

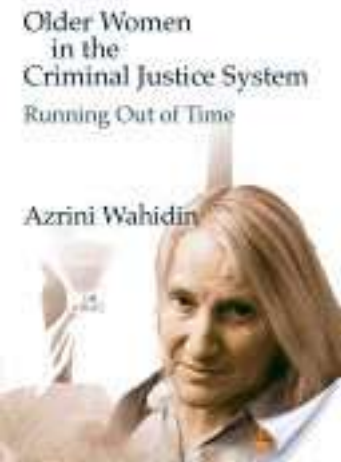
Older Female Offenders: Old and Quiet

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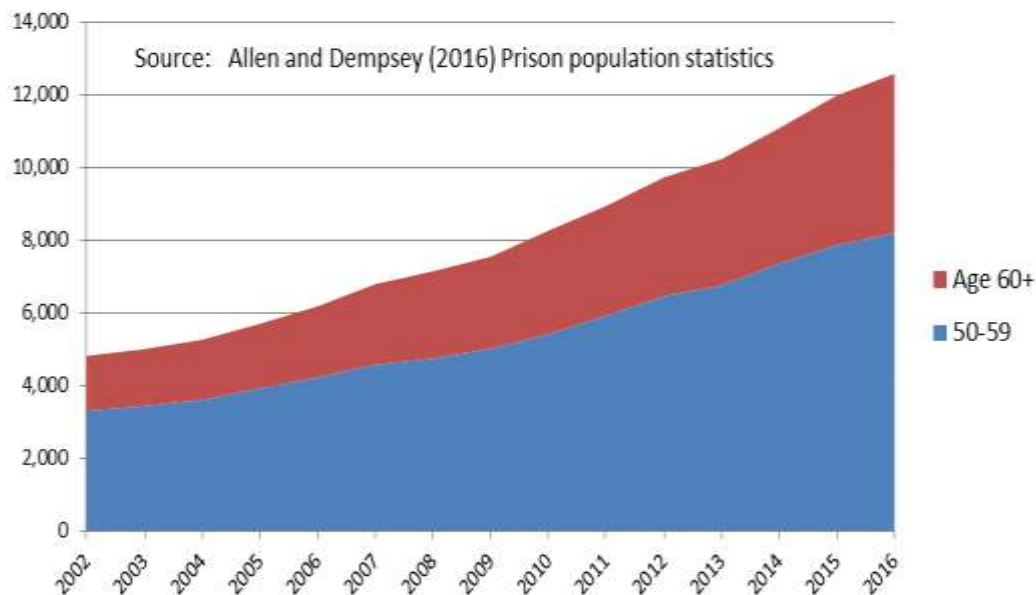
Context



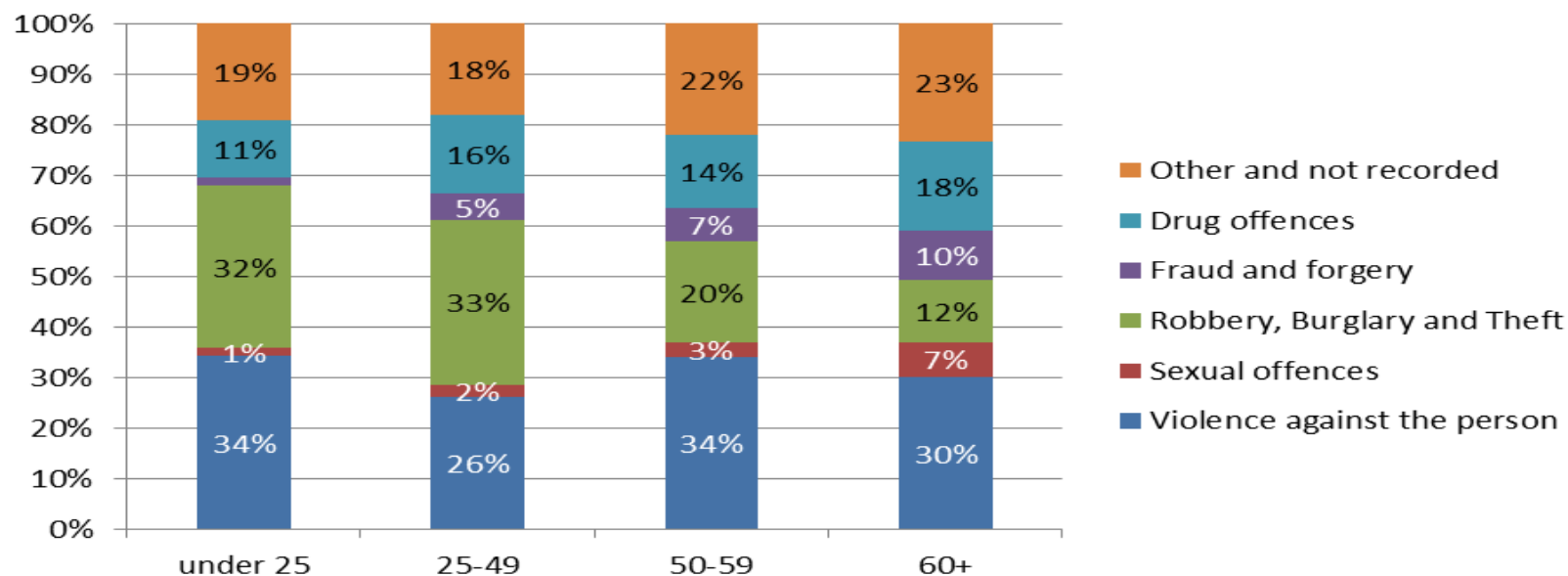
- Old criminals offer an ugly picture and it seems as if even scientists do not like to look at it for any considerable amount of time ... On the other hand, if the thesis of the interrelationship between age and crime is to hold, an investigation of all its implications has to yield results, and with the tendency of our population to increase in the higher age brackets, a special study of criminality of the aged seems to meet a scientific as well as a practical need (Pollak 1941, p. 212).
- 'No specific thought is given to people who are in our age category. Thought is given to young offenders. It is given to lifers. It is given to sort of other categories. *They don't really* think about people of *our age group* and *our families*. I appreciate we are a minority, but I think a number of people you have interviewed would say we are a *significant minority*, and presumably will *continue to be*. I do think they [the prison estate] need to address some of those aspects. They [the prison estate] need to address the problems of people who aren't *one hundred per cent fit*, but who on the outside had normal jobs.' (my emphasis)



