

Speakers: Tea Fredriksson and Robin Gålnander (Stockholm university, Sweden)

Presentation title: Fearful futures and haunting histories in women's desistance from crime

Desistance is increasingly recognized as a series of complex processes by which individuals transform from offenders into nonoffenders. In recent years, research has expanded our understanding for setbacks and struggles within desistance processes. Through an analysis of repeated in-depth interviews with ten desisting women, we have found such struggles to be unsettling and outright frightening. Examples of this were prevalent throughout the women's narratives. The results of our analysis show how frightening aspects of desistance processes stem from making an unfamiliar, normative lifestyle familiar, while unfamiliarizing oneself with a familiar, deviant lifestyle. As such, desistance processes can be conceptualized as uncanny, that is, as pertaining to the frightening and uncertain. Although uncanniness is not a theoretical framework one tends to find in desistance research, it has the potential to develop the understanding of the struggles, fears, and anxieties of desistance processes. Through our analysis, we engage with how uncanniness can nuance established concepts in desistance research.