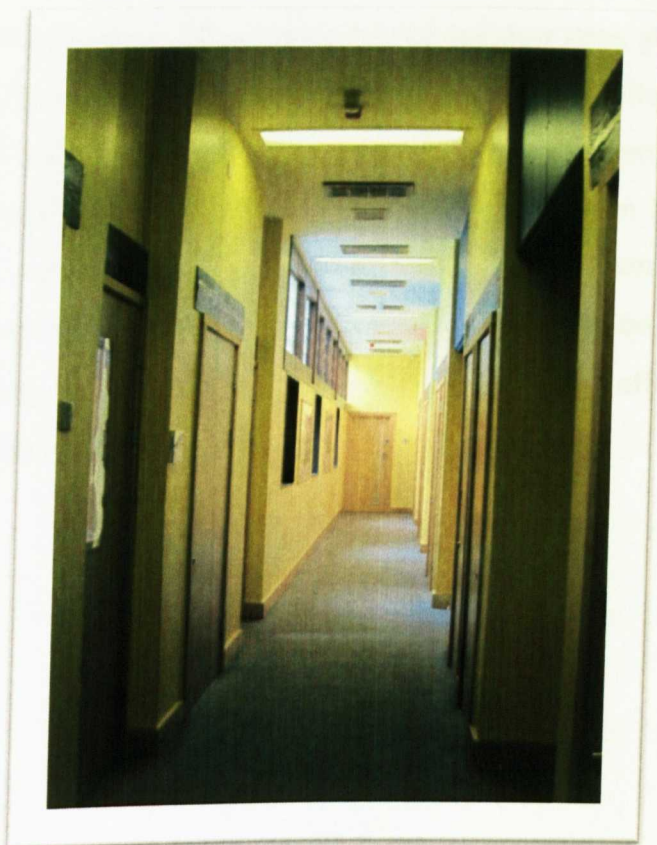


# 'There are no good kids here': Girls' Experiences of Secure Accommodation

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## ***Table of Acronyms***

<b>Acronyms</b>	
<b>YOT</b>	<b>Youth Offending Team</b>
<b>JYB</b>	<b>Youth Justice Board</b>
<b>MOS</b>	<b>Member of staff</b>
<b>LAC</b>	<b>Looked After Child</b>
<b>DTO</b>	<b>Detention Training Order</b>
<b>SEN</b>	<b>Special Educational Needs</b>

## **Abstract**

**In 2010 two hundred and sixty children entered secure accommodation. Of these, fifty-one percent were placed because they were on remand or sentenced after being found guilty of committing a serious offence. The other thirty-seven percent were placed by social services for their own protection under a child welfare order. This means that secure accommodation is used to simultaneously hold children sentenced for punishment with those who are 'saved' from tragedy by welfare professionals. This research explores girls' everyday experiences of secure accommodation by centralising the view of young people as social actors able to play a key role in defining their own experiences. It does so by building on theories around discipline and confinement to consider secure accommodation as an emotional space designed specifically to reform and re-educate children. Taking secure accommodation as a unique social space, this thesis employs the sociology of emotion to explore the social architecture between the adults working as paid carers and the children for whom they receive money to both care for and control. In order to consider the nature of these relationships, this thesis explores the status of 'child' within the unit and the social significance of childhood in the context of a society which binds age with competency.**

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

In 2010 260 children entered secure accommodation. Of these, fifty-one percent were placed because they were on remand or sentenced after being found guilty of committing a serious offence. The other thirty-seven percent were placed by social services for their own protection under a child welfare order. This means that secure accommodation is used to simultaneously hold children sentenced for punishment with those who are 'saved' from tragedy by welfare professionals. There are limited studies about secure accommodations, and those that do exist mostly focus on the contentious issue of the categories of children being mixed together. Therefore, they ask whether it is appropriate to mix children placed under welfare arrangements with those who are sentenced for committing crimes. This ESRC funded research, by contrast, does not do this, rather it uses participatory methods to explore girls' experiences of secure accommodation.

This research explores girls' everyday experiences of secure accommodation by centralising the view of young people as social actors able to play a key role in defining their own experiences. It does so by building on theories around discipline and confinement as represented in the theories of Goffman and Foucault, to consider secure accommodation as an emotional space designed specifically to reform and re-educate children. Taking secure accommodation as a unique social space, this thesis employs the sociology of emotion to explore the social architecture between the adults working as paid carers and the children for whom they receive money to both care for and control. In order to consider the nature

of these relationships, this thesis explores the status of 'child' within the unit and the social significance of childhood in the context of a society which binds age with competency (Castañeda 2002; Christensen 2000; James and James 2004; James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; James and Prout 1997; Mayall 1998). This thesis has wider significance than simply adding to the debates surrounding secure accommodation, and it treats secure accommodation as a window into wider sociological issues around the formation and socialisation of children, and more specifically, young women.

Since secure accommodation makes up only a minute proportion of the secure estate, and is used only to hold the 'most vulnerable' children, research in this area is limited, with the exception of a few notable authors (Coy 2007; Goldson 2002; O'Neill 2001; Harris and Timms 1993). Secure accommodation has not been considered as an emotional space before, even though work by Coy (2007) finds that women refer to it as such, even years after a placement. Therefore, this thesis is not a critique of youth justice policy or a critique of welfare arrangements for children. Instead it explores secure accommodation as a context and institution in which to examine the emotional architecture of relationships and socialisation in human society. Indeed, as the thesis unfolds, it becomes clear that the language of confinement is overwhelmingly a language of emotion.

### ***What is Secure Accommodation?***

The provisions provided for children in trouble are based around two popular notions of childhood, that is; that children are innocent 'little angels' in need of protection, or alternatively, 'little devils' to be supervised and controlled (Scott, 1998; Valentine 2000). This duality means children

face interventions from two different types of professional agencies (O'Neill 2001:27). Thus whilst a child suffering abuse at home might be dealt with in a welfare capacity by the social services, if the same child is caught stealing, he or she will instead become the responsibility of the youth justice system. In one circumstance the child might be labelled as 'troubled', in another she or he would be labelled as 'troublesome' (Worrall 1999). This means that the kinds of circumstances in which children first become known to professional agencies are likely to play an important role in defining their future involvement in professional interventions.

