

the Howard League for Penal Reform

Early Career Academics Network Bulletin

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Introduction



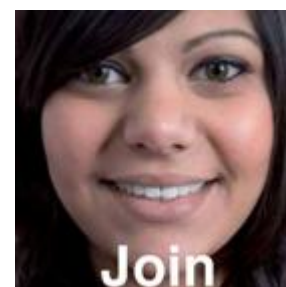
The new academic year and the new parliamentary sessions are just around the corner: a time for renewed vigour and activity at the Howard League. We would love you to be a part of it. So what are we up to?

On the parliamentary front we are holding fringe meetings at each of the three main party political conferences; we will continue to service the all party parliamentary group on women in the penal system and we will continue to add our voice to the various debates, publicly and privately with MPs and ministers. Look out for opportunities to add your voice and views; how about telling us what you think about the Probation Service using the ECAN facebook group? We will be submitting written evidence to the Justice Committee's proposed inquiry which closes mid September.

The academic year brings new opportunities to develop our student groups. See what Hannah McFaul, our national student organiser has to say (p.22) and see if you can help us establish a student group at your university. We will also publishing a range of new reports including something on short sentence prisoners, deaf prisoners, children in police custody and deaths in custody. Could these reports add to your research or perhaps some of our reports could feature on your reading lists?

Finally, we will be developing the networking opportunities for ECAN members in the coming months. Firstly, we would love for there to be more debate on the ECAN facebook page, tell us what you would like to discuss. And secondly, we will be hosting at least one event before the end of the year.

Keep up to date by looking at our website or why not become a member of the Howard League?



News

Going to the party conferences?

The Howard League is going to hold fringe meetings at each of the three main party political conferences this year. Access to those at the Conservative and Labour Party are in the secure area and so difficult to attend, but the meeting at the Liberal Democrat conference is open to everyone. The fringe meeting forms part of our Take Action campaign, will discuss the main theme of *Less crime, safer communities, fewer people in prison* and issues such as localism and real work in prison. It is on Monday 20 September 1pm - 2pm at Hilton Liverpool Meeting Room 6/7, 3 Thomas Steers Way Liverpool L1 8LW, 1-2pm. Frances Crook and several Liberal Democrat politicians will be contributing.



Inquiry into the future of the Probation Service

Parliament's Justice Committee has just announced it is to launch an inquiry into the future of the Probation Service. A central idea of the coalition government is for a 'rehabilitation revolution', so in some ways the Justice Committee is asking if the Probation Service in its current form is up to the challenge. Other issues on which it is seeking written evidence include: the appropriateness of commissioning; the ability to deal with special interest groups; and, the ability of the probation service to deal with more people should the use of short prison sentences be curtailed. The Howard League will be submitting evidence, the deadline in 13th September. Why not let us know what you think through our facebook group or contact my colleague, [Steve Gummer, directly](#).

Public confidence in criminal justice system

Research using the British Crime Survey has just been published that shows that between 2002 and 2008 there has been a 5% increase in public confidence in the criminal justice system. Confidence varied between geographic areas and between different demographic groups with women more confident than men, and interestingly greater confidence among young people and ethnic minority groups. The report also found that the greatest public confidence was in the police. The full report by Dominic Smith can be found [here](#).



The end of ASBOs?

The Howard League has never been a fan, and now it seems nor is Home Secretary, Theresa May. She has just announced a review of ASBOs in a speech at a London Community Centre (28 July) indicating that the police should use a "common sense" approach and that punishments should have a rehabilitative and restorative emphasis and not criminalise. New figures from the Ministry of Justice

show that 55% of the 17,000 ASBOs issued between 2000 and 2008 were breached. Half of those people who breached the ASBO were sent to immediate custody. Theresa May's analysis of the problems included the issue that some youngsters in particular saw an ASBO as a 'badge of honour' which again echoes the research by Chief Inspector Neil Wain [which we published a couple of years ago](#).

Animated views

The Howard League's U R Boss youth participation project has been working with a number of young people in prison and YOTs using different forms of media to understand what has happened in their lives and to express their opinions. Some of the youngsters have used animation. They are now available [on our website](#) and complement our new publication, [Life inside 2010](#).



