weakness. This then implicates a "common sense" cultural normative response to being weak: You don't want to be weak, do you? Get stronger. Thus, self "control" remains an inescapable narrative and an overused (and probably abused) answer.

[6] Instances of this prejudice are not always accepted without resistance and contestation; faced with admonishment or a negative reaction regarding something one cannot or "chooses not to" change, we can dig in our heels on that hill and/or attempt to valorize it. This can be applied on itself; stubbornness itself can be valorized, e.g., with words like "doggedness," "resolute," and "steadfast." What determines positive vs negative evaluations of stubbornness? Is there a relation to stubbornness itself or to stubbornness regarding a specific domain, towards a specific end, etc.?

parroting "if you have nothing to hide." As most if not all such indications are performative,[7] this is also a debilitating socially constructed conventionalism and conservatism. This (and in criminology, right realism) and doublethink go hand-in-hand: act and be disingenuous, but do not show any evidence of it; evidence is not evidence. This is impossible. Even when one is all alone, one bears witness to oneself.

It is manifestly unjust to expect people to be able to live up to a contradiction and actively punish people based on invisible and unwritten standards while citing and pointing to the failure to live up to one horn of the contradiction. This unjust cultural norm, like anything unjust, should change. If this style of expectation, punishment, and stigma were to be impugned in a Canadian court, I would like to believe that it would be struck down as patently unfair as a violation of a principle of fundamental justice. However, as is evident, "informal" norms of "justice" and particular cultural norms can prove to be far more unreasonable and irrational. For me, what is intolerable and noxious is how the unwritten but substantial cultural rules of conduct remain disguised while the legacy of cultural norms and values that are openly accepted, explicitly written, and plainly debated (especially in public discourse) are vacuous and misleading. There can be no happy outcome in these debates because it is built upon pernicious self-effacing contradictions. If anything, the extant descriptive moral narratives I see in Western societies are an entertaining—or at least time-consuming—distraction to keep people busy and confused as to who the real enemy is. It is not the Joneses. It is not any person(s). Realistically and empirically (and as is necessary for diversity), it is an impossible ask for everyone to accept this as a dissolution for how we experience conflict.

[7] Here I use "performative" to mean the sense proposed by J. L. Austin (see Cavanaugh, 2018), e.g. when someone became guilty *because* a judge pronounced a guilty verdict on them in court.

However, I do not think reconciliation is an impossible goal. I believe that modest local gains are in reach, are possible, and would not necessarily "displace" conflict elsewhere in the same "quantity." Having described some of my perceived tensions around the inefficiency and the particular narrative (ideological) obstacles for a more potent conflict resolution at present day, I put truisms and idiosyncratic interpretations aside to briefly describe and argue for the present research project.

Project Background

The original aim of this project was to investigate how criminology instructors might construct "the social" from their thoughts on social existence. This was written in the descriptive blurb offered to participants at the outset to describe the project. However, interviews (the primary data gathering method) never got past views and discussions on conflict. Therefore, this project became focused on the phenomenology of conflict of criminology instructors. Nonetheless, this is relevant to the original aim if what constitutes conflict can be said to be the apparent problems, concerns, or faults in social existence. This can be inferred from what they convey regarding their experiences and conceptualizations of conflict. In retrospect, a more explicit component in querying for the positive beneficial aspects of social existence would have more easily facilitated a synthesis (or dissolution) of the "good and bad" of the social. At its broadest, I still see this project as a modest exploration and analysis of conflict.

I presumed that criminology instructors have given some thought to matters of genuine conflict and conflict resolution as they tangentially relate to justice, crime, and punishment; I would think they assume that students regularly, if not commonly, think about this and may ask them… and that at one time (at least) they were responsive to such inquiries. However, this is not a critical

condition. It is of greater importance that criminology instructors are more likely to be experts on the current state of the extant processes around crime and punishment and on what are the evidence-supported factors that lead to harm and injustice. Furthermore, I think that they actually do believe they are experts in some capacity on these matters (their instinctive claims of Socratic modesty/quasi-modesty notwithstanding). This matters as it attaches to a measure of reliability or metadependability. When individuals consistently and comparably possess a specific expertise on a matter, what they say subjectively and in their "natural attitude"[8] on a matter, descriptively, has a specific and relevant relationship to the present limit of the way that matter is normally described and conveyed (if not understood) in that particular time, in that sociocultural context. In some respects, this is "as good as it gets," for now. Whatever that colloquial expert description may be, how different it is from the description as a product of analysis from the phenomenological attitude[9] carries with it a transformational distance or value. Is there a big difference or a small one? This meta-semiotic value, albeit beyond the scope of this project to quantify, has implications: how much do people actually mean what they say and say what they mean?[10] How different is the natural language from say, first-order predicate logic?[11]

[8] This is a classic phenomenological term that describes how things are "taken for granted" when we are relaxed and on "autopilot," the state one experiences most easily, hence naturally, in life (Vagle, 2014, pp. 13, 88; Sokolowski, 2000, p. 42).

[9] The other term, sometimes called the "transcendental attitude," which is the phenomenal mode of considering the "lens" (or funhouse mirror) of natural language conventions, taking only the most parsimonious account of what must be true, accepting only what is necessarily "evident by observing consciousness itself" (emphasis in original; Husserl, 1913/1983, p. 136).

[10] This connects to "transparency" and to the explicit-implicit gap in natural language, which is a major mode of power relations and form of cultural capital.

[11] See Quine (1948) for a modern account of ontology, which I found highly applicable to the analysis of something as multilayered as conflict.

At heart, I espouse the view expressed by *Protagoras*, that all virtue is knowledge—that "no one errs willingly."[12] Without this, even modest ethics is incoherent and contradictory. Thus, I consider this axiomatic, the meaning of "to err"—and thus of all wrongs—as something that can disprove any claim of something as being right. As such, I was particularly interested in whatever this sample might say for what are the most stressful perceived shortcomings that they are exposed to, live and work in, and have not satisfactorily addressed.

The above so far described the "because motive" for this project. The "in-order-to motive,"[13] one of the senses of "purpose," is to address the above concerns but to also make a practical contribution in some small measure. This would be attained if it brings about an ultimately positive difference in the lives of those who read it. This project aims to provide a broader, possibly stoical, and even therapeutic account of conflict and disagreement; by recognizing when they may be being blown out of proportion, they become less damaging and divisive.

These key interests informed the first set of research questions:

1) If there are common problems faced by criminology instructors, what are they?
   Do all of them see it as a problem; how might they have been differently viewed?
   How much do they consider their peer's views?

2) In their personal experience, what did they do when faced with such problems?
   What are (were) their thoughts on what should be done?
   What do they see as the biggest obstacles to resolving or addressing these issues?

I assumed that when criminology instructors answer, they have already done some of the mental labour to avoid saying invalid things, implausible misunderstandings, misrepresentations and

[12] I take this to mean "anything that is an error would be avoided with the right bit of knowledge," such as driving on the wrong side of the road. Knowledge here is meant in the broad sense, not limited to declarative knowledge.
[13] These two terms were originally used to distinguish two senses of the word "why," by Schütz (1967, pp. 86-96).

other such "low-hanging fruits" in the interpretation and analysis of conflict.[14] This is not to say that what is a low-hanging fruit for one instructor is the same for another, merely that the expressive threshold for behaviour for such a response has been met (e.g. like "voting," which, especially with strangers, we must take on some level as having presumptively equal weight). Therefore, it follows that whatever remains in their answers has some validity and thus might plausibly answer the remaining research questions:

3) What are the latent patterns or recurring factors that accompany the experience and imputation of problematic conflict and disagreement by participants?

4) What are some contextual factors that contribute to conflicts as described?

5) When discussing conflict, what are the most significant recurring themes and topics? What might be some of their plausible (hypothetical) relations with conflict?

6) What seems invariant about conflict?

7) How might some issues in the contemporary criminological teaching practice be addressed going forward?

[14] I also presumed that criminology instructors have access to the "best" institutional and formal resources based on the promise of academic knowledge—the notion that knowledge, research, and expertise are in fact goods with both intrinsic and instrumental utility—albeit with the potential caveat of the population being in a very "institutional" and bureaucratic setting which can, ironically, limit the general application of knowledge and of "research findings."

The last question here is not a research question per se but more of a pragmatic consideration in this project for potential faculty readers. It can apply both "at home" in a department and "out there" in the field to the larger pool of contemporaries.[15]

In the literature review I briefly cover Nietzsche for intersubjectivity, then Husserl and Schutz for phenomenology. Next, I describe the methodological rationale for interviews, sampling choices, and other data collection matters. The data analysis section will describe the considerations and processes to go from raw interview data to findings. Here, phenomenological analysis is briefly reviewed as well as the primary method of qualitative thematic analysis informed by phenomenology. In findings I first present "truncated" themes which are more descriptive and denotative before moving on to themes regarding conflict. I go into detail to examine and elucidate on two core themes: *power/powerlessness* and *prejudicial fallacies of presumption*. I argue for a dissolution and a solution for prejudice and thus conflict in a way that addresses potentially confounding elements in our everyday sociolinguistic practice. I conclude with thoughts on the past and future of criminology.

[15] I argue this distinction is material. A thought experiment: A CEO drugs and sexually assaults a visitor of unknown identity during regular work hours, the body dragged out by masked henchmen afterward. However, the whole act was visible through the CCTV system, and it just so happened that many employees separately witnessed the event, albeit separately, each in their own little office. The CCTV feed was not recorded. None of them have evidence beyond what they saw on CCTV. No one shows up later to pursue the incident. Employees are unwilling to take the risk that they were the only person who watched the feed; business proceeds as usual. Alternatively, someone happens to speak to a bunch of employees and many of them recount (in confidence) what they witnessed. A written report is then circulated. This can raise awareness and discussion on possible similar occurrences in other companies (departments) too. And finally, there is a difference between many people knowing something and when it is also known that other people know too. It is not enough that people know; it must also be known that people know. It is here that the true role of public evidence reveals itself.

Literature, Theory, and Approach

I have opted for a "narrow" literature review that reports on few sources rather than many. In the proposal phase, a very broad range of literature was examined, but I found that most of it was superfluous restatements when just the basics can be enough. Moreover, typical literature reviews include reports of very similar projects to serve as a basis for the so-called present state of knowledge. This was difficult to do here. After 30 minutes of searching online databases (via the KPU databases) and skimming hopeful candidates, I failed to find any phenomenological study of criminology instructors or criminologists on any topic, nor contemporary social scientists on intradisciplinary or interpersonal conflict. The "closest" I could find consisted of reflective autoethnographic or autobiographical works of criminologists, such as Richard Quinney[16] which recounts their take on tribulations across their lifetime in the discipline, a relatively sparse literature on the phenomenology of free will,[17] and phenomenological takes on moral pluralism as a possible account of intersubjectivity.[18] I considered covering them and explaining their relevance, but ultimately I believe this was not necessary (nor helpful[19]) in order to approach, understand, or justify the present project.

[16] I recommend Quinney (2006), the final chapter in a book, as a short and accessible entry spanning his publications on criminology from his later years, 1980s to 2000s.

[17] See Nahmias et al. (2004). This would be in the line of experimental philosophy (and psychology), which I have had covered fairly extensively in the literature prior to undertaking this project.

[18] See Nieuwenburg (2004) and Cherniss & Hardy (2022) for moral pluralism, which argues for incommensurability of what may necessarily be values or morals.

[19] A brief argument: for this tangential literature to be helpful in a substantial way where they are worthwhile to include, everyone in criminology would ideally be familiar and comfortable with, say, the debate around whether a deterministic physical universe excludes the possibility of choice in all senses of "choice," and then whether that is sufficient for, or substantially abridges de facto standards of—including criminal justice ratio—moral responsibility. If even some criminologists are not familiar, then I believe it would not be helpful nor persuasive to refer to that discourse, potentially excluding them from the "conflict resolution" project.

This project seeks to shed light on two main focus points, conflict and intersubjectivity. The latter will be primarily shown and demonstrated, rather than spoken of for differences in ways of experiencing, thinking, and living are a "negative."[20] They can only be subjectively apprehended through something more basic than propositional language or orthography. (If a joke is explained and described, is it still funny?) This is thus crucial and singularly more effective than prosaic description for understanding whereof we must be silent.[21] This is in line with the phenomenological literature: "Reading phenomenological work is like reading a poem. You cannot summarize a poem without losing the meaning. The same holds true with carrying out phenomenological research."[22]

In this section, I obliquely introduce the challenge of intersubjectivity with an excerpt from Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900). I then cover a brief account of the phenomenological development from Edmund Husserl (1859 – 1938) and Alfred Schütz (1899 – 1959), whose philosophical and theoretical approach most closely describe the theoretical foundations for the method that this project is based on. Due to the limitations of how much literature can be reviewed and recommended, I give only a passing mention to Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze, and Althusser, whose works I have barely had time to explore but what I have seen so far resonates strongly with the core assumptions that inform the research methodology here.

[20] Being like privations or black holes, but one that cannot yet be qualitatively inverted, only outlined.
[21] Silent here does not mean audibly silent, but just prosaically. A common critique of when this may have gone "too far" appears when the demonstration is described as obscurantist, elitist, or obfuscatory, especially for things that appear to be "easily" described straight. If this is the case here, I offer that it is due to my personal shortcomings in the ability to describe what I am aiming to.
[22] Vagle (2014, p. 11).

Nietzsche and Intersubjective Understanding

I included Nietzsche for his canonicity and, in my opinion, his highly readable and accessible writings.[23] In this project he is directly relevant to intersubjectivity and power, the latter being a derivative of conflict. Nearly 150-years old, his thoughts and passions still accurately and authentically describe some subjectivities and basic worldviews better than most I have seen. One of his posthumously published notes reads[24]:

> As soon as you feel yourself *against me* you have ceased to understand my position and consequently my arguments! You have to be the victim of the *same passion*!
>
> I want to awaken the greatest mistrust of myself: I speak only of things I have *experienced* and do not offer only events in the head.
>
> One must want to experience the great problems with one's body and one's soul.
>
> I have at all times written my writings with my whole heart and soul: I do not know what purely intellectual problems are.

Of all the things I have ever read (admittedly not much), this quote presented an account and a challenge for intersubjective understanding more than any other. It thrust upon me an undeniable presence of how people differ (even if "most" are the same) with great force. It demands simultaneously a radical empathy and antipathy—we must become victim. When I first read it, and every subsequent time I read it, every clause seems to describe *me*. Everything proposition here truly describes me and my approach to writing and to research. What Nietzsche wrote about judgment upon his own writing (mostly negative but not all) most accurately describes of how I

[23] His intense headaches and declining health for much of his life (Huenemann, 2010), I believe, was a major factor in his "high density" writing style.
[24] Nietzsche (1969, pp. 11-12; emphasis not mine).

feel about mine; we share the ideals, at least of how we look at ourselves. This is not without its challenges and paradoxes.

One aphorism reads "PERNICIOUS.—A young man can be most surely corrupted when he is taught to value the like-minded more highly than the differently minded."[25] This emphasizes the importance of attaining and attending to that which is the least easy and accessible. If I could only appraise intersubjectivity in greatest astonishment by seeing its potential similarity, I find it difficult for the same be reproduced from attention to the patently alien (e.g. nearly all of what I have read that was published in Economics), yet this may well be the goal: I must assume that what I write is patently alien for some.[26] Most people probably will not feel "victim" to the *"*same passion" that drove me to write this (or maybe they will, who knows?). For one who does, the most valid course of action may be then to throw this away, and to do so quickly.

A key difference, which I will revisit later in more general terms, reveals itself when I take in Nietzsche's works as a whole; by looking at object of his diminutions and acclamations, and how he came to them, it is apparent that we are alien: what he calls cold, I often call warm, and vice versa. I could not have written or even have his core views on them, or even imagine myself earnestly doing so—that would be an event outside of my head. Much of what Nietzsche (and many contemporaries) wrote reads as a foil—as if written by an alien clone—in ways far greater than what can be attributed to gaps in time, space, culture, and even health.

[25] Nietzsche (1881/1911, §297).
[26] Although, it would be a valuable finding if there is evidence that this is a one- or two-way relationship.

Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl

Though phenomenology has been practiced for many centuries, "albeit not in name," its modern origin is most often attributed to the works of Edmund Husserl in his foundational phenomenological treatise, *Logical Investigations*, published in 1900–1901.[27] Husserl's usage of the word followed the development of German philosophical idealism from the early 18th century, where the word "phenomenology" first saw use.[28] For this project, phenomenology refers to Husserl's usage and his philosophy that holds human lived experience to be basic and self-evident. How do things appear to us? This open-ended and non-reductive question is opposed to conjectured restrictions by such notions as raw sense data or any other basic and exclusive accounts (e.g. physicalism, mysticism), which are hypothetical, as being more prior, objective, or worthy of belief than their appearance to us, which are less hypothetical and are self-evidently true. I briefly cover "lifeworld," "intentionality," "noema," and "epochē."

Contrasting the positivism of the time, the early Husserl used the term lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) to refer to the subjective totality of the world of experience.[29] The following excerpt accurately describes my understanding and its use here:

> The life-world includes individual, social, perceptual, and practical experiences. The objectivism of science [as practiced] obscures both its origin in the subjective perceptions of the life-world and the life-world itself. In analyzing and describing the life-world, Phenomenology attempts to show how the world of theory … originates from the life-world…[30]

[27] Vagle (2014, p. 6).
[28] Moran and Cohen (2012, pp. 314-316).
[29] Sokolowski (2000, p. 181).
[30] Encyclopedia Britannica (2016).

The "world of theory" includes also informal (and folk) theories. Here, what conflict is can be explored by examining the theories and beliefs held by people. If I were to ask a criminologist, "what is conflict, really?" I speculate it is likely that what would eventually be described would be a theory of conflict: a number of hypotheses, observations/evidence, and plausible explanations (albeit perhaps not the theory they actually hold, e.g. if counter-indicated by their behaviour in and around conflict).

Through the concept of intentionality, Husserl's phenomenology was an attempt to address some of the major problems with early modern philosophy such as mind-body dualism. Descartes and then Kant laid the foundations for the view of there being a "real world" that is separate from our senses and thus from what can be known or accessed by us. This resulted a category of inaccessible and mysterious abstracta for knowing and representation, implying that whatever may appear to us can never be what is "really" there. Husserl would recognize that anything which can appear, conceptualized, and understood is necessarily due to our being conscious *about* something; we are directed towards it, apprehending it, and therefore connected to that thing.[31]

To make further distinctions in intentional conscious experience, Husserl used the term "noema."[32] Noema is best contrasted with Kant's noumena (and phenomena). The online Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines noumena as the objects or entities knowable "only by the mind" and "not by the senses … devoid of all phenomenal attributes." Noema then would be the object or content of intentional consciousness, of what we can apprehend and come to recognize

[31] Smith (n.d.) accounts how intentionality was variously articulated over the years by different phenomenologists.
[32] This was originally a Greek word; in addition to creating original terms, Husserl "borrowed" words from classical Greek and Latin philosophy, contemporary scholarship (Moran & Cohen, 2012, p. 1).

from bracketing any metaphysical suppositions of mind, the senses, and objectivity.[33] The ambiguity and controversy around noema mirror the difficulties and subjectivities of classic phenomenology.[34] I found two denotatively distinct accounts of it: as the intentional object as it is intended (the content or object of intention), and as the ideality of the intention. Is this distinction predicated on a Platonist metaphysical view? I am unsure. However, Husserl stated that the intentional object "plays … the role of 'transcendental clue' to the … multiplicities of possible *cogitations* that … bear the intentional object."[35] From this, I see a promising path towards a valid understanding of the intersubjective.

