WAS THE UK PRISON SYSTEM DESIGNED BY MEN, FOR MEN?

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Abstract

Women's prisons are surrounded in controversy and commentaries on the many issues relating to them such as drug abuse, mental illness and self-inflicted death have become increasingly visible to the public in the twenty-first century. A number of scholars and campaigners blame these issues upon a gendered design; believing that the UK prison system was designed by men, for men. The aim of the dissertation was to investigate the veracity of this notion using a secondary literary-based research approach.

The lack of commentary in historical texts on women in prison has made it difficult to prove or disprove the belief, although evidence in the texts that do discuss women suggests that they have been imprisoned for as long as men – contradicting any claims that the system was applied to women retrospectively. Little evidence to support the claims has been found and in contrast, some evidence suggests that both lords and ladies reviewed the first modern prisons, with Millbank Penitentiary initially holding only female inmates.

The research has also found that the most influential text in reinforcing beliefs that the UK prison system was intended for and designed by men has been the Corston Report (2007). The report is repeatedly quoted and paraphrased in the work of campaigners and scholars, despite the lack of supporting evidence.

It is suggested that future research should concentrate less on gender-based arguments and undertake a more open-minded approach, looking for societal explanations for how the prison system has come to exist in its current form. Class discrimination may be an interesting avenue to follow as the use of ladies and lords to review prisons may have been part of a wider context in the UK society at the time, whereby prison was used as a means for the upper class to repress the lower classes.

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Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction: Aims and Objectives

There is a widely held belief that the UK prison system was largely designed by men, for men (Carlen 2002; Corston, 2007; Coyle, 2005; Fawcett Society, 2004; Flynn, 1998; Platform 51, 2009; Rafter, 1990; Scott and Codd, 2010; Women In Prison, 2011a et al.). The main aim of this dissertation is to investigate the veracity of this notion. This chapter contextualises the main aim and outlines the objectives that shape the organisational structure of the dissertation.

1.1: Objectives

The dissertation has several key objectives. A major objective is to gain an understanding of the history of punishment in the UK, using existing historical research to demonstrate how and why the prison system exists in its current form. Furthermore, through this understanding, a critique of the belief that all prisons were, in effect, designed by men, for men, will be provided. These objectives will work towards achieving the main aim of this dissertation, which, as previously stated, is to investigate the veracity of this belief. This will be continued by undertaking the second key objective, which is to analyse whether the *'male prison design belief'* matches 'knowledge' gleaned from historical literature; or if it is in fact a 'braced myth' (Sutton, 2010).

1.2: Justification for Research

Over the past decade public attention has been focussed onto the many controversial issues in women's prisons by widespread media coverage and a number of 'fly-on-the-wall' television documentaries ('Holloway', 2009; 'Girls Behind Bars', 2011). Newspapers have regularly featured shocking headlines such as 'Women burn, strangle and stab themselves in jail hell' (Bright, 2004) and 'Suicide levels in women's prisons soar' (Hill, 2004). Issues such as self-harming, self-inflicted death and drug addictions have emerged as prominent concerns in prisons generally, though official data suggests that the problems are worse for female prisoners than for their male counterparts. For example; female prisoners who self-harm do so more frequently than male prisoners. In 2008, there was an average of 9 incidents for each female prisoner self-harming compared to 2 incidents for each male self-harming (Ministry of Justice, 2010).

Many criminologists and women's rights groups attribute these issues to the detrimental effect that the prison system has on female inmates; arguing that 'women are shoe-horned into a system which frequently does not meet their needs, nor take account of their different life experiences' (Fawcett Society, 2004:1). The belief that 'women face systemic discrimination in a system designed for men by men' (Corston, 2007: Fawcett Society, 2007:2) is widely held and used to understand why these issues exist in contemporary women's prisons. However, while it is repeatedly argued that the current system is 'bad for women' (Platform 51, 2010) and 'not designed with them in mind' (Platform 51, 2009:1); the original evidence supporting this argument is unclear.

Carol Smart (1976) presents the view that penal institutions for female offenders support the traditional and inferior social position of women and girls, while reflecting the assumptions of several criminologists that women and girls who commit offences are abnormal either biologically or psychologically (Smart, 1976). This view suggests that imprisonment of women was originally instigated or designed by men.

Smart's research is known as the classic original feminist criminological work. It could be argued that because of this, her views have been reinforced as 'fact' and left unquestioned; leading to their replication by other criminologists and consequently these views are upheld in the 21st century. Carlen and Worrall (2004) criticise histories of women's imprisonment, writing that 'no single textbook can claim to do justice to any one of them' (Carlen and Worrall, 2004:1). This research looks to discover the truth behind the creation of the UK prison with the view to determine whether the views of Smart and others are wholly correct; or whether they are in fact a 'braced myth'; as described by Sutton (2010) as:

> 'influential counterknowledge (misinformation packaged to look like fact) that are created by expert authorities. They are so powerful that they are believed to be true by respected and influential sceptics who promote them as examples of the need to be sceptical of counterknowledge'
> (Sutton, 2010).

1.3: Structure
Chapter 2 provides a methodological overview of the secondary approach used in this dissertation; citing the advantages and disadvantages of data obtained in this manner which had to considered before conducting the research.

Chapter 3 demonstrates examples of the claims made by scholars and women's rights groups regarding the creation and design of the prison system. The origins and reasons for these claims are investigated through studying information including official figures on modern women's prisons and some of the controversial issues surrounding them.

Chapter 4 outlines the history of punishment in the UK from the 16th century to the 20th century. This chapter notes that a lot of the literature regarding punishments up to the 20th century contains little discussion of female inmates, in contrast to what is written about their male counterparts. The available information on the development of the UK prison system is used to critique the claims cited in chapter 3.

Finally, chapter 5 concludes that the lack of historical literature regarding the early imprisonment of women is reflected by the lack of evidence provided by scholars and campaigners to support claims that the UK prison system was designed by men, for men. It provides suggestions for future research on the subject, arguing that a more open-minded approach could unearth new evidence. By moving away from gender-based arguments, other influencing factors upon the design and development of the prison system could be considered, such as the use of prison as a means for the upper class to repress the lower classes.

Chapter 2: Research Method

The dissertation uses a secondary research approach. For Jupp et al. (2000), secondary data and analysis is peculiarly considered to include also analysis of the published results of data analysis and not just analysis by others of data commissioned by others. For Jupp et al (2000) secondary data:

> 'refers to a form of inquiry and analysis based entirely on pre-existing data sources... A secondary source is an existing source of information which has been collected by someone other than the researcher and with some other purpose than the current research problem in mind'
> (Jupp et al., 2000: Davies et al., 2011:22-23).