Growth in the older prison population of England and Wales



Older Prisoners, type of offence by age, Females, England and Wales, June 2013





‘To reduce the prison population we must first reduce the number of prisons; to reduce the number of prisons we must first abolish certain categories of imprisonment. Women’s imprisonment is, for several reasons, a prime candidate for abolition. Those reasons can, first, be derived pragmatically from the characteristics of the female prison population and, then, be related more fundamentally to possible shifts in the social control of women and *desirable* shifts in the relationship between women and men.....’ (Carlen, 2002:90)



- ‘To be so sick and locked up, and you don’t have any way of getting help, and you look out there and you don’t see a guard anywhere for maybe 20 to 30 minutes, and you think what if I have a heart attack and I can’t get out. That really scares me’.

‘For instance, we had a woman in here who had a stroke. The officers thought she was fooling around, her arm was completely rigid it was a stroke. The doctor was sent for and he said, ‘you have only got a migraine’.

Half an hour later, she started shaking all over, one of the nurses who happened to have worked with geriatrics suddenly realised it was a stroke. We are all frightened of being ill. You can query a doctor on the outside, but you can’t query the doctors in here’



FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES

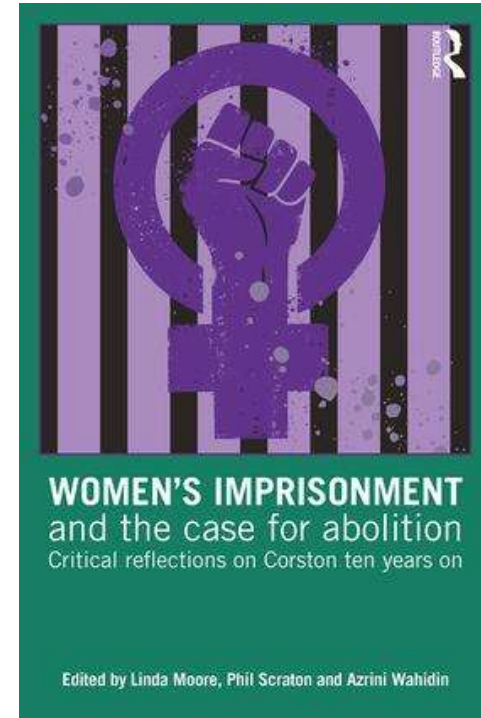
An examination of existing formal and informal practices regarding women in later life, as the first step in developing an explicit and integrated set of policies and programmes to address the special needs of this group across jurisdictions. This will enable a national strategy to be implemented and good practice to be identified.

To develop a comprehensive and gender-sensitive programme for elders that fosters personal growth and accountability and value-based actions that lead to successful reintegration into society.

To prepare all personnel of the criminal justice system to understand and appropriately address elder-specific topics and issues as discussed.

Issues

- 1) Environment – Integration versus Segregation
- 2) Health, Social Care, Need and Wellness;
- 3) Health Care, Cost and Delivery;
- 4) Develop resources and services in a small number of sites (SPS, 2000);
- 4) End of Life Issues – Dignity in Dying.
- **Responses:**
- Introduction of gender and age sensitive programmes, policies and facilities geared towards older offenders.





- Prisoners age more quickly than general population, inspectors say.
- Inspectors also say prisons in England and Wales are ill-equipped to deal with growing population of older inmates
- The report says older jails are ill-equipped for prisoners in wheelchairs or with mobility problems.