Lastly on Husserl, and arguably most central for phenomenological methodology in social science research, is epochē. In the literature, this is also called "phenomenological reduction" or just "reduction." In English, the word whose everyday meaning is closest to "epochē" is "bracketing." This describes the process of moving from the natural attitude to the phenomenological attitude. The natural attitude describes the initial state when some phenomenon is viewed normally; it is "simply there, unbroken, existing in pure ontic certainty (undoubted)."[36] Epochē is the suspension of the taken-for-granted beliefs that inform the natural attitude, meaning "scientific, philosophical, cultural, and everyday assumptions [are] to be put aside … we are not permitted *any* scientific or philosophical hypotheses."[37] The goal is to ground everything only in what must be "*evident by observing consciousness itself.*"[38] This is the

[33] This offers a way toward a more parsimonious ontology of meaning, sense, and reference than the dominant one evolved from Frege by rejecting the key premise that gave rise to "Frege's puzzle" in the first place (the current ordinary and thus dominant meaning of "sense," e.g., "in a sense," is closest to Frege's proposed solution).
[34] Moran and Cohen (2012); Moran (2000); Smith (n.d.).
[35] Husserl (1982, p. 50).
[36] Husserl (1970, p. 172).
[37] Moran (2000, p. 11).
[38] Husserl (1983, p. 136; emphasis in original).

phenomenological attitude where one can then validly determine what is invariant (essential) about a phenomena.

Social Phenomenology of Alfred Schütz

Originally a banker and legal scholar, Alfred Schütz found inspiration from Weber to pursue sociology; his main pursuit was to ground the social sciences in a valid and plausible philosophy.[39] A student of Husserl, Schütz found the mentor's phenomenology most promising for this task, becoming pivotal in establishing phenomenological sociology in North American schools.[40] He attempted to ground the process of Weberian typification (the generation and coherence of ideal types) via phenomenological reduction.

Schütz was devoted to investigating "how exactly the topics and methods of the social sciences" relate to the subjective phenomenology of "meanings and experiences" in it.[41] This encouraged me to consider how suggested phenomenological research methodologies might answer this question. Schütz's direct bearing on the current topic comes to light after considering that there are limits on what can be bracketed and suspended. To explore how conflict may be ameliorated or even just approached differently, I must accept that conflict is something that is recognized by the participants, and presumably having caused stress, withdrawal, hostility, and so forth in them, and that they too recognize this. The phenomenology of conflict might only be studied through how conflict is variously typified in experience across individuals. I describe some more general limitations for bracketing.

[39] Venturini (2015).
[40] See Barber (2017).
[41] Kim and Berard (2009, p. 265).

Contrasting Husserl, who went "all the way" in epochē, Schütz remained "at the level of psychological analysis, setting himself the task of analysing … our experience of other people."[42] The current project matches this. Since I aim to explore what, where, and why conflict is experienced by different people, I presume that there are some subtle differences between subjects in the first place for what suffices for "conflict." The following quote reveals some issues for studying the phenomenology of conflict:

> …we take for granted that the world exists, that it has a history, that fellow-men accept it as each of us does, that communication with others is possible, that each of us sees the world in essentially the same manner as any other normal perceiver…[43]

It is plausible that at least one kind of "conflict" follows from this taking for granted. Taking as given that other people see things "in essentially the same manner" would make it more difficult to address conflict that arises from misunderstanding because misunderstandings (the kind that are worth fighting over) are impossible when it is taken for granted that others see things in the same manner. The only explanation then is that the other person is doing it spitefully or deliberately. Do people reach this conclusion? These are some examples of substantial sub-hypotheses and research problems to explore.

To end this section, I comment on phenomenological terminology. Though littered with unusual words and bizarre-sounding actions, phenomenology describes things that I believe everyone does (some more often than others). These are not strange or novel powers. Sokolowski, *inter alia*, described how he observes the basic accessibility of phenomenology: regarding canonical terms such as "intentionality," "lifeworld," and "phenomenological reduction," he does not

[42] Campbell (1981, p. 199).
[43] Natanson (1970, p. 2).

italicize nor use them with quotes "as though they were alien to [his] thinking; [he] use[s] them."[44] In describing this unemphatic usage, Sokolowski communicates how these terms describe ordinary features of living and experiencing. They are ways of describing features of our world revealed in its appearing to us, of its structures, and of how we recognize, relate to, and make sense of them. The way things appear in the phenomenological attitude is the thing itself.[45] This basis in first-person experience is the fundamental and egalitarian basis of phenomenology, and, in my view, something necessary for deeming any methodology or statement to be evident, verifiable, or valid. Anyone can do philosophy; anyone can do science. In phenomenology, anyone can claim to valid and undismissible facts worthy of consideration on the basis of the thoroughness of one's experiencing as "original self-evidences."[46]

Critiques of Phenomenology

I have one main concern. Though I can accept that all consciousnesses have a natural and phenomenological attitude, is it the case that there is a single natural attitude humans? Recall, Husserl stated that the natural attitude is the way of experiencing phenomena at first instance. Contemporaneously, Giorgi describes the natural attitude as "pretranscendental."[47] This implies some sort of developmental sequence. But might it be that one person's phenomenological reflection, reduction, or epochē-generated conclusion is another's initial—and thus natural—one? I cannot find good reason to discount this. Given even my observed diversity of humans

[44] Sokolowski (2000, p. 2).
[45] Our living and experiencing changes even if we hypothesize there to be an underlying objective unchanging thing (e.g. a "gang sign" is said not to change even if one's understanding of it does). A question to be asked here is why what-is-seen-as unchanging is (or should be) held to be more prior, basic, or underlying.
[46] Vagle (2014, p. 7). In addition to epochē, thoroughness may be demonstrated by providing evidence of honest and open-minded reflection on one's actions, attitudes, and interpretive norms. From my personal experience, the lifeworld and modes of experiencing, do seem to change—and change dramatically—over time.
[47] E.g., Giorgi (2012, p. 9). Note, "phenomenological attitude" is synonymous with "transcendental attitude."

today, and of the corresponding inaccessibles of intersubjective psycho-phenomenal differences, these make it difficult to discount such concerns. If not, or if the above concern does not matter, what is valuable and anti-valuable (pros and cons) about the phenomenological reduction or of its promotion? I revisit this later in a critique of a potential isomorphic twin.

Though the philosophical and transcendental "core" of Husserlian phenomenology is largely unaffected (modestly, what must true of any consciousness and conscious apprehending), this concern brings attention to the human aspects that link this philosophy to social science and to any particular concrete issue. With the lack of countervailing (or cultural) considerations, an excessive—even solipsistic—application is possible, which risks undermining phenomenology in a fatal way (I believe this would subvert Husserl's original normative positions and his critiques of the way things were done). Consider, just who are the ones who are-not-already but could engage with phenomenology and apply the phenomenological reduction? Perhaps what they find themselves having to "learn" and "practice" to do is something that other people find "natural" or instinctive? Should they learn to do so?

In my review of the literature, these and other nagging questions remain largely unanswered despite the radical strengths of phenomenology and despite its central goal the pursuit of determining what can be "absolutely founded."[48] Like Descartes (and countless others), Husserl spent much of his life pursuing how we can know or even assert anything validly or cogently—that something is the case, something is real, something is true, etc. Phenomenology is a tentative yet ground-breaking answer on how that could be possible.

[48] I agree with this characterization, by Ströker (2018, p. 250). A tentative idea is offered (pp. 262-263) as an account of fundamental motivation for philosophy, and thus motivation for at least some people.

However, phenomenology was presented as a metaphysics only. It was the case back then (and now), as a matter of form and norm, to only proffer descriptively objective and "detached," neutral philosophies. From the recent scholarship discussed in the introduction (ethico-onto-epistemology) I believe that norm leads to recurring problems. This goes straight to the concerns and questions of intersubjective "value" and the "so what?" of phenomenology (despite my own personal bias towards it). This is a metaphilosophical question, one where I hold that the answers come from social science (whether we call it that or not). As one example, phenomenology may not adequately address intersubjective disagreement over foundational matters, e.g. over what it means to be "absolutely founded" or even "well founded" (or any range of "just" axiological matters). We seem to be "feeling" beings, resistant to being swayed by "reason," more so on some matters than others. As a corollary, this spells a major potential limitation for the practical goal of the present project.

A Note on Critical Theory

With reservations I eschewed a formal inclusion and overview of critical theories. For this I have two reasons. But first, I give two reasons for why I should give reasons—why should they be included in the first place? A brief backgrounder: first coined in 1937 by Max Horkheimer (1895 – 1973) to describe the then Frankfurt school, "critical theory" heavily contrasted the traditional positivist conceptualization of objective theories by contending that both approach and theory are necessarily ideological and instrumental, in short, that "the ontological status of neither the subject nor the object of theory can be taken for granted."[49] This focus on ideology and

[49] Buchanan (2018, pp. 105-106).

instrumental reason then influenced later developments to examine, *inter alia*, power, power relations, and their instantiations/interpellations.

The first reason is clear: I specifically sought to investigate subjective and intersubjective ontologies of social existence and of social relations (in crim instructors). Given the likelihood that some respondents could seem to be taking for granted the ontological status of, well, any phenomena in the world—such as crime, threats, oppressions, societal structure, etc.—and especially when there is disagreement on those between participants, a critical approach might seem to be the preeminent choice to analyze, dissolve, or otherwise make coherent any potential disagreements—the stated purpose of this project.

The other reason is more damning, *prima facie*, and thus demanding of a response. Habermas argued: though Husserl published *Crisis* around the same time as Horkheimer's works, both addressing the same concerns regarding scientific practice then, "Husserl, without second thought," took for granted the Platonic ideal of knowledge when "[w]hat ultimately produces a scientific culture is not the information content of theories but the formation among theorists themselves of a thoughtful and enlightened mode of life."[50] The explicit content of theories do not matter so much as the "ripple effect" of the ethics and pragmatics of theories, often implicit. The road to crisis, *inter alia*, is paved with the good intentions of theoreticians. Since Husserlian phenomenology sought to refine and address issues of grounding and validity, to refine and make clear what could be said to be the content of theories, does it fail to address this potential blind spot? To properly respond to this requires a stand-alone article. As it pertains to aspects of my carrying out this project, I provide an abbreviated response. (1) Despite its limitations, reflexivity

[50] Habermas (1971, p. 302).

can conditionally provide for at least local (micro/meso-level) bounds on unjust consequences from actors who may be inadvertently complicit.[51] (2) The aim of this project is to provide a modest and subjective take on intersubjectivity; it is an open invite (to the extent possible) for others, thus possibly reaching an intersubjective view on intersubjectivity. (3) Any alternative will still be a human-made (or human-involved) process, which *ipso facto* faces identical concerns. Differences in approach and communication[52] I suspect turn on latent pretheoretical metaphysics.[53]

[51] An example: I and I believe others (including Husserl) would accept certain bright lines and, where those are crossed or at discernibly real risk of being crossed, would acquiesce to a form of "self-censoring." All bad outcomes might have come from intending good, but such intentions do not always lead to bad outcomes.

[52] A reflexive note before delving into the project proper: It is apparent to me that I am speaking with at least two distinct voices or attitudes in this thesis. The first reminds of the natural attitude, which is most directly intelligible within a social-cultural-linguistic radius. Anything that appears plainly to be a value judgment or a concrete suggestion is more likely this voice. The use of jargon is an unhappy midpoint. The other represents my own attempt at describing from the phenomenological attitude, which is strict, technical, and minimalist in order to convey what appears transcendental. The latter attitude recognizes no inherent dichotomies or natural phenomena as "real"; it subscribes to the relational view of the universe where, at and beyond the natural extremes, ethics, epistemology, and ontology are necessarily intertwined. The first voice recognizes the popularity of the absolutist view rather than the relationist (due, *inter alia*, to Newton's legacy). The second brackets it.

[53] I see the relationalist view of the universe (like Leibniz) to be better supported by the evidence and with fewer fatal flaws. Thus, I consider it a more rational metaphysical framework to believe and live by. I believe the leading contemporary academic "field" that most visibly carries this torch is nominally "feminist new materialism," which, despite a few personal (natural attitude) reservations, I believe can actually live up marking a shift to posthumanities (see Kuby & Zhao, 2011). Admittedly, I am not sure if the reservations are "my own," if that is even a possible distinction, or whether it would matter. With a very different writing style (one much closer to my own), the matter of relationalism is covered succinctly in Trusted (1991). This also conveys some details about myself regarding metaphysics and communication; I do not think it is by luck that Trusted's other books cover, eponymously, the exact cluster of topics that initially informed my concerns and methods to approach "conflict": *Free will and responsibility*; *Moral principles and social values; Inquiry and understanding*, *Beliefs and biology: Theories of life and living;* and *The logic of scientific inference*. It is with this and other similar evidence that I am indescribably relieved for I have always wanted to believe that nothing I could ever think or say was novel, phenomenologically speaking. Perhaps in youth, some wish mainly to learn and catch-up to our elders; "I make no claim to novelty … because it is indifferent to me whether what I have thought has already been thought before me by another" (Wittgenstein, *TLP*, Preface).

Data Collection

Sampling

The participant pool consisted of a convenience sample of KPU instructors who presently teach criminology courses. The pool was constructed based on three sources: the KPU faculty directory, with "criminology" as the filter, the faculty list on the criminology department's web page, and by looking at all the listed instructors in the school calendar for all "CRIM" courses from Fall 2018 to Spring 2022 (accessed January 11th, 2022). This resulted in a list of 55 unique candidates. 20 candidates were excluded variously based on unavailability (e.g. on leave),[54] or if I had taken a class previously with them. Previous instructors were excluded on the basis that because they would have reason to believe they "know me," it would skew (presumably unconsciously) what they say based on what they think I am after, what I would like to learn, where I am going and so forth, based on past interactions. Further, I wanted to present to the participants as an "interested stranger," which hopefully represents their default unknown audience. What would they say to someone without knowing much about them?[55]

Emails were sent to all 35 remaining candidates' KPU email addresses in groups of 4 to 5 starting mid-January, lasting for a period of three weeks. Though 13 initially responded with interest, in the end, only 10 (n=10) individuals were successfully interviewed (10 / 35 = 28.5% participation rate). All interviews took place between February 3rd and March 6th, 2022.

Table 1

[54] This would have had to come to my attention, e.g. via the supervisor or someone else in the KPU Crim Dept.
[55] This is not entirely true as participants knew that I was a "KPU criminology honours student conducting course-based research as a degree requirement," as was stated in the recruitment materials.

Participants' Years of Experience as a Primary Instructor of Criminology

Experience (in years)	Number of Participants
Less than 2	2
2 to 7	3
More than 7	5

The participants' teaching experience in Canada were quite varied and extended beyond KPU. In addition to all 10 presently teaching at KPU, 4 also taught at SFU, and 1 each for 4 other Canadian collegiate institutions. The mean experience of all participants was 8.1 years, and the range was 1.5 – 20 years. Their backgrounds in criminology covered a very broad and representative range of subject-area expertise and theoretical approaches in criminology including crime-specific matters (e.g. IPV, sex offending), judicial backgrounds, and sociological approaches, both mainstream and anti-mainstream. There was one notable gap: no one in the sample had indicated having worked as police.[56] And lastly, though I did not ask, the participants appeared to me as 5 females and 5 males. Individual-level participant demographic information is not included here as it would be identifying due to the small population.

A final note on the sampling process: participants from non-KPU institutions were initially considered for a larger population (approx. 110 instead of 56). However, the recent benign growth of the research ethics harmonization framework in British Columbia established additional formal administrative requirements for all social science research involving multiple

[56] To my knowledge, among the 35 potential participants contacted, only 3 had policing experience.

institutions (Research Ethics BC, 2021).[57] The mandated extra steps would not have fit within the undergraduate project timeline.[58]

Interviews

To achieve the purpose of the project, semi-structured in-depth interviews were deemed the most appropriate. In order to elicit in good faith a participant's most subjective and potentially idiosyncratic rationale and perspectives, a patient, genuine, and egalitarian humanist atmosphere was necessary. As I believe this is how I like to be (when feasible), I could do so authentically for interviews. More extensive and involved methods, such as focus groups or multiple interviews, were deemed infeasible due to the limitations of student conducted course-based research. However, and though interviews were advertised as "approx. 30+ minutes," I believe that most participants spoke for as long as they wanted. Only two interviews had stopped due to a "time limit," and in both cases it was because the participant had something important scheduled after. See Appendix B for a copy of the interview schedule.

Less involved methods such as surveys were deemed inappropriate as the topic is not concrete and straightforward enough to quickly report on. The premise being that if all matters could be conveyed clearly and easily, there would not be issues of confusion or disagreement. This project seeks precisely the latent, ambiguous, even dissonant, introspective accounts from participants

[57] Ironically, these requirements would not exist to interview anyone outside of BC; this suggests that institutional employees, including faculty, are afforded this extra layer of "protection" by their respective institutions and administrations. In addition, even though UBC regularly make distinctions between "behavioural research," such as interviews, and "clinical research," such as drug trials, this distinction is not made for what falls under the scope of harmonized research (though I wager it does at the REB approval phase within the harmonized research).

[58] The steps would have included creating an account and registering with Research Ethics BC's (REBC) Provincial Research Ethics Network (PREP), within UBC's system as it is hosted and operated through the latter's Research Information Systems (RISe). Though the umbrella organization (BC Academic Health Science Network [BC AHSN]) describes itself as a health care and life sciences research organization on their "Who We Are" webpage, the social sciences are included under its purview.

toward a dissolution or deflation of how topical issues are perceived to be problematic and to identify potential misdirections and misunderstandings.

To “draw out” this information takes time. I know no quick way to get people to retrieve their unspoken and unexamined understandings, presuppositions, and values in a way that is easily spoken. Rhetorically, are people, at present, disposed to vocalizing their unexamined beliefs? What I observed was that most of the participants first presented with somewhat obligatory “professional” responses such as the party line (disciplinary, sub-disciplinary; the other meaning of these words is not incidental). But, after a while (approx. 15-20 minutes), they did shift to a more introspective and contemplative mood to convey their personal takes on increasingly focused conversation topics. The time requirement is partially due to my inability to find a “faster” way to situate the participants into the subject matter and frame of mind (phenomenological attitude) that I was aiming for so that they may understand my questions as I intended them while also being able to produce answers in the timeframe.

Based on lengths of recordings, only one interview came close to the minimum duration, at 31 min (it was one of the time-limited situations). The longest interview for a single participant totaled 1 hr 44 min. In all, 10 hr 16 min of recordings were reviewed and transcribed (mean = 61.6 min). Despite pandemic risks, I mentioned a preference for in-person interviews. Eight interviews took place in-person. Two were online as they were not feasible to conduct in-person due to time or geospatial limitations. Locations for in-person interviews were library meeting rooms (2 in public libraries, 4 in KPU libraries) and KPU on-campus faculty offices (2).

Data Analysis

To the best of my understanding, the data in this project come from two potentially distinct sources that should be congruent, commensurable, and presumptively identical: 1) what I hold to be memories and impressions from the actual interviews themselves, and 2) the "closest" thing to real live conversations that I can "simulate" or construct "in my head" from listening to the audio recordings made during the interviews, including when I am reading from the transcripts (of the audio recording as simulation). Any interpretation that is supported by at least one and not refuted by the other I took to be unproblematic and usable data.

Prior to analysis, in the steps of listening to and transcribing an audio recording, I would review any handwritten notes for that interview. Additionally, throughout the process of transcribing and in coding, I made notes in the margins of the transcripts, as well as longer memos for cross-cutting or complex issues (all digital). On average I made 20 notes to each transcript (although roughly half were not analysis related, rather procedural/methodological) and a total of 6 data analysis memos.

Before formally beginning data analysis, I reviewed contemporary phenomenological methodology publications. Three stood out for having influenced some decisions: Sundler et al. (2019) and Vagle (2014) for their clear connection to phenomenology in their proposed qualitative methodologies, and Locke (2004) which provided insights from critical discourse analysis. This was one resonant passage from the latter, one that, at times, seems to be overlooked by detractors of critical analysis:

> [t]he aim is not to reveal some sinister and manipulative hand aiming to impose power over others, but to provide opportunities for critical detachment and review of the ways in

> which discourses act to pervade and construct our textual and social practices in a range of contexts.[59]

Criticality is descriptive, illustrating diverse perspectives and experiences. I read the word "detachment" here not as suggesting a detachment from the world, but rather as trying to temporarily detach from our natural attitude and our unexamined biases so as to step into another's shoes and then see how far we can go. This describes criticality and its value.