In this dissertation, use of the term secondary analysis is limited to analysis of published literature. There are a number of benefits of secondary analysis of published literature for students carrying out a research project. Presumably, referring to both analysis of secondary data sets and published literature, Bryman (2004) writes that '...secondary analysis offers the prospect of having access to good quality data for a fraction of the resources involved in carrying out a data collection exercise yourself' (Bryman 2004:202).

For an undergraduate dissertation, obtaining access to prisoners would be very difficult and time consuming because of the many risks and ethical issues which would have to be considered. Denscombe (2002) appreciates that researchers who use documentary sources of data 'might not find the matter of access too much of a problem' (Denscombe, 2002:71). Prisoners are deemed 'vulnerable' research subjects and Moustafa (2005) notes the need for 'special justification' and 'additional protection' when enrolling vulnerable individuals as research subjects (Moustafa, 2005).

A primary approach was deemed unnecessary for the dissertation as the objectives for this dissertation could be achieved through historical research using books, journals, and web-based sources. Those who favour secondary approaches have argued that historical work has a contemporary significance in providing an important baseline for the measurement of both continuity and change with regard to criminal justice matters, while others have argued that the precursors to our current criminal justice processes are worthy of study for their own sake (Noaks and Wincup, 2004).

Analysis of published literature can be used for 'purposes of comparison' (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 2008:277) and for 'triangulation, thereby increasing the validity of the findings obtained from primary data' (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 2008:278). By comparing and triangulating published data, a relatively sound and unbiased understanding of the history of the UK penal system can be attempted.

Although triangulation can increase the validity of findings, it can be difficult to determine the reliability of all sources. There are a number of issues and difficulties associated with using a secondary approach; including 'reliability, accuracy and availability' (Davies et al. 2011:23). Web-based sources in particular have been utilised with a level of caution regarding accuracy and reliability; because a lot of the information on the Internet is unregulated and published without peer review.

In the same way; although some sources may seem reliable because they have been written by an 'official' body, such as the Home Office, potential for bias has been considered because some organisations can publish or hold back information to promote their own views or effectiveness in addressing controversial issues, such as women's prisons.

Working with documentary sources can lead to methodological challenges and researchers sometimes need to think innovatively to overcome possible difficulties (Noaks and Wincup, 2004). When research began for the dissertation, difficulties were encountered initially in finding sources containing precise dates for significant changes in the penal system; such as when the separating of the sexes in prisons occurred. The Prison Reform Trust was contacted (see Appendix) with the intention to obtain some assistance in sourcing accurate information. Although they did not reply, answers to the questions asked became evident gradually through rigorous and thorough collation of secondary data.

Finally, criminological research can lead to inaccurate findings and conclusions due to the underreporting and recording of crime. For example, the 2000 British Crime Survey estimates the true extent of crime is four and a half times larger than that recorded (Young, 2001). This is known as the 'dark figure of crime' and means that official crime statistics are open to interpretation as they do not always reflect the actual number of crimes taking place.

Chapter 3: Claims

According to Smart (1976), 'it is certain that many myths prevail in studies of female offenders' (Smart, 1976:5). This chapter will firstly review the claims made by scholars and then those made by campaigners and women's rights groups. It will then discuss the controversial issues associated with the imprisonment of women, which have largely prompted arguments that gender should be integrated into policy and practice throughout the criminal justice system (Fawcett Society, 2004).

3.1: Scholars

The general consensus amongst many scholars critical of the custodial sanction against women lawbreakers is that prison is a 'masculinist penalty' (Scott and Codd, 2010; Carlen, 2002), 'designed for men' (Rafter, 1990) and 'only with men's needs in mind' (Carlen, 2002). Scott and Codd (2010) describe the system as 'conceived by, intended for and dominated by men' (Scott and Codd, 2010:34). Smith (1962) argues that the penal system has always been male-oriented and male-dominated and that this has had very significant consequences for women (Smith, 1962: Heidensohn, 1985). Carlen and Worrall (2004) believe that women's prisons 'are inappropriately modelled on institutions designed for men' (Carlen and Worrall, 2004:9).

Smart (1976) argues that the lack of interest in female offenders at the academic level is mirrored by a similar lack of interest by the Home Office and its policy-makers. At the time of her writing, with the exception of the rebuilding of Holloway Prison, few changes had been made in the facilities available for female offenders who are institutionalized (Smart, 1976). Scott and Codd (2010) note that although women in prison have appeared in the literature for hundreds of years, it is only since the 1980s (and the emergence of work by feminist theorists like Smart) that there has been a sustained and concentrated body of work which has challenged the use and practice of women's imprisonment in the UK (Scott and Codd, 2010). Smart believes that women and girl offenders present less of an irritation to the police, the courts and the penal system and consequently there has been little official requirement or support for studies of female criminality (Smart, 1976).

Smart (1976) criticises Pearson (1975); who writes 'this book is therefore about how theories are developed, how they are read and received, and how they might be implemented in action' (Pearson, 1975: Smart, 1976:178). Smart notes that 'women are excluded from the processes described' (Smart, 1976:178), suggesting that women have not been involved in theorising female criminality or policy making. Dobash et al. (1986) see that 'patriarchal conceptions played a crucial role in the responses to women right from the beginning of the modern prison' (Dobash et al., 1986: Carlen and Worrall, 2004:8).

According to Carlen (2002); women have routinely been punished in several different ways to men, but it has been a frequent criticism (especially in relation to the design of prisons and custodial regimes) that they have also been punished as if they are men (Carlen, 2002). Heidensohn (1985) agrees that:

> '...the purpose of penal systems was clearly to deal with *male* delinquency and
> crime. Thus the various harsh punishments, the stage systems and marks were

> inappropriate for women who were far less frequently convicted and whose
> numbers were declining'
> (Heidensohn, 1985:65).

Similarly, Genders and Player (1987) see that the development of penal systems in the UK has represented primarily a response to deal with male delinquency and crime, and only later have measures been introduced to differentiate particular categories of offender, such as women, children and the mentally ill (Genders and Player, 1987).