Unlike any other provision available for children, secure accommodation acts as a facility for both the 'troubled' and 'troublesome'. As well as being termed in the academic literature as Secure Accommodation (Goldson 2001, 2002; O'Neill 2001; Harris and Timms 1993), in Local Authority documentation, secure units have also been referred to as 'Local Authority Secure Children's Homes'<sup>1</sup>. Thus, whilst acting as a penal facility to house children guilty of committing grave offences, secure units also act as a home to those who have suffered serious abuse and are in need of protection. Indeed, in March 2010, the period in which the fieldwork took place, there were 310 approved places for children in seventeen secure units across England and Wales. These places were occupied by 260 children: 165 (64%) were male and 94 (36%) were female. Of those 260 children, 130 children (51%) were placed by the Youth Justice Board, 95 children (37%) were placed by the local authority on welfare grounds and the other 30 children (12%) were admitted by the local authority in a criminal justice context (Department for Education 2010). Secure accommodation therefore aims to care for the 'innocent child' that needs

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviated by the unit as LASCH

to be protected, whilst punishing the 'evil child' who needs to be controlled, leading some to comment that 'it has a foot in both camps' (Goldson 2002:9; Goldson 2001:34). Hence, being used to contain both the vulnerable child and the offending child makes secure accommodation unique to all other youth justice and child welfare organisations. As an amalgamation of both a criminal justice and welfare service, secure unit regimes are expected to offer a multipurpose service, fitting to both punish and care whilst simultaneously seeking to reform.

Taken as an adjective, the word 'secure' has five meanings. The most prominent in terms of describing secure accommodation are: '*certain to remain safe [...] fastened so as not to lose way*' and '*having provisions against the escape of inmates*' (Oxford Dictionary). From both the academic and policy literature written in this area, we can see that the naming of secure accommodation is indeed descriptive of its aim to fulfil a dual role in the provisioning of facilities for children. The first definition of 'secure' certainly corroborates the welfare approach to secure accommodation, that is, a place where children should be put to keep them safe whilst ensuring their chances of a 'respectable' adulthood. The second definition fits the notion of the secure unit as a penal facility for those who are guilty of committing crime and who, therefore pose a risk to society. In reality, each secure unit is expected to fulfil both of these roles and care for both the criminal and the welfare referral. The local authority describes Hillside Lodge<sup>2</sup>, the place at the heart of this thesis, as being a home to 'young people who show severe behavioural problems'. The media, by contrast takes a more dramatic focus and in *The Guardian*, residents from one unit are termed as 'Britain's most hardened young

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<sup>2</sup> The name of the unit has been changed to protect the identity of the young people and staff who kindly agreed to take part in this research.

offenders and otherwise troubled youngsters' (Jackson 2003). Whilst some of the children discussed in the article had undoubtedly been found guilty of committing serious offences, it was not mentioned that approximately half of the residents fell into the category of 'otherwise troubled' and were indeed 'innocent' non-offenders. The mixing of two categories of children has sparked a hotly contested debate in both public and political arenas (Goldson 2002, 2001; Harris and Timms 1993; O'Neill 2001).

### ***Social Construction, Identity and Socialisation***

In order to consider secure accommodation as a sociological issue, the next section will use social construction to unpick the key issues arising in this thesis. Sociologists have developed social constructionism as a key theory to remind us to analyse everyday interactions critically. Social constructionism invites us to consider that distinctions between people are socially manufactured and are hence bound up with cultural assumptions, rather than solid facts (Burr 1995). Berger and Luckman's book '*The Social Construction of Reality*' forms a key text in this area that might help us to understand secure accommodation as a social intervention.

Sociology is built on the foundation that knowledge is socially constructed. That is to say, rules, laws, social norms and practices are not universal but change and shift across time, place, space and localities (Karstedt 2002; Sherman 2003). The fact that beliefs and norms are 'constructed' by society means that there is no fixed state for beliefs such as right and wrong or good and evil. Consequently, expectations about appropriate behaviour alter over time (Berger 1966; Berger and Luckman 1966; Burr 1995; Cohen 2002; Elias 1994; Jenkins 1998).

Berger and Luckman (1966) explain that within any society, it is human beings that 'create and then sustain all social phenomena through social practices' (Berger and Luckman 1966). Consequently individual societies are responsible for shaping the categories that compartmentalise individuals into boxes, such as the 'insane' or the 'criminal' (Cohen 2002; Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009; Hacking 1999; Jenkins 1998). This is most easily evidenced by the criminal justice system whereby socially accepted laws have been developed and enforced to protect public stability. The creation of law has meant that certain behaviours are criminalised so that those who display them are stigmatised as 'criminal'. Therefore man has 'created madness and badness' (Arditi 1996). This is further illustrated by research which shows that norms and beliefs are not universal. Therefore, although meanings shift over time, behaviours also embody different meanings across different cultures or subcultures at the same time and moments (Mead 1971; Mead 2007). Although the development of the mass media has led some to claim that the word is becoming localised (Giddens 2002), the fact remains that reality is subjective (Burr 1995). Indeed, sociologists stress that 'what is 'real' for a Tibetan monk may not be 'real' to an American business man' (Berger and Luckman 1966). In this way, we each become a product of our upbringing, and so come to embody the beliefs and behaviours that we are brought up amongst, meaning that we can be placed into socially made 'categories' before we are able to walk and talk (Jenkins 2008). Our cultural identity means that others make judgements about us based on their own assertions of where we fit into society, using characteristics that cannot be hidden from others, such as age, gender and ethnicity (Jenkins 1998; Jenkins 2008; Thomas 2000; West and Zimmerman 1987).



## **The Social Construction of Childhood**

Academics in the sociology of childhood have made use of Berger and Luckman's theoretical understanding of social construction as a way to interpret popular perceptions of children. Although 'childhood' has been understood as a universal definition to describe the position of young people who are not yet adults, a growing body of research has shown that childhood is in fact *not* universal and is experienced differently depending on individual experiences (Aubrey and Dahl 2006; Curtis, James, and Ellis 2009; Ellis and France 2010; James and James 2004; James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; James, Curtis, and Ellis 2009; James and Prout 1997; Mayall 2000; Punch 2002; Valentine 2000). It is widely accepted that notions of childhood have varied across time and place, meaning that different expectations are placed on the competencies of children across the world (Aries 1962; Mead 1971; Stainton Rogers 2001).

