

WOODHILL screening responses

From 2021-2023 The SAFESOC team screened LUNG theatre's WOODHILL film to Death in Prison conference attendees, university students and prison reform organisations. These are the anonymous survey response from viewers.

What impact did watching the film WOODHILL have on you as a viewer?

It was moving and visually compelling.

I've never seen a piece of work that so succinctly sums up the experience of death in custody. So vital that lived experience is placed front and centre of these narratives.

it was extremely impactful; it takes an issue and a 'voice' that is really lacking.

Shocked but also inspired at the strength and advocacy of Janet and other families.

Incredibly powerful film. Such sadness after watching it, but it needs to be watched.

Very raw emotion and grief beautifully articulated.

It provided a human context for the statistics I routinely see in my work and underlined the ripple effect of inhumane conditions in custody.

Sad film,

Very impactful film, felt very personable, gave the statistics a face.

Very moving and thought-provoking.

Reminded me of the waste of life within prisons.

Very affecting; put academic work in perspective.

Despite the distressing nature of the film, as a person with lived experience of prison and a passionate supporter of prison reform, I always find a large degree of catharsis in hearing such issues being spoken about. There is too much of an approach of society to think that people in custody are out of sight and out and mind. There is too much of an

assumption that prison resolves all problems when in reality it tends to just create problems.

Felt for Janet, want to see change.

Awareness of injustice for prisoners with mental health struggles and made me feel anger more than upset that this is happening.

It tells of the other side of the system, effect on the family.

It was emotive but educational.

It made me cry.

Very powerful, heart-breaking and frustrated at the lack care.

Informative.

What emotions did you experience whilst watching the film and why?

Sadness, rage, upset and some moments of uplift.

A sense that something needs to be done about this.

Upset, anger, disbelief.

Sadness and admiration.

Sadness, so much sadness. Anger at the system's failure.

Sorrow, empathy.

I found it incredibly sad: it really put the death of Janet's son in context, especially given her own experiences and those of her other sons. It made me feel that her whole family, as well as her son specifically, had been failed by the state/society.

Sadness for the family.

Sad and angry about the CJS, sad that everything takes so long to change and sad how much the CJS let down Stephen.

Sadness and anger, but also admiration and hope.

Frustration, a sense of sadness.

Sadness at the extent of Janet's personal loss; anger that the system is letting down such vulnerable people.

Sadness, distress, anger, but also sympathy, empathy and a sense of hope and reassurance that other people are so motivated to create positive and progressive change.

Sad, angry.

Anger, sadness, disbelief, shock that mental health assessments are not standard.

Sorrow. We need awareness for preventive measurements.

I felt sad for the mum when she told her story about raising her children. It was upsetting to hear about one of the boys asking for help and not getting the help he needed as this could have been prevented. It also raised awareness to the impact of capital and money on the person in prison and the family.

Heartbreak, empathy, sadness.

Sadness at the unnecessary loss of so many lives and angry at the lack of support, lack of previous health history.

Anger that Stephen asked for help and was ignored. Sadness at the grief that Janet is experiencing.

Will you do anything differently in your future work as a result of watching the film, and if so, what?

I will remember Janet and her story.

Continue to consult families in a meaningful way in all my work.

Really think about how the work in this area should be underpinned/ not lose sight of families.

Encourage others to understand the personal stories about people in prison.

Even more empathy (if that is possible).

Include and remember the importance of the voices for victims.

I will soon be leaving the criminal justice sector, but I will continue to think about the experience of families like Janet's in my future work on social policy.

The film will definitely drive campaigns and hopefully bring around new discussions.

It reminded me of the power of individual testimony and to keep finding responsible ways of platforming that.

It highlighted another example of non-medical professionals (a prison officer) being tasked with medical tasks (mental health screening), which I see as a fundamental issue within the design of prisons.

Find ways to promote and circulate the film with a view to affecting reform.

Join a campaign against big prisons.

I want to do more research on issues such as remand and magistrates court lack of powers to hospitalise and also mental health assessments as standard on entry.

It made me think about mental health and the fact that it is not taken into consideration, statistically more likely prisoners have ACEs and mental health yet it is ignored.

Education and Human Resources, staffing.

Family relationships are vital.

I am going to see if there are any charities to help families pay for transport costs to see their family members.

Yes, be more aware of the emotions and difficulties relatives face.

Speak up for those in prison. Follow up on people and their families.

Educate myself. Learn about how as a practitioner I can make a difference.