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Exploring the Criminology Curriculum – Using the Intersectionality Matrix as a Pedagogical Tool to Develop Students' Critical Information Literacy Skills

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ABSTRACT

Traditional literacy skills often neglect to develop students' critical understanding of how information and knowledge are formed, and the unequal power relations at the heart of this process. There are deep, entrenched biases within criminology curriculum content, and empowering students to use critical information literacy skills is an important part of recognising and disrupting knowledge hierarchies in relation to race, class, and gender. This paper builds on research exploring the content of student reading lists from the curriculum of a new criminology degree programme at an English university. Focus groups and one-to-one interviews were held with 20 undergraduate criminology students to explore how students interact with the course reading lists and how they consider and engage with the sources they use. We argue for critical information literacy to be embedded within our teaching of criminology, and for lecturers and students to more pro-actively consider the sources they use.

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Introduction

Longstanding structural inequalities across Higher Education (HE) in relation to, but not limited to, race, gender, class, sexuality, and disabilities (and, informed by Crenshaw (1989) and Hooks (1981), intersections of these) have long been debated. Whilst there have been recent calls to decolonize the curriculum, with students in the United Kingdom (UK) questioning 'why is my curriculum so white?' and campaigning for change, progress in this area has been slow. Criminology has been implored to acknowledge its colonial roots (Agozino, 2003), yet the teaching of criminological theory across many HE institutions has failed to incorporate an imperialist critique (Stockdale & Sweeney, 2019). Following what they describe as the 2020 "summer of racial reckoning" after the Black Lives Matter protests, a further call to criminologists to examine the role of HE to challenge oppression, complete with practical advice for

change, was made by Twyman-Ghoshal and Lacorazza (2021). They provide a teaching and learning framework for criminologists to embrace in order to deliver an antiracist and decolonized curriculum and teaching experience. This includes the need for us to recognize our own biases and privileges, revise courses and curricula to ensure that social and racial inequalities are not re/produced, to amplify marginalised voices, and to engage students in high impact learning activities that "allow students to recognize the historical biases that remain inherent in research, development, practices, programs, and policies" (Twyman-Ghoshal & Lacorazza, 2021, n.p). Arguing for pedagogy as public criminology, Lori Sexton asserts the importance of recognising and reflecting on our own political ideologies and how they shape our values: "not to exile politics from our classrooms, but to render those politics visible" (2020, p. 255).

This paper seeks to explore criminology reading lists as one part of this decolonizing work, our research makes visible to students the entrenched biases within their reading and uses this opportunity as a learning activity to encourage students to be more reflective in their reading practices, to read more widely than course-assigned material, and to engage with (and cite) a wider range of voices in their own work. We begin by discussing the relevance of this work in criminology, before discussing the concept of critical information literacy and the role it can, and should, play in our teaching. The paper then presents findings from our research with undergraduate BA (Hons) criminology students at a small post-'92, "new", teaching-focused university in England. We argue there is a need to develop and embed critical information literacy within our programmes and discuss the 'Intersectionality Matrix' (Stockdale & Sweeney, 2019) as a practical pedagogical tool for staff and students to reflect on their own practices.

Teaching criminology

The exploration of social control and order, both historically and presently, are central to the discipline of criminology. Through the consideration of topics such as: criminological foundations and theory; causes of crime; criminalisation; criminal justice and crime prevention; social control, governance, and surveillance; global harms and risk; and crimes of the powerful (McLaughlin & Muncie, 2013; Newburn, 2017). Criminology is inherently concerned with examining the development, and maintenance, of systems of justice, punishment, and power (Cohen, 1988), and is often recognised as a discipline which seeks to understand and incite positive change to the inequalities and injustices experienced by vulnerable and marginalised social groups (Davis, 1998; DeKeseredy, 2010). However, due to its subject matter, focusing on institutions (directly and indirectly) controlling societies through racial, economic, gendered, and sexual differences, questions have been raised regarding criminology's links to the maintenance of harmful discourses and social divisions (Boukli & Kotzé, 2018; Moore, 2016; Agozino, 2003; Davis, 2003).

Indeed, Agozino argues that criminology has "served colonialism more directly than other social sciences" by failing to address issues of race and inequality, due to the discipline being complicit in imperialism (2003, p. 1). Similarly, gender inequality within the discipline, arguably, remains deep-rooted (Robinson, 2006) impacting its

ability to fully act against gendered discrimination within society (Fahmy & Young, 2017). The unique and interdisciplinary position of criminology, whilst bringing clear challenges, offers significant opportunities to question problematic discourses surrounding identity-related social division and control. Furthermore, Potter argues that an intersectional criminology that recognises intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and socioeconomic class (and any other identity an individual deems significant) needs to be considered in criminological research (2015, p. 9).