Members are assigned to the category of childhood via age classifications and in Western societies, those under the age of eighteen are separated from adulthood and viewed as still being in the socialisation process, separate from active and participating adult citizens (Hendrick 2000; James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; Thomas 2000). Due to their unsocialised, or 'natural' state, children are monitored and subjected to tighter controls than any other grouping in western society and separate laws forbid children from partaking in activities which are permitted by adults (Hill, Davis, Prout, and Tisdall 2004; Muncie 1999b). Within the category of childhood there are different markers, assigned to ages of those classed as children, so for instance, it is understood that a two year old child will have different understandings and social responsibilities from a sixteen year old (Alanen and Mayall 2001; Hendrick 2000; James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; James and Prout 1997).

Like all other social categories in society, the notion of 'childhood' is one that has been socially constructed and subject to change over the years (Aries 1962; Burr 1995).

*'In societies and times other than our own, children cringed in terror over damnation, boasted proudly about social status, enjoyed lewd and cruel humour, languished in profound grief, and generally displayed what we may regard now as an unchildlike repertoire of emotions.'* (Gordon 1989)

In the same way, activities considered 'suitable' for children have also changed, so whereas parents used to be seen as the owners of children, permitted to sanction as they wished, UK legislation now means that parents are restricted in their parenting practices and must conform to societal expectations about what parents 'must' do to keep their children safe (Thomas 2000). Whereas the family remains 'privatised', there is also a surveillance that watches over families to make sure that children are protected, at least to a degree (Parton 2008). Furthermore, whilst historically children were expected to financially contribute to the running costs of the family, modern laws forbids those under fourteen to engage in paid work. So whilst children have been viewed historically as 'mini-adults' endowed with the same responsibilities and competencies as adults (Stainton Rogers 2001), the latter decades of the twentieth century have noted a shift in the status of childhood and the romanticism of a 'proper childhood' that had previously been enjoyed by only the middle classes (Hendrick 2000; James, Jenks, and Prout 1998). This shift also recognised that children experienced psychological changes during their childhood. They thus came to be viewed as 'developing' or, 'adults in waiting' and therefore as 'less competent' than adults (Castañeda 2002; Scott, Jackson, and Backett-Milburn 1998). Due to this, children have been judged as

'human becomings' rather than 'human beings' and have been subjected to adult protection and control (Alanen and Mayall 2001; Cross, Evans, and Minkes 2003; Hendrick 2000; Moss and Petrie 2002; Muncie 1999a). However, Thomson (2007) adds to this debate by suggesting that since adult identities, like children's identities are 'multiple and fluid', children cannot be treated as a homogenous group any more than 'adults' can (Butler 1990; Holland, Renold, Ross, and Hillman 2008; Thomson 2007).

In western society, children are viewed in terms of their innocence and vulnerability and are seen as being reliant on the protection of adults (Christensen 2000; Valentine 2000). Therefore, the state intervenes if it suspects that parents are not caring for their children properly and an army of professionals are employed to ensure that those under question are carefully scrutinised (Thomas 2000). Indeed, children are seen as representing the 'future' and so are seen as the tool of 'social change'. As a result, the state looks to lessen the social and financial burden of 'problem' families by intervening in the socialisation of children and protecting the welfare of those they feel to be threatened (Hill, Davis, Prout, and Tisdall 2004; James and James 2004; Parton 2008).

In contrast to the view of children as 'vulnerable' beings entitled to protection, political debate has raged around the competencies of children who offend, resulting in the abolition of *doli incapax* which before 1998 had absolved children from criminal responsibility (Ball and Connolly 2000; James and James 2004; Muncie 1999a; Muncie 2005). Therefore it seems that childhood is problematic in its constructions and whilst children in welfare cases are judged as being unable to take responsibility when making important decisions, children who commit crime are held

accountable for their actions and punished accordingly (Farrington 1996; Goldson 2000; Goldson 2001; Goldson 2002; Hogeveen 2005; James and James 2004; Von Hirsch 2001; Worrall 1999).

However, social constructionism is problematic and it is within the context of childhood that we can take social constructionism to its breaking point.

*'If a thing were shown to be socially constructed in the first sense, it would follow that it would contravene no law of nature to try to get rid of it (which is not the same as saying that it would be easy to do so – consider Manhattan). If a belief of ours were shown to be socially constructed in the second sense, it would follow that we could abandon it without fear of irrationality: if we have the belief not because there is adequate evidence in its favour but because having it subserves some contingent social purpose, then if we happen not to share the social purpose it subserves we ought to be free to reject it.'*(Boghossian 2001)

In this way then, we can see that social constructions cannot be simply 'swept aside' once we are aware that they are so. For instance, with respect to children's rights, we can see that there is some universal agreement about the needs and rights of children. The most unifying development in a universal definition of childhood has come from the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989 which has been ratified across all nations, except from America and Somalia (UNICEF 2007). Under UNCRC, a child is recognised as a person under the age of eighteen, and as such, children are entitled their own rights which are separate to the rights of their parents and other adults (Lewsley, Marshall, Towler, and Aynsley-Green 2008). Although UNCRC renders children as needing protection in the form of internationally accepted rights, it is also noted that children are still dependent on adults to assert rights on their behalf (Backett-Milburn,

Cunningham-Burley, and Davis 2003; Bell 2002; Devine 2002; Goldson 2002; Harris and Timms 1993a; Hill 1999; Thomas 2000). Therefore children are understood as being disadvantaged in society and are judged in respect of professional views about their 'competencies' which can then overrule the child's own voice, despite the UNCRC which states that children have a right to participate in important decisions which affect their lives (James and James 2004). So, as important as social constructionist theories are, they still have their limits, and need to be placed within boundaries in order to avoid over generalising their importance in the understanding of the fabric of society.

