

May 2017

Correspondence, Task Force on Decarceration, 1990-1995

American Society of Criminology. Division on Women and Crime

Lynne Goodstein

Kathlene Faith

Strength In Sisterhood
Inc.

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February 14, 1994

Joan Petersilia
Criminal Justice Program
RAND
1700 Main Street
PO Box 2138
Santa Monica, CA 90407

Dear Joan:

Congratulations again on your upcoming marriage. I am truly thrilled for you and wish you the most happiness. (You deserve it!)

Thanks for your letter of December 23 regarding the Division of Women and Crime resolution regarding women and incarceration. It was quite informative and clear. Given the cloudy institutional memory of most professional associations, I'm sure it took you some effort to come up with such a clear statement of what needs to be done. Thanks.

I have sent copies of your letter to the two DWC members who are chairing the effort. What will happen to the resolution between now and next year's meeting will depend in large part on their time and willingness to follow through. At least we know now what must be done.

Two more things. First, I am enclosing some papers and reports I have worked on with my colleague, Henry Sontheimer, regarding juvenile justice issues. It is a tangential area of research interest for me now, but I think Henry continues to work in the area.

Second, I did want to follow up on the question of the possibility for the Division to be somehow involved in the Crime and Justice in the 21st Century work. It was raised at the meeting last year and not followed up. It is certainly relevant to at least consider feminist perspectives on these questions, not to mention the importance of thinking about women in the criminal justice system in the 21st century. Please let me know if there are people specifically working on these issues or whether there is some possibility of getting some Division members involved in this work.

February 14, 1994

Karlene Faith
Simon Fraser University
School of Criminology
Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6
Canada

Zelma Henriques
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
899 Tenth Avenue
New York, NY 10019

Dear Karlene and Zelma:

Attached is a letter from Joan Petersilia concerning the Women and Prison resolution. As you can see, there are a number of things we could do in anticipation of next year's meeting if we wish to push this resolution forward. I would encourage you to do some planning now (for panels for next year's meeting, and for an article to appear in The Criminologist). If you would like to get some more people working with you, you might also wish to put an announcement in the upcoming DivisionNews. I do have some names of people who wanted to become involved in Division activities; I'll include the list in this letter.

Please let me know of the plans of your Task Force and also how I might help.

Sincerely,

Lynne Goodstein
Division Chair

cc: J. Petersilia

encl: Petersilia's letter
list of interested members

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(604) 291-3018/FAX 291-4140

To: ASC Division on Women and Crime: Women in Prison Task Force,
Decarceration Committee and Interested Others (see Distribution*)

From: Karlene Faith, Task Force Chair, and Member of Decarceration Committee

Re: Decarceration Resolution (see attached)

Date: July 11, 1994

I regret that it's taken so long for me to get in touch with you. Following last fall's meetings, a series of health problems kept me in bed for two months and I'm still recovering from the work setback. I'm also coping with a number of major family crises. Thus, I've been unable to attend to other important responsibilities, including our Women in Prison Task Force, and I won't be able to attend the meetings in Miami.

I hope that those of you with whom I worked on the resolution while we were in Phoenix (and others, as well) will meet together in Miami. I expect to see you at the 1995 meetings, and meanwhile I want to contribute in any way I can.

In February, Lynne Goodstein passed along to me a letter from Joan Petersilia, who chairs the ASC Policy Committee. I had been under the impression that our resolution was already "in the works" of the ASC Executive Board. Apparently this is not the case. Joan succinctly identifies steps that might be taken to get the decarceration resolution on the agenda. She points out that the only precedent (the single other occasion on which the ASC agreed to a resolution) was in opposition to the death penalty.

It seems appropriate to me that a call for ending the death penalty should lead to a call for reducing the use of prisons for non-violent offenders -- which would include most women in prison. That our resolution flies in the face of carceral trends in the U.S. should not dissuade us. (If you would like a copy of the still-unedited paper I presented in Phoenix, titled "Correctional Crossroads in Canada: Decarceration? or Proliferation of Women's Prisons?", let me know.)

