

New Zealand Boobslang

Boobslang, or the argot of New Zealand prisons, was the subject of a PhD study completed in 2001 by Diana Looser of the University of Canterbury, Christchurch. Although prison argot is a feature of prison communities in general, Looser found the New Zealand variety to be specific. The thesis, in two parts, examines the sociological and lexicological context for boobslang, along with a lexicon containing approximately 3000 entries, compiled from interviews with inmates in all New Zealand prisons. Details of some of Looser's findings can be found in:

Looser, Diana. 1999. 'Boob jargon': the language of a women's prison. *New Zealand English Journal* 13:14-37.

Looser, Diana 1999. 'Investigating Boobslang' NZWords 2. 2:1-3

Looser, Diana 2004. 'Lexicography on the Inside: doing time in every New Zealand prison'. *International Journal of Lexicography* 17.1:69-87.

Dianne Bardsley
Director, New Zealand Dictionary Centre
School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies
PO Box 600
Wellington
New Zealand
dianne.bardsley@vuw.ac.nz