### **The Social Construction of Gender: The Girl Problem**

Berger and Luckman did not talk about gender explicitly but sociological feminists have built upon their notions of social construction to develop a body of knowledge that unpicks societal understandings of femininity in everyday life (Lorber 1999; Lorber and Farrell 1991; West and Zimmerman 1987). Feminist theorists talk about the binary oppositions that have been culturally manufactured and view women positioned as 'other', compared to 'natural' man (King 2004). Like most categorisations, therefore, gender is socially constructed with women being traditionally viewed as the weaker sex, prone to emotional and irrational behaviour (Butler 1999; Goffman 1977; Hutter and Williams 1981; King 2004; Lorber and Farrell 1991; Sharpe 1994; Wolf 1991).

Sex should not be confused with gender. Although sex is biologically assigned by the presence of one sexual organ over another, gender has been seen as a major classifying force and has been used to 'arrange' many of the facilities of life (Goffman 1977). Gender has become a distinguishing

characteristic of society that need not have existed, instead important classifications could have rested on height, weight or hair colour (Goffman 1977; West 1996; West and Zimmerman 1987). Instead our gender is announced almost as soon as we are born and we are dressed appropriately in pink or blue clothes which announce our gender to those unable to see our genitalia (Lorber and Farrell 1991). Therefore, rather than being born with a gender, we learn to be masculine or feminine from society around us (Lorber and Farrell 1991), so whilst we are told that little boys are made of *'slugs and snails and puppy dog tails'* we are informed that girls are *'sugar and spice and all things nice'* (Hochschild 1983:163). There has always been a professional concern about the morality of young women (Barter 2006; Barton 2000; Chesney-Lind 1989; Hutter and Williams 1981; Kitzinger 1988; Leonard 1982; Miner 1912; Zedner 2006) and women who display behaviours which are considered unfeminine are seen as 'unnatural' violators of their gender (Rowett and Vaughan 1981; Viki, Massey, and Masser 2005). Indeed, the view of women as 'the gentler sex' has meant that those who acted against the 'gentle and loving' female stereotype have been doubly punished (Harris 2004).

Teenage girls inhabit a unique place in our society, judged in terms of both their position as female and as minors. In contrast to the view of childhood which asserts that children need to be controlled and guided, adolescence has been described as presenting a period of struggle whereby young people aspire to distance themselves from the views of their parents (Hudson 1984). In return, adults have historically tried to control 'youth' believing that if they were left alone, young people would ruin their chances of achieving 'respectable' adulthood. This time of adolescent struggle has been traditionally attributed by academics to be a male trait and whereas boys have been given granted an assigned category of

'adolescence' as an excuse to display aggressive and risky behaviours, girls have never been permitted the same luxury (Hudson 1984:36). Perhaps because of their reproductive capacity, girls have been judged for their indiscretions more harshly (Heidensohn 1997:779). It has been suggested that this is because adolescence is deemed as something that is 'grown out of' whereas femininity is held for girls to grow into (Hudson 1984).

Adolescence has been presented as a period of 'becoming' and has therefore been used as a way to justify inappropriate teen behaviour, 'they'll grow out of it' (Hudson 1984:32; Stephen 2000). However, whilst the justification of age is commonly used with regard to misdemeanours by young men, the same is not true for young women (Jackson, 2006). Hudson (1984) found that whilst teachers viewed transgressions by both males and females as being age related, social workers acted sooner if girls misbehaved since they saw this as a rejection of femininity. Thus whilst adolescence can be seen as a phase, a rejection of femininity cannot:

*'Adolescence is, after all, the status a teenager is moving out of [...] but femininity is what a girl is supposed to be acquiring.'* (Hudson 1984:44)

Since it appears that 'troublesome' girls were judged much more harshly than boys, it has been suggested that girls are punished for transgressing not only social norms but also punished for transgressing gender norms (Heidensohn 1997:779; Hudson 1984). That is, whilst boys are expected to misbehave and popular rhymes warn us that: 'boys will be boys', it seems that girls are expected to know better (Nava 1984). Research by Lees (1986) and McRobbie (1978) demonstrated that girls internalised gendered messages about themselves and were highly critical of other girls who displayed 'gender-inappropriate' behaviour. Hence being incarcerated for

**'their own protection' for displaying 'unfeminine' characteristics and 'putting themselves at risk', shows that girls are still being perceived by the state as being 'easily led' and incapable of protecting themselves. Indeed, the majority of children placed in secure accommodation for welfare reasons are girls (Held 2006).**

Furthermore, the difficulties that girls face around their sexuality are still prevalent today. Research by Barter (2004) shows that girls in children's homes were often held accountable for regulating the sexual advancements of boys. In Barter's study, residential staff and residents were shown a vignette of a girl called Helen. In the vignette, Helen is touched inappropriately by another resident, John. The research participants are asked who is in the wrong, Helen for dressing provocatively, or John for crossing the boundaries of inappropriate sexual behaviour. More than half of the staff believed that Helen was to blame. This shows that girls are expected to govern their own sexual behaviour, both in terms of stopping boys from going 'too far', and also not putting themselves at unnecessary risk (Chambers 2004; Hird 2000). From her research, Barter confirmed that whilst sexual abuse in residential care homes is common, most girls stated that they would not report incidents to staff. This seems understandable when one considers the 'professional' stance to such accusations:

*'She's winding him up, flirting with him letting him think he's in there so he's probably got the wrong message and then can't stop himself [...] it's hard for boys at that age [...] their hormones rule everything.'* (Female residential worker in Barter 2006:351)

Girls are seen as being responsible for their own sexual actions and therefore in control of their own sexuality, whereas boys are seen to be at



risk from the provocation of girls and of losing themselves to their innate sexuality (Barter, 2006). Therefore, as Kelly (1988) suggests, women are expected to regulate their behaviour to ensure that they do not provoke sexual feelings in men. This continues beyond the spaces of children in care and shapes most of the social spaces that girls and boys occupy together. For instance, Morrow (2000) and Chambers (2004) found that bullying and sexual harassment is widespread in schools too, although, as in residential homes, girls do not report incidents in a formal way:

*'the problems of prising apart the distinctions between sexual harassment, teasing and flirting are compounded in a wider culture in which sexual banter is perceived as a shared pleasure between men and women' (Chambers 2004:412).*