There has been an unprecedented increase in criminology courses at universities in the UK. In 2019/20, 906 undergraduate criminology courses, offered by 130 providers, were listed in the UK, with this list growing to 1116 courses from 154 providers in 2020/21 (UCAS accessed 04/09/19). The growth of criminology degree courses mirrors the increase in criminological research, with the number of journals and funding for the subject area expanding significantly in recent decades (Garland, 2011). Increased research opportunities and subject engagement arguably makes criminology the swiftest growing academic discipline in the UK (British Society of Criminology Learning and Teaching Network, 2018; Garland, 2011; Bowling & Ross, 2006). However, such growth is often deemed unequal, with the criminological thought, and curriculum, of western nations being given precedence over those of the global south (Young, 2011; Connell, 2007; Howes, 2018).

The growth in number of criminology degree programs is in keeping with the commodification of HE more broadly. Commercialisation and commodification of academic knowledge arguably permits increased numbers of individuals to enter degree level study. Yet, HE centred on neoliberal values has impacted the value students place on a degree as well as institutional approaches to research, teaching and curricula (Walters, 2007; Ericson, 2003; Garland, 2011; Serrano, O'Brien, Roberts, & Whyte, 2018). Education once centred on knowledge development and learning to enable intellectual, social, or personal growth and empowerment, has now come to be viewed as an "investment" and something which can be exchanged (Barton, Corteen, Davies, & Hobson, 2010: 38; Walters, 2007). Changing expectations of undergraduate students, linked to the commodification of HE, impacts curricula and teaching formats in a way which undermines the importance and development of critical thought and scholarship (Barton et al., 2010; Furedi, 2004).

These educational conditions, existing within profit-orientated HE academies, arguably accurately illustrate 'the "banking" concept of education' put forth by Freire (1970: 44-59). This concept links to the actions and re-actions of both educators and students in learning spaces, with students existing as passive "containers" who are to be "filled" by educators (Freire, 1970: 45). Current HE, which is outcome-orientated and transactional in nature, appears to be characteristic of "banking" education as opposed to focusing on cultivating inquisitiveness, information sharing, developing new ways of knowing or detailed contextualisation – all of which are vital to develop critical thinking and understanding (Freire, 1970). Freire (1970) asserts that educators and students should not be blamed for approaching teaching and learning in this way, as the problem is structural. Curricula and approaches to education which are diverse, intersectional, and thus critical, necessitate time and financial backing to enable staff to prepare courses and students to

engage meaningfully. Such requirements are often limited within neoliberal HE departments.

The structural forces which impact the development of critical thought conceivably hurt subjects like criminology in a distinctive and detrimental way due to its subject matter (Barton et al., 2010; Serrano et al., 2018). Whilst approaches to teaching criminology can promote dialogue and debate to support student's engagement and knowledge development. External pressures on module delivery and learning can result in an educational experience in which teachers are depositing information into often passive students. Arguably, reinforcing and reproducing the very inequalities and hegemonic narratives which criminology fundamentally seeks to expose and question (Gilbert, Schiff, & Cunliffe, 2013). Similarly, the prescriptiveness of module content, particularly in the context of reading lists, can often feed the cost-benefit nature of contemporary HE and passive learning (Freire, 1970). Courses that do not create reading lists which include a wide range of voices risk undermining the development of criticality among students. Indeed, when discussing the impact of neoliberal values on the criminological imagination, Barton et al. states: "By recognizing and rejecting inequalities and authoritarian structures and by promoting marginalized voices, democratic and emancipating educators can facilitate the empowerment of students, making it possible for them to act against their own and others' oppressions" (2010, p. 34). Thus, the criminology education experience, for students and staff, is significantly harmed in an environment where all involved are constrained by hyper outcome-orientated knowledge development.

Central to criminological research, teaching and learning is development of critical thinking (QAA, 2019; Barton et al., 2010; BSC., 2018). Howes (2017) research suggests that many criminology students develop their critical thinking skills in relation to how crime and criminal justice is conceptualised, however, in terms of developing critical theory (i.e., promoting social justice and redressing power inequalities), not all were engaged. Howes highlights the importance of recognising power dynamics that still exist within classrooms, including the power of the teacher to determine content, set texts and lead discussions (2017, p. 904). This is why critical information literacy is such an integral part of this process. The tradition of the discipline has caused marginalisation of certain voices (female, colonised, non-western and LGBTQ+) which can distort the production of knowledge in relation to key criminological topics and issues (Cunneen & Rowe, 2014; Connell, 2007). Lack of representation of multiple relevant voices within the criminology curriculum ultimately undermines the ability for the development of criticality within the discipline.