Following Sundler et al. (2019), I process the data, slowly, into codes, patterns, and themes. However, the steps and decisions for organizing and sorting data throughout the process, to my knowledge, were not concretely described in anything I read, nor did I notice whether any of the analytical steps were informed by them. Overall, this was highly iterative and recursive process, especially starting out, gradually tapering off (or else I would never finish). There were two starting points for processing the data: chronologically, I first inductively coded all the transcripts, line-by-line. It became clear that conflict and disagreement were the main things talked about; thus the project was reconfigured to fully pursue this. Additionally, the pragmatic component of this project gave a secondary "starting point." For all participants, anything that was said in response to specific questions would be represented and considered at face value (at least until issues arise). I believe this provided a very reliable set of datapoints to which everything else in the transcripts, especially latent meanings, can contrast and relate in order to make sense of what people are saying—what they are trying to say—when they are saying it, with reduced assumptions regarding social or cultural contexts, which may be inherently

[59] Locke (2004, p. 89)

subjective in a way that I cannot access, as well as being concerningly close to guesswork (I do not have all 10 participants biographies, thus ascribing cultural factors is riskier).

Presenting the denotative, *prima facie* data was relatively easy and served as a secondary way to "systematize" the process for themes and patterns to develop. When going from codes to categorical codes to themes,[60] for every major grouping of similar codes with many references but not many participants, when feasible I would consider if there was a broader category for them, stopping when most participants (typically 6 or 7) are represented in it. This was part of seeking invariances and common factors for whatever was most commonly talked about. The final steps of analysis prior to presenting here involved reviewing categories and themes and, for each, making a final pass over each transcript to see if anything there reinforced or refuted. This final step adds a layer of assurance: I do not know how "good" I am at inductively generating or recognizing codes and meanings. However, whenever it is clear to me what I am looking for, then I believe I am very good at finding that, even if it is very subtle.

A common difficulty was encountered. After two coding passes, enough high-level themes emerged that it became apparent that I could not possibly describe every single analytical perspective (based on what I bracket) that came up. Among the greatest difficulties was deciding what metaphysical assumptions I had to take to be given, what I could not bracket or suspend to reach a "sweet spot" for this project. Whatever set of criteria (perspective) I took, e.g. level of realism vs irrealism, what I take as given to resolve contradictions (which were frequently articulated by participants), would result in different reported findings. In retrospect, and if this is

[60] See Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017) for one overview of these terms.

seen as a "weakness" for any human-authored study, then I would think many studies (autoethnographic?) would be necessary to address it.[61]

On the other end of the extreme, bracketing everything is not viable given the current research problem either. The necessary "floor" for a coherent and meaningful description, at least presently, is quite high.[62] In considering the minima of metaphysical abstracta (Ockham's razor), the problem is that one goes so far that the resulting description becomes bloodless for readers (especially contemporary ones), and thus fails to convey participants' experiences to them. For Schütz, "[s]ocial science ought to deal in what [he] called 'second level constructs,' interpretations of … common-sense 'constructs' people have."[63] Going to the "first level" would result in substantially greater difficulties for comprehension, risking misrepresentation; when describing a human experience purely mechanically or strictly, we read this absence of evidence as a compelling evidence of absence. Flat affect is not neutral affect. We see the absence as cold, listless, even catatonic—these words, when used to describe humans, convey something markedly worse than neutral. The "neutral" state of being for humans is one with feelings. When we say someone is alive to something, they are not just aware of it but have an attitude to it, are sensitive to it, and feel something about it. That is what we mean when we speak of living.

Returning briefly to the literature, tenets for analysis in phenomenological methodology are rooted in the canonical terms described previously. From those foundations, Sundler et al. (2019) listed three principles for thematic phenomenological analysis: openness, questioning pre-

[61] If I pursue an academic career, I believe this methodological issue (illusion?) will always feel just out of reach.
[62] I am curious if this is a necessary feature of phenomenological philosophy, that how much one can bracket in a certain domain is related to how much normative weight that domain has for them—how many eggs one has in that particular basket.
[63] Packer (2011, p. 154).

understanding, and a reflective attitude. Openness includes curiosity, attentiveness, and sensitivity; the researcher "does not know the participants experience and … wants to understand the studied phenomenon in a new light to make invisible aspects of the experience become visible."[64] The centrality of bracketing corresponds to the researcher no longer taking as given, suspending or doubting their pre-understandings; perhaps when something is said, it has a slightly different intended meaning than what the researcher instinctively assumes. The concern is that the researcher ends up "describing his or her own pre-understanding instead of the participants' experiences."[65] These principles, their rationale, and their suggested remedies parallel broader qualitative research concerns regarding researcher reflexivity and positionality.

I believe I can somewhat address the above concern by making it clear that most of what I write here is liable to be based on my pre-understanding, which I have strived to elucidate and describe (it is the main factor for the length of this thesis). Key advice from Vagle (2014) was found in the epilogue[66] where he emphasized the importance of patience, contemplation, and being "gentle" and "content" in doing phenomenological research. This gave me great pause on the importance of "feeling good" about the work we are doing, something I did not really think about before this project (during most of this project too). This may be a crucial and personal ethical component for validity and—now overused word—sustainability in walking the path of the phenomenological tradition.

In a similar vein, I did not deem anything that any participant said to be "wrong," phenomenologically speaking (this is for me quite easy). Even when two separate participants

[64] Sundler et al. (2019, pp. 735-736).
[65] Sundler et al. (2019, p. 735).
[66] I think this provides major insight: if the author's exhortations do not fit "naturally" in the body, then I suspect the normal style(s) for formal written works have major issues for presenting (communicating) authentically.

seemed to be giving two incompatible and opposing understandings on a matter, I do not believe that either should be easily dismissed as wrong—even if *one* participant gave seemingly incompatible views. The truth of a statement is based on one's understanding of that statement at that time and in some frame of reference.[67] What I mean by frame of reference here—what I am after—is why they gave the answer they did, why they think it is right, what evidence and values it is based on, and so forth; no one errs willingly.

Lastly, I found some issues regarding the nominal branches of phenomenological methodology. It is unclear whether the current project fits most closely with interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) or descriptive phenomenological analysis. The difficulty matches the issue of not presenting one's pre-understanding. I find it hard to report anything at all that appears to me without pre-understanding. I can report on modest (and topically irrelevant) phenomenological core features of experience—but that would be "just" phenomenology, a report on consciousness and its structures rather than any "thing" in it, e.g. the experience of conflict.[68]

This ambiguity was not resolved. I was unable to find any set of bright line analytic criteria that distinguishes descriptive from interpretive phenomenological methods in practice.[69] This was despite their very distinct and at times oppositional philosophical history (plausibly, as different as Husserl's phenomenology was from Heidegger's). Furthermore, I tried to find the core tenets in leading methodological literature on both (e.g. Amadeo P. Giorgi's works for the descriptive

[67] Adapted from Wittgenstein (1969, §80-83).
[68] If this were all that is needed, then interviews would not be necessary as a self-study would yield findings like "perceived conflict is stressful and uncomfortable"; I do not think this finding would be news to anyone.
[69] A secondary, tangential concern: Is description possible without interpretation? Likewise, does interpretation require an implicit description *to* interpret? If either of these are true, then there must be a technical nuance that specifies or bounds "interpretation." This would have to be a metaphysical claim; how was it justified? Metaphysical claims tend to be notoriously hard to justify using evidence; evidence is when information has a "necessary" component, but all too often, information at the metaphysical level is only contingent.

approach and Jonathan A. Smith for IPA). Regardless of what I found, when I had read published primary research[70] that claimed to be one or the other, I was unable to find consistent distinguishing evidence; though the authors of those studies did name a specific approach, it was not apparent how they had done so based on what was written. This may be a personal limitation of mine, or there may be practical difficulties in recognizing, applying, and articulating the application of the core philosophical differences for tentatively differentiated phenomenological approaches, at present.

I offer what I believe to the most controversial (or radical/heretical, at least) take here on social science as a whole: a refutation of the "just do research," "just present data," "just the facts, please" model: In an unjust society, oppressive authoritarianism will have co-opted deferential externalism and hides this fact by, e.g. framing it as modesty and virtue. I believe this is the case presently. The degree of deference and externalism in the dominated space of what is validity and "good research" is now problematic, factoring into communication breakdowns whilst sustaining a false consciousness. This is not to say that my repudiation here, generalized, will fix things—it might even make things worse—but sticking to the devil we know guarantees that we are sticking with a devil, even if slower and more predictable.

Moreover, deference to such a status quo is too similar to authoritative/rian realism (and Stockholm syndrome). A scientistic deference to empiricism and "data," especially in the human sciences, is a model that allows for the abandonment of social responsibility and the abridgement of ethics in research and in researchers. It effectively enables powerful (yet invisible) cultural-

[70] I looked at the first 6 peer-reviewed article results from KPU's Summon search ("descriptive phenomenological" vs "interpretive phenomenological") with titles that seemed relevant enough. They were mostly from health science, gender studies, research on the experiences of various subcultural groups, and psychology. Based on their provided methods and rationale, none of them clearly fit into one approach over the other.

normative "authorities" to hegemonically control, well, sociocultural narratives, for starters. I will not be using authority[71] as an argument here, even if it is axiomatic for some people, and even if it is what some people want; such methods contradict many premises in this project.

Notably, this observation and assertion further emphasizes the need for a post-qualitative approach. It is likely that the first branches or "waves" of qualitative research were set in direct relation to positivist paradigms, whilst still using much of the language and flawed metaphysics of the latter—so that it may be sufficiently understood as an initial step "away" in the liminal range; as Otto Neurath held, sailors on a wooden boat at sea can only replace so many planks at a time; they necessarily stand on the old ones to do so. To address any conservative reflexes: we are not killing or abandoning the current paradigm, but rather growing it to do what it was always supposed to now that the generations have ticked on and the world changed.

Ethical Considerations

Despite disclaimers, it is likely that there were some participants who were not aware that their views of conflicts would be contrasted with their peers, analysed, and presented in a fairly publicly accessible way. Due to this and because the interviewed sample is from a relatively small population where members spend a fair amount of time with each other, preservation of anonymity was and is a priority. Where any personal information is given (e.g. any background info), then the connected quote is not connected to a participant ID number.

Therefore, seeing as I forgot to ask after each interview, I would like to make the request now to any participant that might happen to read this to please avoid identifying yourselves to your

[71] I think it is "presented confidence" that would be the proxy for authority here, ergo, a con game.

peers, e.g. “I was P2” or even suggest in any way that you even participated (e.g. if asked, one can just easy “play dumb” without even needing to say anything untrue). I think identification, even speculative, would be detrimental to the project as then it becomes easy to “assign” views and values to a specific individual rather than see them as being common and thus needing to be dealt with generally (even if still conditionally). It is much easier to ignore or discount something when we can say “that’s just so-and-so’s view,” especially when we have certain dispositions toward so-and-so (often based on something unrelated).

Findings and Interpretations

The interviews were structured by two major anchoring questions, Q1 and Q2 (though not identically phrased every time). As the full range of participants’ answers to them are valuable for a comprehensive approach to conflict and intersubjectivity, I present all their answers and the most immediate layer of the interconnected ideas that I got from them as “truncated themes.” I describe them as truncated because only data (which, as a reminder, is more than just words and semantics) within a proximate timeframe to being asked are included. The rest of the data are cut off, truncated, and available only for indirect use. The main considering for listing only what was “proximally” answered is because that is how many meetings and “real life” interactions are structured, especially bureaucratic ones. When asked a question *in natura*, one typically does not have 20 or 60 minutes to answer. What is said then is taken at face value. This project does not purport to evaluate or label any individual participant nor set of beliefs or dispositions, just their “elevator pitches.” If the elevator pitches here do not match up to the ideals, then I believe this is a valuable finding, one that hopefully shrinks this gap. Therefore, the “truncated themes” below can be taken as descriptors of participants’ “elevator pitches” with regard to the questions asked.

After the initial truncated themes, I move on to deeper connections and analyses to better understand different experiences of conflict. As these are based on issues from the practice of criminology itself (and its instruction), I think it is appropriate to describe it as metacriminological discussion.

Truncated Themes

Q1) Ideally, what should criminology instructors or criminologists be doing? What should they be responsible for?

Q1 was asked to 8 out of 10 participants (annotated as P1, P2, … P10). Tentative answers, erring on the side of caution, were inferred from the remaining two, P6 and P8 (due to time constraints and because I forgot, respectively). In total, there were 11 clear and distinct themes from all the answers. They are listed in Table 2 in the form of broad imperative statements, roughly ordered from basic/foundational to end-oriented.[72] For each one, I provide details and contrasts (when available) from each supporting participant. As a side note from my perspective and experience as a student, I find most of these are actually pursued and realized (at least some of the time).

[72] The ordering is admittedly tenuous and quite subjective as it is a rushed sorting of acts from epistemological-developmental to ends that are outcome specific. Fortunately, I see no reason for ordinality to really matter.

Table 2

Participants and Themes for Answers to Q1: "Ideally, what should criminologists or criminology instructors be doing? What should they be responsible for?"

#	Imperative Theme	Participants
1A.	Be critical	P1, P3, P8
1B.	Clarify things about the world	P1, P3, P5
1C.	Help people	P1, P3, P4, P5
1D.	Engage with underexamined core matters	P2, P4, P6, P8
1E.	Find solutions or ways to address issues	P1, P5, P8, P10
1F.	Just ask questions (less focus on solutions)	P4, P6
1G.	Provide genealogical accounts	P2, P6
1H.	Be focused on students OR "teach"	P3, P4, P5, P7, P9
1I.	Just tell the truth as unbiasedly as possible	P7, P9
1J.	Research	P10
1K.	Be better change agents for criminology itself	P5, P8

1A. Be critical

Three participants directly stated that criminologists or criminology instructors should be critical of several things which are taken for granted, such as law, social hierarches, and neutrality in the form of, e.g. formal equality.[73] Exemplifying this, P8 asked:

> What even is crime, and why are we [studying it]? Why are we doing research on all of these things that just kind of perpetuates its existence? We're just reasserting [the] dominant notion of crime as opposed to challenging other harms that are more impactful and harmful to society in general.

[73] Formal equality by another name is "equality before the law" (a §15 *Charter* right) where all are seen and treated equally against a uniform presumptive identity (e.g., a minimum-wage worker faces the same $500 fine as a rich person). For a legal account contrasted with "equality under the law," see Lucy (2011, pp. 415-416).

I want to introduce early two items for consideration while going through this subsection: 1) categorization was sometimes difficult, and 2) some of these categories (and the process of attributing participants) have a "flip side" that can imply the same meaning. For example, one participant ("P#," denoting "remains unidentified")[74] expressed a position antithetical to the typical "critical" approaches: "I don't want to talk about critical theory; I don't want to talk about intersectionality; I don't want to talk about capitalism, communism, neoliberalism." However, they also expressed that "I think academia should be about collaboration [with organizations that are closer to delivering "real" changes], and I don't think we're at that point right now" (P#). This is an appraisal of academia (specifically criminology) and how science is, in a sense, "ineffective" and myopic at addressing structural and pragmatic issues, a deeply critical view.[75]

Nonetheless, it is not clear if they should have been included in (1A) because "being critical" is not something they would say, even if their actions and recommendations support the description. I believe a superior explanation is found in looking at the different "definitions" (usages) of certain terms, e.g. neoliberalism/communism, which become dissonant and contentious (and highly connotative from their very disparate and value-laden present usage (a

[74] Some quotes will remain unnumbered to avoid participant-specific biases when viewing their numbered quotes. Please also note that, for all participants, implicatures from most of their quotes can be surprisingly ungeneralizable and unindicative of other things they said.

[75] The typical argument implicitly parallels the "separation of powers" doctrine in Anglophone societies: the "academy" is responsible for "research" and theory, not for implementation. Yet there is no formal organization or structure that bridges the gap between the "ivory tower" findings (some are really good) to "the real world." Every separation of power implies a separation of responsibility. This structural "that's not our responsibility" is an ethical blind spot, often escaping notice and remaining unaddressed, hence the major holes in the system.

potential form of contestation over meaning and public discourse).[76]

1B. Clarify things about the world

This phrase relates to the idea that many criminologically important things are in-fact unclear, confusing, or obfuscated. Specifically, this goal entails expository priorities in criminology to make clear, e.g. the evidence and effects (which can be wide-ranging) of crime and criminal behaviour, its ontology, and our best ideas on what the contributing or linked factors are (P1, P3). Further, criminologists and its instructors should make it clear what and where inequalities are in the world and in our societies (P3, P5). More specific to the realm of criminology instruction, P5 deplored the lack of explanation and transparency given to students for why instructors do what they do. Quoting P5, "[students] need to learn how to follow instructions, produce work [in] the way people want it to be done … because that's how [most of their] first jobs [are] going to be."

1C. Help people

"I think I view my role as trying to help people understand why the world is the way it is, why people react the way they do to certain crimes, why people have certain assumptions…" (P1). A number of participants accentuated the ethical and helping role that criminology can and should play. Generally, it can be therapeutic and helpful for people to understand where assumptions (others or their own) come from so that they can become more willing to revisit their own

[76] This can also explain the change in people's answers and attitudes when presented with an abstract case of moral responsibility for a violent act vs responsibility in a "concrete" described example of a violent act (described in Nichols, 2011). Studies have found that most people seem to be pre-theoretical compatibilists, that most people are certain that the universe is uncertain (Nahmias et al., 2005; Hannikainen et al., 2019; Feldman & Chandrashekar, 2017). These potentially unfounded, evidence-less, and even contradictory metaphysical views strongly suggest a normative (correlated with affective) or otherwise metaphysical element of our basic beliefs.

assumptions (P1, P3). More specifically, criminological research and education can help people not fall prey to pop myths, misdirections, or even things like phone scams (P3). Presently, criminology can definitely "increase awareness" regarding a trend with major criminological implications; in "a lot of areas [especially digital]… it's increasingly easy to contaminate with misinformation" (P4).

Here it is opportune to emphasize that, though only 4 participants are listed here, I sincerely believe all 10 participants believe in this in general. In every interview, participants expressed numerous instances of wanting to help at least some people. However, most participants also implicitly conveyed a clear unwillingness to help (and even a willingness to hinder) some people—street offenders, white-collar offenders, or even other criminologists.

1D. Engage with underexamined core matters

Participants described issues around criminology's parochialism, even isolation.[77] "One of my thesis advisors said it's the worst thing you can do is get a PhD in criminology because you're going to be limited in your knowledge" (P8). Is it the case that criminologists are gun-shy around transdisciplinary challenges and concerns? Would this not be counterintuitive for a field that wears its interdisciplinary origins as a badge?

For example, criminologists should centrally engage with concepts and practices of justice in its broader senses (P2, P4). More generally, underexamined matters are often normative and prospective. P6 recommended criminologists to "ask the hard question, why is it that some

[77] Anecdotally, as a first-year student at KPU, the first two times I mentioned my intent to major in criminology to non-crim professors (psychology and anthropology—the joy of electives), one raised their eyebrow and the other straightforwardly recommended me to "get away from that island."

people think that this, whatever the thing is, ... why did people think that's deviant or wrong?"[78] P2 asked the prospective question: “We inherit history, but what do we want to have for the future?”

Although only three directly described (1D) in their answers to Q1, when considering the entirety of each interview, every single participant expressed positions regarding normative and prospective matters, albeit with varying degrees of visible comfort and linguistic explicitness.[79]

1E. Find solutions or ways to address issues

Several participants made it clear that criminology should formalize pragmatic considerations. Skill and expertise in research and analysis should be directed to identifying and addressing inequalities (P1). Likewise, criminology can identify contextual factors. The issues do not have to be easily addressable overnight. For example, P8 observed systemic issues of hegemonic generativity, e.g. when "politicians and other [such] people always speak in that sort of [positivist and empiricist] language. How do we intervene in these situations?" To be able to put that answer into practice, P8 was okay that “that shift is going to take a while."