The debate highlighted by Lees (1986), about the sexual double standard between teenage boys and teenage girls, remains relevant two decades later. The slag/drag dichotomy still pervades and girls 'have to be careful' not to get themselves a reputation for being 'easy' or 'a slag' (McRobbie 1979). Work by Kitzinger (1995) suggests that the term 'slag' is pinned on women who allow their bodies to be used by men, and, if a girl is 'tricked' into having sex, she can be left 'feeling like a slag'. There is evidence to suggest that girls and boys also see themselves and each other in these predetermined categories of what boys and girls 'should be', and research suggests that as well as receiving negative attention from their peers, girls who had sex outside of a stable relationship would also receive interest from professionals fearing for their morality (McIntosh 1978: 55). As we will go on to explore, girls labelled as 'promiscuous' and those found to be having 'inappropriate' sexual relationships are often those who enter secure accommodation under a Section 25 welfare order. With the gaze of professionals set to reducing 'harm' and the 'risk' of girls damaging their

own morality, it seems that female sexuality is set to remain monitored and used as a source of control for women and girls:

*'It is difficult to see how professionals who view female sexuality in such a negative manner will be able to offer a positive contribution to enabling girls to overcome prescribed gender roles and provide a framework to enable a more assertive female sexuality to emerge.'*  
(Barter 2006:355)

Through targeted intervention, professionals aspire to 'preserve' girls' adulthoods for them, believing that they cannot be trusted to safeguard their own morality (Mayall 1998; James, Jenks and Prout 1998). Whilst Goldson cites unit workers' exasperation at seeing girls referred for being promiscuous (Goldson 2002:97), Harris and Timms (1993) report that the terms 'out of control' and 'moral danger' are frequently seen in referrals for girls, but rarely seen in relation to boys. The concerns about female teenage sexual activity are made more prominent since teenage motherhood is seen to be the source of wider societal problems and of a financial and moral drain upon society (Murray 1994; James and James 2004:154; Harris 2004:31; Worrall 1999:42). So, although it is deemed acceptable for a boy to experiment sexually, it is felt to be inappropriate for a girl to display similar behaviours, hence girls appear more frequently under welfare responses to being 'in moral danger' (Worrall 2001:89). Whilst Barter's research shows that professionals attribute blame to young women for 'encouraging' the advances of young men, Coy (2007) found that women sex workers had a different opinion about their childhood sexual status than the professionals who worked with them at the time. Coy's respondents reported that they were defined by social workers as being 'sexually active' when they had believed themselves to be 'sexually abused' (Coy 2007:6). Many of the women in Coy's study reported that

being sent to secure accommodation only confirmed their identity as that of 'criminal' and not as 'victim' which they felt they were.

### ***Thesis Aims and Objectives***

My research seeks to set girls at the heart of the secure accommodation debate (Coy 2007:4; Thomas and O'Kane 1998; James and James 2004). I aim to provide girls the chance to describe their lives in their own terms, thereby replacing legislative or policy descriptions of them as vulnerable or risky with a new depth of understanding. This research will therefore contribute to the literature about secure accommodation and offer accounts to fill important gaps in this area, showcasing children as the experts of their own experiences.

As this study is an exploration of the everyday lives of girls living in secure care, it therefore takes a different approach from other authors who have commented on children in secure accommodation (Goldson 2002; Harris and Timms 1993a; Harris and Timms 1993b; O'Neill 2001). Whilst other studies have asked children for their thoughts on secure placements, rather than centralising children's views, Goldson (2002), Harris (1993) and O'Neil (2001) have been instrumental in defining important political limitations. That is, authors do ask children for their initial feelings about their placement into secure accommodation but do not look into the routines and regimes of the everyday experiences of secure care. My observations offer a very different view of secure accommodation, and provide a detailed and in-depth view of life in secure care. So, rather than looking at a policy driven view of secure accommodation, or comparing different modes of operation, I am concerned chiefly with documenting the experiences of the girls residing in Hillside Lodge in from 2009 to 2010.

**In sum, my research aims to:**

- **Explore girls' experiences of secure accommodation**
- **Explore every day decision making in secure accommodation**
- **Investigate the nature of power relationships in secure accommodation**
- **Learn how and if young people's identities are shaped by their placement in secure accommodation**

**To address these questions, I conducted participant observations of Hillside Lodge secure unit over a twelve month period. During this time I invited all of the girls residing in the unit to take part in three interviews. To offer another perspective on life in Hillside Lodge and to contextualise young people's perspectives of rules and routines, a handful of staff were also invited to share their views. At the end of the project, fifteen girls had taken part in the study along with five members of staff.**

**My analysis seeks to answer several key questions:**

- 1) How does it feel to be a girl in secure accommodation?**
- 2) How relevant is disciplinary control to the running of a secure unit?**
- 3) How are girls constructed and understood in Hillside Lodge?**
- 4) What attempts are made to reform and shape the identities of girls in secure accommodation?**
- 5) How do girls perceive themselves and other young women living with them?**
- 6) How much (if any) control do girls have over their own experiences of secure accommodation?**

## ***Framework for the thesis***

Chapter two 'Constructing and Controlling Children' considers the main pieces of academic research around secure accommodation and will explore findings from these earlier pieces of work to set a platform on which to analyse my own research. This chapter will explore previous findings to illustrate gaps in the current academic literature with regard to the lives and experiences of children and young people in secure accommodation.

Chapter three 'Discipline and Emotion in a Secure Setting' will explore the literature relating to girls in secure accommodation and will use theories by Foucault and Goffman to inform later work by Bendelow, Hochschild and Gordon in the sociology of emotion. This chapter will explore the concepts of power and discipline and will consider changes in the criminal justice system which encourage reformation rather than punishment. In addition, this chapter will explore the theory of 'caring power' and will consider secure accommodation as an institution in which young people are 'cared' into emotional reform.

Chapter four provides methodological insight into the research process and explores the methods that were used to gather data. This chapter sets out the intricacies of being a researcher in an institution which is usually hidden from view and also discusses the ethics of conducting research in a secure unit.

Chapter five draws on ethnographic fieldnotes to set out the daily rhythm and routines of the unit. This chapter sets the scene for the findings

chapters and allows the reader to understand the context in which the girls' experiences are set and in which the research took place.