Whilst it may be necessary to teach orthodox criminological perspective and theorists to enable students to be equipped to participate in criminological debates, it is important to not only recognise the socioeconomic, political, historical, and geographic context in which these theories were formed but to "teach standard forms critically"; it is not to reject the teaching of these theories, but the supremacy of them (Dennis, 2018:197-8). It is also vital to consider the multiple perspectives and narratives relevant in global and contemporary societies concerning criminological issues. Thus, the research findings discussed in this paper evidence the impact a lack of diversity

within criminology curricula has on undergraduate students learning and the development of critical thinking.

Critical information literacy

Information literacy is a concept used widely in library and information science, but it is also contested and debated. It is linked to social justice in the Alexandria Proclamation (UNESCO, 2005), where to "seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively [...] is a basic human right", but is traditionally seen in Higher Education (HE), as a skills-based framework (see DaCosta, 2010; Jackson, 2012, Vitae, 2012) in which a researcher goes through stages of identifying a need for information, constructing a strategy to obtain it, evaluating what is found and then using it to create and disseminate their argument (SCONUL Working Group on Information Literacy, 2011).

There is a growing critique that this approach ignores the social and political structures which influence publication and access to information, and in doing so fails to address the social justice aspect of UNESCO's assertion. Instead, a *critical* information literacy approach is based upon the core principle that students should have an understanding of "how information and knowledge are formed by unequal power relations based on class, race, gender, and sexuality" (Beilin, 2015: n.p) and that those designing courses and teaching in HE should reflect upon this in making HE inclusive and accessible. In addition, the information literacy approach can ignore students' agency as researchers and creators of knowledge themselves (Elmborg, 2012). This can have a significant impact on students - many students are excluded and made to feel othered in HE. This happens when people arrive at university and look to establish their own identity whilst simultaneously trying to seek where they fit in, but when they come from backgrounds which HE does not class as the norm and are not reflected in terms of experiences or culture (Donovan & Erskine-Shaw, 2020; Peachey, 2020; Tewell, 2019). Research with LGBTQ + students shows that representation is lacking (Ellis, 2009; Equality Challenge Unit, 2009; Mckendry & Lawrence, 2017), this is also found with disabled students (Morina, 2017), Black students (Eddo-Lodge, 2018) and students classed as Black and minority ethnic (BME) (Akel, 2019; Charles, 2019; Owusu-Kwarteng, 2021). Cross-university co-operation, as an influence on curriculum design, is a vital approach. Information literacy often ignores the development of both librarians and academics in terms of their knowledge and understanding of these issues, therefore influencing the curriculum in HE (Gustafson, 2017). When considering the issue of the reading which makes up the core of a module, there must be a consideration of who is represented in the reading list itself, and how, because there are barriers in the academic publishing process which mean that the literature available in traditional formats of textbooks and journal articles is likely to be skewed (El Kadi, 2019; Kara, 2019).

The academic publishing process has been criticised as one which allows white, male voices to dominate (Zevallos, 2019) and which has structural inequalities throughout (le Roux, 2015; Moletsane, Haysom, & Reddy, 2015, Regier, 2018), as has the publishing industry generally (Akbar, 2017; Saha & van Lente, 2020). It is therefore

imperative to empower students to be able to reflect and act upon how "knowledge is historically constituted and reproduced, to understand the racialised, gendered and classed contexts in which it developed, and to notice the silences and exclusions upon which it establishes its authority" (Rupprecht, 2019:16), at both curriculum design level, and in integrating teaching and learning opportunities for the students to critique and contribute to curriculum content. Flynn, Brookbank, and Haigh (2021:36) recommends changing a traditional learning objective of "By the end of this session, students will be able to perform a simple search in xyz database" to "This lesson should help students to develop their skills in searching the xyz database", shifting to a learner-centric objective, making less of an assumption about existing skills, and not assuming that they will get the results they want from this database. In developing evaluative skills, students have the chance to appraise the tool itself for what it does and does not contain. Learning objectives should also acknowledge the emotional impact searching for information could have for those already othered by systemic inequalities.

These changes are ideally implemented at curriculum level, to avoid student anxiety in receiving critiques of information forms in one module but being recommended them uncritically in another. McCartney and Wilkinson (2021:313-321) outline principles for a critical curriculum, including questioning the concept of "authoritative" literature, incorporating analysis of less traditional forms of resource, and acknowledging the place of politics in anyone's stance on the topic at hand. They recommend "collaboratory" approaches, with genuine diverse and student-led discussion. Finally, linking the curriculum with social and environmental engagement encourages all to reflect on their own experiences in relation to wider societal concerns. This will not only have an impact on their university experience, but also set them up with a critical approach to their professional and personal lives beyond.

