Editors’ Introduction: Ken Pease (1943- ): A Prospective Obituary

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"Being ever of a maudlin disposition (I dug graves in the vacations) I read every obituary in all the journal issues I ever opened." (Pease, 1998a, p. 163)

Those of you who knew Ken Pease will not be surprised at his failure to conform in time for this obituary. It will have to serve as a draft, and we welcome his further input for a revised version. However, this leaves us in the disappointing and methodologically challenging position of writing a prospective obituary. It is therefore serendipitous that, to our knowledge,

such a prospective-retrospective has not been previously applied as methodology in a criminological context, and we claim it as an original contribution. Were he with us today, Ken would be proud. Then he would speedily edit the material, adding value and insight throughout while thoughtfully correcting us grammar.

Since this is not a posthumous volume at time of going to press, it is clear that we come here not to bury Pease but to praise him. For the former of these two acts would, in present circumstances, lead to somewhat incredulous choking on his part. However, we know this would be accompanied by praise for our foresight and efficiency in completing the task in advance of the traditional deadline. This *festschrift* belatedly marks Ken’s official, if rather early, retirement in 2003, and pays tribute to his various criminological contributions to date. This is despite the fact that we predict these contributions will, no matter how hard we protest, continue for many years to come.

**Pease Popularity Problem**

It was always clear that Ken Pease’s ridiculous popularity would present a problem for editors seeking to compile a single volume. It has been our frequent wish that Ken was not so collegiate, so prolific, so generous of co-authorship, had not mentored so many students or assisted so many colleagues in various tasks, with such consistency and distinction for so long a period. That he unfortunately did so presented us with the unenviable task of being able to invite only a fraction of those who would have wished to contribute. That Ken were less giving of his time and skills, less generous with his ideas, sparkling imagination, extensive knowledge and outrageous capacity for methodological innovation, would clearly have been desirable. However, it was not within our capacity to produce the Encyclopaedia Peasia in 26 volumes. While we realise Ken may not forgive this lack of capacity on our part, we ask the forgiveness and understanding of colleagues we were unable to ask to contribute. We thank and applaud those who did for making this what we hope is also a substantive contribution to knowledge and crime prevention practice.

Popularity, however, was only one of Ken’s many problems. A lack of respect for the academic establishment and its practices was evident through his career. This was nowhere more obscure than in his singular preference to appear as last author on his publications, despite so often being both intellectual driving force and principal writer. We refute Nick
Ross’s description of Pease as “absurdly humble” in the Preface to this volume, and prefer to categorise him as wilfully anarchic, verging on unprofessional. That Pease had a somewhat crude lack of materialistic greed, frequently spurning his consultancy fees and preferring to pass it to a needy research assistant or churn it back into his research, was overcome upon retirement only by the need to purchase food and clothes. Were it not for the scope and impact of his academic work, and the respect it engendered in such a range of colleagues and institutions, such fundamental flaws would surely have precipitated his more rapid demise. In his academic work, far too many were the times when Pease elected to constructively build upon the work of others, offering sound advice and encouragement, when a damning indictment would have been less arduous and more publishable. It is a wonder that he survived so long without the hardnosed attitude characteristic of so many academics, and we look forward to the day when this flagrant abuse of academic tradition is practised no longer.

**Criminal Careers and Career Criminologist**

Born 5th August 1943, the precocious intellect of Kenneth George Pease was in evidence from the outset. At the age of 11 he scored the highest exam result (for the legendary British “eleven plus”) in the county of Cheshire. When offered sponsorship to attend the venerable Westminster School in London, he rejected it in favour of a more local establishment. After being tempted to read for an undergraduate degree in Psychology at University College London, the young Pease returned to northwest Britain, where he then remained despite a range of efforts to entice him away. Utilising a prospective model of residential locations (based on Johnson et al., 2004), we predict with near certainty that he will remain in this location. This is not least due to the proximity of the soccer grounds of Manchester City, Stockport County and Stalybridge Celtic: It was long clear that Ken’s pursuit of the underdog applied to sport as much as to canines that occupied his time and residence.

To his credit, Pease was always an advocate of clarity and truth in the visual display of quantitative information. He had a penchant for the work of Edward R. Tufte (e.g., Tufte, 1992). We think they would be proud of the way we have shaped Figure 1, making it somewhat squarer than a traditional chart in order to exaggerate the aggressiveness of the publication trajectory. Note how the same chart with a more typical x-axis would not produce quite the same erection. By the time of publication
of this volume, Pease will almost certainly have published more than 250 works of various types. We were only able to obtain data on 224 publications by 2004 as he “has lost track” of some of them in recent years. This simple counting of publications masks significant variation in terms of articles, books and monographs (Table 1). This analysis understates the widespread impact of Pease’s work, the reading of which some commentators have argued was more contagious than a cold on a damp winter morning, if slightly less likely to require antihistamines.