Although I was unable to put Joan's suggestions into practice for the 1994 meetings, I would like us to get a head start for 1995. Please let me know if you'd be willing to assume any of these tasks, or if you see other ways of approaching the issues.

1. Organize one or more panels for the 1995 meetings on the theme of decarceration, with a focus on non-carceral alternatives to women's prisons. (If you would not be willing to organize a panel, would you be willing to be on a panel?)
2. Submit a notice to the Criminologist asking for an ASC vote on the resolution, and submit a brief article defending the reasons to support the resolution.

3. Lynne suggests announcing our activity in the DivisionNews, to ensure that women who might want to be involved in this can be included.

4. Ask the ASC Secretary to put the resolution on the agenda for a membership vote at the 1995 Business Meeting. If it passes, the issue will return to the Executive Board, where decisions can be made as to "appropriate next steps." (We need to be prepared to offer recommendations.)

If you would be willing to accept responsibility for any (or all) of the above, and/or if you would be willing to organize and facilitate the Women in Prison Task Force decarceration meeting in Miami, please let me know.

You may have thoughts on work that should be done by the Task Force, apart from the campaign to reduce the numbers of imprisoned women. If so, please let me know your ideas.

Best wishes to you.

Karlene

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BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASC SUPPORTS ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION FOR NON-VIOLENT OFFENDERS. THE OVERREPRESENTATION OF HISTORICALLY DISENFRANCHISED GROUPS IN NORTH AMERICAN CARCERAL FACILITIES, THE PERVASIVE EVIDENCE OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL, PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE AMONG PRISONERS, THE SOCIAL COSTS OF SEPARATING PARENTS FROM THEIR DEPENDENT CHILDREN, AND DISCRIMINATORY SENTENCING PRACTICES ALL POINT TO A NEED TO CHALLENGE THE PERPETUATION OF IMPRISONMENT RESPONSES TO NON-VIOLENT ADJUDICATED OFFENDERS. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT COMMUNITY SERVICES AND RESOURCES BE DEVELOPED AND EXPANDED FOR THE EXPLICIT PURPOSES OF 1) REDUCING THE NUMBERS SENTENCED TO PRISON, 2) GENERATING MODELS OF DECARCERATION WHICH ADVANCE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL EQUITY, AND 3) PROVIDING ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TREATMENT.

School of Criminology
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(604) 291-3018/Fax 291-4140

October 2, 1994

Zelma Henriques
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
899 Tenth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10019

Dear Zelma,

I was so glad to hear from you, and to seeing your commitment to helping the decarceration campaign build some steam in the ASC.

I sent my memo to everyone in mid-July, and when by early September I still hadn't heard from anyone I felt discouraged. Then, hallelujah, I got an encouraging Fax from Evelyn Gilbert, and we had a long phone chat. She'll be in Miami, and was willing to be a co-chair of our task force; she's agreed to announce and organize a meeting of the Women's Division Task Force on Women in Prison (and Decarceration.). She's also planning to organize women in prison/decarceration panels for the 1996 ASC meetings, in Boston. I'm so pleased that you, too, are willing to organize a panel and present a paper.

With the three of us — Zelma, Evelyn, Karlene - we already have almost enough for one panel. Could you work together to organize a second panel ... ? There could be a lot of interest. I guess you'll find out in Miami. (I wish I could be there with you. It could get real interesting.)

Zelma, please get in touch with Evelyn*, so you can find out what she's thinking and the two of you can put your heads together.

She and I thought it makes sense to follow Joan Petersilia's and Lynne Goodstein's suggestions (see my memo of July 11). Do you agree?

I'm grateful you're both willing to carry on with this. It's getting preposterous in North America — the numbers of women (and men) getting locked up, and for all the wrong reasons.

Life has been difficult due to aging (parents), serious illness (sister, partner), a missing brother, unemployment (adult children) and other chronic crises.