Materials and methods

This project was part of a two-stage approach which examined the voices and perspectives that were represented within the reading lists of all modules within a new and developing undergraduate criminology degree program, and how students interacted with their reading lists. The degree program launched in 2016 at a post-'92 university in England. Post-'92 universities in the UK are those which, prior to the UK government's *Further and Higher Education Act 1992*, were a different form of Higher Education institutions such as polytechnics or colleges. Higher Education institutions given university status through the UK government 1992 reforms are thus referred to as post-'92 universities. The university where this project took place was previously a teaching and education college, in existence for 175 years, and gained university status in 2006.

The first stage of the project involved the analysis of reading lists in relation to the authorship of each text to understand how the voices of female, male, BME and LGBTQ + people were being represented within undergraduate criminology curricula. Throughout this research we have used the term BME because in the UK it is used as an umbrella term to override racist discourse and terminology. However, we fully

recognise that ethnic identity is a "social, political, historical and symbolic event" (Hall & Schwartz 2017, p. 6) and, as Hall and Schwartz highlight, the development of terminology in relation to race in the UK, including the term BME, has been, and continues to be, "complex and troubled" (2017, p. 194). Initial findings from the first project evidenced that there was a lack of representation and diversity within the texts in the context of both core and recommended reading (Stockdale & Sweeney, 2019). This was concerning, demonstrating that criminological topics were largely being presented to students in a way which promoted dominant hegemonic narratives, rather than encouraging criminological topics to be explored through the wide range of voices which exist, and which are relevant to the discipline. However, we needed to understand how students were using their reading lists, their importance and how widely they engaged with material relevant to their course outside of these set lists. The research included in this paper therefore set out to explore students' experiences of the criminology curriculum, to provide insight into their perspectives on engagement with course reading and material, and also to develop an understanding as to how important they felt it was to read about criminological topics from work published by authors from a range of backgrounds and viewpoints.

The project considered the experiences of students across all three years of what was a new undergraduate criminology degree (BA) programme. In 2019, when the research took place, between 65 and 85 students per year were enrolled. The faculty, which originally included three academics who designed the course content in 2016, had expanded to approximately 17 academic staff by the time of the research. Students were recruited via an electronic recruitment poster calling students to discuss their curriculum. One researcher also attended core lectures on the programme to speak briefly to the students the project. The students opted in by contacting the researcher if they wanted to be involved. Students who took part were provided with refreshments during the sessions and each participant received a £5 shopping voucher. The study involved a total of 20 students, most students ($n = 16$) took part in the format of focus groups ($n = 4$, one with Year 1 students, two with Year 2 students, and one with Year 3 students). Whilst a small number of students ($n = 4$) were involved via a one-to-one semi-structured interview (one with a Year 2 student, and three with Year 3 students). The greater presence of Year 2 and Year 3 students within the sessions was relevant to the research as they had undertaken a greater number of modules on the course, and therefore had more experience of the reading lists to reflect on. All participants where white, 19 of the 20 students involved specified that they were white British, and one student was white Polish. Of the 20 participants, 4 identified as male and 16 identified as female. We had hoped to run focus groups by level and then have specific sessions for students who identified as female, LGBTQ+, and BME. However, it was not possible to recruit participants in this way, primarily due to the demographic make-up of students on the course.

The inclusion of interviews, as well as focus groups, was initiated due to the difficulty in organizing final year students to meet in groups due to the variety of optional modules taken impacting timings and availability. Whilst the focus groups provided students with more opportunity for discussion, and thus at times more detailed consideration of questions, the interviews removed any possibility of peer pressure and resultantly enabled richer individual reflection on questions and activities. Within both