Coyle (2005) also sees the Prison Service as an 'organization which is geared to deal with male prisoners' (Coyle, 2005:68); and therefore is insensitive to the 'multiplicity of needs which differs from those of the male populations they were originally intended to contain' (Scott and Codd, 2010:34). Devlin (1998) argues that this makes women 'invisible' as soon as they pass through the prison gates because they are subsumed into a world that is predominantly masculine (Devlin, 1998). Genders and Player (1987) agree that the adaptations of regimes are continually dominated by forms of patriarchal control (Genders and Player, 1987). Heidensohn (1985) cites early twentieth-century developments as 'proof' of the almost exclusively male concerns of the penal system:

> 'In 1908 preventive detention was introduced to deal with 'habitual criminals'
> who were dangerous to society. The sentence could be applied to women and
> men and a few women were so sentenced even though few habitual women
> criminals were more than social nuisances. In the same year the system of
> Borstal training was introduced after a series of experiments, under Sir Evelyn
> Ruggles-Brise's direction, in training young *men.* Girls, too, could now be
> sentenced to Borstal institutions'
> (Heidensohn, 1985: 65).

According to Rafter (1990), justice for imprisoned women is 'partial' in two ways:

> 'Prison administrators often reacted with greater leniency toward women,
> excusing them from rules to which men were subjected in custodial institutions,
> providing female-specific care in reformatories... they were assigned to less
> physically arduous labour but had fewer opportunities for exercise, fresh air
> and changes of environment; they encountered lower levels of surveillance than
> men but also had less protection and less access to staff... The other sense in
> which justice for women was partial is also paradoxical: even when, in
> custodial prisons, women and men were handled with seeming impartiality,
> women suffered more because these prisons were designed for men and held
> men in far greater numbers'
> (Rafter, 1990: xxx).

Carlen (2002) believes that the repeated losses suffered by women's institutions in the battles with the men's establishments over regime and rehabilitative resources have led to the 'ensuing disadvantageous differences' (Carlen, 2002:5), rather than them stemming from any gender-sensitive design.

Cavadino and Dignan (2007) find that female offenders do not in general receive harsher treatment than their opposite numbers of the opposite sex; however, some

women are effectively punished for deviating for conventional feminine norms, and the system tends to react to female offenders in a manner which is imbued with sexism (Cavadino and Dignan, 2007).

Finally, a number of scholars have argued that architecturally, prisons are not designed with women in mind (Carlen and Worrall, 2004; Bastick and Townhead, 2008). Carlen and Worrall (2004) see the approach to accommodating women as taking one of two forms:

> '...women are either considered to be no different from men and have been housed in identical structures, or they have been subjected to a paternalistic belief that if they are in 'nice' surroundings, they will feel less imprisoned. Nothing could be further from the truth'
> (Carlen and Worrall, 2004:55).

A majority of the oldest prisons in the UK were not purpose-built and are converted stately homes (Carbon Trust, 2009); therefore as Carlen and Worrall (2004) appreciate, an argument against the architecture of prisons cannot be wholly gender-specific (Carlen and Worrall, 2004).

3.2: Campaigners
In the mid-1980s with the founding of the campaigning group Women in Prison, women's imprisonment in England became more visible and due to a number of campaigners and concerned officials it was placed firmly on the prison reform agenda by the end of the 1980s (Carlen and Worrall, 2004). Women in Prison's raison d'être was initially based on the following claims: firstly that women's imprisonment is different to men's, and that the special and distinct pains of women's imprisonment have, in the main, been ignored by writers, campaigners and prison administrators; secondly that women in prison suffer from discriminatory practices by administrators resulting in their receiving fewer education, work and leisure opportunities than their male counterparts and thirdly, that women prisoners suffer from discriminatory practices by prison officers (Carlen and Tchaikovsky, 1996).

Many of the statements featured in publications by Women in Prison and other women's rights groups share similarities with the claims made by Baroness Corston (2007) in The Corston Report, for example; women 'have been and are marginalised within a criminal justice system designed by men for men' (Women in Prison, 2011a) and the institutions are 'not designed with [women] in mind' (Platform 51, 2009:1).

Baroness Corston was commissioned by the Home Office to conduct a report into vulnerable women in the criminal justice system of the United Kingdom. The Corston Report (2007) outlines the apparent need for a 'distinct, radically different, visibly-led, strategic, proportionate, holistic, woman-centred, integrated approach' (Corston, 2007:79). According to Corston, 'women have been marginalised by a system designed largely by men for men for far too long' (Corston, 2007:2). Corston makes a number of recommendations based upon her view that 'prison is disproportionately harsher for women because prisons and the practices within them have for the most part been designed for men' (Corston, 2007:3). She is very critical of a 'system designed and structured for men' (Corston, 2007:39) and repeatedly notes that women are 'marginalised in a predominantly male system' (Corston, 2007:49); going on to

describes the no longer used Intermittent Custody penalty as one that 'could only have been designed by a man' (Corston, 2007:53).

Corston (2007) takes the view that the UK penal system was intended for men and then retrospectively adapted to serve women:

> 'Some of the guidance material I have seen, particularly that of the Prison Service, although well-meaning, starts from the premise "This is how we do it for men, how can we tweak it to accommodate women?" This approach is unacceptable'
> (Corston 2007: 21).

This opinion is replicated by Penal Reform International, who see prisons as 'single sex, coercive institutions designed to hold men in a secure environment' (Penal Reform International, 2008:2). They see women's prisons as a 'poor adaptation' of the model for men (ibid.).

The Fawcett Society is the UK's leading campaign for equality between women and men. Corston contributes to a number of The Fawcett Society's publications and continues to argue that 'women face systemic discrimination in a system designed for men by men' (Corston 2007: Fawcett Society 2007:2). The Fawcett Society goes as far as to blame the high levels of self-harm within the female prison estate on the effects on women of 'a prison estate which is designed for male prisoners' (Fawcett Society 2009:8).

Emphasis is repeatedly placed upon the differing 'needs' of women to men, and the inability of the criminal justice system to address them; with the recurring argument that institutions are not designed with women in mind and consequently fail to meet their needs (Platform 51, 2009; Fawcett Society, 2004; Release, 2011). Bastick and Townhead (2008) believe that this leads to incarcerated women being affected by imprisonment in 'a particularly harsh way' (Bastick and Townhead, 2008). They cite some of the needs and concerns of women prisoners that are different from those of men prisoners, including family responsibilities; their vulnerability to abuse in prison; health needs, including those related to sexual and reproductive health and the high rates of mental illness (ibid.).

Elizabeth Fry; 'the first penal reformer to devote her attention solely to the plight of imprisoned women' (Howard League for Penal Reform, 2011), writing in the nineteenth-century argues that 'to place [women] under the care of men is evidently unreasonable, and seldom fails to be injurious to both parties' (Fry, 1827:26).

Women In Prison (2011a) argue that 'prison does not work' (Women In Prison, 2011a) and advocate alternatives to custody for the many women who have been subject to sexual or violent abuse or have mental health problems – many campaigners believe that for these women, prison 'is not the right answer' (Platform 51, 2009).