1F. Just ask questions (less so find solutions)

In direct contrast with (1E), two participants explicated the relative unimportance of coming up with solutions. It is foundational not to lose sight of the importance of asking questions. This was said in a way that was implied to be especially relevant for criminology students: "[students

[78] Somewhat coincidentally, this kind of question captures a great deal of the present project.
[79] A background note: In the proposal for this project, I criticized the lack of authors’ statements of their normative positions in commonplace criminological practice (publishing). This is an issue as I see it impossible and suspect, even beguiling, that the absence of express normativity can be accepted in publications when doing so reinforces the unreflexive, positivist, and parochializing norm in criminology.

should] just … lay out the problems … don't offer any solutions, because the problems are so big …" (P4).

P6 offered a broader approach to this: "social science … is really a critique, if you will, of society—not necessarily with a solution. If, before you could speak, you have to have a solution, then there wouldn't be much criticism at all. There wouldn't be much analysis at all or [even] questions." Insofar as criminology is a social science, it is valid and foundational to look at society, thus ask questions about society in general.

1G. Provide genealogical accounts

Genealogy of a social matter is kind of like history, but its focus is on discourse, specifically the changes in discourse over time and the key factors involved. Concepts and instantiations of in/justice is one such discourse. As an example, legal scholars can “trace” the thread of some legal, e.g. criminal, concept back quite some time, showing how social and cultural mores and moral precepts were intertwined with changes in law and possibly connected to social or political trends. Representing this type of account is the common undergrad question, "what is the history of the RCMP?" (P6). Many conceptual things might only be properly understood and referenced by finding out how they translated to empirical actions and outcomes.

P6 suggested a genealogical approach to discuss and explore justice, one that starts by “looking at the historicity of the nation-state:

> We have criminal justice systems that are bounded by the nation-state. We know the nation-state emerged a particular time in history. It's implicated in in all of the things that we've been talking about.

> So, what does justice look like if we are thinking beyond the nation-state, as if justice is not something that's just administered by the nation state, but it's something that's more responsive to the actual lives that people live?"

1H. Be focused on students OR "teach"

Possibly unsurprising given the status of KPU and of myself, the most popular kind of answer fell under criminological pedagogy. Though answers here may represent more general attitudes from their speakers, they were clear that it at least applies to their students. P3 stated the importance of distinguishing different types of students when thinking about learning outcomes, e.g. who is majoring in criminology and who is taking it as a one-off elective. I note that "diversity" is one of the main themes in the next subsection. It is reflected in what P3 stated as a unique responsibility in criminology instructors, one that can make a profound difference down the line based on whom their students are likely to interact with in the future: students intent on working in the criminal justice system or with vulnerable individuals would, ideally, graduate with an "understanding that their perspective is not the only one" (P3).

Next, similar to how criminologists themselves were said to ideally be critical (1A), P4 said that criminology instructors should encourage students to be critical, to think for themselves on normative issues, and come to their own conclusions (also P9); the only requirement P4 stated is that students should be clear on the logic of their dis/agreement.

P5 gives a more practical orientation, underlining the responsibility to teach students to be better communicators and presenters. As well, P5 stated the importance of teaching students ways of responding to adversity and to take criticism, to figure out what to do with it in a helpful way; If

something crappy happens, well, "[t]his happens everywhere. You should expect this to happen."[80]

P7 was the only person who expressed the mainstream party-line (I believe at least three other participants hold it centrally) by mentioning the importance of teaching neutrally and apolitically: "just try to present the research as is." When there are two opposing perspectives, then, "to the extent that it's possible—[instructors] should be presenting both perspectives" (P7). P9 added: "If I can't give [multiple perspectives] to you, I'll find someone to come in and be a guest lecturer [so students can] hear it from them"

P9 offered two more pedagogical goals: instructors should aim for their successful students to be comparable to graduates from similar programs from other institutions. And finally, students should be end up feeling they can make informed decisions and be more evidence-based:

> When it comes time to a provincial or a federal vote—and someone's up there, "Rah-rah, you know, 'get tough on crime'"—I just want all my students to go:
>
> "I know a little bit about this; I'll make a decision about this, but at least I have some reasons for the decision. It's not based on, you know, Facebook, or TV and stuff. I took a course two courses at Kwantlen. I understand a little bit about this, and here's my vote. But, I, I know something." (P9)

1I. Tell the truth as unbiasedly as possible

Two participants stated the importance of "truth" and on minimizing bias. Criminologists or instructors must "really try and minimize the biases even though, [they're] gonna walk in with a bit" (P9; P7). I believe this separate and distinct from all the others because it illuminates a

[80] Note that three other participants made similar comments against "handholding" or "coddling" students, but only P3 did so in response to Q1.

matter of how "truth" is presupposed. Most participants did not mention this, but this does not mean they are ever trying to tell "untruthful" things. Does bias necessarily make something less true? It is hard to say. In this way, truth and bias have a multivocality that is worth highlighting.

1J. Research

Notably, only one participant (P10) used the word "research" in answering Q1. Research here can be of any criminological issue, as well as research involving implications for proposed programs or other such things so as to guide policy matters.

I did not include participants who provided descriptive statements that constitute at least one of the definitions of "research," even though there were many. This is because, I believe, a plurality of participants actively (if not consciously) avoided using the word. Presently, I believe there are value-laden connotations with that word when used in a spoken context in academia. If there were participants who wanted to avoid these connotations, then they likely would not have said "research." Revealingly, P5 said something suggesting complex attitudes to the research paradigm in criminology: "If you want people to read your work, don't get it published in a criminology journal. Cause [then] no one is going to read it." Though this kind of attitude or social belief may denote a disdain for research, I read it as a longing for a better paradigm of research and publication; on the flip side from disdain lies veneration for (the ideal of) research.

1K. Be better change agents for criminology itself

The following quote fits best here.

> Seeing it as an undergrad and now 10-15 years later as an instructor ... nothing has changed. In fact ... [things have] probably ... even gotten worse. [S]it in a university faculty meeting and listen to what we're talking about. The stuff we're talking about in

> change—when we're talking about like course outlines, or you know, course design… these are not… we're not talking about, you know, relevant things in my opinion. What do they need to learn when this is over? (P5)

Is criminology stagnant? Can the practice itself improve? Or is it doomed to remain one of the worst PhDs one can get, according to P8's advisor? P8 and P5 both hold that it is the people in it who are responsible for this "disciplinary self-improvement." Returning again to the centrality of the concept of justice in criminology, P8 articulated a major goal for criminology as needing change agents, but in a more active and robust way: "the baseline for … just … [having] other people be aware that there's an injustice … we need to go past that."

Whether that is realized as collaboration with non-academic organizations (the suggestion made earlier) or intradisciplinary solidarity, which is in many ways a goal of this project, or even just an inducement for criminologists or criminology instructors to perhaps reflect (historically) how and why they came to work in this capacity, all of these can give shape to the various injustices (or even just the disappointments) we can see in the course of our living so that we may do something about them. So, really, this might all just be called empowerment. I was somewhat astonished to find, looking back, that not just this answer, but every single one effectively leads to empowerment. What then disempowers? And what can we do about those?

Q2) What factors underlie difficult-to-resolve conflicts in criminology?

Q2 had greater variation in phrasing as clarification was more often needed. The way I had initially drafted this question was still too ambiguous. Various and supplemental phrasings included: Are there some "stubborn" conflicts or major disagreements that you have witnessed in

the practice of criminology (and why do you suppose those are)? Why are criminologists sometime unable to see eye-to-eye, even on just how to address it or to move forward?

Q2 was asked to 9 out of 10 participants. The exception was P5 who was instead asked "first-person" versions of the question, e.g. what do their peers[81] in criminology do that perplexes and frustrates them? Even more so than Q1, answers to Q2 rarely fit into only one category. Cases given by participants usually contained many factors. Therefore, to reduce over-inclusion and dilution (as well as speculation that participants may express disagreement with), I tried to include a participant in an answer category only when it was denoted, e.g. stated immediately after being asked or unequivocally a central message, one they aimed to convey semantically, or otherwise showing high relative prioritization (e.g. answer was repeated throughout the interview in a way that showed they particularly "care" about it rather than just using it as a convenient case/metaphor). A summary of answers is provided in Table 3, sorted in no particular order.[82]

Table 3

Participants and Answers to Q2: "What factors underlie difficult-to-resolve conflicts in criminology?"

#	Stated Answer	Participant(s)
2A.	Mistreated, unacknowledged, without their involvement	P1, P6, P7, P10
2B.	Quasi work-related stressors	P2, P9
2C.	Taking sides OR pressure to do so	P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, P10
2D.	Clashing attitudes regarding "change"	P2, P4, P10
2E.	People dislike being criticized or besieged	P3, P5, P7
2F.	Complaining but not offering solutions	P5, P7

[81] "Peers" was qualified to them to mean more than just same institution colleagues, e.g. including individuals such as anonymous reviewers, instructors from other institutions, etc.

[82] Results are presented in the order that participants answers were coded, P1 to P10 (notice the leftmost P-numbers for each row in Table 3 is 1, 2, 3… etc.); due to random assignment of P-numbers to actual participants there is no meaningful order.

2G.	Contested meanings	P6, P8
2H.	No conflict in criminology	P1, P2, P4, P10

2A. Mistreated, unacknowledged, without their involvement

I would have liked, instead of "without their involvement," to have simply wrote "uninvolved."[83] However, the ordinary meaning of "uninvolved" suggests that whoever is not involved did so of their own choice. It blames them for their lack of involvement, voice, participation, and influence. Hence, I felt it necessary and more accurate to use a phrase instead to represent more accurately this theme. What participants variously described was how they and others felt unheard or unfairly governed.

Speaking on conflicts (including intradisciplinary) that have a political dimension, P1 stated that "usually, [it's because] somebody is feeling... mistreated. Their interests haven't been acknowledged in the political process. They don't agree with the way they're being governed." Here I think it is fair to say that when we feel our "freedom" or agency in some regard is unreasonably curbed by someone, some group, or by "the system," this feeling of frustration leads to conflict (classic conflict theory).

[83] I did not use "excluded" for it implies a concrete excluder, which I believe would then lead an erroneously search for an individual excluder, like searching for a bully. Moreover, "excluded" tends to refer to some specific event that one can be excluded from, a game at recess, a dinner party, a pool of candidates for promotion. Those who are excluded can simply "look for" inclusion elsewhere—find a different group of friends, a different company, a different town… This is not possible for what I wish to speak about: "not involved" refers to conditions of exclusion and marginalization from full participation in society, from accessing knowledge or cultural capital, from the pursuit of thriving, and thus from the material conditions of social-personal development, of life itself as we understand and imagine it.

P7 made similar statements: “if you say stuff that isn't consistent with [the dominant trend], you might get more pushback. Not necessarily bad pushback. Sometimes there seems to be nefarious pushback."

Speaking more metaphysically, P6 appeared markedly ambivalent when noting that, for so many alive today, “we're born into conditions not of our own choosing.” P6 then elaborated how this can shape our actual lived experiences:

> We all have to work … because without a wage, we can't buy food or pay rent. So, we're caught … in [this] system … this system then gives rise to … how I can imagine my time with my children … I literally could not reproduce myself in a sense of feed myself, bathe myself, and sleep and wake up if I didn't have money.

2B. Quasi work-related stressors

Though we can assume every job has “work-related stressors” and grinding demands, the “quasi” in this category qualifies factors which are most likely outside the bounds of “what people signed up for” (most/all of which, I believe, can be easily captured in a list of reasonable ideals). This category refers to things that fall outside of that list, including structural and contextual factors, or clearly things that conflict with reasonable assumptions or ideals. Often, legitimate dissatisfaction or concern indicate the presence of one or more of these.

P9 asked me: “KPU asynchronous online is… it's not, it's not truly online; it's not really the same as a true online course, is it?” I nodded, seeing as how, by chance, I have taken correspondence education in the past. It was ten years ago, and I recall there were regular 1-on-1 meetings, the entire course materials were indexed and easily accessible, the online learning portal (website) for students did not present a ton of superfluous features, modalities, and displays that will never

be used by most students… All of these are ongoing problems with Moodle, and with the increase in online class offerings, growing pains—put euphemistically—puts the burden of doing "quality assurance" with those (potentially "forced") tools onto instructors.

P2 and P9 explicitly mentioned issues around international students when answering Q2 (P3 mentioned it elsewhere). Some background: many international students (taking criminology) at KPU do not come from middle or upper-class socioeconomic backgrounds. It is not uncommon that a number of people—extended family, at times an entire village—would pool together money to send a promising prospective student across the globe to KPU. It is in this context that profound moral dilemmas emerge with concomitant stress and tension.

P2 describes the impact:

> A student comes to [a class] … [a]nd is not really ready yet for university life. [So] I'm like "OK, if I fail you then, perhaps, there's going to be [severe] life consequences." That has been, to be honest, the major issue that I've been preoccupied with.

P9 shared similar sentiments:

> Criminology draws a lot of international students [who] can't really speak English that well. [W]ith that level of English proficiency … [i]t's the best bit of an uphill climb. [T]his is no secret … In criminology … a lot of profs, we're just, by the end of semester people are literally begging to pass them. So [that] they don't fail because whatever money, wherever, however they're gonna—if they don't pass the course … the money that their parents spent to get them here is wasted. They got to go back home, as opposed to being able to stay here.
>
> Some of the stuff, I don't mark for spelling or grammar, because if I did, we wouldn't even go anywhere.

The tension here was noted to be from two areas: one, there was significant deception—e.g. early in recruitment there were likely misrepresentations about the likelihood of succeeding at KPU given the prospective student's present abilities and the level of challenge, the "amount of work needed," to successfully graduate. Two, instructors are then forced (possibly without much real warning), to have this complicity and responsibility "downloaded" to them, "without consultation, without [any] kind of like forethought of how this is actually going to play out" (P2). This despite how instructors (and perhaps *only* instructors) are the ones who will face the visceral negativity of a lose-lose situation where they must then pick their poison: fail a student and subsequently, untold hours of labour and struggle (from "unwitting" contributors) will have nothing to show, or pass those students, resulting in significant vacuity and loss of distinction, accreditation, and gaining moral hazard. Word gets out (easily), continuing the vicious cycle.

I find myself asking: Why should instructors face that problem—a problem that seems very much man-made and unnecessary? This question was likely motivated by a reductive ideals of micro-level interactions. It may well be excessively naïve, but I find it difficult to see it as disposable or illogical. To me, an instructor's prime directive is to influence students in a way so they can learn and grow as much as they can, not just in that course, but also after it as well, to help students adopt a positive attitude towards learning, to be more open-minded, skilled, proficient, or knowledgeable in some way that will bring value to themselves and to others around them.

2C. Taking sides OR pressure to do so

More participants expressed, referred to, or otherwise implied this in their responses than any other. I briefly provide rationale for the disjunction for (2C). Some participants expressed in

first-person having felt the pressure to take a side. This is distinct enough to be preserved. Additionally, the latter "pressure" clearly relates to (2B) whereas the more general and abstract former does not clearly imply stress from (2B) nor any affectively "negative" motivation. Most responses fell into the category of second and third-person observational statements.

> I don't know if this is unique to criminology; this is just sort of the way that the world is kind of going. … Increasing[ly] … I've noticed it in students, I've noticed it in faculty, noticed it in a variety of people that I speak to, is this notion that you must "pick a side." And you must become entrenched in that side. (P3)

This quote summarizes (2C) quite well. It is the basis for a natural and phenomenological take: I believe "taking a side" refers to a kind of behavioural display or virtue signaling[84] that places one in some pre-existing group, political camp, or tribe. It is not clear what the mechanisms are for establishing that one has tentatively "taken a side." What actions are sufficient? How did those signals of sufficiency come to be established? It is clearer what was meant by "entrenchment." Once one has tentatively taken a side, 1) there is no changing sides, and 2) one must adhere to all the rules and requirements for members of that side. Violate the rules for your side and become something even worse than the opposing camps: a traitor. No side will take you. "If you say anything out of line, you're now the devil" (P7). This state of affairs is obviously dogmatic. Yet, I

[84] I do not like to use the term "virtue signaling" for reasons derived from the premise "one person's virtue is another's vice." I address the claim that virtue is a subjective imputation (or belief) of what is virtuous, and therefore any signaling is "virtue signaling" if that individual sincerely believes it. This is problematic for two reasons: One, what justifies that person's belief? What's stopping someone from holding something to be virtuous when, say, it is convenient? Something does not become a virtue just because someone says or believes so. It falls to holders of this claim to provide more requirements. Two, I have come across no reason to believe that what someone does (signals) determines what is subjectively held by that person or vice versa. One can be true and the other false. This conflation and reduction is dangerous and patently non-virtuous. Virtues, traditionally conceived, are something one aspires to and pursues. Being virtuous can refer to a higher derivative—the successful pursuit itself (becoming more virtuous over time). This cannot be soundly inferred from any one instance of behaviour or signaling, or even a short duration in trying and novel times. Biting the bullet and presenting a more modest position on virtues, such as a kind of "virtue pluralism" collapses into something excessively relativistic and vacuous—all "signaling" can be said to be virtue signaling.

suspect that not a single criminologist or criminology instructor would say they support the practice of criminology becoming dogma. I go as far as to say most if not all would signal a strong opposition to it. Is this dissonance or ignorance, or is the distinction unclear?

What are some of the "sides" or oppositions in criminology? Well, in "criminology … we got psychology, we got sociology, you've got police stuff all coming in, and all having a lot to say about crime" (P9). Participants' responses described three oppositions in criminology: policing vs academia, mainstream vs critical, and sociological vs psychological approaches to research and analysis. I begin from the latter to the former.

This participant (P#) with degrees in Psychology had this to say:

> I've had colleagues who have told me that psychology is garbage … [Yes, one] downside to [psychology] is that you don't see the intersectionality between things, you don't see how a whole bunch of things work together. [But you] realize the hope is that once you do enough research, you build and build and you can put this all together. But, I would never say that a sociological perspective, or an economic perspective, or a green perspective, or… I would never say that they were wrong.

This went to teaching too: "Some [criminology instructors] don't even want to teach about psychological factors or individual factors, looking at the personal explanations" (P10). It is unclear what the ramifications are here for students, the department, or the discipline, if there are any, that are not mitigated; if one instructor does not want to teach something, another one can instead—no conflict here.

One of the participants with a sociological background expressed similar concerns regarding disciplinary background: "I think a lot of [criminology] is still very positivistic and empiricist" (P8). A few more participants implied a dominance of sociology in criminology. One participant

said that, in criminology, "there's … a sociological culture underpinning the majority of individuals who are in criminology. And that seems to be the dominant voice" (P7).

Disciplinary background overlapped in comments that described an opposition between mainstream and critical criminology. P10 stated that "critical theorists … won't really want to even entertain the psychological, biological factors, or even the structural factors. They'll focus more on the way society is set up and managed and controlled."

I asked a question to participant (P#) who was more from mainstream criminology. What would they suggest for a hypothetical critical criminologist to be more open to? They said:

> Well, perhaps that the laws are actually created to try to create a safe society for people. [Because] people don't want to experience harms, whether it's violent crime or property crime. … Like, suggesting anarchy, to just get rid of the police and do all this… I mean, what's going to happen then, if… that critical theorist [becomes victimized], for example?
>
> I don't think laws are created to control, to create obedience, that we need to be obedient. If they were created for the safety of the people, then there has to be a level of … compromise … for example, when you cross the border, if you agree to having a Nexus Pass,[85] well, then you get your fingerprints [taken].