Life has also been generous, including responses to Unruly Women. It was awarded a B.C. book prize on women's issues, so I've been interviewed by the media frequently this past month. It's been a rush of provincial and national attention (however fleeting) to women in prison, and why they shouldn't be there. A group of former prisoners and others of us have been channeling the energy and interest into forming a new support group (see brochure enclosed).

I'll look forward to hearing from you after you've had a chance to talk with Evelyn, and/or after the Miami meetings.

Sincerely,

Karlene Faith
Associate Professor

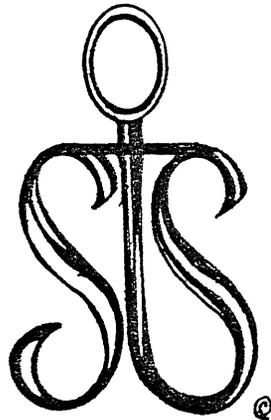
*(319) 273-2786

C:

Evelyn Gilbert

Lynne Goodstein ✓

SIS
STRENGTH IN SISTERHOOD



How will we accomplish this?

With all members of *SIS*, among them, Karen Borden, Sylvie Bouchard, Maggie Colville, Heather Evans, Gayle K.Horii, Kristine Lyons, Jo-Ann Mayhew and Fran Sugar, we will network with other women's organizations whose aims are synonymous with the liberty of women. We are fortunate to be able to confirm the participation of the following people as Advisors:

Peter Benning	June Callwood
John W. Conroy	Claire Culhane
Donni Derr	Liz Elliott
Karlene Faith	Jody Gordon
Lyn Guy	Margaret Jackson
Mary Lasovich	Kim Pate
Sasha Pawliuk	Beth Shields
Pamela Sleeth	Dianna Smith
Des Turner	Frances Wasserlein

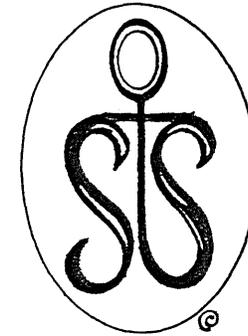
Where can you obtain more information about *SIS*?

Send a stamped self-addressed envelope to:

SIS
7231 - 120th Street, Suite 407
Delta, B.C. V4C 6P5
Tel/Fax 604 591-2076

What can you do?

Please pass our address & telephone number to a woman in prison, past or present. We welcome your support, your ideas and suggestions. Please phone/fax *SIS*.



About the Logo

The central and unifying component of our group is woman, and therefore the universal symbol of WOMAN is selected.

Each letter "S" is taken from the ancient symbol of eternity, normally shown in the horizontal position. We choose to stand strong in our commitment to the ideal of eternal *Sisterhood*.

If the ovals which make up the top & bottom halves of each "S", were closed, one could easily see the "five points of light", and the symbolic reference to humankind - our commitment to humanitarian ideals.

The letters differ slightly in shading and size representing all of the visible differences between us - not barriers to *SIS*, but celebrations which signify the valuation of each as an individual.

The joining is representative of our belief in the *Strength In* the enjoining qualities of *Sisterhood*.

Who are we?

In the process of incorporating as a non-profit society, we are a group of former prisoners, current parolees, academics, advocates for women in conflict with the law, lawyers, feminist activists and humanitarians.

What is our purpose?

To provide a support network for women in prison, past and present, with activities centered on housing, education, employment, parenting and counseling services. Our aim is to assist every woman who requests our help to formulate and to achieve her individual goals. One of the primary goals is living without fear.

SIS
Strength In Sisterhood
7231-120th Street - Suite 407
Delta, B.C. V4C6P5
Tel/Fax 604 591-2076

SIS_{ta}

Strength In Sisterhood trust account
The Bank of Nova Scotia
SFU Branch, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6

SIS gratefully acknowledges donations. If made directly to the SIS_{ta}, please forward the details of the amount and the date of mailing along with your mailing address so that we may send a receipt. If you wish to receive updates please check the appropriate box.

With Thanks,

In the gentleness of SIS_{terhood}

Name: _____

Full Address: _____

Tel: _____
Fax: _____

Forward Updates