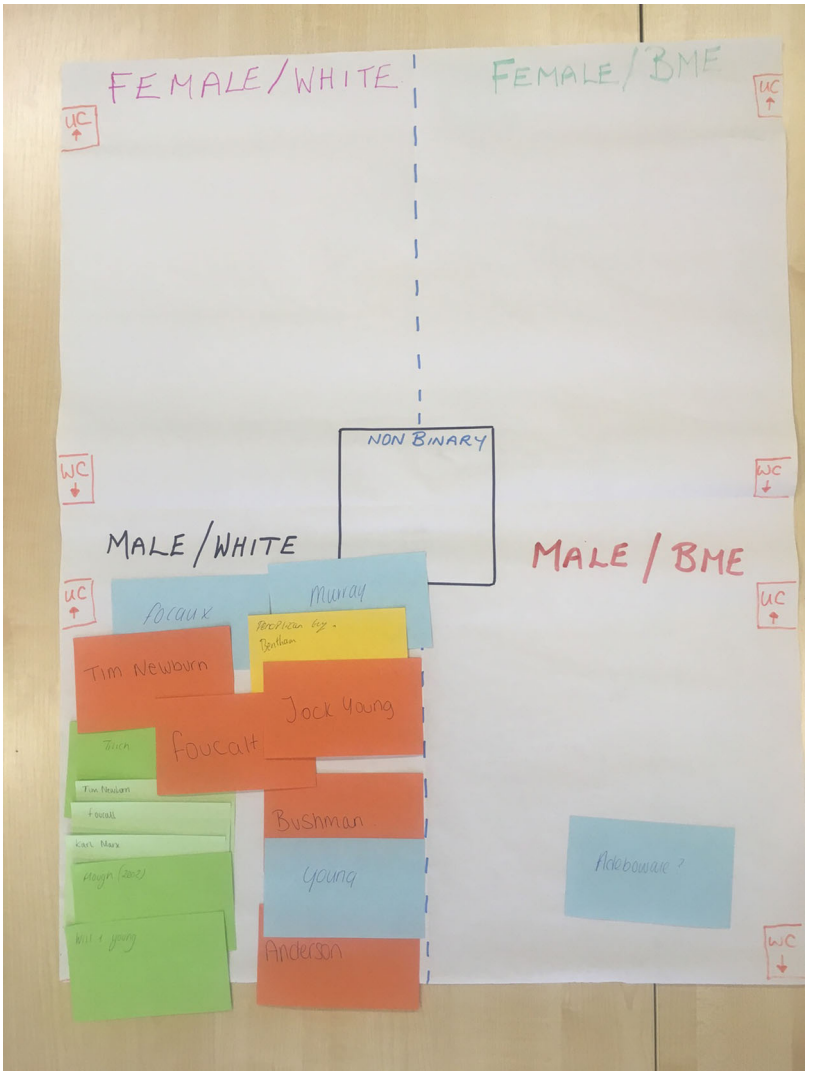

Figure 1. The image shows the Intersectionality Matrix being used in Focus Group 1. Flip chart paper is divided to show 'Female/White', 'Female/BME', 'Male/White', 'Male/BME', there is also a non-binary option. Arrows indicating 'upper class' and 'working class' were used later in the discussion as students discussed the authors' backgrounds.

focus groups and interviews a mixture of questions and visual activities were facilitated, these were utilized in the same way regardless of the number of students participating in each session.

Visual participatory activities were facilitated to incite discussion and critical reflection from students in relation to the course curricula. An "Intersectionality Matrix" was developed prior to the sessions taking place. The importance of considering intersections of race and gender is well recognized (Crenshaw, 1989; Hooks, 1981). We wanted a way to visually represent how intersectionality worked, our thinking was if students were able to name a range of authors, the 'gap' in BME, and particularly BME female, voices who are excluded and effectively 'missing' would be seen (see Figure 1).

After initial discussion with regards to students' perspectives on the course curricula and content which they did and did not enjoy reading, students were asked to think of, and write down (on Post-It notes), names of any criminologists that they could think of/remember reading from their studies. After thinking of the names of criminology authors and theorists, the Intersectionality Matrix was shown to students who were asked to place each Post-It note with the name they had written down onto the section of the matrix they believed represented the author most accurately i.e., white male, BME male, white female, BME female (a non-binary option was also included). This was very much about the student's perception of the author, and we encouraged the students to sort names spontaneously based on this perception, as further discussion would take place after this initial sort.

We also recognized how class and sexuality may intersect. The matrix therefore had an 'Upper Class (UC)' and 'Working Class (WC)' sliding scale to the side – after the initial sort, students were asked to consider class, however, in practice this discussion was limited as most students believed all academics who published to be middle class, thus highlighting the deep-rooted issues within academia and the publishing industry and the need for academics to purposefully and explicitly include a wider range of readings from other sources in their teaching.