3.3 Controversial Issues
A number of penologists note that incarceration is much harsher for women than their male counterparts (Carlen 1983: Scott and Codd, 2010). Carlen (2002) suggests that critiques and assessments of women's treatment in the penal system have been riven

with contradictory assumptions, assertions and aspirations (Carlen, 2002). However, statistics and official studies, such as the Corston Report (2007), appear to reveal a number of controversial issues within the female prison estate. O'Dwyer et al. (1987) see that women in prison suffer all the same deprivations, indignities and degradations as male prisoners; while also suffering additional problems that are specific to them as imprisoned women (O'Dwyer et al., 1987). They see that in women's prisons; educational, work and leisure opportunities are more limited and disciplinary regimes are more rigid (ibid.). The main themes and areas for concern appearing in the literature in relation to women's prisons are drug abuse; mental health; strains on family relationships; self-harm and self-inflicted death.

The issue of iatrogenic dependence (addiction to prescribed drugs) is a significant one in women's prisons (HM Prison Service, 2003). The most commonly reported drugs used by women in prison are heroin, methadone, DF118, cocaine and crack cocaine, cannabis, and various benzodiazepines (often two or three types) (ibid.). According to Malloch (2000), the number of drug users has increased significantly in all penal establishments and the number of women believed to have been drug dependent prior to imprisonment has escalated (Malloch, 2000). Malloch (2000) argues that prison magnifies the problems associated with drug use as a result of the operation of custodial regimes and the underlying objectives of imprisonment (ibid.).

Carlen and Worrall (2004) believe that women turn to drugs both prescribed and illegitimately obtained in order to survive the pains of imprisonment (Carlen and Worrall, 2004). Alternatively, HM Prison Service (2003) link women's substance misuse to histories of personality disturbance and deliberate self-harm; 'the latter being a widespread and serious problem during the drug withdrawal period' (HM Prison Service, 2003:12).

Surveys and research have consistently shown high levels of psychiatric psychopathology (mental illness) in the women's prison population (HM Prison Service, 2003). Women prisoners are five times more likely to have mental health problems than women in the general population (Plugge et al., 2006: Scott and Codd, 2010). Of all the women who are sent to prison, 37% say they have attempted suicide at some time in their life. 51% have severe and enduring mental illness, 47% have a major depressive disorder, 6% have a psychosis and 3% have schizophrenia (Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Task Force, 2009: Prison Reform Trust, 2010). Plugge et al. (2006) believe that reception into prison could precipitate feelings of shock and depression (Plugge et al., 2006). In their study, some of the women with drug problems explained that their drug use acted as a form of self-medication. Their reception into prison and detoxification could therefore mean the 'powerful and unwelcome emergence of disturbing thoughts and feelings' (Plugge et al., 2006: 57).

As is the case across most women's prisons; in Holloway, a high proportion of prisoners spent childhoods in care, many witnessed or suffered violence and nearly a third experienced sexual abuse (Holloway, 2009). 90% of young offenders have some sort of mental health problem or addiction (ibid.) and one in five women in prison has spent some time as an in-patient in a psychiatric hospital (Prison Reform Trust, 2000: Carlen and Worrall, 2004). Mark Landy, Head of Mental Health at Holloway, suggests that the sense of abandonment and isolation that the women feel when they're locked in their cells at night time reminds them of past experiences that they had as children

where they were left by their families or by the care system – this is then relived in the present day (Landy: Holloway, 2009).

Coyle (2005) believes that one of the most distressing features of imprisonment for many prisoners is their separation from family and friends. He sees that contact with families is the thing that prisoners value above all else (Coyle, 2005). Out of the 139 prisons in England and Wales, only 14 of these are women's prisons. Because of the small number of women's prisons and their geographical location, women tend to be located further from their homes than male prisoners – sometimes over 100 miles away (Prison Reform Trust, 2010: Action for Prisoners' Families, 2011). They are also less likely than the general population to be able to call on the support of a stable relationship (ibid.).

According to Corston (2007), this has a detrimental effect on maintaining family ties, receiving visits and resettlement back into the community (Corston, 2007). The Women in Prison Project Group (2007) argue that the effects of maternal imprisonment on their families are generally more disruptive than the effects of paternal imprisonment, and this is not adequately recognised by the criminal justice system (Women in Prison Project Group, 2007). 66% of women prisoners are mothers, and each year it is estimated that more than 17,700 children are separated from their mothers by imprisonment (Women in Prison, 2011b). Many female inmates are primary carers for their children and consequently this has the potential to make their experience of imprisonment distinctly different to that of men.

Plugge et al. (2006) found that there were many ways in which the deprivations of prison impacted upon all women, but most significantly in terms of mental health was separation from family, most especially children. One of the women in their study reported the psychological deterioration she had observed in a cell-mate whose child was being looked after by social services (Plugge et al., 2006).

The Courts are now more likely to use custodial penalties for females (HM Prison Service, 2003) and the Women in Prison Project Group (2007) note that because of this, the woman herself may not anticipate the possibility of imprisonment as the outcome of her trial. They believe that the lack of preparations or provision made for the woman's children before being taken into custody may cause added distress to both the mother and the children, and 'may leave children fending for themselves' (Women in Prison Project Group, 2007:10).

In the 'Holloway' (2009) television programme, an inmate called Lorraine is seen to be extremely distressed when she is told to leave for a different prison far away from her friends and family: 'it's like you get settled in a place and all of a sudden they wanna up and move you... it's so wrong. I can't mess my head up again' ('Lorraine': Holloway, 2009). Despite her protests, Lorraine has no choice and has to go because the prison is overcrowded. Another inmate, Charlotte, is told to move 100 miles away from her family. She argues 'you might as well take my family away as well, that's what it feels like they're doing... they're taking my prison family and my real family away from me. No wonder so many people kill themselves in jail you know, this is what they do to people' ('Charlotte': Holloway, 2009).

In recent years concern has grown over the increasing number of women in prison who have killed themselves and there is an understanding that a much greater proportion deliberately injure themselves, some very seriously (Coyle, 2005). Liebling (1994) believes that the rate of suicide among female prisoners is underestimated because of their relatively small numbers, leading to the neglect of their specific needs and concerns (Liebling, 1994). According to Fazel and Benning (2009), 'for the past 25 years, suicide has been about 20 times more common in female prisoners in England and Wales than in the general female population of similar ages' (Fazel and Benning, 2009:184). In Holloway Prison alone, 12 women killed themselves between 2006 and 2009 (Holloway, 2009).