Chapter six 'The Girls: Characteristics and First Impressions' introduces the reader to the research participants and describes their pathways into secure care. This chapter also shares the 'starting point' of the girls' emotional journeys in the unit, offering their first impressions and exploring their initial feelings about secure accommodation in general and Hillside Lodge in particular.

Chapter seven 'Care(ful)ing Relationships' explores the relationships that were evident in shaping girls' everyday experiences of Hillside Lodge. In addition this chapter explores the emotion work that discretely dominates relationships between members of staff and Hillside residents, exploring the intricacies of emotion management. This chapter concludes by exploring the emotional architecture which binds and separates young people and staff and shapes the relationships in which they invest.

Chapter eight 'Forming Good Children' revisits the theoretical discussions around childhood and explores, from the perspectives of the Hillside girls, how it feels to undergo emotional reformation back to childhood. This chapter examines the notion of vulnerability in relation to childhood and unpicks the notion that vulnerability is a childhood issue.

Chapter nine 'Making Girls and Appropriating Girlhood' explores gender identity with participants and explores the prescribed notions of femininity

which become embedded in expectations for girls and young women. This chapter focuses on the differences in perceptions of girlhood and explores the opinions that staff have about the girls in their care as well as how girls feel that they are treated specifically in relation to their gender.

Chapter ten 'Control within the Contradiction' explores the everyday strategies that girls' used to assert some control over their own placement in Hillside Lodge. This chapter will consider young people's attempts at resisting emotional reformation and will reflect upon the outcomes for children who attempt to opt out of 'the last chance saloon'.

Chapter even will form the conclusion to this thesis and will bring together the issues raised as a result of the research. This chapter will endeavour to contemplate the notion of emotional management as a reformatory tool for children who are seen to have 'nowhere else to go'.

## **Chapter Two: Constraining and Controlling Children**

### ***Introduction***

Whilst most secure units are owned by local authorities, children can be placed by both the Youth Justice Board and Local Authority Social Service Departments, meaning that children legally labelled as criminal are held alongside children who have not offended. This chapter will consider the main pieces of academic research around secure accommodation and will explore findings from these earlier pieces of work to set a platform on which to analyse my own research. In addition, this chapter will explore previous findings to illustrate gaps in the current academic literature with regard to the lives and experiences of girls and young women in secure accommodation.

### ***A Historical Overview of Secure Accommodation***

Secure units were first introduced in the UK in 1964 as an additional provision to the 'approved school' system. The units were attached initially to three approved schools and aimed to provide accommodation for boys who were 'exceptionally unruly and uncooperative' or persistent absconders who could not be accommodated anywhere else (O'Neill 2001:65). In 1968, the legislation was changed so that children guilty of committing 'serious crimes' could also be placed in secure accommodation under Section 53 of the Children and Young People's Act of 1933 (O'Neill 2001). Although initially designed to cater for those perceived as uncontrollable and troublesome, when approved schools were reviewed in 1951, the Franklin Committee found that many of the units' residents were simply 'persistent absconders' and not necessarily otherwise troublesome in their behaviour (O'Neill 2001:66). Thus, as the provisioning for



absconders continued, units began to actively target absconders aiming to help children who were 'running away from their problems' (Harris and Timms 1993).

The approved school system was abolished in 1969 and instead 'community homes' were introduced, meaning that young people would be placed under the remit of local authority social services instead of the criminal justice system (O'Neill 2001:69). The policy incentive behind secure accommodation therefore changed and shifted towards an ethos of 'helping' children rather than punishing them. Unit managers were given discretion to select appropriate children for individual units able to provide suitable 'therapeutic' intervention where children could be 'forced, in their own psychic interests' to confront their problems (Harris and Timms 1993:600-601). Once secure units were placed under social services however, local authorities were reluctant use them to house young offenders and instead felt that units should focus solely on those in need of care. As more and more children found themselves placed in such units, it was argued that rather than fulfilling a need in society, the rise in secure accommodation meant that young people were being locked up for less serious issues, causing some authors to claim that increased provision created demand rather than fulfilled it (Harris and Timms 1993:16). Indeed, the release of a Home Office funded report by Cawson and Martell (1979) had stated that the supply of secure accommodation beds outweighed the needs of children, meaning that children were being locked up unnecessarily to fill places. Cawson and Martell had also insisted that simply absconding was not sufficient justification to lock children up (O'Neil 2001). Following this report 1979, the funding for secure accommodation was cut dramatically and the numbers of children placed for welfare reasons decreased accordingly (Harris and Timms 1993:76).

In 1981 the European Court of Justice ruled that placing children in closed units without a judicial ruling was unlawful under the European Convention on Human Rights. Hence from 1983, children could no longer be admitted to secure accommodation unless their case had been heard before a court (O'Neill 2001:71; Harris and Timms 1993:18). The government began inspections of the units in the 1980's and required that all units earned and maintained a DHSS licence. This step meant that some of the local authority homes closed down instead of improving standards (Harris and Timms 1993). During this time, increased pressure from professionals and politicians meant that secure units once again accepted young offenders and by the nineties both criminal and welfare children could be placed in secure accommodation together (Goldson 2002:76). With the political climate increasingly hostile towards children under New Labour in the 1990s, places became monopolised by offending children. In addition to the agreed fifty percent unit occupation, the Youth Justice Board also had the option to 'spot buy' extra beds as they were needed. This meant that the ratio of welfare and youth justice placements could often be skewed in the favour of youth justice, and by 2010 two thirds of all children placed in secure accommodation were there for criminal justice reasons.

### ***The Legal Framework for Sentencing Children***

From a criminal justice perspective, young people can be placed in secure accommodation if they are on remand awaiting trial, if they have been sentenced to a Training and Detention Order (DTO), or if they are found guilty of committing a crime chargeable under Section 53 under the Children and Young People Act 1933, that is, they are found guilty of committing a 'grave crime' which would receive a sentence of over fourteen years or 'life' if tried in an adult court (O'Neill 2001; Worrall 2001;

Goldson 2002). The age of the child sentenced often determines whether they will be placed in a Youth Offenders Institute, Secure Training Centre or a secure unit, with the preference being to select the youngest and 'most vulnerable' to go to secure units.