There is a matter from the above excerpt that I would like to clarify. First, I assume that there are some people who do believe that laws (at least some laws) are created to control and create obedience. This view may even be justified based on evidence. However, even if this is true in that sense, it may still be true that in another sense, another perspective held by real people, that laws are not created to control or create obedience. This goes to metaphysical causation, intention, the how and where "control" or "obedience" are implicitly operationalized in our

[85] This is a travel certificate for US-bound travelers for expedited passage at Canada-US border checkpoints.

minds. Phenomenologically, when I stop to look at either of those words, it is not clear what the relations or implications are with “real” things in a way that is plausibly predicated on (necessarily “comes from”) what is being impugned—the control and obedience that we instinctively despise.

Controlled by whom or what? Obedience to whom or what? Looking back on the various times these and related words have been used, it seems they have multiple senses, and thus meaning is potentially lost in translation with people who presume it univocal. Bracketing my own pretheoretical understandings of those words, I find no reason and no argument to believe they are transitive from their “original” personal understanding (e.g. control and obedience to an authority figure, or to discomfort/hunger) to the generalized usage(s) in criminology, including critical criminology (e.g. control and obedience to “the law,” or to the threat of violence by police). One hypothetical explanation for this then is that those individuals who do not handwave the transitivity thus do not naturally recognize control, domination, or obedience from things like “law.” Those who have not had sufficiently bad experiences with authority figures (caretakers, police, etc.) may not then see it to be control or obedience. This is not a matter of poor logic, irrationality, or anything inherently blameworthy. It is not impeccable, but whatever flaws in the mindset behind the excerpt are not the ones being denotated by its critics.

Moving on to the idea of dominance, when “looking at the published literature, [most] are the standard, the scientific approach, do empirical analyses… [whereas] qualitative [research] is not the main thing within the published research … when you look at the average criminologist, it's probably the opposite. [I]t's a smaller group of people who are doing the majority of the

research" (P7).[86] Here I assume in criminology a substantial correlation with qualitative research and the sociological culture, ditto with the "standard" quantitative approach and the mainstream culture.

In any case, dominance here appears to be multiple realized. Can more than one group be dominant over different things, say in criminology? This seems so. I think then, when speaking of dominance, it is paramount to clarify and illustrate exactly what is being dominated over, and by whom/what; the word alone is not descriptive enough, nor does it bear evidence. If there is no case for "general" dominance—at least in criminology, where I have not seen any cogent ones—then maybe it is worth it to discontinue using the word altogether in this specific context?

Some participants mentioned the, somewhat loosely defined, policing-academic opposition in criminology. "Some [criminologists or criminology instructors] are actively anti-police, and some are just, for whatever their own reasons or experiences, don't accept police" (P9). This can be from a tradition of bad blood from the past; "historically, in this country [Canada], academia has been … largely … seen as somewhat oppositional to policing" (P5). In addition to history and personal experience, one's "side" can become reinforced and entrenched through the material conditions of their respective training and professional development—which can be an echo chamber—whether that's in academia or in policing. This confrontational attitude in criminology between members of these camps continues to show up today:

> Police are totally entitled to say that from academics, you know, "you don't know crap; you've never been out there, you haven't done this and that." And I think that's fair play. And I think the academics go, "You'd never look beyond your eight-hour shift. You haven't really looked at it in any kind of global measure, any kind of… beyond your sphere." It's true. So sometimes, police go, "this is the way it is," [then] you academics

[86] See also Copes et al. (2020).

> can go, “actually, it's not that; you're just seeing the bad every single day.” (P9)

P5, on a similar angle, elaborated:

> And [police go,] “you’re academics; you don't know anything about being a police officer. You don't know anything about this job. What do you know?” So, there's a couple of those things. There's been trust issues, there's been [the] “us versus them” thing going on … The other part of it too I think is there’s been an arrogance on behalf of academia, to [not] welcome police officers into their field.
>
> So, people who were cops who transitioned to academia, [have] the sense they’re going to be biased toward police officers. There's a sense that they're not academic—not true academics. So, we haven't had a lot of academic policing people transition to academia—until more recent years, and now I'm seeing a lot more of them which is a great thing. But we don't do a great job of it in Canada. The UK does a better job. The US does a better job. We don't do a great job of kind of encouraging police officers to transition into academia.

Regarding the perspectives in these quotes, I believe some skepticism and rigour in being “up to date” would be of value. Is it really true that some instructors refuse—and articulate this refusal to their students—to teach either psychological or sociological perspectives, or critical vs mainstream perspectives? What constitutes and informs the sense that police who now work in academia are “not true academics”? Might some of the inferences and decisions been too hasty, or at least not transparent enough as to how/why they were made? Are they really being “picked on” for being “ex-cops” or for other reasons? Would it be fair to judge them based on those “other” reasons? There are probably “career” academics who are woefully unacademic and further others who may well be distorting the ambit and practices of academia to best suit themselves and their selfish pursuits.

Whether any of these "intuitions" are true is not as important (or, ahem, academic) as details regarding how and why this process (semiosis) takes place. Doing so, then we can more easily shine a light on questionable practices, dispel misunderstandings, and show who has jumped to the wrong conclusions. In the same vein, from my time as a student at KPU I have heard instructors say in lecture something like "I know that some of you have been told over and over that Rational Choice Theory [RCT] is bunk and that there are offenders who can't be considered as making rational decisions. Well, let me tell you…" I have personally never heard critiques of RCT this way, so I would be curious what evidence such instructors are using to base their assumptions from. Might some of that now be out-of-date? For example, if now the prevalence of such critiques are lower than what they assume, maybe they are low enough such that they no longer feel the need to opine to students about their intradepartmental peers' opinions to students.

2D. Clashing attitudes regarding "change"

Across all interviews, there is strong evidence that different participants had deep-seated attitudes regarding tradition, status quo, and, path-dependence.[87] This can be said to be one of the major "sides" in (2C). However, there are two main reasons, either are sufficient, for why this is a separate category. The first is that a number of participants directly referred to attitudes, mannerisms, and speech that reliably and powerfully indicate and predict behaviours and reactions to perceived changes and even proposals for change. The second is that, in general, I have not come across evidence that people can "take a side" here, nor evidence that they can

[87] P2 defined "path dependence" as "proceeding into the future in ways that have been informed by the past," but I believe P2 meant it to lean in a relatively—for lack of a better word—linear and concretely constant way, e.g. when previous year-over-year increases in enrollment must be maintained and no (other) reasons are asked for nor needed; the "path" is self-evident.

change whatever their disposition (and thus side) happens to be except for on very topical issues where they can deal with or vote on abstractly. This seems more egg than chicken. Though (2D) ties in closely to other answers, I see it as important and distinct enough that it itself is often an issue that (even if poorly represented and oversimplified) is now by itself a sufficient proxy for major conflict and contention.

P10 said, of an oppositional group: "I think they're set in their own beliefs and they have they have a strong set of values for one particular belief system" (P10). This being set-in-our-beliefs is transcendental when it applies to itself and reinforces itself. It is hard to say which comes from which. Moreover, whatever this is, it hides itself if it is the case that we are more likely to attribute "closed-mindedness" to people and groups whom we disagree with.

P4 first described everyday attitudes regarding whether convicted murderers should be eligible for parole in 10-15 years:[88]

> You will get different opinions and people saying, "I wouldn't feel safe around that person; I don't know if that sends a message to society." And then other people [will be] like, "well, they did their time, and they've reformed…"

Much later on, P4 returned to this, describing (2D) more fully in a reflective passage:

> I feel like … the people who often themselves have not always held beliefs that have reflected this idea that people change throughout their lives. I wonder if they're also more likely to have throughout their lives just kind of believed the same things.

[88] This split in attitudes was salient in Canada as there was a "faint hope clause" (s. 745.6 of the *Criminal Code*) that allowed for a special review for early parole after 15 years for life sentences. Under the Harper conservatives, this clause was repealed for offenses committed after 2011.

> And [if] so, they've just internalized this idea that as a fundamental quality of being human… you grow up, you be the person you are, and then that's just who you are. I think about people who say things like, "you know that's just who I am; I can't change it," versus… how receptive people are in classroom discussions to actually changing and just admitting like, "yeah, it's totally changed me; this changed my opinions; this changed…"

There is another sense in which (2D) can be taken. Rather than framing it as traditionalism/conventionalism vs change-for-the-sake-of-change, conflicts and clashes regarding "change" are very applicable to conflicts regarding pragmatics: What should be done for this issue? What should be the response to that? The issues described right here are not grand abstract matters like crime or homelessness, but very concrete, particular matters. What should we do for Joe Biggs and Jessica Rasberry who just got arrested for making a makeshift bomb (that could not work) out of a rice cooker?[89] The debate—and even an agreed upon answer—for just this can already be overwhelming. That is why it is sometimes difficult to address issues even around concrete matters;[90] they can mean so many different things. But at least they are

[89] This alludes to the BC case of Nuttall and Korody (2016 BCSC 1404), who were convicted for terrorism charges then exonerated due to police entrapment in "a clear case of police-manufactured crime" (para. 671). This case is special as it seems to me that not too long ago, they would not have been exonerated—or even today in some jurisdictions (and not because the law is different there). I think many people, were they to read the details of the events—and especially the reasons of the court—would develop strong moral precepts. The rulings and reasonings presented in courts, churches, and communities have great influence, in general, on people's precepts even having the authority to legitimize calling them morals. A future study on social moral authoritarianism might be one that, using a sample selected for conventionalism and traditionalism, randomly sorted into two groups, A/B, each presented a fictional legal account similar to Nuttall and Korody, with identical facts, where version A is convicted by all 3 judges and version B is exonerated by all 3 using plausible rationale—with the level of moralizing language typical of an actual court judgment. If, afterwards, participants show significant conformity of "moral" precepts, beliefs, or attitudes to the version presented, AND they articulate that it is genuine, heartfelt, and deep "moral" conviction that represents "who" they are, well… then, their working definition of morality (the ordinary one) is really quite dangerous and delusional. Also, if this would proposed experiment would not pass ethical approval, that has the same implication while also suggesting that "it is unethical, here, to provide evidence to people that what they think is 'their' authentic moral compass was in fact easily manipulated and not based on matters of fact." So, maybe it's research ethics, maybe it's academia, but something here is fishy; deception is wrong, tell the truth, but keep them in ignorance of the facts when the evidence will hurt them.

[90] I use "concrete" and "universal(s)" throughout here in their technical definitions. Universals are ideas or characterizations that represent something general, of predicates, a quality or property possessed by all members of a class; concreta, in contrast, are particulars, instances of "real" things.

reliable in one sense. E.g. in discussions around a proposed gun control law, or which car to buy, people can bring so much to it, and, following what P3 said, not everyone who shows up is there to listen.

Lastly, though P5 was not included in this category, they suggested some contextual factors, duty, contemporary social movements, and shifts in social beliefs:

> I think a lot of people in academia have taken it upon themselves to be over[t]ly[91] critical of law enforcement. And some I think, see it as their duty to do so, to do that.
> … that has to do with [a] kind of blurring of the lines between what an academic and activist is. And [an] increase of activist style, activist academia. By their very nature, you know, activists tend to challenge power, which is a good thing.

2E. People dislike being criticized or besieged

> The department meetings are not the same… they turned into things that are not the same. (P3)

Three participants said directly that people, including those in criminology, sometimes do not respond well to criticism. I noted a connection with one set of answers in (1H), to teach students how to handle criticism. Though (2E) is similar to previous answers, it is distinct enough for its own mention. Also, this raises the question of what specifics of criticism make it problematic. We can also ask: what exactly are the "problematic" responses to criticism?

When I first noticed (in interview) that multiple people were stating this, I wondered if I was hearing right, or perhaps participants had more nuance to share… I found it strange to consider: if "criticism" in academia is not harmful, why are people increasingly averse to it? If it is, or is

[91] It is ambiguous if P5 said "overtly" or "overly."

becoming more harmful, what about it is doing so? Why not focus on being more charitable and, well, being able to express their thoughts and critiques in a nicer way, without triggering each other? Surely, academia does not select for toxic polemicists, right?

P7 (who was interviewed early on) had already mentioned this:

> People are so used to not having their opinions challenged—which is ironic because if you ask these people in an abstract way, you know, is it good to have opinions challenged… they say 'yes, of course, greatest thing [ever].' Yeah, and then once you start challenging their opinions, it tends to be … we're obviously all going to have some emotional attachment to our views.

P3 said something similar, but in choicer words: "People want to speak, [but] they don't want to listen, and they don't want to engage. … They want to be free of criticism" (P3). When I asked why, they said it was because "it can look like we weren't prepared, [which] can make us feel bad" (P3). I did not ask why "not being prepared" makes us feel bad.

Policing was again often mentioned. One person remarked that there are "fairly vocal [people] in criminology who will argue all cops are bad. And if you go against that narrative, they're not… usually happy" (P7).[92] Would it be okay to let them be not happy? I should have also asked, if not going against that narrative is tantamount to a stressful form of self-censorship, then it may be necessary anyway to "go against that narrative," although this can be done in an amicable (or at least neutral) way. Proactively, I believe this can be more adequately addressed with focused

[92] As a context note, P7 said that they believe not all cops are bad. Additionally, when someone argues something, it does not imply that they actually believe it. Further, from my experience, "fairly vocal" (denotatively) can describe people who just like to argue for the sake of arguing.

guidance (e.g. focusing on people find out what they are good at, what their strengths are) instead of throwing people into the proverbial deep end.

2F. Complaining but not offering solutions

One participant (P7) said that, in effect, loud complaining serves only to fuel the fire, to run down people's patience, and make it more difficult to have civil discussions. This was described as the kind of complaining that does not offer any solutions or alternatives whatsoever. P7 intimated, to the "people who are really vocal about their hatred: … if you're not providing an alternative then… what are you doing? You can voice your opinion. But don't voice it so aggressively or like, vehemently..."

Here it is clear that, at least for P7, if one does not have anything "useful" to add, to at least do so in a non-aggressive way. P5, was more direct with how they felt: "It's the same discussion all the time… We just have these repeated conversations that get us nowhere. That get us nowhere!"

With the benefit of context, I offer an account of P5's statements. They felt most of their past conversation on certain topics did not offer clear solutions, nor clear ways to get to them concrete problems. This is not to say that either P5 or their past interlocutors were right or wrong with regards to what they believed or said—it could be the case that there were ways and pragmatic solutions in there, but just not clearly articulated enough. Likewise, it is unclear if P5 had ever expressed just what kinds of things they did want to hear, things that do suffice to address concrete issues.

I have some experience in listening to criminologists and criminology instructors. From my limited experience of that, I have rarely if ever, failed to arrive at some ideas—some very

modest, some distal, some ethically dubious—of what could be realistically done to address a concrete issue or coherent injustice. I am not saying that P5 does is any bit less capable (I assert they are actually more creative than I am). Therefore, what is being said here does not really describe the problem or the factors. A future study may investigate the latent meanings and potential signals that indicate something as "actionable" or as a "realistic" course of action; the "repeated conversations" have fallen short of reaching this.

I believe what we have here is a kind of communications breakdown. If two people are "criticizing" (attacking) each other, often it is the case neither really knows what is really and intentionally being said by the other person—what is the real substance of the critique or disagreement—and, like the couple arguing over the car, neither are really being clear themselves either. They may or may not be giving reasons, but if they are upset, they are probably expressing their emotions in a way that is too much for the other person to handle.

Phenomenologically, from looking at all the impugned cases of "criticism," what people really are upset about is not being criticized but rather being attacked. I do not believe the sense of "criticism" that is said to be problematic here can exist without being seen as an attack. I imagine most people in criminology departments would rather welcome critiques where they do not feel attacked. Therefore, I assume a perceived "attack" is necessary here. It is a bit more focused to investigate "what constitutes an 'attack' for a person" rather than "why do criticisms make people upset?" From then, steps can be taken dissolve or address excessive sensitivity to being attacked as well as explaining to a person how their words choice and other modes of expression can prevent any communication or cooperation because it attacks people. I believe a happier middle ground (albeit not perfect) can be found.

I note here that, independent of Q2, many participants (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P9) mentioned the importance (though not sole importance) of the goal of being able to offer a viable replacement in working towards a status quo change.

Many recognized the difficulty and the exigence; “I don't really have a better solution to having an organized society” (P1); “we’re all trapped in this system” (P6). Others on how long it will likely take: a “long term structural solution is one that I ... think we should also work towards, but I think it's going to take much longer” (P2). Finally, P9, speaking on the issue of police reform, pointed something out that applies to both “camps”:

> … They're just so adamant that they're right, so adamant that someone else is wrong, that there just isn't any room to play. They're just absolutely convinced that we're… but they don't have—the thing [is]—they don't have, really, an alternative.

There are a few interpretations for “alternative” here. The first is the literal, logical or physical meaning: that it is logically possible. In this arguably radical sense, suicide is always an alternative. The other is, I think, more charitable, and is thus how I interpret “alternative” here to mean: the alternative must be viable, meaning acceptable. Let’s say two people read and consider a written proposal or suggestion as an alternative to how things are currently done; one says it is viable, the other says it is not. This position *might* turn on straightforward matters of fact and ignorance thereof (e.g. the one thinks they do not have the spare manpower does not know that plenty of new people were hired the day before). Or, like the cars, it might turn on values, biases, or ideology. It would help if people would articulate the reasons for their views (e.g. whether an

alternative is viable or not police reform) and, even more transparently and responsibly,[93] also articulate reasonable falsification conditions for their reasons.

Assuming then that academia does provide "answers" (and thus alternatives) and solutions—or can at least investigate potential ones—if something seems impossible, unreasonable, too difficult, too expensive, or too time consuming, I suggest then to be more modest with what can be done; focus on just one small step at a time.[94] Academic "answers" or alternatives do not have to (and should not be expected to) change the world overnight. Or even over decades or lifetime—if feminism has changed the world, its beginning was before anyone alive today was even born. We would not be the first to plant trees whose shade we will never (directly) enjoy.[95] Alternatively, modesty can mean to focus on starting small and close to home—that is where the immediate conflict is actually situated, no?

2G. Contested meanings

A number of participants discussed discipline-specific contestations over ambits, meanings, and other "technical" topics. What is crime? "What is the function of police?" (P6). What should criminology focus on? What lines separate what is criminological from what is not?

P8 remarked on topicality of criminology was impugned; due to the "limited nature of the specific focus, it's all very, very topical." They then described how, based on the interdisciplinary

[93] When I argue—in both the ordinary and academic sense—I try to offer exactly those, e.g. by saying "ok, here are some ways that I could be convinced otherwise…" while recognizing that those are not necessarily the only ways that my position could change. More generally, offering "useful" information always offers implicit falsification standards. This is the foundation for interpersonal trustworthiness and reliability: "I testified X, and if it is shown that X is false, then I have lost some credibility."

[94] I actually think criminologists and criminology teachers can actually do some things that relatively few other people can—this is not nothing.

[95] This proverb can be traced back to Cicero (Quote Investigator, 2020). We already do many things for posterity. Why are some and not others within the window of acceptable discourse?

origins of criminology, it is even more contested and intransigent than other disciplines to determine what should be included and excluded in the criminological focus: "in comparison to some [other] disciplines … that have a coherent theoretical base … Criminology doesn't have that."[96] This is a relatively unique factor for the "rendezvous discipline" that has one less referee to arbitrate conflicts. Add to that how the discipline focuses on topics that are inherently based on conflict; criminology is less a rendezvous point and more a hotspot for stand-offs—and sometimes shootouts.

Could issues of what criminology should focus on be settled by shifting to an analysis of deviance? Well, then "you already come up to against your first problem or your first question, which is, 'what is deviant?' … There's no consensus on what is deviant"[97] (P6). In many ways, deviance is one of the ways to describe certain kinds of behaviour that is merely not the same as the norm. It would seem that criminology desperately needs a direct connection to ethics, i.e. moral philosophy.

Why? Criminology is growing; "criminology is this huge discipline, but ... what impact is it truly having? I think that's always been a sort of disconnect" (P8). Here, it is clear that if criminology

[96] My understanding is that classical criminology does have a coherent philosophical base; Beccaria, Bentham, even Hobbes, they were all philosophers and theorizers. What is true though is that, unlike other scientific disciplines which have kept up with their "philosophy of X" counterparts, criminology has not. We still use 200-year old utilitarianism as the basis for say, RCT—complete with references to felicific calculus—rather than the more developed contemporary versions of consequentialism. For criminology, the CJS, and society, this is dreadful.

