

## **Orientations towards women among male prisoners convicted of sex offences**

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This talk will be based on ongoing research into sex offender imprisonment in England and Wales and Norway, as part of a large-scale project comparing imprisonment in the two jurisdictions. It will discuss the ways in which male prisoners' convictions and sentences for sexual offences impacted on their thoughts about and orientations towards women, and build on research which has explored relationships between male prisoners and female prison officers (e.g. Crewe 2006). It will argue that these orientations are shaped by institutions as well as by individuals, and that differences in the ways prisoners are monitored, managed and stigmatised can lead them to think about sex and gender in different ways. Sociologists of imprisonment often describe sex offenders primarily by the function they fulfil for their mainstream peers: as the failed man against which mainstream prisoners can define their masculinity. This talk will challenge this description and describe the ways in which sex offenders construct their own masculinities, contributing to wider discussions about the prison as a gendered institution.