In their tribute to Leslie Wilkins (to which Pease contributed), Gottfredson and Clarke (1990) analysed publication patterns and identified two types of Wilkins. The first was the British civil servant, and the second the American academic, with the latter slightly more prolific. Our examination of the trajectory of the Pease publication rate suggests, rather, three stages of an ongoing criminal career. After onset, even as an initiate, Pease’s involvement in crime was frequent. Prolific and serious subsequent
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involvement with periods of both generalism and specialism have led to a seeming reluctance to desist. The period we characterise as onset and initiation lasted until around 1977. During this period, Pease fenced his criminal wares at Manchester University, then as Senior and Principal Research Officer at the Home Office (1972-1976). The value of his average annual offence rate, lambda, was approximately 2.11 (19 publications over nine years). In stage 2, Pease was a persistent, prolific and serious offender through the 1980s as Head of the School of Sociology and Social Policy at Ulster Polytechnic (1981-1983), and upon return to his old stomping ground at Manchester University as Senior Lecturer (1983-1986), then Reader (1986-1995). From 1978 to 1989 inclusive, Pease’s offending lambda was 5.5 (66 publications in 12 years). The latest epoch of Pease’s career commenced at the start of the 1990s (136 publications over 15 years), which saw an escalation of offending with an annual lambda of 9.1. Numerous career advancements – appointment to a Professorial Chair at the University of Manchester in 1995, acting Head of the Home Office Policing and Reducing Crime Unit (1999-2000) and setting up the successful Applied Criminology Group (1995-2003) at the University of Huddersfield – failed to stop Pease from collaborating with a range of co-offenders. As visiting professor at University College London and at Loughborough University, he appears both relentless and unrepentant. Over the years he ruthlessly pressed initiates into service, and apprentices into more serious work. The Pease criminal career resulted in a protracted series of grave offences against previous ways of thought, method, policy and practice. It is noteworthy not only for its duration but also for its particular trajectory. While desistance is commonly at a younger age for most offenders, it is clear that Pease continues to be offensive well beyond his sixtieth birthday.

A career of such profligacy and seriousness is rare. It landed Ken in hot water on countless occasions. He was frequently retained by the police and held at Her Majesty’s pleasure. Both he and his work were routinely processed the length and breadth of the criminal justice system. Pease-related crime writings hold an unusually high re-sale value on the black market of policy and practice. They appear unusually accessible, durable and – a particularly odd characteristic – useful. Perhaps it was his interaction with Interpol or the UN, or perhaps the rise of mutual extradition treaties, but Pease was frequently deported to countries around the world, only to escape and return to hunt in his native Stockport. And despite numerous appearances before the Parole Board since 1987, like many such organis-
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ations, they were reluctantly obliged to release Pease on his own recogni-
sance. The result was that few contemporary criminals were on first name
terms with so many senior police, criminal justice and crime policy-making
figures as the fugitive Ken Pease. Though he never broke bail or other
agreements, his “Wanted” mug-shot and by-line appeared in diverse com-
munication media around the world. Even that tabloid rag *The Economist*
demanded he write about his imprisonment experiences for their annual
global review (Pease, 1989). Amongst the harsher of many sentences meted
out, Pease was condemned to be a Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts
from 1995, and shackle by the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in
1997 for services to crime prevention. Note the arresting and familiar
orientation of Photo 1 when Pease successfully infiltrated the grounds of
Buckingham Palace. Since the abolition of capital punishment, the OBE
is one of the severest sentences that can be bestowed upon a U.K. citizen.
Only placing him in the stocks at the Tower of London would be more
fitting, and we know of only a handful of academic criminologists war-
renting this or similar measures: Sir Anthony Bottoms, David Farrington
OBE, Roger Hood CBE, Pat Mayhew OBE, the late Sir Leon Radzinowicz,
Nick Tilley OBE, and Paul Wiles (Order of the Bath). A rogue’s gallery
if ever there was one.

