
ANNUAL REVIEW 2008-9

New
Thinking
About
Women &
Criminal
Justice

THE 
GRIFFINS
SOCIETY

THE GRIFFINS SOCIETY RESEARCHES AND PROMOTES EFFECTIVE PRACTICE IN WORKING WITH WOMEN WHO ARE IN PRISON OR SUBJECT TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE INTERVENTIONS IN THE COMMUNITY



INTRODUCTION TO THE ANNUAL REVIEW BY ROMA HOOPER, CHAIR



This has been an exciting and challenging year. Our first set of Fellows under our new system graduated at the end of last year fulfilling our best expectations that with the right support and structure in place the quality of research which our practitioner fellows are able to achieve can be ground breaking. This change in the Fellowship structure has been largely thanks to the LSE and Kate Steward engaging with individual academics who agreed to supervise each fellow. This new way of working is now embedded in the Fellowship Programme.

In May 2008 Kim Davis joined the Griffins Society as our Research and Information Officer and Kim, with her ability to bring in a wonderful group of volunteers, has proved a real asset to the organisation.

We were very sad to lose our very first director, Dr Kate Steward, who moved on to pastures new at the beginning of 2009.

Kate's contribution to the development of the Griffins Society has had a major bearing on where it is today. Her commitment from the very outset, when she joined as a PhD student in the late 90s to her taking on the role of director has not only been very valuable and much appreciated, but has made a significant impact on the profile and growth of the organisation.

We have been most fortunate in the employment of our new director, Peter Dunn, who has come to us with a wealth of experience and knowledge and has picked up the mantle from Kate with great enthusiasm. Peter is a former probation officer and Youth Justice Board policy advisor, and his previous post was Head of Research and Development at Victim Support.

We have been delighted with the work of our Sex Workers in Prison Project and the commitment and enthusiasm shown by Louise Clark, who turned her Fellowship research into a living product which now has a life of its own and we wish her well in her new endeavours.

And finally, the Griffins Society moved offices in February to the Angel. The offices are much better than the ones we had before and we now feel part of a community at the Claremont Centre.

We have an exciting year ahead of us and with our new team now settled in I believe the Griffins Society is set to continue with its growth and development.

The Griffins Visiting Research Fellowships Programme

Since 2000, the Society has provided the Griffins Fellowships Programme in partnership with the Mannheim Centre for Criminology at the London School of Economics. We provide people working with women in the criminal justice system with 'thinking space' and the opportunity to research an issue concerning women and criminal justice alongside their own work. They receive supervision from senior academics and coaching in social research methods. Fellowships research published this year included Pat Trehan's study of women drug users and their

needs. This shows how disrupted attachments are a feature both in women's drug use and their ability to engage with services. Her research has strong implications for work with women who abuse drugs. Similarly, Claire Taylor's study of volunteering in prison revealed the benefits and the drawbacks for women in custody of volunteering. Her findings were used in a recent government review of volunteering in the criminal justice system. We will shortly be publishing papers from the 2009 Fellowships. These will include research about why some women breach licence conditions, a study of 'what works' in local service delivery partnerships, an evaluation of a domestic violence programme, the innovative work of a Welsh women's centre, and a Youth Offending Team's pioneering work with girls and young women.

Sex Workers in Prison Project (SWIP)

This project concluded this year when the training for HM Prison Service staff that it originated was mainstreamed into their training programme for staff in women's establishments. The success of this project was celebrated at an event at LSE in April that was introduced by Baroness Corston. SWIP developed from Louise Clark's 2006 Fellowships research, which revealed ignorance and prejudice among criminal justice staff



about the needs of women who had been exploited by the sex industry before coming into prison. SWIP is an example of how the Griffins Society works hard to ensure research is applied in service development.

Women's Information Network (WIN)

WIN is a searchable on-line database of service delivery organisations throughout England and Wales that provide support and help to women offenders. Anyone with internet access can search it, free of charge, for information. During the past year we have increased the number of organisations listed on WIN to over 1100



and we have improved the regularity with which the information is updated: we now aim to contact every organisation once a year to update their entry. This work is undertaken by our small team of volunteers, most of whom are women currently serving prison sentences who come to the Griffins office each day on release on temporary licence. We value their work very highly, and they too enjoy learning new skills including internet searching, making telephone enquiries, and managing a database. Our plans for WIN include improving the usability of the database by introducing new search facilities, improving the accuracy and scope of the information, and evaluating users' satisfaction with it.