Coalition plans for change

Over the summer Justice Minister Crispin Blunt has been suggesting a number of reforms might be afoot, many of them not only chime with the sentiments of Winston Churchill's 1910 speech but also the Howard League's agenda. Among those which we are particularly interested in are:

- The review of sentencing policy. Take a look at our [community programmes award winners](#) to see the range of good schemes already working to providing more effective community sentences.
- A green paper to reassess the effectiveness of indeterminate sentences (IPPs). A sentence which the Howard League has questioned in its legal work and in our report ([download for free here](#))
- Exploring real work for prisoners which allows for deductions from their earnings in properly paid work to contribute towards victims' services. The Howard League had its own social enterprise Barbed. It showed the value of real work and training opportunities for long term prisoners. [Have a look at our report](#) and look out for a new report which will soon be published on what happened to some of the Barbed staff



Features

The role of the arts: the potential for enhancing offender outcomes

Laura Caulfield



Laura Caulfield discusses her research into the role of the arts in criminal justice.

Over the past couple of years I've become increasingly interested in the role of the arts and other 'alternative' activities in prison. While traditional programmes in prison have been shown to be effective with some prisoners in some circumstances (Falshaw et al., 2003), the varying needs of those in prison suggests that a range of inputs is likely to be required to address this variety effectively. This knowledge, coupled with the abundance of positive anecdotal tales about the impact of arts based projects, led me to want to find out if arts based programmes really do have a positive impact on offenders. In 2008, along with colleagues in the Centre for Applied Criminology at Birmingham City University, I began evaluating the work of a charity called Good Vibrations and followed their work in prisons for eighteen months (Caulfield et al., 2010; Wilson et al., 2009). Since then I've also begun work reviewing a number of other arts-based projects, but the evaluation work with Good Vibrations is a good example of the potential long-term impact these projects.

Good Vibrations

Good Vibrations is a charity that runs music projects with prisoners and more recently, offenders on probation. Good Vibrations uses gamelan percussion music from Indonesia and provides intensive, usually week-long courses, for groups of around 15 to 20 prisoners. The courses are open to any prisoner (however other prisons target participants, e.g. the unemployed, the very low-skilled, people in touch with mental health teams, self-harmers), do not require any musical training prior to participation, and for many prisoners will be their first experience of education in the prison setting. As well as learning how to play traditional pieces of gamelan music, participants create their own compositions as a group. They also learn about Indonesian culture and associated art forms (e.g. shadow puppetry, Javanese dance). At the end of the week, prisoners perform a concert to which staff, peers, family members and others are invited.

Collecting the evidence

Against the background of some official concerns about the “public acceptability” of some arts in prisons projects, and taking into account that effective research into the arts should track participants over time, our work aimed to explore the long-term impact of taking part in a Good Vibrations project on participants while still in prison and those now released from prison.

Researchers spoke to men and women in prison and in the community who had taken part in a Good Vibrations project in prison. To assess the long-term institutional impact of taking part in Good Vibrations projects, research participants from HMP Grendon were tracked through the prison system. To measure whether any long-term impact was sustained as offenders leave prison, a sample of participants in the community who had previously taken part in a Good Vibrations project in prison were contacted. Finally, the effect of Good Vibrations project on adult female offenders was reviewed. Participants’ attitudes, emotions, and behaviours were measured through adjudication reports, OASys records, and interviews with participants and prison staff. An emotion scale developed by the research team and piloted in a previous study proved to be a useful tool for assessing emotional and psychological change over time in project participants.

Key findings

The key findings from our research suggest that Good Vibrations:

- Acts as a catalyst for change in the lives of offenders, and that this positive change is sustained as offenders move through the prison system and out into the community.
- Has a significant impact on male and female offenders in the general prison population and in therapeutic communities.
- Has a significant impact upon offenders over and above participation in a therapeutic regime.
- Significantly improves confidence, listening and communication skills, tolerance, levels of self-expression, and ability to cope with stress and prison life. For many participants these changes are sustained in the long-term.
- Enhances participants’ levels of engagement with further education and training.
- Has a significant positive impact upon the emotional well-being of female offenders.
- Is responsive to the differing needs of men and women in prison.