An composite example of a Youth Justice referral is offered here to set the scene for the reader:

*Joanne is fourteen and has been convicted of murdering a child. Social workers and youth offending workers report that Joanne needs close supervision and intense therapeutic support. Joanne is known to self harm and has also attempted suicide a number of times. Since Joanne's crime is a high profile one, her case is frequently discussed in the media. Intense media coverage poses a risk for Joanne since other inmates might guess her identity and seek retribution. There are also concerns that inmates might disclose Joanne's identity to the public. Joanne's situation makes her vulnerable and it is judged that she should be held in secure accommodation for her own safety. Joanne would be likely to stay in secure accommodation until she is old enough to be moved to an adult prison.*

Children sent to secure accommodation through the child welfare route are usually detained under Section 25 of the Children and Young People Act (1989). The act stipulates that:

- (1) *Subject to the following provisions of this section, a child who is being looked after by a local authority may not be placed, and, if placed, may not be kept, in accommodation provided for the purpose of restricting liberty ('secure accommodation') unless it appears—*
  - (a) *that—*
    - (i) *he has a history of absconding and is likely to abscond from any other description of accommodation; and*

- (ii) *if he absconds, he is likely to suffer significant harm;*  
*or*
- (b) *that if he is kept in any other description of accommodation he is likely to injure himself or other persons.*

An example of a section 25 referral is offered here to set the scene for the reader. Please note again, that this example is not a genuine example as describing participant's cases in such detail would compromise their anonymity:

*India is fourteen years old and has been living in a variety of local authority children's homes since she was three years old. India has been caught staying with her birth mother, although her social worker has forbidden it due to India's mum's heroin addiction. Care workers in India's children's home have reported her missing 104 times in one year and sometimes do not see her for days at a time. She sometimes returns to the home with bruises and burns on her face and body. India self harms and has declared that she will kill herself if she is not allowed to live with her mum. India admits that she has been working as a prostitute to buy drugs. India's social worker decides that she cannot keep India safe anymore and calls for her to be placed into secure accommodation on a welfare order.*

Under section 25, children can be placed in secure accommodation if there are concerns about their safety, particularly if there are fears that the young person will abscond from an open setting and that there is a possibility of them being harmed if they abscond (Goldson 2002:12). The Act requires that the placement should be terminated if the circumstances responsible for placing a child into secure care changes (Goldson 2002:13) but, once an order has been made, a child can be held in secure accommodation for seventy-two hours at the discretion of social services. After this time, social services must apply to the court to have the young person placed officially (DoH 1991: Reg 12). The Act states that children

should be placed in secure accommodation on welfare grounds '*only when there is no appropriate alternative [...] and never as a form of punishment*'. Welfare children are usually placed in a secure unit as a last resort. That is, when they have habitually and continually absconded and have been harmed whilst 'missing' from parental or local authority care.

At the time their case is heard in court, young people are advised not to attend but are instead encouraged to instruct a solicitor and an *Ad Litem* or Children's Guardian to ensure that their best interests are met. If a young person is placed in secure accommodation on welfare grounds, they can be housed for up to six months following a review after the first month. After the initial order period has lapsed, social services are able to extend the order by a maximum of six months at a time.

### ***Critique of Secure Placements***

Absconding from local authority care is one of the main pathways into secure accommodation under a welfare order, however, many research studies have found that children run away when they are unhappy or suffering abuse (O'Neill 2005). Indeed, many run to escape abuse within the care system (Coy 2007). Rather than being re-placed and treated as a victim of abuse, absconding puts young people in the 'troublesome' category. This means that they are simply brought back to the setting from which they absconded, often by the police. So, under the guise of 'protection' professionals are able to use the Children Act (1989) to incarcerate children for actions that are not criminal (O'Neill 2001; Harris and Timms 1993; Hudson 1984).

Past research has found that, possibly due to the strong wording of the act, professionals have tended to use secure accommodation as a last resort (Goldson 2002; O'Neill 2001; Harris and Timms 1993). Whilst this might be seen as a positive factor by some, others have found that children who could benefit from an early placement were left until they reached a crisis point. In fact research has shown that some children placed into secure accommodation under Section 25 do benefit from their placement. Rose (2002) and Coy (2007) for example found that secure accommodation could be a positive experience for young people since it provided 'intensive support' along with time to reflect. However, the short term provision provided by secure care has led others to challenge the effectiveness of its use:

*'If you're vulnerable and you come in here it isn't going to make you invulnerable is it? [...] I have to learn that on the outside, not in here [...] I have to have help when I get out but it wasn't there when I came in and it probably won't be there when I get out.'* (Girl aged 15 cited in Goldson 2002:111)

Harris and Timms (1993) have claimed that children in care are punished for the inadequate provisions made for them. Findings show that local authority homes that are ill managed and badly run admit far more young people to secure accommodation than homes which are well run. Smith (2005) suggests that secure units are in fact a back up for homes that cannot control the young people in their care, whilst Goldson (2002) found that some described units as 'a dumping ground'. So rather than allocating blame to ineffective systems or viewing problem children as an outcome of poor professional practice, young people were problematised and labelled as 'trouble'. Due to the negative press attention attached to social workers when something does 'go wrong' and a child is hurt or killed, some suggest

that social workers act in the best interest of the local authority and not in the best interests of the child (Goldson 2002). Thus rather than providing support for young people in a community setting, children are placed into secure accommodation 'just in case'. In addition, research has shown that Children's Guardians are not a necessarily effective measure in safeguarding children's needs. Goldson (2002) explains that guardians are often given inadequate time to prepare for hearings and also reported feeling pressured to agree with the recommendations made by social services (Goldson 2002).

