

## Introduction

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The Institute of Criminology has undergone substantial changes during the first half of 1995. Mark Findlay has taken leave as the Director of the Institute to take up a two year appointment as Head of the Department of Law at the University of the South Pacific. At present Julie Stubbs and I are acting as Co-Directors.

Mark Findlay has provided an enormous level of commitment and energy to the Institute. One reflection of that commitment is the strength of *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* as an important contribution to criminological debate in Australia and elsewhere.

The articles in this issue of the journal cover a broad range of topics central to contemporary discussions around crime control and criminal procedure. One major theme covered in papers by Magner, King and McKillop is the relationship between science and law. These papers include discussion of the role of expert evidence in the trial process, and the relationship of psychology to the law in a discussion concerning the improvement of witness memories. Coming from a different perspective is Fraser's discussion of transgressive sexualities and the intersection of legal and psychiatric discourses in normalising "homosexuality".

Another issue of significance raised by Brown and Vinson is the possibility of developing progressive prison policies. A recent change of government in New South Wales provides an opportunity to rethink penal policy, particularly in the context of a burgeoning and expensive existing prison system. Debates concerning the rights of victims and offenders are raised by Sinclair in the context of a recent court ruling on the right to take blood samples without consent from an accused person. Grabosky looks at the issue of crime through a discussion of fear of crime and the methods available for fear reduction.

Several contributions to the journal are concerned with "race" and racism. Lucas provides an important social history of Aboriginal/police relations during the 1960s and 1970s. Judge Hal Jackson comments on a recent report from the Western Australian Aboriginal Legal Service on policing in Wiluna. Also of immediate contemporary relevance is the failure of the Commonwealth's Access to Justice strategy to fund an Aboriginal Women's Legal Resources Centre, despite the well-documented need for such a service. In a different context, Hoehl comments on the possible legal responses to racist violence in Germany.

The next issue of the journal will be a special issue on child abuse edited by Ania Wilczynski. Copy deadline for consideration of material is the first week of September.

**Chris Cunneen**

Co-Director and Guest Editor