Overall, what our research tells us is that participating in Good Vibrations – and projects like it – can provide the starting-block for positive change in offenders. Many participants are able to leverage the impetus from these projects and use this to go on to achieve, both personally and practically. The research also suggests there is clear potential for arts-based programmes and more traditional programmes in prison to complement one another. The focus of traditional programmes has typically been something of a 'one size fits all approach'. Often, for example, prisoners with low literacy levels can be reluctant to engage with the 'basic skills' programmes offered in prisons. These kinds of formalised educational courses can, for many, seem like a replica of what turned them off education in the first place. This is where arts-based projects are different, providing an unthreatening introduction to learning and achievement. "The project has definitely made me more confident in the way I deal with people...and even in my own ability," said one participant of the Good Vibrations Gamelan in Prisons Project in June last year. "I've been more open to learning other things, because I am capable of learning."

Poor educational background is statistically associated with an increased risk of reoffending; therefore, it is important to assess how far projects may act as a stepping stone to more education, and thus impact upon prisoners' level of need and risk of reoffending. Aside from the clear potential of the arts in reducing reoffending, it is important to also recognise the humanising effect on individuals taking part in arts programmes. The prison service does not simply aim to incarcerate offenders, but aims to rehabilitate and provide purposeful activity. Increasing offenders' self-esteem, communication skills, and self-worth are vital in their own right and arts programmes appear to positively impact on these areas.

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Mental state: adaption to prison

Nic Bowler



Nic Bowler used a mixed methods approach to establish whether mental state in prison is linked to experiences inside and outside prison, and to understand how these factors operate within a prison population.

PhD Study

My study grew out of a mental health needs assessment exercise funded by a local health board in 2002. The School of Human and Health Science at Swansea University have subsequently supported me in developing my data into a PhD thesis and, consequently, I've spent the last eight years scouring a wide range of literature, collecting and analysing data and writing up the study. In this

article I would like to give an insight into my findings and a slightly more personal account of the experience of undertaking a PhD on the mental state of prisoners.

Background

For especially vulnerable individuals, prison can be a fatal experience and for many others it increases the risk of self-harm, continuing exclusion, mental health problems and negative life trajectories. Furthermore, productive sentences and constructive outcomes in respect of resettlement and rehabilitation after prison are unlikely without good mental health. There are now many epidemiological studies of prison populations showing dramatically raised psychiatric morbidity going back to Gunn et al. (1978), more recently Shaw's (2002) review and others such as Meltzer et al. (2002). Pre-prison stress linked to contact with the criminal justice system and court process has been associated with the emergence of psychiatric symptoms amongst prisoners during the early stage of imprisonment (Harding 1989). Although prison itself can be a constructive experience (Bonta and Gendreau 1990), many individuals experience prison as a damaging experience, deleterious to mental state (Birmingham 2003), where they cannot cope and are vulnerable to self-harm and suicide (Liebling 1995). Prisons are not equipped to deal with mental distress and do not adequately prepare prisoners for life outside (Prison Reform Trust 1995).

The combined problems associated with imprisonment and mental disorder impede reintegration and assimilation into mainstream community life, thus contributing to the likelihood of recidivism, continued exclusion and the absence of mental health care (Fryers et al. 1998). The Chief Inspector of Prisons identified that prison often exacerbated mental health problems

therefore impacting on both the individual prisoner and the community into which they are released (HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 2007). In my thesis I tried to identify the impact of these critical experiences upon prisoners' mental state, as despite this background of mental health problems within the prison population and the damaging long term effects, few prison research studies have attempted to capture the dynamic effect upon the individual of life before, during and after prison.

I was able to collect data relating to the mental state of 861 prisoners in two Welsh prisons and also data relating to multiple variables linked to prisoner's background, health, social status and experience. I also conducted focus groups which helped to set the statistical data against a 'real-life' background.

My study showed that:

- Many prisoners experience a 'nexus' of interconnected problems including poor education, unemployment, drug use, poor mental health and communicable diseases.
- Being on remand and being in prison for the first time were associated with poor mental state
- Remorse and variables related to personality type, specific offence and regime characteristics also had significant associations with poor mental state.
- A beneficial association was found from having had a previous sentence, and also from two counter-intuitive and previously unreported 'typical' social exclusion-related prisoner characteristics, i.e. being unemployed prior to prison and having a 'history of drug use'
- Professionals use alternative constructs for interpreting the mental state of prisoners, and as a consequence, 'atypical' and remorseful prisoners may possess hidden morbidity and need.