HM Prison Service (2003) offers the following possible explanations for the higher rate of self-inflicted death among women in prison:

- 'Women have a high level of mental healthcare needs
- Around 50% have personality disorders
- Around 14% have functional psychoses (such as schizophrenia, main depression)
- Women are more likely than men to report depression or anxiety
- 40% have received psychiatric treatment prior to imprisonment
- Women are more likely to be dependent on drugs, particularly opiates
- Women are more likely to have experienced abuse, physical, sexual or emotional;
- More women are likely to have self-injured or attempted suicide in the past' (HM Prison Service, 2003:13).

'Self-injury' (also known as 'self-harm', 'self-mutilation', 'cutting-up' or 'self-abuse') refers to any act that involves deliberately inflicting pain or injury to oneself. The National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England (Department of Health, 2002: Kenning et al., 2010) identifies prisoners as a population at particularly high risk of suicide, supported by several studies (Shaw et al., 2003: Kenning et al., 2010; Jenkins et al., 2005: Kenning et al., 2010) with rates of 9% and 10% among pre-trial and sentenced women, respectively (Home Office, 1998; Shaw et al., 2004: Kenning et al., 2010).

Women account for over 25% of self-harm incidents reported in a year, but make up only 6% of the prison population (HM Prison Service, 2003). Female prisoners who self-harm also do so more frequently than male prisoners. In 2008, there was an average of 9 incidents for each female prisoner self-harming compared to 2 incidents for each male self-harming (Ministry of Justice, 2010).

According to Dell and Beauchamp (2006), self-harm is generally identified as a coping and survival mechanism for dealing with emotional pain and distress, isolation and oppressive conditions in women's lives (Dell and Beauchamp, 2006). They believe that for incarcerated women, the 'pains of imprisonment' are a major contributing factor to self-harm and although unhealthy, self-harm provides them with a sense of release or cleansing, a means to feel, a sense of control and a way to communicate internal pain (ibid.).

Liebling (1994) suggests that there are other explanations for the high rates in female prisoners of both self-injury and self-inflicted death: women prisoners may have easier access to medication, a higher rate of dependency on prescribed drugs and a higher frequency of identifiable psychiatric disorder (Liebling, 1994).

It is evident that women suffer a great number of pains during their imprisonment, and because of this their needs are different to their male counterparts. Carlen and Tchaikovsky (1996) go as far as to propose that for an experimental period of five years, imprisonment should be abolished as a 'normal' punishment for women and that a maximum of only a hundred places should be retained for female offenders convicted or accused of abnormally serious crimes (Carlen and Tchaikovsky, 1996). They argue that the pains of women's imprisonment are sufficiently different to those suffered by male prisoners; this therefore justifies their separate theorizing and consideration. Scott and Codd (2010) note that 'historically, women rule-breakers have been dealt with differently to men' (Scott and Codd, 2010:43). The next chapter will use historical research to assess if, when, and how women were considered in the creation and consequent development of the UK prison system.

Chapter 4: History of Prisons

The word 'prison' comes from the Latin word meaning to seize. A prison is defined as a building to which people are legally committed for custody while awaiting trial or punishment and based on this definition, prisons have been with us for many centuries (Coyle, 2005).

It is notable that despite the fact that women were originally incarcerated in the same institutions as men, most of the historical accounts studied in this chapter make little or no mention of women. Rafter (1990) states:

> '...few historians of the penitentiary have noted that women as well as men inhabited these gloomy institutions. Had they investigated the treatment of incarcerated women, they would have found that in nearly every respect, it contradicted the usual picture of penitentiary discipline'
> (Rafter, 1990:3-4).

Zedner (2006) also acknowledges the 'general silence of penal historians on issues of gender' (Zedner, 2006:37), but appreciates that despite the beliefs of many historians that gender issues failed to generate gender-specific policy, such policies did exist (ibid.).

4.1: Pre-16th and 17th Century punishments

There is a consensus among penologists that before the seventeenth century the notion of sending offenders to prison as a punishment in itself rarely occurred (Fox, 1952: Coyle, 2005), although some commentators have argued that this did happen, at least from the thirteenth century for 'fraud, contempt, disobedience to authority, failure in public duty and petty crime' (McConville, 1981: Coyle, 2005:26).

Camp (1974), referring to prison conditions until the beginning of the nineteenth century, observes that 'men, women and children were housed indiscriminately in buildings that never saw the light of day' (Camp, 1974:14), however, according to Harding et al. (1985), the earliest recorded attempt to provide separate accommodation was in York in 1237 (Harding et al., 1985).

In 1293 the Chancellor of Oxford University urged for the borough gaol to be extended by one floor so that suspect offenders, trespassers and women may all be held separately. The segregation of women was declared necessary 'for the avoidance of sin' (ibid.). This 'sin' must have been accomplished, as not all prisons followed such segregation; one offender, Matilda Hereward, appears to have been pregnant on every occasion on which the justices of gaol delivery visited her prison over a period of 18 months and her execution was thereby delayed (ibid.).

Harding et al. (1985) argue that the presence of women within gaols made them vulnerable to more sinister consequences - in 1449 William Arnold, the gaoler of Newgate, was imprisoned for rape of prisoners in his care, as was an earlier Richmond gaoler, Thomas Porter (ibid.). According to Cambridgeshire Criminal Justice Board (2011), most convicted felons were hung and beheading was normally reserved for noblemen and women (Cambridgeshire Criminal Justice Board, 2011).

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, the older notions of the majority of disputes being settled locally, either by the villagers themselves or by the Landowner became undermined and the pressure was placed on the modern concept of 'crime' as the same no matter where it is committed, or whoever commits it (Lea, 2006).

4.2: 18th Century - transportation and early penal reform

Playfair (1971) finds that under the exterminatory penal system of the eighteenth century and earlier, children were as harshly dealt with as adults and women as harshly dealt with as men (Playfair, 1971). Smith (1962) also notes that in pre-industrial times, women and men were subject to the same penalties, most of which were non-custodial (Smith, 1962: Heidensohn, 1985). Smith sees that as Bridewells and penal custody developed, women were equally liable with men and young children to be imprisoned (ibid.).

Playfair (1971) and Smith's (1962) findings perhaps support the argument made by Carlen (2002) that women have been treated as though they are men (Carlen, 2002). However, while there were many punishments designed to publicly shame and hurt the offenders, such as branding, whipping and mutilation; there were also punishments especially designed for women, known as 'common scolds', including the ducking stool and 'scold's bridle'. The ducking stool comprised of a chair in which a convict was affixed and then immersed repeatedly into a body of water (Duhaime, 2011) and the scold's bridle was a device used to 'control, humiliate and punish gossiping, troublesome women by effectively gagging them' (h2g2, 2006).