[97] Strictly speaking, consensus is not necessary; in most disciplines, there are competing leading theories, however, they are usually not immediately incompatible. Even in ethics, contemporary moral theories do not clearly negate each other, nor are they complete enough that they articulate how to settle conflicts. However, in criminology many of the contestations between leading camps seem so deep and incompatible that disagreement and competition seem to be the only stable things. It is plausible that until more general sociocultural (incl. philosophical) paradigms towards ethics (meta-meta-ethics) and conflict themselves change, this might be as good as it can get.

is not connected to, e.g. ethics to act as a metaphorical referee, then there will inevitably be other forces to fill the power vacuum, in a sense.

Some evidence of where things are headed are more obvious now (though the described effects were likely always present): Criminological findings “get twisted. criminological knowledge is being conveyed [partially and] to an extent… even you see that in the media now, like, you know, people are quoting criminologists more often, even with this convoy" (P8).

Others made similar statements on concerns regarding criminological publications. P5, speaking on the COVID19 pandemic, said:

> [N]ow all of a sudden, public health data … published papers—a lot of these are … getting reported in the media, or worse yet, reported on Twitter by people who aren't experts. And what you're seeing is, people reporting findings, the media reporting findings, and totally… either misjudging what the finding was, misrepresenting what the finding was—and not necessarily by any intention of their own because they're not qualified on how to study research; they're not qualified on how to understand data…"

2H. No conflict in criminology

This category is straightforward. If a participant responded to Q2 in a way that showed difficulty or express uncertainty regarding whether or not there was conflict, and this persisted long enough such that they seemed to “buy” that view (meaning they “accepted” their initial answer and “went with it”), then they are included here. It is difficult to rule out my own lack of clarity in formulating interrogatives to participants; as such, I suspect it is partly my fault. To illustrate, this was a brief back and forth:

> **Me:** So, disciplinary conflicts … being a student, I've seen lots of, like, very opposing ideas on how to tackle [criminological] issues. … targeting certain kinds of crimes, like, especially on, like, substance-use related crimes, or [substance] fueled ones?
>
> **P10:** So, disciplinary conflicts in like where? Like, are you talking about…
>
> **Me:** Yeah, like the responses to crime, like, the direction of criminological focus and research, …."we need to look more at this" or "no, we need to look more at that."
>
> **P10:** Right, so in terms in criminology, in terms of sentencing, how it's being dealt with…
>
> **Me:** Yeah. Criminal justice responses, yeah, is one of those areas…
>
> **P10:** Yeah, so [REDACTED (personal background information)], I teach a lot on whether right now there's more trauma informed responses to crime. So restorative justice measures, diversion, extrajudicial sanctions. We're seeing a lot less charges…

P10 continued to speak to changes within criminological matters such as changes in criminal justice diversion rates, population and demographic trends in offenders, and various crime-reduction related initiatives. This was interesting. P10 was the only one who interpreted my question as asking about criminological issues meaning issues that criminology studies, rather than criminological (metacriminological) issues in the sense of things that relate to the practice of criminology itself and not its focal topics.

Answers in the negative with attitudes of nonchalance would also include their respective participant here. Only one of the participants in this category would later expressly change their mind on their initial denial. More likely, cross-inclusions in other categories would be a result of their becoming more relaxed and introspective, and then speaking to things that substantially and clearly represents conflict for them (or for others).

At first, I would think that unclear negative answers had meant that the keywords or query did not register, that they really do not think of anything in criminology as problematic, that they really do not know/haven't thought about it, or were simply not confident or comfortable to remark on it directly. Here is another brief excerpt:

> **Me:** What are some of the major conflicts or, like, intransigences in contemporary crim that you've encountered or seen?
>
> **P1:** Do you mean, in terms of crim teaching or just crim content, like, actual conflicts in the world?
>
> **Me:** The, like, conflicts to approaching crim; how it should be taught, what its focus areas should be, that kind of stuff—like, the role of crim in the world, if there is one.
>
> **P1:** Right. Well, I would say that this answer comes really from my own background [REDACTED] which is not uncommon. In a faculty, people have [REDACTED] and sometimes it can be tempting, easy, kind of fun to go down the road of [REDACTED]. And you want to separate that out and get it into the more interdisciplinary perspective of criminology. And, so, as a person that [REDACTED], I often have to consciously do that...

Here I believe P1 was mentioning obliquely the centrality of the interdisciplinary nature of criminology and how that can be a reflexive boon; likewise, certain ways of "doing" criminology are at greater risk of taking reified constructs as real units of analysis without providing a formal explanation or theoretical grounding.

We then discussed their background and their interests in criminology and their approach to it before contrasting it to other approaches:

> **P1:** Yes, so … criminology requires you … to look at a more societal-level. How crime is being committed; why it's being committed … where they have value—

> **R:** Yeah, that makes sense… I agree. But does that ever result in like, conflicts or resistances to—
>
> **P1:** I don't know if it does. It... I think it's just more of a learning process for people that come with different backgrounds to a particular discipline…

I hope it is clear now why I included P1 here; they have a view of criminology as being a rewarding learning process without so far needing to worry about any conflicts or problems.

Closing Note on Truncated Themes

I give an interpretive note for Q1/Q2 and make a methodological confession. I stated earlier that I tried to separate their answers to those two questions (which were the only ones that happened to be consistently asked, and not even at the same "time," e.g. beginning or end, in the interview) from the "rest" of the interview, and then present only the answers. I believe I was successful in presenting what participants would say in the period immediately following being asked such questions. More modestly, even if what I wrote does not reliably always satisfy that, it would still be valid as something they would strongly assent to as an answer. However, it is entirely plausible and reasonable to consider that, after being asked a question say near the beginning, the participant may still be thinking about it 20 or even 60 minutes later, and thus their answers are still shaped—and thus "responding" to—that initial question, among others. If not for the truncated presentation, more of the interview would likely have been included, where fuller and more nuanced answers, closer to the "ideals" of the participants, are represented and depicted for Q1/Q2.

Astute readers may have noticed some sleight of hand: In some of the answers to Q1/Q2 (e.g. 1A, 1B, 2A, etc.), there are quotes from participants who are not listed under that answer. Quotes

from these extraneous members were used when they accurately and succinctly described, often in third person, what the actual members expressed or implied in first person. This also supports the assumption that participants have accurate intersubjective views of each other, at least at a nominal and lexical level.[98]

Six Invariances of Conflict

Next, I describe the results of analysis and focused contemplation when considering the interviews in their entirety and the truncated themes as a whole. What contrasted the truncated themes as well as what augmented them, deepened their meaning, and fleshed out how they can (and should) be understood. I found I could not simply begin the process of concluding the project at the truncated themes because, in short, they were not satisfying. This was not because they were preliminary and "easy" to arrive at, but because there were no logical frameworks (to my knowledge)—much less *formal* solutions—on how to address those findings and themes going forward. I could have just let others, e.g. criminologists and criminology instructors who have skin in the game, figure this out and proceed… but this felt dubious (and just a bit too deferential) that it would be just as effective as a third party (that is, myself) offering deeper suggestions.[99]

Moreover, truncated themes seem to be just a scratch on the surface. I needed more connections and deeper connections as well as fuller and more dynamic accounts to reach a critical mass of

[98] This has its own implications; is a nominally identical but substantially divergent understanding itself problematic for some people? I think so, it would be the ones who have a certain "demand" to be understood, if you will, one that most people would actually view as unreasonable and unhealthy.
[99] Plus, conflicting parties tend not to be great communicators with each other.

inferences and evidenced, plausible relations in order to construct a fleshed out and living thesis rather than just a "snapshot." The dimensions of any real conflict far exceed that of a snapshot.

I briefly introduce the themes which appeared to me as invariant (necessary) for conflict with descriptions in brief. This is by no means a comprehensive or even a very good list. In this intermediate step I believe I fallen short the most. Yet, perhaps ironically, I believe it is the closest thing this project offers that represent the results of thematic analysis (from codes to categories—truncated themes—to "full" themes) for the two main objects of investigation here: conflict and intersubjectivity.

1) Responsibility, Anti-responsibility, and expectations

Individuals often held disparate models of causation. This influenced their attributions of responsibility. Any time conflict was spoken of, there was always some attribution of responsibility (and thus expectations) to someone or something. This was not necessarily towards any "causal" agent, e.g. some particular person(s) should have intervened but did not. P2 said, regarding some of his proposals for better policies: "KPU could institute it. That would be one solution."

Not all expectations are reasonable nor of our choosing. P4 points to individualism and social beliefs that feed into victim blaming:

> …for a variety of reasons, we live in a culture of punishment, which I think is connected to just an individualist society where people are taught that, you know, "you're responsible for your own choices, you're responsible for whatever happens to you." And I

> think that can lead to legitimising—even when those consequences are really bad—because you can say that's, “well, that's your own fault you’re even in that situation.”

P8 described how, for a significant portion of criminologists, on “[ethics] and good pedagogy … That doesn’t really flow from their practice whatsoever. It's more so, ‘I'm a researcher, and this is my job.’”

2) Presence of negative feelings

Conflict feels frustrating. It was reported and implied to be angering, disappointing, confusing, saddening, frightening, and shaming. What was always present was fear and uncertainty. Of the examples given, always present was the potential of what others can do to them, justified or not. Punishment and “what people can do” are not limited to the violent or the physical. Emotional responses to being criticized (2E) mirrored that of being isolated. Feeling isolated can lead to “acting out.”

The various ways and instances of reacting or “acting out” from all those feelings above can be seen as the major symptom of conflict that should be addressed. This alone would be a superficial approach rather than addressing broader material factors which are typically structural. Descriptions of others can apply as self-descriptions too: “because that's how sensitive people are on various topics. Like, they'll just take their own feelings and apply it to what you said” (P#). This can be read as the speaker taking their own feelings (on how sensitive people are) and applying it to this topic (to understand how people are)—on paper, this is actually consistent rather than inconsistent. Still, contortions lead to dissonance, which amplify conflict and make it hard to address, e.g. when people “double down.”

3) Communications breakdown

Indicated by apparent oppositionality, e.g. in truncated themes; one direct reference is in mutual exclusiveness of (1E) and (1F), which diverged on whether criminologists should prioritize either "solutions" or "just ask questions." More than half of Q2's themes (2A, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2H) indicate this with minimal required inference (so minimal it is immediate for many).

4) Moderated by structural and systemic factors[100]

> Who said no? The province said no. (P7)

Nearly everyone seemed to have complained about some emergent factor, usually structural, bureaucratic, organizational, political, etc. Whether it is administrators and administration, politicians and polities, bureaucrats and bureaucracies, systemic factors close to home or on the other of the world (and their "agents"), were variously impugned. P6, among others, expressed languor at how our "criminal justice system, [and] policing, … really [mainly] address so-called street crimes." Those who can maybe make real differences are far and away.

> … the people who need to see [criminological research]… don't really get access to it. One thing I've found in doing this kind of work is, policymakers, people in politics, people who make law, who execute law, who do things, aren't particularly very good at doing things that are evidence based or research driven. (P5)

Here there is evidence of the micro-macro "problem" and of, I posit, the sublime.[101] This is closely related to symptoms of alienation and co-optation. Several participants described

[100] Note, (4) is not an invariant feature of "basic" (transcendental) conflict, but rather of contemporary organizational or societal conflict (which can moderate and thus contribute to the basic one). It was reported enough and salient enough for "special" inclusion.

[101] I suspect that the kinds of reactions subsumed under "sublime" have a relation to how certain individuals evaluate and thus approach macro-level matters.

themselves and other criminologists inevitably succumbing to this.[102]

Two Themes in Detail

Each one of the above could easily form the basis of a rich and rewarding qualitative project. In hopes of this happening (if not already done so), or left for the reader as an exercise—especially (4) as a dialectic-social initiative for practicing academics who are dissatisfied with "the system"—I do not elaborate on them here. Some of these seem to have latent logical relations with each other, even without conflict. For example, responsibility implies power ($R \supset P$). One who has no power regarding something can not have any responsibility regarding the same thing. There are two more which I wish to cover in greater detail: epistemic fallacies and, more briefly, power/powerlessness. I would have liked to have done the same for the other four. Nonetheless, I personally believe that the most interesting and useful things in this thesis are, from the two themes, one dissolution/clarification and one recommendation.[103]

Fallacy of Presumptive Exhaustiveness

More often than anything else, apparent logical fallacies had me doing a "double take." I focus on one in particular, which happens to be phenomenological, because it had more occurrences

[102] The quotes in this category resonated with an in/famous quote by Marx: "The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers" (Chapter 1 of the *Communist Manifesto,* 1848). See Andrews and Skoczylis (2022).

[103] I argue that recommendations are necessary here in any study of conflict (ideally, every study in the human sciences). The basic test for whether an account or an understanding of phenomenological conflict is valid or valuable is to offer hypotheses that can address (or fail to address) the experience of conflict and its invariant effects. All recommendations are hypotheses in the form: if X is undertaken, then Y will be better. Being able to offer these, then, is a necessary step. This I argue is worth doing for anyone who is serious about investigating and expounding any fundamentally social matter. Expounding is critical; the importance of sharing needs emphasis as some individuals seem content with prioritizing investigation (and then with merely "knowing" something for themselves). For me, it is the act of articulating and publicizing, of dialectically questioning and perhaps refining knowledge (in a way that might reach many interested people) that is indispensable of science.

and was related to more major themes than all others. The existing umbrella term for this fallacy is “false dichotomy.” This occurs when an assumption is made (often implicit) of there being only two choices, most often one or the other and not both. Other names for this include “false dilemma” and “black-and-white thinking.” In the interview data, one species of this was surprisingly common in descriptions, statements, and reasonings given by participants, especially when they regarded their value judgments or when evaluating other people (groups, camps, etc.). In my view, its prevalence demands its own moniker, one with a clearer eponymous description: fallacy of presumptive exhaustiveness. This variant is when something, e.g. usually an answer or explanation, is taken or presented in a way so as to exclude others, again, usually implicitly.

The fallacy is ubiquitous in everyday use and is usually unproblematic. Suppose you ask someone “how much cash do you have on you?” They respond with “I have $50.” The ordinary interpretation is that they do not have $100 on them even though the response is still true if they did have $100 (the strict interpretation). These common-sense situations suggest we can just charitably interpret whatever is said. It is, after all, slightly more costly to say “I have no more than $50 in my pocket” or “I have **only** $50.”

However, it becomes problematic, communicationally and ethically fraught, when any of two conditions are met: 1) When the intended meaning is prone to be misconstrued, e.g. due to intersubjective differences that are not culturally mitigated, usually, e.g., when one is speaking to someone predisposedly adversarial to what is being expressed. 2) When it is said in a public or expert capacity, especially on “hot” matters.

An obvious-yet-invisible aspect with this fallacy was revealed, e.g. when P9 painted another group as having black-and-white thinking while appearing to do the same:[104]

> I guess … they just feel that the police are really, really truly, you know, black and white. And just can't think outside that. And that's their gripe, [which] is that they don't see any, they don't see any greys though. As they see it, you know, law enforcement, application [of] law enforcement, no discretion…

Another participant (P#) demonstrated something similar, presuming something about "a large group of people," even after having stated the importance of being agnostic and open:

> So, I have an open… agnostic [view] … There's a large group of people who will look at [black people being killed by police] and say, well that only happened because the guy was black… which is not in and of itself an argument. It very well could be true, but you need more evidence than just that, right? … people will then conclude the perspective that they want in the same way that you can't look at that and say it's not racist. You should be agnostic towards whether it's racist or not until there's actual evidence.

On the face of it, and as the speaker of the last quote correctly stated, these are probably untrue for the entirety of those groups, yet that becomes the assumption going forward. The fallacy and some possible consequences are apparent in what this participant (P#) had said about their students:

> Like, I've had students come to my office hours and stand in the doorway… and like, I'm like, you know, you can sit down and talk to me… they're meek … There's this inability to have uncomfortable conversations, or talk about serious matters with people and authority.

[104] This is also described in the proverb "the pot calling the kettle black."

I think it is pretty easy for a student to just be standing in a doorway while also not being a meek person (e.g., maybe they are preoccupied by thinking about how to phrase their question; maybe they are wary of people being "territorial," e.g. including of workspaces). I note that this is not an exclusive issue for the two quoted participants.[105] Every participant demonstrated this in some measure, though some more than others.[106] Nonetheless, it does show the theme here: in the absence of direct evidence on an empirical matter, people are liable to assuming one extreme or the other, rather than remain agnostic. Even though they were asked to speculate, it shows that, in the absence of evidence, people tend to jump to hasty generalizations, oversimplifications, and false dichotomies. Are there areas where they are more aware, and others not? Is there a "default," perhaps linked to culture? Though I have tried to avoid making this a Psychological thesis in any capacity, here I must wonder if it is just "easier" to presume exhaustiveness.[107]

P9 suggested that these presumptions might be connected to compassion fatigue in a hypothetical situation that happens all too often (while possibly also committing the fallacy):

> … it's called compassion fatigue, [which] can be the police going:
>
> "I can't, I can't take this any longer, I've seen is the same guy. And I'm bringing him back to life three times in one day, and I see him again… really, three times I've tried to bring you back to life. All week long I have been picking you up in the ambulance … I don't give a shit, you use fentanyl a lot," and that's it. As opposed to… [it'd] be pretty hard to [go], "Wow, I got to find [you] a new a treatment center or something; you're not gonna make it three weeks here! And I don't have anything here, all I can do is to keep doing

[105] A major methodological caveat: many participants could have thought that I was asking them to speculate, based on my asking them what they think, why such-and-such is so in their opinion, whatever comes to mind first, even occasionally using my favourite maligned phrase, "there's no wrong answers [sic]."
[106] I would go as far as to ask whether any contemporary is immune.
[107] It seems to me that all "internal" distinctions and decisions are inherently dichotomous attempts to make a "decision" forwards based on whatever imperfect information or evidence is available.

this, to kick you back to life here."

It may be unrealistic to presently suggest any individual police to find a treatment centre and put the hypothetical fentanyl user into it. Still, there is a range of things between the two courses of action presented. I hazard to suggest that the participants who said criminology should provide solutions would say that finding realistic courses of action in the middle ground is something criminologists can and should be doing.

P4 suggested that this fallacy is common in teaching: "even in assignments and stuff, that's always kind of the question that comes up is like, 'do you think we can fix this, or do you think we need a new system?'" What is the difference? Different students can take that question in completely different ways. This is fine for the "academic" purpose of getting to know just how different our backgrounds and understandings are (e.g. what is a system, what does 'fix' imply vs 'replace' for abstract and emergent entities). But, again, this becomes an ingredient for self-fulfilling prophecy and an unnecessary perpetuation of fallacious and misunderstood distinctions. It is as if students are being trained to being able to defend arbitrary and unconnected particulars[108] instead of being skeptical, of considering the evidence, and to be wary of superficial disagreements. If instructors are going to give hills out to students to lie on, I would hope they have put some effort into making sure they are worthwhile hills.

If these are "just" thoughts or a form of expressivism, that is completely fine—I even encourage it. It is even the case that when questioned many respond with, "I didn't mean it literally; I'm just

[108] I think what most undergrads understanding of "what a system is" has so little to do with *normative* change—probably the "good intention" in asking this question. Rather, it misleads from it, reifies "the system," and sets up false metaphysical relations. Then it becomes even harder to get to normative change because people start splitting hairs on what a system is and what it means to "change a system," all of which are nonsensical but feel like a hill that people might decide is theirs to die on.

sayin', sheesh; uhh, that's just how I feel?"—itself a presumption of exhaustiveness of justification. This is fine—I am not for censorship or cancel culture. However, I also note that, were they by themselves, the same people would likely not "say how they feel" in the same way. For most, an audience is necessary. The double standard here is that they need an audience even when they say they "don't care what other people say/think" (P7), effectively stating that they themselves will not play the part of any audience. Though this is getting increasingly precarious, by itself, it is still fine.