Adaptation to prison life

From these findings and a narrative of the 'lived' prison experience, entry-into or exclusion-from a socialised prison identity is proposed as a critical mediating factor for prisoners' mental state. This 'adaptation' hypothesis suggests that for many prisoners, prison may paradoxically create, maintain and reinforce an 'invulnerable' shared identity. This identity is based upon offending and common pre-prison social experience; adaptive prison socialisation and solidarity is predicated upon it. These factors appear to be protective of mental state. However the institutionally specific qualities of this shared 'prisonized' (Clemner, 1940) identity will work against preparation for life outside prison, given that successful integration within society requires different social attributes. The prison identity dynamic may be further reinforced upon release by public opinion which is intolerant of prisoners, presents an obstacle to their reintegration into society, and potentially strengthens offending identities and behaviours. Whilst prisons are now mandated to address prisoners' needs, their institutional constraints may ultimately make them both harmful for those excluded from the shared prison identity and unfit for the purpose of rehabilitation for those included within it.

'In the round' my findings strongly reflected the criminogenic backgrounds from which many prisoners are drawn. From the focus group data, multiple social disadvantages clearly played a significant role in drawing individuals into offending lifestyles. Therefore, I propose an adaptation theory, namely that a process of adapted identity and adaptive socialisation mediates mental



state in prison. This was a finding that was neither anticipated nor initially looked for. It was in the process of statistical testing that an initial review of the variables linked to social exclusion (as a discrete and manageable sub-set of 657 variables) started to throw up the 'reversal' of association with the 'history of drug use', 'previously sentenced', and 'unemployed' variables. This was contrary to expectation and initiated the adapted identity and adaptive socialisation line of enquiry. There does not appear to be any literature addressing quantitative prison data in the same way as this study, or drawing the same conclusions. However, I have become aware of other literature (Butler 2006) and research which has analysed the culture of prison and generated relevant theory qualitatively. This literature describes the enclosed

separateness of the prison environment, its hierarchical and punitive *raison d'être*, and its masculinist milieu predicated upon toughness (Mills 2003, De Viggiani 2003). Against such studies I hope that my thesis will find its proper context and contribute a combined epidemiological and narrative perspective to the available literature.

The PhD experience

Participation in the research felt immensely challenging, especially the requirement to understand the statistical data. Equally demanding was the sheer scale of managing such a wide-ranging PhD study part-time over eight long years. There were three or four barren years when I was unable to make the links between data sets, find satisfactory approaches to their analysis, cope with my workload, devote sufficient time to my studies, get anything at all written down, or generally see any constructive end point. It was at these darkest moments that I had to take ownership of the study and pull it up by its bootlaces. With hindsight I would change aspects of my preparation for research, and the study itself, particularly strengthening the link between data sets and questions concerning segregated prisoners as a sub-population of special interest. Perhaps the greatest challenge though has been my own lived experience of association with the prisons, the prisoners and those who work in all the prisons I have had contact with. I have enjoyed a special and privileged access to these closed institutional environments and continue to

be deeply affected by the experience. Getting prisons right is a reformative mission of importance, not just for those incarcerated or the victims of their crimes, but as a fundamental issue of social justice which affects all of us.

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Young people and their access to justice

Kathryn Farrow



Research literature about young people in terms of ‘access to justice’ tends to be dominated by concerns about young people who are outside the law due to their offending and anti-social behaviour. There is less focus on their potential to be vulnerable, and when this is the case, whether the law serves young people and acts as a framework to protect them.

Introduction

This article draws on a broader review of research conducted in 2007, which was one of a series exploring access to justice for vulnerable groups, funded by the Ministry of Justice (see also Mason and Hughes, 2009). This involved a focused literature review of published, peer reviewed research evidence, supplemented by insights from broader knowledge, including ‘grey’ literature. In this review, ‘justice’ refers to both fairness of process and fairness of outcome in addressing ‘justiciable problems’; that is, problems for which there is a potential legal remedy within a civil and / or criminal justice framework (Buck et al, 2005:302). The following discussion is structured to reflect some of the themes that emerged from the literature in relation to young people:

- The nature of youth as a period of risk of vulnerability;
- Young people as offenders and their welfare needs;
- Young people as witnesses to and victims and violence, and the effects of this.

