



GSOC.CR4 Feminist Explanations of Crime and Gender Patterns

AQA 8192 · Calculators not allowed · about 75 minutes

Total Marks

--

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Use sociological vocabulary and name sociologists where you can.

- 1** Frances Heidensohn's control theory argues that women commit less recorded crime than men mainly because...

- ☐ A) women are naturally more law-abiding than men
- ☐ B) women are subject to greater patriarchal control, limiting their opportunities to offend
- ☐ C) women are punished more harshly than men for any crime
- ☐ D) crime statistics ignore all female offending

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

- 2** Heidensohn's theory rests on the concept of patriarchal control.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

- 3** Heidensohn identified different settings in which patriarchal control operates.

(a) Explain how Heidensohn argued women are controlled 'at home'. (2)

(b) Explain how Heidensohn argued women are controlled 'in public'. (2)

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

4 Explain how Heidensohn argued women are controlled 'at work'.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 The sociologist Pat Carlen interviewed working-class women who had been convicted of crime.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

6 Carlen also identified a second implicit 'deal'.

(Total for Question 6 is 4 marks)

7 State one criticism often made of Carlen's study.

(Total for Question 7 is 2 marks)

8 State one criticism often made of Heidensohn's control theory.

(Total for Question 8 is 2 marks)

9 Pat Carlen's concept describing the implicit promise of reward for working within the law is called the...

- ☐ A) gender deal
- ☐ B) class deal
- ☐ C) strain theory
- ☐ D) master status

(Total for Question 9 is 1 mark)

10 Two women of similar age and financial background are both experiencing serious hardship. One has a stable, supportive family life. The other has recently left an unhappy and controlling relationship and has little family support.

Using Carlen's concept of the gender deal, explain why the second woman might, according to Carlen's theory, be more likely to see crime as an option.

(Total for Question 10 is 6 marks)

11 Sociologists urge caution when comparing recorded crime statistics between men and women.

- (a)** State one recorded pattern in official crime statistics regarding gender. (2)
- (b)** State one reason feminist sociologists give for being cautious about reading this pattern as simply meaning 'men offend more'. (2)

(Total for Question 11 is 4 marks)

12 Feminist sociologists have also examined how the criminal justice system might treat men and women differently.

Define the 'chivalry thesis'.

(Total for Question 12 is 4 marks)

13 Not all sociologists accept the chivalry thesis without qualification.

(Total for Question 13 is 4 marks)

14 Explain one way that being a mother might, according to feminist sociologists, affect a woman's likelihood of receiving a prison sentence compared with a man convicted of a similar offence.

(Total for Question 14 is 4 marks)

15 Explain one reason why feminist sociologists argue crime should not be studied only by looking at male offenders.

(Total for Question 15 is 2 marks)

- 16** Compare Heidensohn's control theory and Carlen's class deal/gender deal as explanations for lower recorded female offending.

(Total for Question 16 is 4 marks)

- 17** Feminist sociologists also use the concept of the 'dark figure of crime' when discussing women and crime.

(Total for Question 17 is 4 marks)

Mark scheme · GSOC.CR4 Feminist Explanations of Crime and Gender Patterns

Question 1

- **B1** B (women are subject to greater patriarchal control, limiting their opportunities to offend)
- **Answer: B**

Question 2

- **B1** social control exercised by men over women, restricting women's behaviour and opportunities within a male-dominated society (oe)
- **B1** development, e.g. operating in different settings, such as the home, in public and at work
- **Answer: Social control exercised by men over women, restricting women's behaviour and opportunities within a male-dominated society; it can operate in the home, in public and at work.**

Question 3

- (a) **B1** identifies that domestic responsibilities such as housework and childcare restrict women's time and freedom
- (a) **B1** development, e.g. limiting opportunities to be out of the home, where most recorded crime happens
- **(a) Answer: Domestic responsibilities such as housework and childcare restrict women's time and freedom, limiting their opportunities to be out of the home, where most recorded crime takes place.**
- (b) **B1** identifies that fear of male violence can restrict where and when women feel able to go out
- (b) **B1** development, e.g. this limits opportunities for offending and for association with delinquent peer groups in public spaces
- **(b) Answer: Fear of male violence can restrict where and when women feel able to go out, limiting their opportunities for offending and for association with delinquent peer groups in public spaces.**