Results

Intersectionality matrix as a pedagogical tool

The key finding was that in each session students from across all year groups were only able to name white male criminologists. Very few female criminologists were recalled, and, if so, these were white female. Very few Black male authors and no Black female criminologists were recalled. It is important to note that this finding may be unsurprising given that these voices were mostly excluded from the reading lists for most modules (Stockdale & Sweeney, 2019). The authors that students remembered were predominately white and male, students had not engaged with reading outside of their course-assigned material, and prior to this exercise they had never thought to question this as reading lists had been traditionally presented in an unproblematic way. The need for critical information literacy is not embedded within our teaching practice. Therefore, whilst at the start of the focus groups when students talked about the types of reading they enjoyed (outside of academic reading) some mentioned feminist poetry, yet their wider reading and engagement with a variety of work was not represented in their academic knowledge. See Figure 1 as a typical example of a matrix produced by students in a focus group:

Using the Intersectionality Matrix to visually map out the reading and voices students had been engaging with, and were most aware of, through their criminology degree was an important way to highlight how their reading was heavily gendered and predominately white. This enabled students to understand the core ideas and need for critical information literacy. Viewing the completed matrix had a clear impact on students:

> Yes, I think this would be really helpful for future students if this could be something that they were made aware of. Like I said, I didn't realise that I have been reading like mostly

> the same type of people's opinions and viewpoints until I saw this. And I think a lot of other people won't realise either (Interview 4).

> For me personally I think that we should, its important and something that should be done … cos we are trying to like learn, and it just shows that we get insight from like a white male when like a back female could have a completely different insight into the topic (Focus Group 3, Participant 5).

In focus group 3 participants discussed how this lack of diversity is in effect failing students. When studying for a degree, students expect to experience a wealth of learning and to have an enriched experience. It was suggested that by being unaware of the literature sources that they were using the student is left feeling "ignorant" – you don't know what you don't know; if certain voices are being excluded and students are not being taught critical information literacy then seeing their reading on the matrix created a sense of frustration and disappointment within students:

> I just don't want it to come across like we are being ignorant, in the sense that we are not talking about those who have put their views across and have been really interesting and may have come from a different ethnic background … or are gay or anything like that … I don't want it to come across like we are being ignorant cos we're not writing about it … most of the time it has been like a white male or a white female that we have like learned about in every day and, actually, it would be nice to see someone else's perspective that's quite unique (Focus Group 3, Participant 2)

There was a consensus across the focus groups that students wanted to know more about the author's backgrounds, experiences, and inspiration for writing.

> Focus Group 3, Participant 1: Yeah, rather than just like reading the article and taking things out I think it would now be important to think about the author as well. Like obviously use articles that are relevant but start thinking about the author more.

> Focus Group 3, Participant 2: Yeah, like their background and, see where they have come from, like if they are working class, upper class. Because like we have struggled with this activity cos, we are not entirely sure and that's because we don't get told about their background and it's kinda important. And I think now I'm just going to look like more into their background and get more information on them.

> Focus Group 3, Participant 5: Yeah! I think that by doing that and being more aware it will make us think more critically about their work which will help the assignments because if it's like a white male of a higher class talking about a white female from a lower class like well – 'how is their insight actually relevant to what that person has been though' if they have no connection to it. Yeah.

Across all focus groups, having completed this exercise students expressed how this exercise would change the way they thought about their reading and the sources they used more in the future:

> I'm definitely going to walk away from this thinking about these issues a lot more than I did when I walked in. I'm going to do more research and think about the authors more (Interview 3).

> Yeah, yes, I think that it should actually. Because it's not something that I had thought about before but now that you've mentioned it and we are talking about it I do think 'oh gosh yeah, it would be good to have more of a range and that variety'. I think that definitely, I think can only come out as a positive, like a positive aspect yeah (Interview 2).

> Definitely be looking more into female and more non-binary people … people from different ethnicities 'cause I think that is what could make an assignment a bit more enjoyable … and I think searching for other people from different backgrounds, it can be quite inspiring. I know that when I hear a female … criminologist, I tend to be like 'oh oh female', then it's a bit more inspiring you like want to read up more on it … so yeah, I'd definitely be more … in our head it's hard to think of it like this but when it's shown in front of you, you kinda like 'oh, ok' - you don't actually understand it until it's shown to you … I wouldn't have thought about it … but now looking at it in person I can see that yeah, its, we need a bit more, uh, variation. (FG1P1)

These quotes from criminology students are important. The focus groups and interviews all lasted just under one hour in length and were initially intended as a research tool to explore students' interactions with their reading lists, not necessarily as a teaching tool. However, the discussion suggests significant learning had taken place; whilst students had attended various "skills" sessions around searching for information, referencing, and citing "correctly", and these skills were all embedded across teaching in each year of their studies, there was a clear absence of critical information literacy skills. The students, all of whom were white and many of whom were coming to the end of their third year of study had not thought about how the reading and knowledge they were using had been created and formed.