Youth and vulnerability

In the UK, the ‘Every Child Matters’ framework for child and youth services is the key policy framework for young people and concerns children and young people aged up to and including 19 years. In this article, children and young people are defined as under-18 years of age to reflect the legal definition of child and adulthood. We can understand young people as vulnerable in the context of access to justice through a model of social vulnerability; that is, rather than being inherently vulnerable due to characteristics of age, social structures and processes create vulnerability (Wishart, 2003). There is ongoing professional discussion about re-focusing and re-framing of services from ‘protection’ to ‘support and prevention’ (embodied in ‘Every Child Matters’) and this has led to a flood of new initiatives, systems and advice which at the time this review was conducted had yet to be evaluated.

There is a common theme within research about the status of young people, and society's failure to recognise that young people rely on support mechanisms that often do not fully protect them. The family, schools, and court processes are all identified within the analytical literature as not fully meeting the needs of young people and children (Bailey and Whittle, 2004; Goldthorpe, 2004; Nykanen, 2001). Services that are required in order to provide specialist support are rarely adequately resourced, in particular those that have been established to address family breakdown, mental health problems and being witness to or the victim of crime (Bailey, 2003; Bailey and Tarbuck, 2006).

Several authors draw on their research findings to argue that in law, policy and practice, young children are readily seen as vulnerable, but young people - adolescents - less so. Adolescents tend to be viewed as a threat to communities and to other groups in society and involved in anti-social and disruptive behaviour, but evidence shows that in fact they are at the greatest risk of being victims of violence themselves (Bailey and Whittle, 2004). Furthermore, the physical, practical, emotional and cognitive dependence of children and young people on adults means that they are uniquely susceptible to abuse, neglect and violence at the hands of others (Goldthorpe, 2004). There are a number of research reports that explore the marginalisation of children (Nykanen, 2001; Goldthorpe, 2004); a tendency for society's view of what is normative behaviour to be too narrow (Daiute and Fine, 2003); and a denial of young people's rights to the same levels of justice expected by adults (Bailey and Whittle, 2004).

Young people as offenders

Young people as offenders, their circumstances and the policies and practices that aim to address their behaviour and reduce their involvement in offending dominate the research that considers young people's engagement with legal systems. There is a wealth of research which suggests that many people within our communities see offenders as threatening rather than vulnerable. However, young offenders frequently have co-existing vulnerabilities: mental health problems; insufficient parental support; substance misuse problems; and those stemming from poverty and deprivation (examples include, Bailey, 2003; Davies and McMahon, 2007; Farrington, 2002; Mason and Prior, 2008). Research has long demonstrated that adult offenders start their offending careers as children and young people, and it has highlighted how diverting people from delinquency benefits society as a whole as well as the young person. Bailey (2003) suggests that we should move away from a narrow conception of young people who offend as young offenders to recognise them as young people in need:



“... there has to be a cultural shift in understanding the importance of the need for treatment in young offenders both to reduce risk of re-offending, to protect the public and to increase life chances of young offenders becoming ‘healthy’ adults” (p.590)

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is key in defining policy and practice that aims to address youth offending. However, there is concern that its ability to shield young people from ‘populist punitiveness’ remains fragile, especially when adolescents are so readily seen as threatening and the cause of much of anti-social behaviour, and research emphasises the poor outcomes for young offenders who are imprisoned (Rutherford, 2002). Rutherford (2002) argued that the Youth Justice Board should be moved to the Department for Education with its wider brief of ensuring equality of outcomes for all young people regardless of any involvement in offending behaviour. (More recently the YJB has been moved to the Ministry of Justice, arguably quite the opposite of Rutherford’s proposal). He suggested that such a move would place “an emphasis on social inclusion [that] promises a more progressive set of policy and practice responses for youth justice” (p.100). These concerns are echoed by Goldthorpe (2004) in her analysis of emergent government policy: “children and young people at risk of offending are no less children in need than any other child” (p.130). Thus, in the broadest sense, young offenders can be seen to lack access to justice as policy and practice is primarily focused upon offending behaviour rather than their wider needs.