Question 4

- **B1** identifies that women are more likely to be supervised by men in the workplace
- **B1** development, e.g. women may risk their job or reputation through offending at work
- **B1** further point, e.g. workplace supervision and expectations can reduce both the opportunity and the incentive to break rules
- **B1** correctly links this to Heidensohn's wider control theory as a third distinct setting alongside home and public space
- **Answer: Heidensohn argued women are more likely to be supervised by men at work and risk their job or reputation through offending, reducing both the opportunity and the incentive to break workplace rules.**

Question 5

- **B1** identifies the 'class deal' as the implicit promise that, in return for working within the legitimate economy, a person will be rewarded with a reasonable standard of living
- **B1** development, e.g. Carlen argued that when working-class women feel this deal is not available, for example through poverty or unemployment, it can break down
- **B1** further point, e.g. when the class deal breaks down, crime can start to look like a rational alternative for meeting material needs
- **B1** correctly and specifically attributes this concept to Carlen's study of women and crime
- **Answer: Carlen's 'class deal' is the implicit promise that working within the legitimate economy will bring a reasonable standard of living; when working-class women feel this deal is unavailable, for example through poverty, crime can start to look like a rational alternative.**

Question 6

- **B1** identifies the 'gender deal' as the implicit patriarchal promise that conforming to a traditional female role, e.g. as wife and mother, will bring emotional and material rewards
- **B1** development, e.g. Carlen argued that when women feel this deal has failed them, for example through an unhappy or difficult home life, they have less reason to conform
- **B1** further point, e.g. this can make crime seem like a more reasonable option
- **B1** correctly distinguishes the gender deal from the class deal explained in Q5
- **Answer: Carlen's 'gender deal' is the implicit patriarchal promise that conforming to a traditional female role will bring emotional and material rewards; when women feel this deal has failed them, they have less reason to conform, making crime seem more reasonable.**

Question 7

- **B1** identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. it was based on a small, unrepresentative sample of women who were already involved in crime
- **B1** brief development, e.g. so its findings may not generalise to women in general
- **Answer: Carlen's study was based on a small, unrepresentative sample of women who were already involved in crime, so its findings may not generalise to women in general.**

Question 8

- **B1** identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. it may understate women's own choices and agency, treating female behaviour as mainly shaped by male control
- **B1** brief development
- **Answer: Critics argue control theory may understate women's own choices and agency, treating female behaviour as mainly shaped by male control rather than by women's own decisions.**

Question 9

- **B1** B (class deal)
- **Answer: B**

Question 10

- **B1** identifies the gender deal as the implicit promise of reward for conforming to a traditional female or family role
- **B1** explains the first woman's stable family life means the gender deal is still broadly being honoured for her
- **B1** explains the second woman's unhappy, unsupported situation means the gender deal has broken down or is not available to her
- **B1** links this absence of reward to Carlen's argument that crime can then appear a more reasonable choice
- **B1** correctly notes that financial hardship alone, shared by both women, is not what makes the difference in Carlen's argument here; it is the state of the gender deal
- **B1** accurate use of Carlen's terminology throughout
- **Answer: The first woman's stable family life means her gender deal is still broadly honoured, giving her a reason to conform; the second woman's unhappy, unsupported situation means her gender deal has effectively broken down, so, according to Carlen, she has less reason to conform and crime may look like a more reasonable option, even though both women face similar financial hardship.**