Embedding critical information literacy

An important insight from the discussion is the student's trust in their lecturer and the information that they are given. As the student below discusses, opening up teaching to a discussion around whose voices are being used and are embedded within the discipline is important for engagement, as students might understand or relate to other work better. It also develops a sense of critical information literacy whereby a student would be able to engage in critical discussion, they would be more empowered, and could write and speak in ways which may challenge certain viewpoints if they had a better understanding:

> Focus Group 3, Participant 1: I think a lot of the time … like we just take peoples word … so like in a lecture we're not challenging what they are saying as much. Like maybe we don't feel comfortable saying like 'well, why haven't you included this' because of hierarchy or … like we assume that they know more about the subject so we shouldn't question them.
>
> Researcher: Yeah. So maybe opening up more dialogue about different perspectives might encourage you to have more confidence, like for example when you are writing, to know that you can include a lot more different people and perspectives, and students being made to feel confident in doing that.
>
> Focus Group 3, Participant 5: I think they do it in the sense that the lecturers, like they see it as trying to help us and keeping to the main people, so we don't get confused. But then it's like throughout all our assignments we're talking about like the same group of people instead of like thinking 'ah, well actually there is an alternative which might argue the point different'. So, I think it just like being more broad, if that makes sense?

Students recognize that it is particularly important to hear from a variety of voices in criminology. As Potter argues, it is important to employ an intersectional perspective that explores criminological research and theory and evaluates crime-related

policies and laws "because girls and women of Color experience life differently from boys and men and White girls and women" (2015, p. 3). After using the Intersectionality Matrix students expressed a clear understanding of how the marginalization of certain voices impacts on the way their knowledge around criminological topics has been produced.

> Researcher: Do you think that it matters to the discipline of criminology more generally?
>
> Interview 3: Yes, yeah because it completely influences how it is seen, and how it is portrayed. Because we don't have the influence from people who aren't upper class or white, we are not being influenced properly. Because we've just got this one group pretty much when then there are loads of others.

As discussed, having conducted this exercise, students were then able to see the author as a person, not just a name or a reference. The lived experience of the author is important in relation to knowledge construction:

> Yeah, I suppose I would actually … it helps to do a sort of little bit of research about the person and their work and where it has come from … You know it's more like over years they have built this research up for this reason, and its important, and I think that it gives it more like depth as well to your work … and as well I think you are like showing respect to them as well as a researcher. Like you are acknowledging them as a person and not just like they are a person who has done all this work and then they are in a book and that is it. (Interview 2)

This is particularly important, as Dennis (2018:192) argues, philosophies are taught as being distinctly human, as being independent of culture, society and history: "yet human status is not open to *all humans*. It is denied to females and those racialised as Black". The student quotes above make an important point in terms of showing "respect" to the academic arguments, and the academic who wrote them – to "acknowledge them as a person". There is significance in this, particularly for women, people of colour, and those who have been historically marginalised, excluded, and erased.

Whilst students viewed more thoroughly understanding authors backgrounds and positionality as important to their criminological awareness, they also thought it would support their academic attainment. Some students felt that by having diversity in their reading this would potentially enable them to achieve higher marks in their assessments:

> I'd say when writing assignments and essays I think everyone you'd maybe read that uh you get nervous that you don't want to write very similar things to other people … you know … I think one of the worst things to think about when handing in and submitting something is … has my teacher read that ten more times before me … and maybe when someone's marking it when they've heard that before they might not pay as much attention they might think 'oh I've read this before.' It'd be nice to have other people's opinions so that we feel a bit more confident in that … that we're not all sounding the same, so we're not going to get possibly marked down or anything like that (Focus Group 1, Participant 1)

Students understandably care about the marks they receive and ways they can improve their academic achievement. Concern surrounding marks among students evidences that the conditions of 'banking' education are hard to escape (Freire, 1970).

However, perhaps encouraging students to engage with the authors they are using within their modules can improve learning experiences by encouraging critical thinking, illuminating matters of social justice, and help the production of high attaining work.

Students, therefore, express a desire to know more about the background of the authors they use in order to develop their own thinking, learning, and grades. Additionally, after taking part in this exercise, there is a recognition that in the texts that they learn from, read, and cite they do not have a deep understanding of the author nor the time, place and space in which the work was conceptualised. As this student highlights:

> Even if we've got all the names like some people there, I don't know who they are, what their views … just because I've used it [referenced them] doesn't necessarily mean that I know their views? … [because] even though I try and research it myself like so many like wordy - especially when it comes to people's views it doesn't say like this is the person who says these views it's … it just makes me think like I still don't understand what his views are so I know Foucault and even though I might have referenced them, I still don't exactly know what their views are at all or who they are kind of thing (Focus Group 1, Participant 1).