Some unpublished career highlights should not go unrecognised. In
1980, as expert consultant to the Sixth United Nations Crime Congress,
Pease sat on the podium in Caracas, Venezuela, in front of the diplomatic
missions of the world. Suddenly, eyes from around the globe alighted upon
him. With a brief delay for the Chinese translation to which he was
inadvertently listening through his earpiece at the time, he heard his name
mentioned and realised he had been asked a question. The world’s finest
diplomats awaited his pronouncement as he shifted uncomfortably in his
seat and, in an effort to avoid international dispute, strove to answer the
unheard question with the profundity and insight upon which his reputa-
tion was built. Never a prouder moment for the pioneering analyst of the
early UN crime surveys.

Among Ken’s more irritating habits was his ability to persistently
inspire others. Few among us can say they have not, after even only a few
minutes with Ken, been left with a new research idea, a fresh momentum
and spirit, or even a whole new research agenda. We have lost count of
the number of people who should, but rarely do, blame Pease for their
peculiar career path. And he was as generous with his ideas as his time. And,
while we talk of intellect, that is not to detract from his professionalism.
Photo 1: Pease Steals OBE Award from Buckingham Palace and Celebrates with Family in 1997 (left to right: Nick, Judy, Ken, Katie)
His ability to draw criminological insight from The Simpsons TV show is legendary.

In truth though, we write of an academic sports star. A meet was better attended and more successful if Ken was in the starting line-up. He had the talent that turns heads. Peers and onlookers watched with awe. Few have his mental agility to turn on the spot and play the unanticipated through-pass that cuts open the defence. Fewer still have the creativity combined with that lightning burst of pace. Unique was his ability to bring such qualities to the field with consistency, disarming ease, and grace. The crowd roared.

**So What? Was Pease Effective?**

Peer citation is a commonly used indirect measure of intellectual impact. For the period 1991-1995 Pease topped the citation rankings for the *British Journal of Criminology* after the British Crime Survey main reports personified by Pat Mayhew and Mike Hough.\(^1\) This was a move up the charts from eighth-place for 1986-1990 (Cohn and Farrington 1998). We confidently anticipate a high ranking if analysis were conducted for more recent years. Reflecting this trajectory, plus decreased international insularity due to the Internet, we would anticipate a significant promotion in relation to non-British journals over the last decade. This would be despite the Pease habit of pursuing useful applied work, a refusal to resort to grandiose theory, plus an eschewal of large academic conferences and the limelight generally. Moreover, we note the absence of publication frequency and citation analysis for the field of crime prevention, where we anticipate Pease would be on the podium.

What could be called the “pioneer’s paradox” is that truly influential work becomes normalised to the extent that, to future generations, it appears commonplace. The best work appears so obvious that the work achieves public ownership. In the late 1970s and 1980s, Pease was probably the leading scholar of community service orders (including Pease, 1975, 1978, 1983a; Pease et al., 1977; McWilliams and Pease, 1980). His work on judicial sentencing (Thorpe and Pease, 1976; Hine, McWilliams and Pease, 1978; Fitzmaurice and Pease, 1981, 1986; Wasik and Pease, 1986), crime seriousness (Wagner and Pease, 1978; Pease, 1988), probation (Pease, 1985b, 1999; Laycock and Pease, 1985; McWilliams and Pease, 1990; Humphrey and Pease, 1992; Humphrey, Carter and Pease, 1992, 1993), and prison populations (Pease, 1980; Harvey and Pease, 1987), falls
into this category. For a couple of decades Pease was arguably one of the few real universalists, foraging across broad swathes of the criminological steppes, his crime prevention interest always evident but taking time to emerge as a specialism. Note that only a smattering of Pease publications and topics are mentioned above, and others include various areas of policing, parole recovention predictors, evaluation methodology, incapacitation, the uses of criminal statistics, recovention predictors, domestic violence, obscene phone calls, community safety legislation, rape, child abuse, threats, and the utility of DNA evidence. His dozens of studies of repeat victimisation mean the subject now appears laughingly obvious. Since Ken directed the pioneering Kirkholt burglary project (Forrester et al., 1988; Pease, 1991), his work on repeats influenced local, national and international crime prevention and policing policies (see Gloria Laycock’s [2001] “repeat victimisation story”). One result was that the work of victim services and victim support agencies was re-conceived. The “Biting Back” project was the first to develop responses to crime that were graded according to risk (Chenery, Holt and Pease, 1997). It is now difficult, or perhaps just foolish, to study crime without accounting for repeats. His empirically-driven policy analyses (e.g., Pease, 1998b) spurred the investigation of spatially-near repeats, tactical repeats undertaken by the same modus operandi, and virtual repeats of similar places, products and other targets. His studies of how offenders repeat crimes, and the resultant detection possibilities, bridged the gap with criminal career research. To prevent crime by addressing some dimension of repetition ought to be termed a “Pease response” to capture the general notion.