When is it not? To illustrate what I think are the problems of this unexamined expressivism, typically in more formal or public contexts, I ask these questions: When it is unclear, ambiguous, or multiple reasonable interpretations are possible, how should others know what to take "seriously" from what someone else says or what was intended (e.g. which are empirical states, how is it supported by evidence, and which are ends-, value-, or norm-based)? How can colleagues tell when a person is "just" expressing their feelings (so they say) and when a person "means" what they said? How do these inform their "vote" in terms of disciplinary direction and policy, going forward—what will they actually commit to or sign-up for?

If one does not want to be ignored (the precursor to *real* censorship and isolation), I make one modest suggestion: speak clearly, thoroughly, and transparently. Clearly means validly, thoroughly means logically and evidentially, and transparently means "what motive do you have for saying this." Admittedly, this is a radical egalitarian goal, one that can plausibly be equally enacted by and with everyone in a public capacity (i.e., with people whom we do not know on a "personal" basis or have a private relationship with). It is more critical than "learning how to talk about serious matters with people and authorities" because it does not need to acknowledge or

recognize the legitimacy of any so-called authority. Really, it is just a request to be logical and thus responsible.[109]

The prevalence of people having "self-effacing reasoning" (anti-clarity, thoroughness and transparency) seems to me to be the greatest obstacle in being able to meaningfully describe our social problems and propose potential solutions. Present education and training seem to do little to address it or set the bar in an increasingly arbitrary and individualistic world (not implying that they are meant to do so). Criminology is a brutal discipline. Criminological matters can and do have real consequences and dire effects for real people. By failing to see how our acts, presumptions, and predispositions made "in the moment"[110] have social consequences; we become unwitting agents in the reproduction of what many participants described as undesirable states of affairs. I provide one final exemplar of this, the "bad logic" I impugn here:

> Sometimes, [carceral] custody is the only place that will offer appropriate programming. So, you actually want to incarcerate. [J]udges will say "this person [needs more help], so let's give a federal sentence, two years or more, that way they'll get the right programming. …
>
> [On those who oppose that sentiment,] they see things as very just black or white and not Gray, right? … Are you more focused on the rights of the offender or are you … from crime control where you're trying to … think more about … protecting the public. (P#)

Here P# described criminologists or criminology instructors generally as falling into one of two camps. Charitably, this can be overlooked (as can the appeal to authority). The issue is more a pedagogical matter. This logic—though it was presented in an "informal interview" and not in,

[109] If this request seems to deter or discomfit someone, might it be that they simply have a misunderstanding of what logic actually implies—through no fault of their own (e.g. that's how they were taught)?
[110] We often blanketly justify this as "being authentic" without further distinction when people can be authentically bad or unethical. Authenticity is the beginning, not the ends.

say, a classroom—when made from legitimate authority, expertise, or esteem is an implicit signal that we—students, people—do not have to be logical, and (with even the slightest presumption of exhaustiveness) *should* not be logical. This shows further the unexamined negative consequences of the prevalence of this particular fallacy. It seems we[111] do not do a great job of teaching logic, including the consequences of il/logic, the variance in preference of logic, and how to ethically make sense of things in the absence of logic.[112]

Closer to the consequences, this "assume the extreme," which I aver is a form of prejudice, is implicated in creating the conditions for those people to live up (down) to their expectations,[113] like a self-fulfilling prophecy. I call this the desire to be "right by reduction,"[114] where people might tend to do things—but far more likely not do certain things—to be "right," so they can ultimately say "I told you so."[115] For example, consider a parent who normally helps their young child study for tests, the child decides to watch a new cartoon show which the parent disapproves of because it will "rot their brain" and make them "bad" (and thus do worse in school). The child disagrees and continues to watch, so the parent stops helping the child study. If the child does in fact start doing worse in school (or otherwise become "bad"), the parent now has their "I told you so." Commonly, the need to be "right" and exert control can be entirely detrimental to the individual, such as when a juvenile who feels "ignored" and unable to engage normally in a class will lash out disruptively, knowing (predicting) they will be sent to detention; this may be the way they can feel they can be "right" about anything in their context. Quotes from former

[111] I use "we" here very loosely; it can be interpreted however the reader likes.
[112] A pop culture quote from Spock: "Logic is the beginning of wisdom, not the end." See Brown (2018). Note, that this does not mean logic is the *only* "beginning"; other things are probably needed too for wisdom.
[113] This might sound like labeling theory, but it is deeper: instead of the nominally defined label, the prejudices actually map to values, judgments, and even treatment of people so prejudged (e.g. through social belief).
[114] I also considered "right by default" but this covers up the "active" role that the viewholder has to be "right."
[115] This connects strongly to the effects of ideology and its reproduction, a kind of "doubling-down."

dictator Joseph Stalin often exemplify this reductiveness by solving his "problems" with murder, much like how one can cure a headache by decapitation.[116]

One phrase that was directly voiced by a few participants was the notion that detractors or complainers provide no alternative (see 2F). This reminds of a notorious statement in the latter 20th century, so popularized by Thatcher: "There is no alternative" (TINA). I believe this pumps people's prejudicial intuitions (and ignorances) in a way that is exemplary for being right by reduction. For its supporters, based on the information available to them, TINA is extremely attractive and taken to be "correct." Anyone with more information can and should be dismissed;[117] they who remain are then right by reduction. Why is it that people would rather be "right" about something even if it is a negative and reductive outcome, compared to considering new evidence and perhaps adapting?[118] Is it that painful that one would rather stick to the devil they know, effectively elevating this devil to Godhood by dismissing all other possibilities? Can we, perhaps as a culture, address this debilitating fear?

On Prejudice

A thought experiment: its aim is to make a logical and phenomenological case that can give people some pause to check the tendency—based on speech and actions—to automatically and hastily prejudice others with oversimplifications and presumptive exhaustiveness.

116

117 This is plain for anyone to see in both populist and ordinary politics today.

118 Nietzsche's writings were replete with symbolism of beasts. Especially salient is the Eagle and Serpent (from *Zarathustra*). I strongly suspect that when people double down, the phenomenology of "sticking with one's decision" is represented by the Eagle, by what people see in it (transcendental agency, pride, nobility, etc.—he was German). Being subject to "heeding" evidence, can perhaps *feel* as if one is hopelessly "enslaved" to evidence, i.e. to worldly affairs, embodied by the Serpent. See Thatcher (1977) and Bellioti (2017) for Nietzschean bestial symbolism.

Imagine a fairly tall person (T), roughly 2.1m tall, standing in a doorway facing you.[119] Now imagine a boorish person (B) standing in a doorway also facing you. In the first case, one can imagine corresponding sensory data that suffice to determine such an approximate tallness, e.g. standing next to a wall height chart, fully upright, perhaps nude so as to rule out the possibility of a prank being pulled by two short people in a trench coat.

But for the second case, B, are there any basic sensorial data that can suffice for anyone to be a boorish person? One might say a person is boorish if they have a disposition to be boorish,[120] based on consistent patterns of behaviour, e.g. a tendency to immediately react to something most boorishly. For this, some duration or past period of time is required. It is not clear if we can imagine via hypothetical sensorial data that B has had any past at all.

To validly say that B is boorish, some exhaustiveness with regards to boorishness is needed. Whatever is being imagined or pictured must be the only relevant factors. For example, say you imagined B acting rude and churlish towards someone else (including the imaginer, i.e. you). Does this mean B is boorish? What if B were an actor, and the situation imagined was a shot for a film? In our solipsistic imagination, we can accurately and omnisciently suppose that that was not the case; here, the absence of imagining evidence suffices to prove absence of evidence. This is not the case in the world. In our shared reality, not imagining, seeing, or having evidence for something does not make it false. Therefore, it is patently illogical (and rude) to ever presume exhaustiveness of any person (or group). The cons of saying it tend to outweigh the pros. Like

[119] The opening is inspired by Quine (1948).
[120] This is similar to the Aristotelian account of character and virtue.

calling a colleague "stupid," it poisons the well. One is culturally unacceptable—almost taboo in academia—yet the other is ubiquitous and invisible.

Powerlessness and Power

Second only to the previous theme, more data and codes revolved around power, control, powerlessness, threats, and such. Many previous themes are correlated. I mention specifically the breakdown in verbal/written communication. Formal communication is one of the main ways (and only ways) that academics can, well, do anything (ethically speaking, at least). This is usually in the form of convincing someone of something, whether that is each other, their students, or the occasional someone from beyond the ivory tower. If words are the main tools, then, how much can they address conflict? Can we make it so the pen—representing the ideals and limits of nonaggressive expression—is truly mightier than the sword? Can we do this with only the pen at our disposal? This goes to the question of empowerment I address shortly.

From its present use that I have seen, I view "power" as describing an abstract universal. Universals are understood subjectively, and as such can be inconsistent and contested. Ask ten people what power is, means, or refers to; keep asking and you will eventually just get more universals. Their meanings and thus dis/agreement on certain universals, especially personal ones, can differ as much as the people who use them can differ. The intersubjective range and nuance is subtler yet greater than I think most people (including myself) can safely presume.

There are a number of prominent 20th century scholars who have explored and developed how we, collectively, think about power.[121] I am less than familiar with their works.[122] Nonetheless, in lieu of more contemporary works on "power," I believe Nietzsche must still be mentioned. One core thesis of his was the "will to power," that power is the primary and fundamental motivation for people.[123] If this is true, then power is a master universal for humans.

Comparing Nietzsche's examples to contemporary examples, personal examples, and other's self-descriptions, Nietzsche's thesis seems to be a fundamental (and poetic) account of the pursuit of worthiness and the avoidance of basic, transcendental fear. The means and ends for both is stipulated as "power." Both the goal and starting point for empowerment, then, is worthiness with the closure of fearfulness. Contrary to the popular account, I presently do not think fear can be reduced to the ordinary conceptions of emotion, feeling, or even a set of these. This is why I call it "fearfulness," which I hope makes it clearer that it is not something temporary like an instance of fear, e.g. that is in an experience of stumbling upon, say, a snake in one's backyard. They transcend those. However, even without scientific account or formal theory, we can still speak of worthiness and fearfulness just as we do with "power."

Moreover, described as objects of fear were described variations of "force" and "violence." Nine out of ten participants directly or indirectly used at least one of these words in a salient way. The OED defines violence as "the deliberate exercise of physical force against a person, property, etc."[124] There must be a relation to physical force; here I restrict it to force which is caused by

[121] I assume that even criminology undergraduates have heard of Foucault at least once.
[122] I believe they need to be studied at depth (which I have not done) to come to an understanding and to be able to apply it towards "solutions," especially given the substantial "poetic" element in their writings.
[123] Emden (2016).
[124] Though OED connects violence to physical force, this is a historical relic. We have evidence that trauma and harm need not be from physical contact (meaning the requirement of sensation of touch or other perceived somatic contact) at all. In addition to traumatic visual and auditory experiences, there are systemic versions as

humans,[125] including human-made and human-involved mechanisms for applying force, e.g. bombs. A key part of the definition is "deliberate." If we come to believe that someone deliberately acts in a hostile way toward us, we doubt our worthiness. The more people who appear deliberately hostile to us, the less worthy and more fearful we risk becoming and feeling.

Though participants related force and violence to fear, this struck me as too simplistic; I argue it is fearfulness instead. Do participants regularly experience force or violence on their persons? Do secondary (vicarious) experiences of these produce fear, or just more fearfulness? Fear is intentional; fear is always directed at something, which we can call a danger. Force and violence are proxies for danger. Danger is necessarily based on values, that is, a necessary threat to something valued, such as life, limbs, social acceptance, and so forth. What is the danger faced by the participants?

Next, I argue that fear and fearfulness, rationally speaking, are only sensible if it is possible to alter the fate of which we are afraid. I believe many have the common view (CV) that (most) people are simply ignorant or otherwise such that this account of fear would not apply to them. I think this is a mistaken or overly reductive belief of people's ignorance and irrationality. I will make my argument for this with the CV that people fear death because they want to avoid it and because death is bad or uncomfortable, or something like that.

well, such as economic abuse (forced dependency; see Sanders, 2014) e.g. in intimate partner relationships, and also epistemic violence. (See Held, 2019, for an indigenous account on epistemic violence in research.)

[125] Though there might be rationale for fearing natural disasters such as earthquakes or predatory beasts, these can still be connected to stoicism: either we can control it (and fear our powerlessness to do so) or we cannot and it is thus it is not sound to fear it in and of itself. We can avoid something without needing to fear it.

Death is physical.[126] Everything that is alive knows death, yet nothing can ever subjectively experience death.[127] Death is not only inevitable, but it is necessary. Therefore, what we fear must be of something else, something invariant of how we interpret death. The fear of death is fear of dying before we may have reached worthiness; one is not yet ready to die. We are not afraid of death so much as we are afraid of not having lived.[128] Fear of death in conditional form is wholly subsumed within fearfulness.

Disagreement and Empowerment

Here I take as a premise that ethical and real empowerment must come through substantial empirical changes. Therein lies the confusion and the dissolution. Only through actions and subsequent effects regarding particular, concrete matters can one really and realistically gain or lose power. Power is abstract. Changes in power must take place through concreta. This disconnect between abstracta and concreta lies at the heart, I would argue, of all disagreements on courses of action (which are always constituted in concreta) when there is an agreed-upon abstract goal. Confusion or mix-ups regarding this will mean a category error, possibly leading to expectations for something that logically cannot be.

Criminology is a common site for them: "What are your solutions to fix these issues right now, as criminologists? Because "ending poverty" isn't an idea. It's not!"[129] (P5). I interpret that when people (such as P5) say they want to hear solutions, what they mean is "what set of concrete

[126] Here I refer to death in the ordinary empirical meaning and not any literary or poetic representations of death.
[127] From Wittgenstein (*TLP*, 6.4311).
[128] In retrospect, a review on the literature on the phenomenology of death may have been helpful to conduct.
[129] It may be the case that there a set of particulars which would satisfy "the end of poverty," because the existence of "poverty" can be defined via particulars, e.g. the number of individuals living below the poverty line (note this is not necessarily a valid standard). In this case, I would call this, at best, a partial solution (perhaps infinitesimally partial) since it gives a medial goal that would consequently contribute towards the ultimate goal.

actions can realistically be taken to address something?"[130] P5 had said many times that they have had numerous conversations in the past, all fruitless. How much of it was implicated by confusion or unclarity on the metaphysical matter in the previous paragraph?

So often, though, we do have apparent agreement on things, albeit nebulous, even in criminology: reduce crime, reduce recidivism, humane working conditions for frontline workers, more political will to address societal ills, what some societal ills are, etc. What use then is any of this agreement? If a bunch of people "agree" on abstract goals, such as those, or, e.g. from Q1: be critical, clarify things, help people, be focused on students, or empower people… it is not at all clear what would satisfy, even less clear what would meet the threshold of consensus (and motivation) for action. Nonetheless, if they do agree in principle but disagree on courses of action, how do we bridge that gap in form?

If someone agrees in good faith with an abstract goal, that must *mean* something. If this can be connected to courses of actions, then, rationally, they will acquiesce. Can we ask them what their goals mean and which particulars it connects to? The hope is they can answer clearly, thoroughly, and transparently. If they need more time, we can be patient and try to give them the means (though it is not always possible for things to stop and "wait" for very long). The difficulty is to determine what that means for them and how high up (or down) in their priorities it is (they will probably not be able to give you a comprehensive account). Courses of action must not conflict too much with their other abstract goals, which are often unarticulated and implicit. Anything that is truly a goal is valued as a means or as an ends. The project of intersubjectivity is to map these values, priorities, and preferences as they actually are and how

[130] Empirically speaking, when something in the form of this question is spoken, the "something" here is usually a particular concrete issue.

they vary in the population.[131] I believe headway is possible as "the more we go into details, the more we find traits that we also encounter in others. … All individual characteristics are generalities."[132]

Domain-specific Inquiry

One way to explore and determine the intersubjective meanings of universals variously held is by asking them questions that narrow down the focus. The main one is to ask for a domain-specific qualifier. When it comes to how we describe and characterize people and anything social, I have not seen any universals that are actually universal and mean the identical thing for all people in terms of concreta.

Answers for these questions should involve both universals and concreta (for valid correlations to be made). For those who want others to be critical: Critical of what? What kinds of actions, behaviours, or concreta demonstrate criticality? For those who express a wanting for power, ask: Power to do what? What particular actions or states constitute power or empowerment? If someone is said not to like to be criticized: What is the act of criticizing here, exactly? For this particular act, what kinds of things does this person not want to be criticized about?

These questions are some examples of ways to come to real understandings of what these abstract qualities (here "critical," "power," "criticism") actually represent and mean to different people as they are practiced and experienced. Patterns in the domains (universals and concreta) will be evidence towards a theoretical base for what intersubjective goals there may be. How they correlate to concreta are a start for being able to propose "acceptable" courses of action to

[131] As they influence behaviour and decisions and not necessarily what people say.
[132] Simmel (1916/2003) as cited in Pyyhtinen (2010, p. 149).

address problems. If every course of action is unacceptable for at least one group or pattern—and they express this rejection or non-consent—well, maybe this group is not functional there. One very costly alternative is to split up into smaller groups to go their own ways (no hard feelings). This step is only to be taken when the cost of doing so—all the potential desirable achievements that are possible from having the larger group—are worth sacrificing and losing out on (potentially indefinitely) in order to be able to attempt to pursue with less conflict the things that splitting up would enable (with the consideration that these will likely have a smaller overall effect). No hard feelings means no conflict.

Conclusion: Criminology Needs Metacriminology

In this thesis I have tried to explore the limits of an attempt to convey in words a phenomenological undertaking to assess and address intersubjective issues such as conflict and disagreement from one subjective perspective. This necessitated an explorative approach to how major labels, such as conflict, were conceptualized, described, and constituted.

My findings here consisted of truncated themes from answers to two questions which were consistently asked in interviews: what criminologists should be doing and what they should be responsible for, and what are the major or stubborn disciplinary conflicts in the practice of criminology itself. I then described a number of invariant (necessary) features of conflict, in inter/subjective experience, the differences therein, and with regards to its moderation via certain external factors. I then went into more detail analysing two core matters, fallacy of presumptive exhaustiveness and power, both of which were seen frequently in all the interviews while also presenting itself as subtle, difficult, or otherwise unclear on how to address them. I offered a dissolution based on potential confusions surrounding universals and particulars, and then finally

suggested a tentative solution with the use of a specifying mode of inquiry to better nuance our mutual understandings of very subjective and personal phenomena. In the remainder of this section I describe some pragmatic benefits as well as a wider "post-project" arc towards a metacriminological practice or paradigm, which I argue is sorely needed, to address persistent issues of the non/ontology of crime, and, in spite of its (not undeserved) reputation, I attempt to offer a rehabilitative grounding of criminology as a social science par excellence.

The findings here, especially the descriptive, have pragmatic use even with its approximations and limitations.[133] A criminology department can find it useful in many capacities, e.g. what is the distribution of positions regarding something from Q1 in the truncated themes? How might proposed policies or directions reflect the themes from Q1? Findings can function to be salient issues for individuals to assess and evaluate their own stated (and latent) priorities, to be a form of professional development, to guide curricular/course/program outcomes, to dispel potential misconceptions, or, perhaps most simply, just have something that is "out there" (as cover) to have as conversation topics to talk with peers about without it seeming out of the ordinary nor any need to make it personal.

From what was stated earlier, especially in (2G), criminology is, effectively, the study and analysis of societal conflict and also "serious" conflict in general (e.g. state crimes, intimate partner violence). As this project is an undertaking of exploring conflict within the practice of criminology itself, I may have bit off much more than I imagined. I described the discipline itself as a hotspot for conflict, yet there is no formal component in criminology for analysing "internal" conflicts unless they cross into a pre-existing category of "serious conflict." There is a

[133] More competent academics can no doubt refine them and are encouraged to.

very good argument that—uniquely—metacriminological conflict falls logically within criminological ambit. That there is no formal metacriminology[134] or philosophy of criminology is a huge sign of the contours, challenges, and realities of criminology as practiced.