After the Transportation Act 1718, the principal method of disposing of the majority of offenders who were not hanged was by transportation, but to some contemporaries the crime wave of the 1750s seemed to show that this was failing to deter offenders (Rawlings, 1999). The government began sending offenders to the hulks – worn out battleships moored off naval dockyards in the south of England – where they worked either on the docks or dredging out rivers and where, perhaps to reassure the public, they were exposed to view (ibid.). Rawlings (1999) sees this as a key moment in penal policy and administration because although the government had spent large amounts of money on transportation since the Act, it now became involved in the administration of large prisons in England for the first time (ibid.).

After the end of transportation to America, the work of the penal reformer John Howard (1727-1790) raised awareness in imprisonment (Freeman, 1978: Rawlings, 1999; Whitfield, 1991: Rawlings, 1999). In 1774, Howard published the first of his massively documented and horrifying reports on the state of the prisons in England and Wales. He found that without regard to their sex, age, character or record, offenders were manacled and herded together like cattle in airless wards and dungeons (Howard, 1774: Playfair, 1971).

Howard argued that an individual could be reformed by being given the opportunity (or forced) to seek her or his own salvation in prison (Rawlings, 1999). He campaigned for the segregation of the sexes in prison (Camp, 1974; Carlen and Worrall, 2004); a concern which was an important issue for the nineteenth-century female prison reformer, Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845). Carlen and Worrall (2004) note that this is not surprising:

'...given the idealised images of woman-hood that have been around from the seventeenth century onwards, and given also, the relatively small proportions of women in the total prison population since the end of the nineteenth century' (Carlen and Worrall, 2004:7).

Howard and others made a number of suggestions which contributed towards the Penitentiary Act 1779; proposing for there to be two penitentiaries – one for men and one for women – run by salaried officers and subject to a committee of supervisors. The penitentiary would reward prisoners for good behaviour and punish them for bad through a system of grading, payment and remission. It was seen as a place for separating prisoners to secure good health and to prevent moral contamination, as well as a means to achieve an improvement in the morals of the prisoners and of deterring others from crime (Smith, 1778: Rawlings, 1999). Although no penitentiary was built and the act was allowed to expire in 1784 (Rawlings, 1999), the growing problems associated with hulks such as their extremely high mortality rates, along with the work of Howard and others maintained interest in the possibilities offered by carefully designed prisons (ibid.).

While ideas about reforming the criminal justice system were still being debated, change had been taking place throughout the eighteenth century. The development of transportation, houses of correction and prisons created alternative punishments for a range of offenders, but it was in the nineteenth century that the pace of change began to move rapidly (ibid.).

4.3: 19th Century – segregation of the sexes and cellular confinement
Camp (1974) describes prison conditions until the beginning of the nineteenth century as 'primitive and barbaric' (Camp, 1974:14). In the nineteenth century, for the most part, policy was concerned with male prisoners, but the approach taken to women offenders also changed. It had been commonplace in the eighteenth century to see women not as criminals but as the causes of crime and by the nineteenth century women were regarded as normally morally superior to men. They were seen as mad, evil, or the 'helpless product of a defective biological constitution' (Rawlings, 1999:86). Many policy makers regarded these conditions as untreatable, nevertheless the belief that a different approach was needed for dealing with women prisoners from that used for men can be seen in the penal reforms introduced by Elizabeth Fry into Newgate from 1816 (ibid.).

Fry was initially concerned with the children and not the women prisoners (Howard League for Penal Reform, 2011) but she quickly sought to improve the physical conditions for the women, concentrating on their behaviour rather than their moral corruptness (ibid.). Long overdue alterations and improvements were made to the ancient Newgate Prison, and in 1817 Fry and her Quaker friends were allowed to form a Ladies' Prison Committee in an attempt to improve the conditions of female convicts (Camp, 1974). The 1839 Prison Act made recommendations regarding the separation of prisoners 'in order to prevent contamination', and imposed rules on their treatment according to their classification' (Camp, 1974:15).

This, along with Fry's work, led to the separation of men and women in the gaols in the mid-nineteenth century (Playfair, 1971; Rafter 1990; Carlen and Worrall 2004) and the appointment of women warders, matrons and, later, lady superintendents to oversee

the women's side (Dobash et al., 1986: Carlen and Worrall, 2004; Playfair 1971; Rafter, 1990). According to Heidensohn (1985), a distinct regime for women was formed (Heidensohn, 1985). Rawlings (1999) describes the 'productive work' that the regimes provided women with, in order to give them skills that they could use on release such as making clothes, washing and cooking; whereas men were put to unproductive hard labour in the public work prisons (Rawlings, 1999).

In contrast, Carlen and Worrall (2004) and Scott and Codd (2010) argue that the regimes for women were only very slightly different to those specifically designed for men in the abolishment of the corporal punishments (still inflicted on male prisoners) and, in some institutions, women were allowed longer periods of association (Carlen and Worrall, 2004; Scott and Codd, 2010). Playfair (1971) sees that these actions were 'chivalrously inspired', out of a realization that even women lawbreakers belonged to the fairer and frailer sex (Playfair, 1971). Dobash et al. (1986) also cite patriarchal conceptions as playing a crucial role in the responses to women right from the beginning of the modern prison (Dobash et al., 1986: Carlen and Worrall 2004).

The 'chivalry theory' claims that chivalry leads police and sentencers (who are predominantly male) to afford women less harsh treatment (Cavadino and Dignan, 2007). The opposing view has been termed the 'evil woman' theory (Nagel and Hagan, 1983: Cavadino and Dignan, 2007) and has been put forward by many feminist commentators (Cavadino and Dignan, 2007). It means that women who offend will receive harsher treatment in the criminal justice system because they are seen as 'doubly deviant' – they have offended not only against the law, but also against social norms about how women should behave (ibid.).

Millbank Penitentiary was the first prison to use the utilitarian principles of Jeremy Bentham's Panoptican, allowing for round-the-clock surveillance of the inmates by their superintendent.   According to Playfair (1971), Millbank's first inmates in 1816 were all female (Playfair, 1971). Playfair (1971) describes a report in The Times published the day before Millbank opened: 'several noblemen and ladies of distinction went over the different cells which were then ready for the reception of the female convicts' (Playfair, 1971:33). An article in The New York Times (1875) quotes the then Surveyor General of Prisons, Colonel Edmund Du Cane; who refers to the female inmates of Millbank - 'Millbank Penitentiary, the prison whither females are sent from the dock' (Du Cane, 1875: The New York Times, 1875). Du Cane (1875) also points out that Milllbank was regularly attended by 'the schoolmistress' and 'the lady visitor' (ibid.).