It is interesting that the students across all focus groups repeatedly refer back to the "founding fathers" such as Foucault. As Coleman (n.d) cited in Dennis (2018:196-7) argues, texts need to be placed in context and the place of disciplinary founding fathers *[sic]* should not be in a "privileged place of neutrality which assumes a universal forefront and placing persons racialized as Black to the fore". It is locating these authors in time and space and within their specific cultures that ensures their voice is not taken as a universal one, instead we should aim for a multiplicity in education, a "cacophony of voices" in our classrooms (Dennis, 2018:197)

Discussion

The findings presented clearly highlight students' shock and concern at their own lack of knowledge and awareness of authors' backgrounds and how there was little diversity in their reading, which was predominately written by white male scholars. Students commonly expressed a lack of consideration towards author's backgrounds prior to engaging with the Intersectionality Matrix, yet students' reflections after using this pedagogical tool evidence that they *are* interested in the authors that they engage with through their studies, and they appreciate the importance race, gender, class, and sexuality can have in criminological research and texts. Interestingly students were concerned about being uninformed, due to not being explicitly exposed to certain voices and experiences, which suggests that they view their degree as more than a passive transaction. Criminology students view the purpose of their degree as being more than a means to an employable end, instead, through their degree they want to increase their awareness and understanding of a range of perspectives for personal growth as well as to have a more rounded world view (Barton et al., 2010).

By thinking about authors' characteristics through the Intersectionality Matrix, the positionality of academics and their work was illuminated to students, evidencing the importance an individual's background might have on their understanding and

approach to a criminological topic or research and encouraging students to engage critically with the viewpoint from which information was produced, rather than passively reading a text (Freire, 1970). Such critical thinking supports students to develop their academic skills through critical information literacy as well as strengthened awareness and understanding of criminological ideas and topics. Questioning criminological sources and perspectives in this way can enable students to develop a more rounded and contextualised world view and encourage activism within their own lives (Freire, 1970; Barton et al., 2010).

Conclusion

Despite the small scale of this study, findings indicate that there continues to be a fundamental lack of guidance, inclusion, and information within undergraduate criminology curricula to address the exclusion of women, people of colour, LGBTQ+, and lower socioeconomic class voices. A lack of support, and drive, to enable inclusion of "alternative" sources to undergraduate reading lists undermines the importance of the perspectives and experiences of individuals of all identities to criminological narratives and debates. The interrelated combination of unequal representation of voices, and the commodification of academic knowledge and learning, arguably create serious difficulties for criminology to meaningfully act against the reproduction of problematic and harmful discourses regarding crime, punishment, and marginalized social groups (Christie, 1977; Bosworth & Hoyle, 2011), endeavors which the discipline centers itself upon, both through teaching and research, in order to work towards criminology's wider pursuit for social justice (Bosworth & Hoyle, 2011). Failing to engage undergraduate students, many of which are the criminologists of the future and all of which are members of civil society, with criminological awareness from perspectives outwith 'normative' narratives arguably undermines the discipline's central endeavours.

As academic staff teaching criminology in a HE environment we are working with criminal justice practitioners of the future. As Sexton argues we have "a powerful opportunity to provide rigorous, critical, social science education to practitioners before they are indoctrinated" (2020, p. 249). In order to promote social justice and address unequal power relations and inequalities the core undergraduate skills of 'critical thinking' need to be expanded to include critical information literacy: students need to consider both how crime and criminal justice is conceptualised *and* reflect on how criminological knowledge has been formed. The Intersectionality Matrix provides a pedagogical tool which enables students to see which voices dominate, and which are absent. This visualisation creates an opportunity, both for staff and students, to reflect on which voices have been marginalised, excluded, and silenced. It further provides an opportunity for teachers to engage with their students in these debates: when conducting the focus groups, we did not pretend to have the answers, the aim was not to "fill" the matrix with names for students to passively learn. As Hooks writes, it is not enough for individuals to change how they think, as if this is the end of any transformation process (1994, p. 47). Conscientization is not transformation (Freire, 1970). This paper has shown how the 'Intersectionality Matrix' (Stockdale & Sweeney, 2019) which has basic sections relating to ethnicity, gender, and class, can be used as

a pedagogical tool to support students to critically consider the academic voices which were represented in their module reading lists and course content. By exploring and naming dominant voices in the discipline – and highlighting whose voices are absent – we are able to reflect, act, and develop meaningful diachronic praxis both for student learning and within our own teaching of criminology.

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