Relating to this conception and serving as a useful illustrative example is a substantial body of research that emerged during the review process that highlights the mental health needs of young people who offend, particularly the over-representation of young people with mental disorders in the criminal justice system. Callaghan et al. (2003) undertook a qualitative study of 60 young offenders referred to mental health workers in two UK Youth Offending Teams and found a range of problems associated with poor mental health and the centrality of poor mental health to these young people’s offending. Bailey and Tarbuck’s (2006) systematic review of research in both the UK and US identified that young offenders have disproportionate mental health needs in comparison with the general child and adolescent population. Their review leads them to argue that current screening provision in both the UK and the US is insufficient to identify the mental health needs of young people and that provision fails to address and provide for them. Barrett et al. (2006) undertook a survey of 300 offenders in and out of custody across six areas of England and Wales. Their findings included high incidence of mental health problems, which were often being unmet and that had not been identified through assessment, leading them to argue that need for mental health care outstrips supply in secure young offender institutions.



Young people as witnesses to and victims of violence

The issue of young people as witnesses, to and victims of, violence is another complex area that emerged when exploring young people's access to justice. Bailey and Whittle's (2004) systematic review of literature on research, policy and practice in the field of young people as victims of crime identify a number of relevant issues. They found that young people are at greater risk of crime victimisation when they live in households where there is an adult who is the victim of domestic or non-domestic violence. This research also suggests that young people who are exposed to family violence learn both the role of perpetrator and of victim. In addition to these effects, there is evidence that being a victim or witness to violence has an impact on mental health. They suggest that children exposed to violence can show decline in cognitive performance and school achievement which has long term implications for the transition to adults able to live full lives.

Bailey and Whittle's (2004) review also explored the under-reporting of assaults against young people, using as an example hospital 'Accident and Emergency' reporting mechanisms. They identify research that shows most injuries on young people are not reported to the police. They argue that evidence indicates that health professionals do not always take such matters seriously, failing to see incidents (including assaults that take place at school) as crimes in the way that they would where adults are victims.



There is also research to support concern about the processes of law and the potential damage that can result from giving evidence in court. Whitcomb's (2003) research review finds that most children and young people can testify without suffering long term adverse effects, but also that much can be done to alleviate the stress that the process causes, for example, by reducing delays. Her synthesis of available research demonstrates how there are negative effects from multiple interviews during the course of an investigation; negative effects for mental health of testifying against perpetrators, particularly for victims of sexual abuse; and the adverse effects of the court setting itself. The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 (YJCEA), implemented in 2002, aimed to counter some of these issues, but there remain concerns about court processes and their impact on vulnerable and intimidated witnesses.

Burton et al. (2006) undertook research for the Home Office that explored measures put in place since 1999 to protect vulnerable witnesses. They surveyed practitioners from criminal justice agencies (Police, CPS, Crown Court Witness Service and Crown Court) before exploring 2000 cases across four police areas. They found that those within the agencies believe that vulnerable witnesses are better prepared since the YJCEA, but that there needs to be earlier identification of witnesses/victims so that support can be provided and that measures do not go far enough. Burton et al. were concerned to find that a number of measures which seemed to offer promise

were rarely offered, for example court familiarisation visits; the clearing of the public gallery; and the use of pagers to enable witnesses/victims to wait nearby, but outside the court building.

Conclusion

Access to justice for young people is a complex area of policy and practice. Young people's rights are enshrined in international, as well as UK law, yet in practice they are experienced in relation to, and defined by, adults. Based on the evidence reviewed here, it is hard to conceive of young people accessing justice like adults. So many of our legal processes and structures do not recognise vulnerability or the notion of 'evolving capabilities' (Nykanen, 2001), providing support and advice that is tailored to the different needs of young people.

We should be wary of viewing young people as vulnerable solely on the basis of their age; rather, by understanding a model of social vulnerability as linked to processes of social exclusion, we can see how young people become vulnerable in certain circumstances, particularly where services fail to support or recognise their needs. There is a lack of recognition of the welfare needs of young people, particularly those who are offenders and/or victims, and insufficient resourcing of preventative services that are able to intervene before the problems faced by some young people become worse (Edwards et al., 2006).

