

# Fellows

## Mary Gibson

IFK\_Senior Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. October 2012 bis 31. January 2013

## Mary Gibson

### PROJECT TITLE

Prisons, Gender, and Citizenship in Modern Italy

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

My research project focuses on the political, social, and cultural history of Italian prisons from Unification in 1860 until World War I. Prison policy was central to Italy's project of constructing a new liberal and secular national identity to distinguish itself from the absolutist monarchies that had dominated the peninsula before 1860. Reform of the justice administration, a fundamental aspect of state-building, was especially urgent in Italy where judicial corruption, inefficiency, and inhumanity symbolized its *backwardness* to the international community. To establish a reputation as modern and progressive, Italy sought to replace corporal punishment with the reformation of inmates through education and work in modern penitentiaries. While this transition to incarceration as the dominant form of punishment in the modern world has been analyzed for northern European nations, the Americas, and even some areas of Africa and Asia, it remains unstudied for Italy during its first fifty years as a new nation. Furthermore, international scholarship has focused almost exclusively on men's prisons while neglecting to analyze the differing organizational structure and rehabilitative ideology of women's institutions. By placing gender at the center of the analysis, my book will argue

that the disparate and unequal experiences of male and female prisoners both complicate the usual chronology for the *birth of the prison* and demonstrate the failure of the new liberal state to extend full citizenship to women.

## **CV**

A past recipient of grants from the Fulbright Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities, Mary Gibson has also been a fellow at the American Academy in Rome. Her areas of research include modern Italian history, women's history, and the history of law and crime. She is currently writing a history of prisons in modern Italy.

## **Publications**

Selected publications: *Born to Crime: Cesare Lombroso and the Origins of Biological Criminology*, Westport 2002; *Prostitution and the State in Italy, 1860–1915*, Ohio 1986.