As the basic principles and system of the Panoptican still apply in modern prisons, this evidence appears to contradict views that the UK prison system was designed by men, for men; because it was originally tested on females and reviewed by both men and women, with Elizabeth Fry's Ladies' Prison Committee forming only a year later.

According to Playfair (1971), in the late nineteenth century female convicts were in some ways treated better than men – they were offered a larger gratuity, a maximum of £4 instead of £3 on their discharge, and could start earning marks, as the men could not, during the probationary period of separate confinement. They were also entitled to a higher maximum remission of sentence – one third rather than one quarter (Playfair, 1971).

Elizabeth Fry's blueprints for women's penal regimes 'prescribed several of the disciplinary techniques which became hallmarks of the mid to late-twentieth century institutions' (Carlen and Worrall, 2004:8). However, many of Elizabeth Fry's ideas, based upon her experiences among the prisoners in Newgate, 'remain aspirations rather than achievements within the prison system of the twenty-first century' (Halliday, 2006:182).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century belief in punishment and deterrence as the main objects of imprisonment, and confidence in the separate system as a desirable and effective means of dealing with prisoners, came increasingly under question (Edwards and Hurley, 2002). The Gladstone Committee produced a report in 1895 reflecting this change in attitudes towards prisoners. 'We start', said the Committee, 'from the principle that prison treatment should have as its primary and concurrent objects, deterrence and reformation' (Gladstone Committee, 1895: Edwards and Hurley, 2002). The report contained a number of recommendations for penal policy, including the abolishment of unproductive labour in favour of industrial labour which under proper conditions was healthier, eased the task of providing industrial work in prison, and, if regarded as a privilege which could be withdrawn, would not endanger control (Edwards and Hurley, 2002).

The report cited rehabilitation as a principal objective on the penal agenda and ever since it has been a major, but not sole aim of the penal system. The Gladstone Report led to the Prison Act of 1898 which unified the convict and local prison systems, created three classes of prisoner, limited the use of corporal punishment and introduced remission of sentence for local prisoners (Coyle, 2005).

4.4: 20th Century – the Woolf Report

In 1902 Holloway became the main prison for women after the last of the male prisoners were transferred to Brixton. Camp (1974) describes how Lady Constance Lytton, one of the most influential of the suffragettes spent some time in Holloway seven years after it became an all-women's prison:

> 'On the occasion of her first arrest her identity was known, and she was given preferential treatment. But on the second occasion she had purposely dressed as a working woman and gave a false name. Her treatment was very different indeed and led to hardships which resulted in her being a semi-invalid for the rest of her life'
> (Camp, 1974:133).

Zedner (1991) notes that a number of educated, influential suffragists between 1905 and 1914 gained direct personal experience of prison, giving huge amounts of publicity to the many humiliating and degrading practices such as the requirement that women have all their hair cut off (Zedner, 1991: Scott and Codd, 2010). While Camp's (1974) description of Lytton's experience suggests that discrimination existed by class in prisons as well as by gender, it is unclear whether the identities of the women whom Zedner (1991) refers to were known by the prison staff.
Smith (1962) sees that although the Chairman of the Prison Commission in 1942 complained that not enough attention had been paid to the specific problems of women in prison, a special agenda for the discipline and treatment of women in custody was

gradually and silently being established (Smith, 1962: Carlen and Worrall, 2004). Despite this, Lord Justice Woolf's (1991) report almost fifty years later excluded women's prisons from the terms of reference of the judicial inquiry, even though there had been a serious disturbance at the women's section of Risley Remand Centre a few months earlier (Carlen and Tchaikovsky, 1996).

The Woolf Report (1991) was prompted by a number of riots in the male prison estate and it contained 12 main recommendations to improve prison conditions including the abolishment of the 'slopping out' procedure whereby prisoners were forced to urinate and defecate in chamber pots in their shared cells. Woolf said there should be improved standards of justice within prisons, including access to an independent complaints monitor. The report was widely hailed as the most radical reassessment of the prison system in the 20th century (Allison, 2005) and according to Tumim (1996), the Woolf Report remains important because it undermines the belief that if you make prisons bad enough, people will not commit crimes.

Shaw (1996) sees that while there has been a high level of analysis and discussion and some significant theoretical contributions to the understanding of women's imprisonment, it does not appear to have had much impact on policies relating to women offenders (Shaw, 1996). Flynn (1998) suggests that the running of women's prisons should be treated as a distinct specialism. He sees that this was only partially recognised when in 1998 an assistant director, supported by a Women's Policy Group, was appointed to develop model regimes for women prisoners (Flynn, 1998). This occurred after the 1997 Thematic Review of women in prison was published, prompted by an unannounced inspection of HMP Holloway by the then Chief Inspector of Prisons, Sir David Ramsbotham. The Fawcett Society (2004) argues that it is only since then that 'real efforts have been made to address the specific needs of women' (Fawcett Society, 2004:45). This view contradicts Heidensohn's (1985) belief that a distinct regime for women was formed in the mid-nineteenth century (Heidensohn, 1985) and also fails to consider the work of Fry's Ladies' Committee which was dedicated to addressing the needs of women and was created almost 200 years previous to the review.

The review led to the reorganisation of the Prison Service so that women's prisons were managed separately from men's, rather than as an adjunct, and a policy unit dealing with women's prisons was established in the Prison Service though this has now been dismantled (ibid.).

4.5: Women in Prison Today
Since the end of the 20th century, there has been a dramatic rise in the numbers of women in prison from an average of 1560 in 1993 (HM Prison Service, 2004) to recent figures stating the number at around 4241 in April 2011 (National Offender Management Service, 2011). According to Scott and Codd (2010):

> '...the focus of the debate [around women in prison] has shifted from the near-invisibility of women in discussions of prisons in the 1980s and the failure to comprehend their particular needs and experiences, to additionally incorporate concern about sheer numbers'
> (Scott and Codd, 2010:46).

Several reports have highlighted the needs of women prisoners and their experiences; in particularly the aforementioned report by Baroness Corston. The Corston Report (2007) contained 43 recommendations and included a detailed blueprint 'for a distinct, radically different, visibly led, strategic, proportionate, holistic, woman-centred approach' (Corston, 2007:79). The government agreed with most of the recommendations and committed to take many of them forward (Scott and Codd, 2010), however, their response has been criticised by many including Baroness Howe of Idlicote who approved the view of the Howard League for Penal Reform that 'the visionary, radical proposals at the heart of the Corston review have either been sidelined or completely abandoned' (Howe, 2009: Scott and Codd, 2010:48).

