

On Presenting the BSC's Outstanding Achievement Award to Professor Pat Carlen

Anne Worrall

Emerita Professor of Criminology, Keele University

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Friends and colleagues, I am deeply honoured to have been asked to make this oration for the British Society of Criminology's Outstanding Achievement Award to Professor Pat Carlen, currently Visiting Professor at Kent University. And it is a particular pleasure to see members of Pat's family here this afternoon.

Earlier this year Keith Hayward, Shadd Maruna and Jane Mooney edited a book entitled *Fifty Key Thinkers in Criminology*¹. Within this volume, Jackie Tombs has written a chapter about Pat Carlen and anyone who wants a full summary of Pat's outstanding career and writings might wish to consult that. Today I am going to read just one paragraph from that chapter before talking briefly at a more personal level about what I and other members of the BSC owe to Pat. This is what Jackie said:

Pat Carlen, one of Britain's most imaginative and innovative sociologists, has often been called a 'feminist criminologist' though maybe that is something of a misnomer since she always insists that she never has employed any body of feminist theory when doing sociological analysis. Nor does she think of herself as a criminologist but rather as some-one who engages in sociological work. She describes herself as 'a knowledge worker... whose creative and theoretical work is about objects of knowledge'. Her interest in criminology is not for its own sake but rather as a dimension of sociology in general and social exclusion in particular. As a 'thinker', one of her greatest characteristics is her refusal to be pigeonholed; she does not belong to any particular 'school' of thought nor is she any sort of 'ist'. None-the-less, her writings have exerted distinctive and important influences on feminist, critical and abolitionist perspectives and on criminology more generally.

I first met Pat in 1976 when she interviewed me and, with the late Mike Collison, subsequently taught me on the MA in Criminology in the Law Department at Keele University. John Pratt was also on the course that year and I imagine that there are a number of people here today who also experienced that uniquely inspirational duo of lecturers. Pat had just published *Magistrates' Justice*² and it was clear that this was a new and innovative voice in the field of criminology. In 1980, I was fortunate enough to be appointed a temporary lecturer to cover for Pat while she undertook the fieldwork for *Women's Imprisonment*³, so I have always felt (quite unjustifiably) that I made a contribution to that book.

A year later, Pat became my PhD supervisor and taught me everything I know about research. I am sure there are others - some here today - who have experienced Pat's uncompromising but supportive style of supervision: Bankole Cole, Jo Phoenix, Hillary Bradshaw, now Jones, to name but a few. In

¹ Hayward, K., Maruna S. and Jane Mooney, J. (2010) *Fifty Key Thinkers in Criminology*, Abingdon: Routledge.

² Carlen, P. (1976) *Magistrates' Justice*, London: Martin Robertson

³ Carlen, P. (1983) *Women's Imprisonment: A Study in Social Control*, London: Routledge and Keegan Paul.

1987, Pat invited me to edit *Gender, Crime and Justice*⁴ with her. This was a typically generous gesture and indicative of the support and guidance she gave to young academics - she also co-edited books with Mike Collison⁵ and Dee Cook⁶. She is always an exacting but hugely stimulating collaborator.

It was 20 years ago that Pat founded the Department of Criminology at Keele and the first undergraduate criminology degree programme in the country. Dee Cook, Richard Sparks and Ian Loader joined Pat and Mike and, by 1993, so did I. It was an exciting time as the undergraduate programme expanded. By the time Pat left Keele in 1996, we had been joined on the staff by Lynn Hancock, Ruth Jamieson, Tim Hope, Sandra Walklate and Barry Godfrey. Evi Girling had joined us as a Research Fellow. At least two other well-known criminologists - Elaine Crawley and David Gadd - were undergraduate students at that time and Rob Mawby was a PhD student. Please forgive me if I have missed out others with strong Keele connections during that period.

As a Head of Department, Pat set very high standards for the rest of us but she was a fiercely loyal and protective colleague and she always seemed to get the best out of us, partly, I'm sure, because of her commitment to transparent equality. She never asked us to do anything she wouldn't do herself and she would always teach more hours and mark more essays than anyone else. An ethos of equality was one of her great legacies, continuing, I believe, to this day. Another was her determination to keep a strong gender balance at all levels within the staff group.

Since leaving Keele, Pat has written more books (18 in all on subjects as varied as truancy, homelessness, official discourse and imaginary penalties as well as women offenders) and scores of journal articles. She has taught and supervised more students and become Editor-in-Chief of the *BJC*. She was the second of only four British-based women to receive the American Society of Criminology's Sellin-Glueck Award for outstanding international contributions to criminology in 1997. Throughout her academic career she also worked tirelessly for women prisoners and, with the late Chris Tchaikovsky, founded the *Women in Prison* campaigning group.

Pat's latest book, *A Criminological Imagination*⁷, was published in June. It consists of excerpts from all Pat's major publications, selected by her - what might be termed a 'retrospective' of her work. It confirms the breath-taking range of Pat's writing and the unfettered nature of her thinking. In the nicest possible way, you never know what Pat is going to say next!

So it gives me great pleasure to present you, Pat, with the British Society of Criminology's 2010 Award for Outstanding Achievement.

⁴ Carlen, P. and Worrall, A. (1987) *Gender, Crime and Justice*, Maidenhead, Open University Press.

⁵ Carlen, P. and Collison, M. (eds.) (1980) *Radical Issues in Criminology*, London: Martin Robertson.

⁶ Carlen, P. and Cook, D. (eds.) (1989) *Paying for Crime*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

⁷ Carlen, P. (2010) *A Criminological Imagination: Essays on Justice, Punishment, Discourse*, Aldershot: Ashgate.