

FINDING PSEUDO FAMILIES IN WOMEN'S PRISONS: FACT AND FANTASY

Erin E. Heitmann

Dr. John Galliher, Thesis Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This paper examines prison literature concerning women's facilities, focusing on the years 1960-1979. Sixteen specific pieces of literature are examined focusing on three claims in respect to sexuality among the incarcerated women: 1. If the sixteen works include an operationalized definition of homosexuality; 2. What terminology the authors use interchangeably with homosexuality; 3. What evidentiary support do the authors use to support their claims concerning the incidence of homosexuality. The goals of the paper are to collect women's prison literature from the aforementioned time span and cast a critical light on this existing literature. I suggest that this literature should be examined from a new lens; possibly a feminist or queer theory lens to fully address the previous assertions of homosexuality.