Scott and Codd (2010) note that while The Prison Service's (2009) set of standards specifically for women's prisons reflect good practice in male prisons, such as 'first night' provision and support for buddy and listener schemes; they can still be criticised for utilising gender in imprisoning women (Scott and Codd, 2010). For example, knitting and cross-stitch are commended as in-cell activities for women; Scott and Codd (2010) see these activities as 'almost archaically gendered' (Scott and Codd, 2010:49). It is understood that while 'archaically gendered' activities and regimes exist, arguments against the imprisonment of women and the conditions of their incarceration will continue to appear in contemporary research and campaigns.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and the way forward

This dissertation set out to investigate the veracity of the notion that the UK prison system was designed by men, for men.

It was initially suggested that Smart (1976) and other feminist theorists may have created a braced myth, however, at least in terms of campaigners it appears to be the Corston Report (2007) which has been more influential. It is evident that the report was groundbreaking work at the time and uncovered many controversial issues which appear to be more prominent in the female prison estate, such as mental illnesses and self-injury. Indeed, Scott and Codd (2010) refer to the Corston Report as 'the most significant recent report' (Scott and Codd, 2010:46) and believe that most of the recent policy developments in relation to women's imprisonment have been prompted by the report (ibid.).

As Cavadino and Dignan (2007) comment, 'while there may not be an overall bias against female offenders, they nevertheless continue to suffer in the current punitive climate' (Cavadino and Dignan, 2007:365). Although Corston (2007) regularly emphasises the notion of the UK prison system being unsuitable for women as it was created by men; she does not include any evidence to support this claim.

This claim has been replicated and cited repeatedly in publications by the Fawcett Society; the UK's leading campaign for equality between women and men. Work by Platform 51 (2009) and Prison Reform International (2008) along with other campaigns mirror the views held by Corston (2007) and the Fawcett Society (2004; 2007; 2009), suggesting that the Corston Report (2007) has been the most important piece of work in determining the orthodox view on the treatment of women in the penal system. Despite the lack of evidence supporting the claims by Corston and others; there has been little effort by scholars or official bodies to provide an opposing argument.

It is therefore inaccurate to conclude that the UK prison system was designed by men, for men because there is not enough evidence to support the claim. The history of the UK prison system outlined in chapter 4 could lead to a conclusion that women have been involved a lot more than campaigners and scholars suggest, for example the work of Elizabeth Fry 'prescribed several of the disciplinary techniques which became hallmarks of the mid to late-twentieth century institutions' (Carlen and Worrall, 2004:8). It is interesting that it is Carlen and Worrall (2004) who note this because in the same text they argue that women's prisons are 'inappropriately modelled on institutions designed for men' (Carlen and Worrall, 2004:9). Carlen (2002) suggests that critiques and assessments of women's treatment in the penal system are riven with contradictory assumptions, assertions and aspirations. Ironically, it appears that this may apply to her own work as well as the historical accounts; highlighting the difficulty of sourcing reliable information on the history of the UK prison system.

A vital part of the findings is the evidence surrounding Millbank Penitentiary. If the evidence is true; the beliefs of Corston (2007) and others may be incorrect, because Playfair (1971) and the New York Times (1875) suggest that while the physical structure and design of the prison may have been designed by men, the modern prison was trialled on and developed for women.

According to Playfair (1971) and the New York Times (1875), Millbank was initially inhabited by female inmates and its system was approved by ladies as well as lords. This contradicts any beliefs that the current system was created by men, for men and retrospectively adapted to suit the needs of women because women were the first inmates that the system was trialled on. The main principles of Jeremy Bentham's Panoptican system implemented at Millbank still exist today. As evidence supporting this contradictory information is sparse; one cannot yet come to a conclusion that women were involved in the design and implementation of UK prisons. Future research searching for a determinate gender-based argument on the history of the prison system should therefore further investigate Millbank in order to discover precisely how women were involved as inmates or reviewers of the system.

In conclusion, while prisons may not have been designed particularly with women's needs in mind, it could be argued that they have not been designed with men's needs in mind either, as many of the issues associated with female imprisonment also occur in the male prison estate. This suggests that the prison environment itself can encourage negative behaviours, regardless of gender, for some of the most vulnerable members of society.

In order to discover alternative ways to explain how and why the prison system in the UK exists in its current form, it is proposed that subsequent research on the history of the UK prison system could benefit from shifting focus away from gender-based arguments and undertaking a more open-minded approach. This could allow for societal explanations, which up until now have arguably not been considered with enough importance. Carlen and Tchaikovsky (1996) suggest that social inequities must be used to contextualize proposed reforms for women. They argue that unless this happens, 'custodial conditions for women are likely to worsen their post-prison effects and are likely to multiply and become more deleterious, and the numbers of women jailed in the future will probably increase' (Carlen and Tchaikovsky, 1996:215).

In the context of this dissertation, social inequities in the history of the prison system could stem from the use of ladies and lords to review prisons. Camp's (1974) description of Lady Constance Lytton's imprisonment in the early twentieth century suggests that discrimination existed in the prison system in terms of class, rather than by gender alone. In hindsight, an investigation into this could have been beneficial but for the purpose of this research, time constraints would not have allowed this to be possible. It is therefore recommended that this research is undertaken in the future in order to determine if this was part of a wider context in the UK society at the time, whereby prison was a means for the upper class to repress the lower classes. Up until now societal explanations have arguably not been considered with enough importance and they should be researched extensively in the future.

Appendix:

Letter to Prison Reform Trust

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Prison Reform Trust
15 Northburgh Street
London
EC1V 0JR

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Flat 31 Royal Victoria Court
Gamble Street
Nottingham
NG7 4ET

Mobile: 07824825986
Email: lydia.hackney2008@my.ntu.ac.uk

<div align="right">

05/01/2011

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Dear Sir/Madam

I am an undergraduate studying Criminology at Nottingham Trent University and would be very grateful if you could help me in any way with a number of questions that I have regarding the research I am conducting for my dissertation. My dissertation has the following aim:

'There is a widely held belief that the UK prison system was largely designed by men, for men. This dissertation will investigate the veracity of this notion.'

I have researched a number of sources and haven't yet been able to find out some important information which I think you may be able to shed some light on:

- Was there a specific date, or legislation marking when men and women were separated in prisons, and/or any reasons for the separation?

- I am aware of the work by Jeremy Bentham and his Panoptican prison design, however, were there any women involved in the original prison designs and erection?

- Since the erection of the first prisons, have any women been involved in their reform?

- Are you able to recommend to me any sources on the history and development of the prison system that you think may be useful for my research?

- Do you have an opinion on the topic that you would like to share with me?

I'd like to thank you in anticipation for any help you are able to provide me with.

Yours faithfully

Lydia Hackney

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