Yet if there was a concern about Pease-led crime prevention projects it has always been that their implementation success may have been due to his particular vision and captaincy. Such ingredients are hard to replicate. Over a quarter of a century ago, Pease recognised that who implements wins:

[T]he cause of unease about the state of crime prevention is not with the lack of solutions, but with the lack of incentive to apply solutions. The most sophisticated technology available is useless in the absence of an adequate system to deliver it to the right place at the right time to prevent crime. (Pease, 1979, p. 233)

Other indirect indicators of impact are apparent. Longevity, though it takes various forms, can indicate influence. One specific example is Kuhn and Willi-Jayet’s (2005) test of a sentencing hypothesis proposed a quarter of a century earlier by Pease and Sampson (1977). Another would be that
there can be few if any authors who published more than Pease using the
data from the British Crime Survey and the United Nations Survey of
Crime Trends and Criminal Justice Systems, and certainly none who wrote
more imaginatively, for a quarter of a century to date.

It is difficult to capture the influence of the observation that prison
population per capita, the measure used by most studies, may be highly
misleading as a comparative measure of punitiveness (Pease, 1994, see
also Nuttall and Pease, 1994). Our notion of crime displacement was
transformed by Pease’s re-conceptualisation of the issue including: (1)
Displacement is a good thing because it shows, first and foremost, that
crime can be prevented; (2) displacement should be proactively used to
deflect crime from some situations and to shape crime patterns in others;
and (3) offenders can be “displaced” to licit activities (Barr and Pease,
1990). “Self-selecting offenders” was his favourite term for those people
whose minor legal infringements flagged their more serious offences – so
aptly encapsulated in a study of illegal parking in disabled bays. Both
drivers and vehicles were far more likely than the control group to have
outstanding warrants or additional violations (Chenery, Hernshaw and
Pease, 1999). These are just illustrative examples from a long list.

Pease wrote with flair and concision. When combined with his ten-
dency to a most un-academic clarity of expression, a talent for insightful
metaphor, and a preference for scientific method, it is a wonder his work
is read at all. One of the more personal anecdotes we located is this opening
of a book chapter:

As a student, I had the great pleasure of being taught by the statisti-
cian A. R. Jonckheere, originator of the eponymous trend test. I
held him in awe at the time because I was told he could play Scrabble
well in seven languages. His insistence on prediction was remorseless.
He described a visit he had made to the laboratory of the eminent
ethologist Nikolas Tinbergen. Jonckheere said the two men stood
in front of a tank of sticklebacks, and he challenged Tinbergen to
predict the behaviour of one fish in five-second units. Jonckheere
said that Tinbergen came out reliably better than chance according
to the sign test which he conducted in his head.

Criminology has not consistently engaged with the future . . .
(Pease, 1997, p. 233)

This seemingly innocuous tale introduced a study which outlined an agenda
for anticipating criminal opportunities. It trail-blazed the prediction of
crime futures. Ken’s work with the U.K.’s Foresight programme inspired
the crime and technology research programme of the Engineering and
Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). Along the way Pease introduced concepts and themes that underpin much of this growing area (see also Pease, 1998c, 1998d; Association of British Insurers, 2000; Foresight, 2000a; Davis and Pease, 2000; Pease, 2005). The study of the future is one of the threads that drove him to nurture a concept of crime science as the prevention of crime via all appropriate disciplines. Crime prevention as crime science should include engineering, biotechnology and other hard sciences, all of which have a major role to play in addressing crime. Ken may not forgive us for the fact that the bulk of present contributors derive primarily from the social sciences. However, for the fact he did not co-author or edit his own tribute volume, and for the detrimental effect this lack of input had upon many of the contributions, he only has himself to blame.

The Contributors

Rarely have we seen such an able set of academics so motivated to see the back of someone. The obvious dedication with which the chapters were compiled is merely one tribute to the unspoken desire to see the discipline rid of Ken Pease. That he continues to linger, making repeated and fruitful contributions, is somewhat disappointing to the bulk of the competitors herein. To speed the process, the only guidelines we gave contributing authors for this volume was that this was a Pease festschrift to be published in the Crime Prevention Studies series. Half a dozen of the contributing authors completed their doctoral theses under Ken’s supervision (Armitage, Everson, Farrell, Moss, Shaw, Tseloni). Most of the remaining have worked with, co-authored or frequently consulted and collaborated with Ken in some capacity. While some of the chapters are personalised (though this was not a requirement), the chapters went through the peer-review process in keeping with the series’ guidelines.

