

CRIMINOLOGIST CORNER(ED)

The BSC's monthly interview with the great, the good and the...hoping for greatness

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Jess Lawrence - Interventions Alliance

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Where is home?

Just outside sunny Brighton – although I'm proudly Welsh (originally from the not-quite-so-sunny Swansea Valley).

How did you become a Criminologist?

I think the universe had plans for me. While I was looking for my 'dream research job' in psychology academia, I started as a temp admin in probation – then after a few different jobs in probation my CRC started an in-house research unit and my 'dream research job' came to me!

Who/what inspires you?

Wow, so many things and people. But I think mainly people who are passionate, loud and outspoken about things they care about.

What is your greatest fear?

I really am scared for how minorities are being treated both in the UK and abroad (looking at you, USA). Until fairly recently, I used to say how bizarre I found it that the legalization of 'homosexuality' is in such recent living memory – but now the rolling back of rights for trans people, migrants and women makes me worried that that level of restriction on individuals may not stay in the past forever.

What are you most passionate about?

Fighting the above! It's really scary out there for minoritised people, but building our army of allies for change and fighting back is so important. I believe in the resistance.

Who would play you in the film of your life?

I am famously useless with films, and by extension knowing anything about the people in them. Therefore I crowd-sourced the answer to this question – my nearest and dearest say that either Florence Pugh or Jennifer Lawrence are the right fit. Based solely on the video of the latter meeting Jack Nicholson after the 2013 Oscars, I am going to have to pick her! Evidently she shares my inability to be chill around people we look up to.

Which book that you haven't read do you most want to read?

Other than autobiographies, I struggle to get through non-fiction books outside of work. But that doesn't mean I don't want to read them! I know that Shon Faye's 'The Transgender Issue' is a landmark book and recommended for everyone, but (to my shame) I just haven't been able to get to it yet.

What Criminological work are you involved in at the moment?

I'm currently looking at psychological safety in justice workers – I recently published an article in Probation Journal on the importance of this for people supporting trans clients, and now I'm looking at the topic more broadly amongst colleagues in my own organisation (Interventions Alliance

deliver behavior change interventions, provide trauma informed homes and consultancy on related topics). I think it's such an important topic, because feeling psychologically safe means we are better able to learn and grow effectively, and therefore provide the absolute best care to their clients.

I'm also really passionate about improving support for trans people in the justice system, particularly in the community. This is something I'm always talking about – and keen to keep advocating for!

What do you hope to do next?

My work is always focused on listening to peoples' experiences and finding ways to improve them – whether that's for people who are involved with justice services or the people that deliver the work. Our organisation is growing and branching out in to other areas of delivery at the moment, so I'm excited to meet and hear from more people and drive more change.

We've got a project planned exploring the experiences of participants on behavior change interventions, and another around the emotional labour of colleagues in women's approved premises.

What would you have done if you hadn't become a Criminologist?

I have always wanted my career to be related to uplifting, supporting and advocating for marginalised people, so I think I'd either be in another area of academia (going back to my psychology roots and/or focused specifically on LGBTQ+ research),

or working for a charity with the same aims.

Finally, please share the one book, one album and one luxury item you would take to your desert island.....

Book: *Queer Criminology* by Carrie Buist & Emily Lenning

Album: I had to decide this based on my downloaded albums on Spotify... the one I reach for the most (without getting bored) seems to be Atreyu – The beautiful dark of life.

Luxury Item I just got back from a music festival and after 5 days in a tent have now decided I will never be separated from my wonderful, comfortable, cosy bed ever again.

Find out more about Jess and Interventions Alliance Here:



2nd International Conference on Global Criminology and Victimology

7-9 Aug 2025

The 2nd International Conference on Global Criminology and Victimology, hosted by the Assam Royal Global University in collaboration with the BSC Critical Criminology Network and the World Society of Victimology, will be held from 7 --9 August 2025.

Find out more here

next issue...

Prof Bhanu Prakash Nunna - RV University, India