Question 11

- (a) **B1** identifies a genuine recorded pattern, e.g. men are convicted of far more recorded crime than women
- (a) **B1** brief accurate development
- (a) **Answer: Official statistics show men are convicted of far more recorded crime than women.**
- (b) **B1** identifies a genuine reason, e.g. some female crime, such as theft or violence within the home, may be less likely to be reported or officially recorded in the first place
- (b) **B1** brief development
- (b) **Answer: Some crime committed by women, such as theft or violence within the home, may be less likely to be reported to or recorded by the police, meaning recorded figures may not fully reflect underlying offending by gender.**

Question 12

- **B1** the chivalry thesis argues the criminal justice system, e.g. the police and courts, treats women more leniently than men for similar offences (oe)
- **B1** development, e.g. women may be more likely to receive a caution rather than a charge for a similar offence
- **B1** further point, e.g. this leniency is contested and debated among sociologists rather than universally accepted
- **B1** correct use of the term 'chivalry thesis'
- **Answer: The chivalry thesis argues the criminal justice system treats women more leniently than men for similar offences, for example through cautions rather than charges, though this claim is debated among sociologists.**

Question 13

- **B1** identifies a recognised criticism, e.g. leniency may not be shared equally, and can particularly benefit women seen as conforming to traditional expectations of femininity
- **B1** development, e.g. women judged to have broken gender norms, for example through violent crime, can instead be treated especially harshly
- **B1** identifies this pattern as sometimes called 'double deviance': being punished both for the offence and for departing from expected gender behaviour
- **B1** further point, e.g. this suggests the criminal justice system's treatment of women may depend heavily on how far a woman's behaviour matches or breaks traditional expectations, not simply on being female
- **Answer: Critics argue chivalry is not shared equally: it may particularly benefit women seen as conforming to traditional femininity, while women judged to have broken gender norms, for example through violent crime, can be treated especially harshly, sometimes called 'double deviance'.**

Question 14

- **B1** identifies that courts may be reluctant to separate young children from their primary carer
- **B1** development, e.g. this can lead to more non-custodial sentences, such as community orders, for mothers than for otherwise similar male offenders
- **B1** further point, e.g. this reflects wider social expectations about women's caring roles rather than the seriousness of the offence alone
- **B1** correctly links this to wider debates about gendered treatment in the criminal justice system introduced in Q12 and Q13
- **Answer: Courts may be reluctant to separate young children from their primary carer, so mothers convicted of an offence may be more likely to receive a non-custodial sentence than a man convicted of a similar offence, reflecting wider social expectations about women's caring roles.**

Question 15

- **B1** identifies that criminology historically focused mainly on male offending
- **B1** development, e.g. this risks giving an incomplete or distorted picture of crime, its patterns and its causes
- **Answer: Criminology historically focused mainly on male offending, which feminist sociologists argue risks giving an incomplete or distorted picture of crime, its patterns and its causes.**

Question 16

- **B1** identifies that both are feminist explanations focusing on how patriarchal social structures shape women's behaviour
- **B1** explains Heidensohn emphasises broad, everyday control across the home, public space and work
- **B1** explains Carlen focuses more specifically on the material and emotional 'deals' offered to working-class women and what happens when these deals break down
- **B1** development noting the two explanations are complementary rather than contradictory, both pointing to patriarchal structures rather than biology as the cause of gender differences in recorded crime
- **Answer: Both are feminist explanations rooted in patriarchal social structures: Heidensohn emphasises broad, everyday control across home, public space and work, while Carlen focuses more specifically on the material 'class deal' and emotional 'gender deal' offered to working-class women; the two views are complementary rather than contradictory.**

Question 17

- **B1** identifies the dark figure of crime as the gap between crimes that occur and crimes officially recorded
- **B1** development, e.g. domestic abuse is currently underreported, partly due to fear, shame or dependency on the abuser
- **B1** explains this means official statistics may understate the true scale of women's victimisation
- **B1** further point, e.g. it may also understate offending that takes place within private, domestic settings
- **Answer: The dark figure of crime is the gap between crimes that occur and crimes officially recorded; domestic abuse is currently underreported, partly due to fear, shame or dependency on the abuser, so official statistics may understate the true scale of women's victimisation and of offending within private, domestic settings.**