Nick Ross, whom we thank for so eloquent a Foreword, is the groundbreaking journalist and founding presenter of the monthly BBC television programme Crimewatch, now in its third decade. In 1993, Ross and Pease met when they sat on the select National Crime Prevention Board of the U.K.’s Home Office. Their collaboration contributed to the development of the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science based at University College London. Gloria Laycock, director of that institute, and Nick Tilley, both long-term Pease collaborators, outline crime science in their contribution. Paul Ekblom’s progressive thinking about rational choice theory provides
insights into offenders which will inform crime science. P-O. Wikstrom examines pitfalls in inter-agency work on crime prevention as well as criminality prevention, and proposes that the gulf between research into crime causation and into identifying preventive mechanisms for crime is not necessarily broad.

A key facet of Ken Pease’s work was that, no matter how sophisticated the underlying methodology, the product would be grounded in practical application. Ken’s work has been as influential in local areas as in national policy and internationally-recognised developments in methodology. Among the sound-bites that could be lifted from his work is the notion that crime should be prevented by all locally appropriate means. Three of the present chapters have a local or regional focus with broader implications. Kate Brookes and Jenny Ardley develop an index to measure the risk of burglary in Nottingham. Steve Everson and Pete Woodhouse examine the impact of Section 17 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, with particular reference to police Architectural Liaison Officers. And Rachel Armitage examines the impact of Secure by Design upon crime in housing.

A willingness to produce work contrary to academic fashion, where appropriate, is a frequent feature of Ken Pease’s work. The chapter by David Farrington, Trevor Bennett and Brandon Welsh evaluates an “unsuccessful” CCTV scheme. Crime was not prevented in this particular application of the technology, and it is clear that rigorous evaluation of “unsuccessful” projects can be tremendously informative.

The prediction of crime, crime’s unequal distribution, and innovative crime analysis techniques are areas that feature prominently in Ken Pease’s work. Prediction is a necessary if not sufficient step towards prevention. Shane Johnson and Kate Bowers contribute their work on prospective hotspots, which they developed with Ken Pease. John Eck, Ron Clarke and Rob Guerette add “Risky Facilities” to the lexicon of terms that encapsulate crime’s tendency to pursue repetitive patterns. Machi Tseloni provides our most sophisticated quantitative tribute, using multivariate analysis to examine area variations. Mandy Shaw and Sylvia Chenery examine the aftermath of victimisation while Michael Townsley and Graham Farrell further the study of repeat victimisation in relation to prison inmates. Ken Pease drove research and practice on crime’s tendency to repeat, which led Wesley Skogan to comment:

Probably the most important criminological insight of the decade has been the discovery in a very systematic fashion of repeat multiple victimization. This has tremendous implications both for criminological theory and . . . practice in the field. (Skogan, 1996, p. 3)
Concluding Comments

With the seemingly pessimistic insight for which Ken Pease is known amongst colleagues, Richard Dawkins once noted:

I am lucky to be in a position to write [a book], although I may not be when you read these words. Indeed, I rather hope that I shall be dead when you do. Don’t misunderstand me. I love life and hope to go on for a long time yet, but any author wants his work to reach the largest possible readership. Since the total future population is likely to outnumber my contemporaries by a large margin, I cannot but aspire to be dead when you see these words. (Dawkins, 1998, pp. 3-4)

We therefore conclude with the optimistic note that we anticipate Pease making a significant posthumous contribution to the study of crime and its prevention. It would perhaps be too cheerful to hope that you are reading it when he (or more preferably, all editors and contributors) has long passed. While it is regrettable that the inception of a posthumous Pease contribution continues to be delayed by his unrelenting selfishness, this is something we will endure. While this rough effort at an obituary is unsatisfactory, it will, at least, allow us to consult the subject on further details, analysis and measurement techniques, respectively.

Postscript

Ken Pease (1943– ) is rarely missed by his wife Judy (nee Judith Anne Parker), son Nick (Nicholas John), daughter Katie (Catherine Sally), and a small but loud pack of dogs. This volume is titled “Imagination for Crime Prevention” because imagination is the talent Ken believed most necessary, if often sadly lacking, in crime prevention research. It is but one of the qualities he brought to bear and without which his passing will be so much sweeter.

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NOTES

1. As well as being the most-cited BJC authors, Pat and Mike are two of the many colleagues who, in writing this section, we realize would have willingly contributed to this volume.

2. For documentation of the connection see the presentation by Alasdair Rose of EPSRC (Rose, 2004), which acknowledges the Foresight crime prevention panel review (Foresight, 2000b) as the starting point for the EPSRC initiative.

REFERENCES