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Member profile

Dina Gojkovic from the Third Sector Research Centre, Southampton University



Hello, my name is Dina Gojkovic and I joined the Third Sector Research Centre, Southampton university branch in October, 2009. Before this, I lived and studied in Greece and Serbia where I also worked as a mental health counsellor for Serbian Telekom and volunteered as an assistant psychologist in the Special Prison Hospital in Belgrade. However, I was not there for long, several months after I took up the post, a doctoral studentship was advertised by the University of Lincoln in the UK, under the supervision of a well-known expert in the field, Prof. Charlie Brooker. I couldn't resist applying and several months later the post was mine and I moved to the UK.

As a PhD student I undertook research for my thesis, whilst also contributing to a few other projects, one of which was a large national study of prison mental health services funded by the UK Department of Health and led by Prof. Jenny Shaw from the University of Manchester. My PhD was entitled 'An Investigation of Factors Influencing the Organization and Delivery of Mental Health Services In Prisons – A Cross-National Study'. The research looked at two very different systems of mental health provision in prisons – English and Serbian. The English study explored the development of prison mental health, specifically the mental health in-reach teams. The Serbian study aimed to map the offender mental health care pathway as the first study of that nature every undertaken in Serbia.

In October, 2009, just before completing my PhD, I became a research fellow in Criminal Justice at the University of Southampton's branch of the Third Sector Research Centre. The Centre is funded by the Office of the Civil Society, the Economic and Social Research Council and Barrow Cadbury Trust. More broadly, my current research builds on my PhD in the sense that it looks at the provision of services to offenders with a focus on resettlement and rehabilitation. More specifically, the research stream I work in is looking at the involvement of the community and voluntary organisations (also referred to as the third sector) in the criminal justice system with a focus on their involvement in prisons and probation (for more information, please visit <http://www.tsrc.ac.uk/Publications/tabid/500/Default.aspx>).

I find my work very fulfilling and enjoyable because it provides me with an opportunity to combine field work and networking with knowledgeable and influential people in the field from whom I learn daily, as well as publish in and peer-review for international academic journals and attend conferences. This is where I see ECAN come into the picture; networks such as this one ought

to provide a platform for like-minded researchers to get in touch, network, exchange ideas, support each other and offer advice. Hopefully, this should ease the transition (for people like myself) from being a student to being an early career academic and it should ideally encourage one to step onto the career ladder feeling that they are not alone in their quest. I look forward to seeing how ECAN develops.

Student groups

Hannah McFaul

The Howard League has student groups in over 25 universities in England and Wales; campaigning, fundraising and raising awareness of penal reform issues and the work we do. We support our students with free materials, training and opportunities for volunteering and internships. If there isn't a Howard League group at your university, why not help us get one established?

Our successful group at Cambridge was initially set up by a PhD student who contacted me, and between us we organised a speaker event, from which we recruited a committee from the students who attended. We then worked with the students to organise a launch event for the society and sign up members. The society has been incredibly successful since it was set up, organising a wide range of different speaker and campaign events.



If you can help your students get a group established, giving them a great opportunity and experiences, please get in touch, or join the [Howard League students Facebook group](#)

Hannah McFaul
National Student Organiser
Hannah.mcfaul@howardleague.org

ECAN Facebook Group



The Howard League for Penal Reform is active on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Delicious](#). There is a special page dedicated to the Early Careers Academic Network that you can reach either by searching for us on facebook or by clicking on the button above.

We hope to use the Facebook site to generate discussions about current issues in the criminal justice system. We are currently seeking your views on the future of the probation service in England and Wales.

Also, if there are any topics that you would like to discuss, please start a discussion.

Guidelines for submissions

Style

Text should be readable and interesting. It should, as far as possible, be jargon-free, with minimal use of references. Of course, non-racist and non-sexist language is expected. References should be put at the end of the article. We reserve the right to edit where necessary.

Illustrations

We always welcome photographs, graphic or illustrations to accompany your article.

Authorship

Please append your name to the end of the article, together with your job description and any other relevant information (eg other voluntary roles, or publications etc).

Publication

Even where articles have been commissioned by the Howard League for Penal Reform, we cannot guarantee publication. An article may be held over until the next issue.

Format

Please send your submission by email to anita.dockley@howardleague.org.

Please note

Views expressed are those of the author and do not reflect Howard League for Penal Reform policy unless explicitly stated.