P8 stated that there is no unified theoretical base for criminology. Without a coherent and plausible metaphysics, and without a connection to extant philosophies that continue to develop,[135] criminology is left with very loosely connected—some would argue unconnected—empirical phenomena. This was the original and still unrectified mistake: to try and tether a discipline onto "crime" as if it were a real coherent category of its own. We "perpetuat[e] this concept of crime as though it's … something that inherently exists as a real phenomenon. … [certain] types of [criminological] research that's done … just reaffirms that it exists, it's out there, it's an objective thing, as opposed to something that's inherently constructed" (P8). Why do we still hold on to crime realism? We have long since known it is not.[136] To me, this is crazy (meaning without explanation, evidence, or warrant).

Like P8, many others hold the view is that "crime is a social construction absolutely; we create the definitions of crime, we designate [that] this has to be a public harm, public evil, has to be a penalty attached… it's prohibited"[137] (P10). Let us say for argument's sake that crime is a social construction. Does criminology have a robust and complete theory of social construction? I have not come across one. I am skeptical that even a plurality of criminologists could articulate one. So, why is criminology not "social constructionology" then, as a field of study towards better

[134] Presently, there is not even a journal with this title in such an overpopulated publishing era!
[135] Albeit this development is questionable and, to me, increasingly inaccessible.
[136] I have not seen a single plausible, valid, and non-vacuous argument that it is or even could be.
[137] I should have asked P10, "do we really designate that?" This articulated definition of crime—when was it written?—it seems to describe conditions that already existed before… public harm, penalty attached, prohibited… these are all ancient. E.g., "public harm" seems to be socioculturally defined. This raises issues of theory-ladenness.

understandings and theories of social construction, of how social beliefs are formed, or how ideology is generated? That so many criminologists are not social constructionologists is telling. Social construction theories, in their current form, are not seen (not necessarily consciously) to be remotely sufficient or helpful for the "real" and pressing issues that criminology and criminologists wish to tackle.

What is left? Criminologists focus on the concrete and empirical. But it is difficult to analyse empirical and concrete phenomena and develop progressive theories—without serious opposition—without a metaphysical (or at least ethical or even political) consensus. Rephrased, the problem was that criminology is formally postulated as being tied to some empirical concreta (crimes, which have been co-opted and reduced to the *Criminal Code*) that were (and are) not the actual unit of analysis people are actually interested in as an ends. Its focus was and is on concretely tethered factors and behaviours ("criminal" behaviour) that were not theoretically constituted (in universals and not concreta such as reference to the *Code*).[138] Instead, if criminology is about human social behaviour, the theoretical focus needs to be on human and social relationality. If it is about why people follow the law or need an external law, like Hobbes posited, then criminology should be an analysis of why they need it and why some do not in terms that apply to all of them—not just some people are "hard working, law abiding, or rational, and the others are dumb, thrill-seeking, or just lazy ne'er-do-wells" (over the years of review, this closely matches the theoretical depth of many "general" accounts—and even more popular, presuppositions—over the centuries of human social behaviour and intersubjective differences).

[138] This is not entirely true; criminology does have a renewed focus on structural and material factors, thus leading to truly grounded (and scientific) hypotheses and theories.

As long as it remains tied to human-made concreta, criminology will necessarily have at its core the primacy of nominalism, conventionalism, and the acceptance of political-legal dominance.[139] Though it is possible to teach and train to "resist" these norms of domination, it nonetheless still takes them as given. When we wish to defeat the "boogeyman" and rid ourselves of it, it is strange to continue to teach our children about it and to prepare them to fight it.[140] Lastly, human-made concreta can be manipulated—typically by polities—and thus the discipline itself open to complete co-optation without complication or concern as nothing outside of the narrow concreta has any bearing on the focus of the field. If this co-optation would be thwarted, because "we would know better" or "that would be unacceptable," then it is obvious to me that whatever those factors would be which would resist complete co-optation and subjugation should be clearly postulated in the description for criminology. Why leave it implicit? This seems to be a task that first needs a formal metacriminology seeing as criminologists do not presently care to do it.

Limitations

Social Scripts

At many times and in most (but not all) interviews, I distinctly felt like I was in a situation where we were playing parts in the typical conversational style of "a teacher talking to a student." This was usually only near the beginning, usually lasting only 20 minutes, but sometimes up to ~40 minutes. This consideration is a limitation to what can be researched (especially by a student) as

[139] Numerous participants mentioned the idea that a potential departmental split could take place

[140] This conundrum be approached in two ways: first, though one believes it is not real, one does not actually wish to rid ourselves of the belief and the motivation (and so we lie to ourselves when we say we do). Second, one really believes the boogeyman might be real—is unable to banish the possibility despite no evidence—and so must remain in a state of constant vigilance.

a factor for interpretation and exploratory projection, e.g., of "how rich" the area is, how much is "kept from" students. More generally, whatever mediates the mutual understanding of scripts (e.g., across cultures or "generations") is a meta-"limitation"[141] for qualitative research methodologies itself. that findings here are only applicable if what participants said validly represent themselves. I think this is safe to assume; none of the participants seemed at all dubious, furtive, inauthentic, or even disengaged. Ideally, however, interviews would have been done in a way that is commensurate with how peers talk to peers.

Unspecific Locating of Conflict

A reader (Mike Larsen) of an earlier draft asked "where" the conflicts recur, i.e. among colleagues in criminology. This would have been a valuable and practical follow-up question to ask in interviews. Unfortunately, I did not ask this because the centrality of "conflict" as a topic did not become apparent until after the interviews were concluded. In lieu of asking, participants did not specify nor give indirect information from which an answer could be reasonably inferred. In general, I observed that participants tended to omit identifying or contextualizing information in their answers when it came to anything "local" or otherwise from their personal professional context. In order to broach this "personal" contextual information, an interviewer should first provide an accepted justification for the "need to know" (and reaffirmations of confidentiality) prior to explicitly asking.

Sampling and Generalizability

It came to my attention after the interviews and on the basis of being a student that traditional or historical skews of departments can differ substantially between institutions and that KPU has

[141] I use scare quotes here because it may not be a limitation at all but instead a necessary trade-off and relata; this is something that social scientists and theorists can investigate.

seen departmental changes and transformations within the last 20 or so years, the peculiarities of which can specifically affect the data and findings here. Therefore, and even without this, I emphasize that this was one study of self-selected individuals in one department, in one institution in Canada, in a very particular slice of time in early 2022, coming immediately after a chaotic and politically charged period that included COVID-19, the 1/6 U.S. Capitol attack, and the George Floyd protests—conditions which continue to deteriorate.

Obscuration of Ideology and Material Conditions

A most salient critique from dialectical materialism is that the pluralist and individualist approach here masks the structural and material conditions that underlie change at the group, macro, or sociocultural level—a major object of the thesis. My position is that this is the single greatest limitation and obstacle for the alignment of the basic normative aims of science—the pursuit and expansion of knowledge or wisdom as an ends-in-itself that parallels the betterment of the world—with those of the dominant emergent societal-sociocultural entity.[142] My frequent use of individualistic positions and framings here are very parochial and specific: only the

[142] The limited array of intelligible qualifiers we have are hardly suitable to precisely describe this entity. Like ideology, it seeks to keep itself invisible. It is less a matter of vocabulary but of culture; we have likely had countless "words" across many languages to attempt to point to the emergent dominant characterization of cultures and societies. But how does a "word" come to be reliably and precisely understood or intelligible? Past incarnations have all failed to stand the gauntlet of time, perhaps some only recently. The persistence of meaning and reference is predicated—and limited—on the persistence of the material conditions that allow for it (it does not have to be "physical" objects like a tree or fossil). This becomes a more general matter of intergenerational epistemology and the reflexivity (and consciousness) of humanity itself for the fruits and wisdoms of social science have proven to be at the highest risk of becoming "lost," or, perhaps more appropriately, buried and suppressed. Fiction books can surmise what losses in technological sciences may have been, ruins of advanced civilizations evidencing capabilities indistinguishable from magic; yet we have difficulty even surmising—much less "selling" or even wistfully missing—the potential losses in possible or past social sciences (which are also not limited to human social existence). Sociologically, by this emergent entity, we now live in extreme conceit. The dominance of reductive individualism—the assumption of which even widely pervades this thesis—has made us not just blind, dead, and dumb, but proudly complacent. In order to uproot its entrenched stability, we must accept either completely new (meaning potentially foreign/unintelligible) dicta OR accept and discuss openly, sustainably, and effectively that *much* of what we have *culturally* is deeply flawed and needs to change. To me, the former seems at present more implausible and riskier than the latter, which I thus espouse.

immediate concrete "next steps" are presented at the level of the individual and propositionally described. Even if materialism is true, I assume that what we can do can still be described at the level of individual human actions, though only in the strict and not ordinary interpretive contexts of language (of course, reading or "reviewing" the totality of propositions is individually impractical, like reading the totality of tweets). If even this modest claim to possible description is rejected, perhaps on the basis that it is itself too ideologically oblivious or individualistic—which I recognize as being highly plausible—then the implication is a nihilist position for the formal validity and truthfulness of academia itself (and "formal" communication in general). The strict interpretation is, *a priori*, impossible or unfruitful; academia, empiricism, and science, by my formal understanding at least, would be futile endeavours towards any and all propositionally describable social normative ends. Might this position have the onus of reconciling and justifying why academics do all that they do as the best way to do things whilst most would necessarily be *prima facie* misleading, disingenuous, and dissonant? This onus seems necessary in the absence of a viable alternative. To meet the demands of this onus—i.e., the abandonment of empirical description and social science as presently practiced to meet social normative ends—seems too high of a demand in the present dominant Western sociocultural context, even if many individuals (including myself) are individually open to it. I am sympathetic to Cratylus, but he did not discharge this onus.

Concerns on Openness and Imagination as Constraints

I previously described a concern regarding the presumptive natural attitude in phenomenology. One way to understand this concern is by considering a potential sibling, one which may well be

an isomorphic twin.[143] Consider the word "imagination" that seems to be quite popular in the last hundred years in the social sciences. My present understanding of imagination is to consider, for some topic or thing, what could be. This then must also, by complement, consider what can not be—what is understood as being outside the scope of what-is-being imagined. Put this way, the exercise of what we call "imagination" may be functionally identical to the phenomenological reduction which has the goal of finding invariant meaning (of something, what cannot not be, what must be). And I have met many people who, compared to myself, seem far more imaginative—that is, seemingly disposed to pondering and enjoying worlds-that-could-be—as well as many who are of the opposite disposition. Normativity, including the perception of threats, around each of these dispositional poles (which are often depicted in hyperbolic extremes—the one thing we might all have in common) form the basis for rejecting one and praising the other.

Though I did not explicitly include them for this reason, there were numerous themes of general virtues or imperatives relating to being more "open-minded" (openness, explore, curiosity, dialectic). Doing so reveals that some connect strongly to concerns of sampling bias. Many codes were dialectic as participants described how they liked to talk, put their heads together, work amicably, etc. However, the people who accepted the invitation to be a participant are likely to already have a pro-dialectic attitude; the ones who actively avoid it, i.e. the anti-dialectic, would not have been interviewed in the first place. This skews. This plausibly has further confounding effects.

[143] I cannot make an argument here for or against isomorphism (of "imagination") here as I am no historian of sociology nor of "imagination" in discourse. I am merely imagining its possibility.

In academia, one can really only publicly ascribe to being more open to considering possibilities rather than less open. Those who might stand up and say "No, I don't want to consider that; that sounds like a waste of time" cross a bright line. How did such a line come to be? Why is it that I cannot even think of a value-neutral term for "closed-minded," despite how half of the population must fall here?[144] This bright line, I believe, represents a social belief, especially in academia, of the descriptive generality and prescriptive generalizability of open-mindedness. This may well be what we call (narrowly and guardedly) having imagination and imaginativeness in the social sciences, which is already narrower than what has and is broadly recognized as "creativity" in broader human discourse and human history, which I see as being much closer to a fuller, less exclusive, and—ironically—less superficial notion of "imagination."

One consequence of this reduction is that the tension of this hegemony, for those who feel subjugated or unrepresented, become pigeonholed and "expressed" via existing (and almost certainly false) political camps: I have frequently come across sentiments suggesting there are those who feel like they cannot "speak up" in academia; they feel marginalized and outnumbered by what was most commonly referred to as "the left." This is a massive, but not intractable, problem to criticality as practiced and lauded today: within the present universe of discourse at the "second-level" of meaning, which includes the social science paradigms, it is impossible to criticize criticality without "needing" a formal and explicit understanding of the tenets and history of critical theory. This "gatekeeps" many people from the discussion in ways not based on any transcendental ethical or logical reason, even if they would have salient and useful contributions. We cannot wait for those who are remanded to silence—imposed upon them by

[144] I acknowledge that academic populations, even in criminology, likely select for openness in their selection processes.

the presently dominant paradigms of certain cultural capitals over others, especially in academia—to "speak" for themselves when the tools to do so are currently put in a place that is evidently out their reach (e.g. asking a fish to climb a tree). What cannot be said by some can still be said by others. It can even be said clearly. No one can always speak for themselves. Therefore, we must rely on others to speak for us from time to time, in the arenas where we are unfamiliar for whatever reason.

This invisible domain-reductionism seems to function as an ideological apparatus that controls some universes of discourse (here, academia). Even those with the best of intentions can once again find themselves powerless and co-opted in the struggle against narratives and narrations that reinforce dominance and conflict by limiting tools we have, including of what we can imagine. It does not seem that we can use our imagination to get out of this bind. This now appears to me to be a most difficult (and painful) question in social science: How can we proceed forward into conditions of relative (absolute?) darkness, to bring light into the blind spots formed through, and of, our imagination? Is there any answer to this question that is not an imagined answer? I think so. Possibly, we can ask the "unimaginative" people. How would they go about it? If this is so, there is an immense amount of work and reconciliation to be done.

Epilogue

Near the end of this project, and with the aid of a timely suggestion by the thesis supervisor, it became more apparent that the various ingredients for conflict—miscommunication, apparent misdirection, poor articulation, ignorance regarding cultural norms or customs, obstacles to

empathy—are all such because they are difficult to investigate and "learn." Returning to Socrates in *Protagoras*, insomuch as virtue is knowledge, how we pursue knowledge is itself a way to pursue the resolution of and reconciliation from conflict.

In a serpentine and convoluted way, I arrived at the conclusion that the pursuit of the pursuit of knowledge is most closely represented in contemporary academic paradigms as the study, practice, and refinement of research methodology. If I could redo this entire project, it would be instead focused on qualitative research methodology, which, through whatever insights participants may have, I believe would then lead to richer and more effective pragmatic findings, recommendations, and ways to address, well, conflict in criminology for starters. I think it is reasonable to expect people (at least criminology instructors) to transfer and apply good ideas to whatever stressful areas of their life. If not, why not? Do people not see knowledge as a tool? E.g. if people buy a gun for hunting rabbits or for a shooting sport, I imagine they easily come to a number of hypothetical areas it could be used, such as the salient problems in their lives it can address. So why not for propositional knowledge, which is the ends of what research findings are to supposedly constitute?[145] When looking at social science research that attempts to follow the positivist paradigm, why is it that the findings seem at times so eminently compartmentalizable, ignorable, and even trivial?

[145] Perhaps what we are calling knowledge here—the propositional content—really isn't until that becomes "processed" or internalized. Until then, the only knowledge there that we have is that we know of that. Consider a regular person who reads the manual for some obscure and difficult math topic. They can recall every page, every sentence and diagram. Do they now "know" that math topic, its various implications regarding all the areas in their life it can be applied to? I doubt this. I speculate that the component to propositional knowledge that must be learned and internalized is the *functional* knowledge of what something "does" or otherwise "means." Understanding is unique property to meaning and not to "facts."

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Appendix A – Interview Question Sheet

How long teaching? Only KPU? CRIM is broad: describe focus area?

Why is that? // Why do you believe that?

Would you say many others share this/your view?

1) Have you encountered naysayers to [your work]?

2) What in your opinion are the biggest / intransigent challenges in the contemporary crim practice?

3) Why are [they] so stubborn or convinced that THEY are right?

4) Why do you think the folks are unable to agree on how to approach resolving things?

5) Ideally, what would criminologists or crim teachers be doing?

5A) What should criminologists and crim teachers be responsible for, if anything?

Appendix B – Codebook (raw)

Note: Compiled in NVivo 12

Name	Description
Assent consent acquiesce	
compromise	
causality	Imputed causal relation for relevant theme/issue
control	includes emotional or political; manipulation
danger / threat	
crime is up	Wait for "crime is down" to add the category…
emotionality	Strong emotional response
D- freedom	d = desire; probably needs unpacking and analysis
D- public confidence	this is located in multiple layers / units of analysis
power/lessness	incl inability to articulate
Response to risk or harm	
violence or force	
D- consistency	also predictability
D- involvement and transparency	
determinism	Belief in hard-ish determinism, structural determinism, etc.
externalistic determinism	strong-ish empiricism; includes historicism, path dependence, neoliberalism, etc; some of these are such that there is TOO much reliance or determinism (instrumental or not); sometimes too little
Double Standard or Unclear Standard	
DS polarity	domain specific polarity
epistemic issues and interprt	semiosis (fairclough) is 'meaning-making'; bias

Name	Description
Ambiguous Problematic concept	includes problematic instance of ignorance (probably incl. judgmentalness)
bracketing, broadening	includes philosophical inquiry
consciously notice and address it	
DS premises - unspoken	often times, premises are left unspoken; might they need to be explicated? incl "tyranny of the now" (excessive weight on one timeframe or another)
epist. modesty	includes curiosity, “respect” for others, relying on others
false dichotomy	black and white thinking, false excluded middle, presumption of exhaustiveness, etc; includes oversimplification, category reductionism; importance of nuance
intersubjectivity	for "we are very different"; incl. patterns of interpersonal misunderstandings; denotes when meaning of words has been multi-interpreted
pragmatism	
too much information	info overload … superfluous and/or irrelevant
happy when confident	participant tone or other qualities show a fondness or positive valence/bias when speaking from their subject matter experience OR on something they are 'certain' about; confidence requires certainty... maybe other? expertise
learning new vs using old	goals of describing, exploring, prospecting; explore-exploit
non-data culture	culture of secrecy and effacing
Openness	normative open-mindedness, curiosity, wanting to learn more
critical perspective	
diversity	includes tolerance
non-systemic thinking incl individualism	includes marked bias pro-individualism or premising individualism
optimism re sth in crim	
part of the solution	

Name	Description
pessimism OR nonchalance re sth in crim	
Q1 denoted conflict in crim	
what they think underlies conflict	potential causes, precursors, and instigators of conflict; note: criminology had no unambiguous intention that its adherents would agree upon
Q2 What crim people should be doing	answers to eponymous question which I think I asked most people
handholding	coddling
realism	
Responsibility and anti-responsibility	institutional or individual (really, needs to start out as individual). Includes attitudes that may imply deference of responsibility or demanding/expecting responsibilities be discharged by others
social construction	includes symbolism; symbolic justice
sociological OR macro	includes structural factors and limitations
government	
teleology ethics normativity	includes what should or should not be done
Anti/egalitarianism	fairness equality and privilege; includes extremes of top-down/bottom-up, etc.; includes self-interest too; includes minimal material standards
status quo apologism	
sympathy/antipathy for police	
tribalism	ingroup - outgroup; Pick a side/camp; expressivism and signalling; includes elitism; academicism Either these take precedence, generally, over open discourse.... or "pro-communication" itself is a camp (that is not always chosen). I think the latter is more likely as it is HARD to be publicly articulate and coherent.Therefore, reduce and flatten the playing field.
hierarchy	
viable replacement	includes when a viable replacement is implied as needed or desired