Strategy

Towards the end of this year we started a process of strategic review to gain a clearer vision for the Society's work and our future development. The review has resulted in a new Strategic Plan which gives us a better focus on our role in the criminal justice system. Our vision is to be the primary source of information and research about women offenders and effective programmes for working with women. This will help us deliver the role that Baroness Corston noted when she wrote "I recommend acceptance of the offer made by The Griffins to act as

a central repository for information for and about women who offend or are at risk of offending and to promote its use by others".¹ Our new Strategy has also brought with it a fresher, up to date 'look' for the Society, with a new logo and a statement of purpose that more clearly sets out what we do.

...and why the work of The Griffins Society is important

Perhaps because women offenders are a small proportion of the people convicted by the criminal justice system each year, their particular needs are often overlooked. Many women offenders are put through programmes designed for men, which may be irrelevant to the particular factors that led to them offending. Or they may not be offered any interventions that can help them avoid further offending, which then increases their likelihood of receiving a prison sentence. Women are likely to go to prison for less serious offences than men: currently, 68 per cent of women are in prison for non-violent offences, compared with 47 per cent of men.² Offending behaviour programmes designed with men in mind are not only irrelevant for many women, they can make things



worse for them. Recent research suggests that women offenders tend to have highly complex needs that are often overlooked by criminal justice agencies, making women more susceptible to imprisonment for breaching the conditions of community penalties or licences.³

The Griffins Society exists to promote a more informed debate about the criminal justice system's engagement with women offenders. This is so that these unfair inequalities can be overcome and women will receive more effective help in avoiding further offending.

¹ Home Office (2007) A Report of a Review by Baroness Jean Corston of Women with Particular Vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System. London, Home Office.

² Prison Reform Trust (2009) Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile June 2009. London, PRT.

³ Deedes, R (forthcoming) 'Double Invisibility' – Recalled and female, and forgotten in the Criminal Justice System? Griffins Fellowships Research Paper. London, The Griffins Society.

THE GRIFFINS SOCIETY'S 'OUTCOMES TRIANGLE'

Our strategic focus is on achieving outcomes for and about women offenders through new thinking about women and criminal justice.

PLANNING →

RESULTS →

TO ACHIEVE

New thinking
about women and
criminal justice

SPECIFIC AIMS → → OUTCOMES

1. Ensure accurate, accessible information is available
2. Ensure the dissemination of Fellows' research and encourage its implementation
3. Help practitioners and managers in the criminal justice system to be better informed

ACTIVITIES → → OUTPUTS

1. Provide the Women's Information Network and the publications database
2. Facilitate practitioner-led research in the criminal justice system (Fellowships)
3. Initiate innovative projects that implement research recommendations and establish effective practice

(With acknowledgements to Charities Evaluation Services.)

THE GRIFFINS SOCIETY'S PEOPLE

Our Council

Roma Hooper, Chair

Christina McComb, Treasurer

Professor Paul Rock

Professor Carol Hedderman

Wendy Cranmer

Rawle Beckles

Jackie Lowthian

Sally Wentworth-James

Liz Dibb

Dr Mike Shiner

Our Patrons

Baroness Helena Kennedy QC

Professor Frances Heidensohn

Angela Camber

Our President

The Lord Mayor of London

The staff

Peter Dunn, Director

Kim Davis, Research and
Information Officer

Lisa Jenner, Office Manager

Dr Kate Steward (Director until
December 2008)

Louise Clark (SWIP Project Manager
until April 2009)

We are grateful for the help and hard work of our volunteers, who include:

Simone 1

Simone 2

Maxine

Lisa

Krisan

Ayesha

Henry Kay, IT volunteer

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Statement of financial activities including income and expenditure account for the year ending 31 March 2009

The Griffin Society Financial Summary

Year ending 31 March	2008	2009
Income		
- project related	£22,830	£93,213
- donations	£2,210	£1,221
- investment income	£24,208	£24,326
Total income	£49,248	£118,760
Expenditure		
- Fellowship scheme	£36,931	£48,357
- SWIP project	£29,654	£44,801
- WIN project	£0	£44,270
- Other activities	£16,230	£6,636
- Governance costs	£2,336	£2,885
Total expenditure	£85,151	£146,949
Net operating income/expenditure	-£35,903	-£28,189
Gains/(losses) on investments	-£47,997	-£93,187
Net movement in funds	-£83,900	-£121,376
Reserves brought forward	£554,193	£470,293
Total funds carried forward	£470,293	£348,917

Note: full audited accounts for the Society are available on request

The Griffins Society

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