*'I had one case where the social worker said to me, 'if you don't agree to this the child will die'. Where do you go with that?'*  
(Children's Guardian in Goldson 2002:104)

After a six month placement, the cases of children placed under welfare orders are reviewed by a review panel. However, research by Goldson (2002) found that the recommendations of a review panel did not have to be implemented. This meant that young people could be in secure accommodation for extended periods without any idea of their placement length. Indeed, O'Neill (2001) and Goldson (2002) found that not having an end date for a sentence often left young people with feelings of uncertainty about their future and indeed meant that welfare assigned young people could spend longer in secure accommodation than those sentenced under the criminal justice system. This reportedly left young people feeling as though they were being punished for being abused by others. As one girl claimed:

*'I have not broken the law – I have just run away and now I'm locked up. That's not right'* (Girl aged 15 in Goldson 2002:105)

Research shows that girls are more likely to be admitted to secure accommodation through a welfare route than their male counterparts (O'Neill 2005:114). Indeed girls are more likely to be placed in secure accommodation for their own safety with issues relating to sexual practices (O'Neill 2005). This was further highlighted by Teilmann and Landry (1981), who found that parents were instrumental in re-enforcing the notion of girls needing 'protection' by informing the authorities much quicker if girls, rather than boys, went missing (Cited in Leiber 2003:40).

Although there is no other provision to mix children of different sexes within the criminal justice system, it is suggested that sexes are mixed in secure accommodation in the hope of creating a 'natural' environment for residents (O'Neill 2001). Early policy makers argued that children need to be mixed by sex so that inappropriate behaviour can be challenged in a secure setting. However, O'Neill found that because girls were usually in the minority, their needs were often marginalised (O'Neill 2001:173). Moreover, the fact that the majority of boys are admitted due to criminal justice purposes and the majority of girls under welfare provisions made the mixing of offenders and non-offenders more contentious. More disturbingly, O'Neill also found that sex offenders could be held alongside victims of sexual abuse. Whilst this did give units a chance to 'address' inappropriate and unwanted sexualised behaviour, it was felt to be at grave cost to those victims who were part of the so called lesson (O'Neill 2001:154).

One of the main justifications for placing these two types of children together is that both young offenders and those seen as being vulnerable or 'at risk' can come from very similar backgrounds (Boswell 1998; O'Neill



2001; Goldson 2002; Smith et al. 2005). However the issue of mixing types of children is still hotly contested, viewed by many to contravene both the human Rights Act and the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (Goldson 2002; O'Neill 2001). Thus, in summary, whilst acknowledging that Secure Accommodation can be a positive intervention for those facing a prison sentence (Howard League 1997) there are many arguments as to why secure accommodation might not be such a positive intervention for those 'innocent' of committing crime.

### ***Caring for the 'Sweetie Pies' and Controlling the 'Little Shits'***

In the depths of the discussions about childhood, actions for children who are in trouble have traditionally been targeted around the two prominent views of innate childhood. One view is that children are born vulnerable and innocent, in need of protection from the corrupted adult world around them (Scott, 1998; Valentine, 2000), whilst the other, a more cynical view of childhood, is based around the Puritan idea that children are 'evil' or 'sinful creatures' who need to be tamed, disciplined and punished (Pollock 1983). This conflicting dichotomy underpinning construction of childhood exists today and can be seen in the following newspaper headings:

*'Name the Devil Boys: We must not let them hide' (Mail Online, 2010)*

*'25 abused children die under the noses of social workers' (Mail Online, 2011)*

In this way, public provision is sourced and provided to act both as the setting to reform those who have not been sufficiently tamed and also to comfort and care for those children who have suffered at the hands of others:

*'Risk anxiety is primarily expressed as fear for children – worries about their safety and well-being – but also as fear of children, of what children might do if they are not kept within the boundaries of acceptable childish conduct.'* (Scott, Jackson and Backett-Milburn 1998)

Although justifications have been given for the mixing of children who have lost their liberty for very different reasons, the foundations of these explanations are seen as 'shaky' and similarities between backgrounds were not accepted in explaining the incarceration of innocent and vulnerable children alongside 'out and out villains' (O'Neill 2001). Hence by professing that some children are not responsible for their actions, but yet allowing those who offend to take the full credit for their behaviour, the state is sending a mixed message about children. On the one hand young people are judged to be 'immature' and unable to protect themselves, but then on the other hand granted full criminal responsibility as rational beings from the age of ten. It seems that managing risk is the aim of the state, whether it be to manage the risks of harming the child, the risks of the child harming society, or the risk of professionals being blamed for tragic outcomes (Boutellier 2004; Parton 2008).

In addition to the moral debates around mixing different categories of children, the practicalities of delivering such provision can be equally problematic. Goldson (2002) and Harris and Timms (1993) comment that secure unit staff struggled to instil punitive control whilst maintaining to welfare children that they were not being punished. Since the majority of young people are placed into secure accommodation during a time of crisis, professionals in Harris and Timms study, reported that they had 'applied the breaks' to protect young people when they were at their most vulnerable (Harris and Timms 1993:609). However, research shows that

children experiencing this invasive form of intervention felt that they were placed to give professionals a break. Indeed, rather than feeling that the 'brakes' had been applied, children instead felt that their entry into secure accommodation was traumatic, with their first impressions characterised by 'big fences' and strip searches (Goldson 2002; Harris and Timms 1993). It is in these first impressions that the differences between the categories of children are highlighted. Whilst encountering high fences and strip searches are standard practice for children arriving in prison, they are definitely not standard practice for children entering a new children's home. Although the justifications of a high fence and a strip search are arguably valid to meet the needs of both the vulnerable child who is at risk of harm and the criminal child who is to be punished, these measures were described by Epps as being upsetting, degrading and embarrassing (Epps, 1997).

One of the legitimisations for mixing welfare children with criminal justice children is that they have similar needs, so whilst these can be worked on in a group setting, any differences between them can be addressed in personal care plans. However, O'Neill found that often care plans were 'more rhetoric than reality' and that staff did not consult the child or sometimes even read their notes before compiling plans (O'Neill 2001:138). Furthermore, because the majority of residents were offenders, regimes were structured to cater for the dominant group (O'Neill 2005). Hence much time and emphasis was placed on 'addressing offending behaviour' meaning that welfare children were either excluded altogether or else expected to take part in confronting their own 'offending behaviour'. Explaining to children that they were not being punished and then placing them in a workshop to address offending behaviour was not synonymous and consequently it is unsurprising that welfare children felt that they were

being punished. Staff reported that having offenders and non-offenders mixed together made their job particularly difficult, especially if they have been working with young people that have been abused (Harris and Timms 1993):

*'Generally they think that they are here to be punished. How can you explain to a girl who has been abused for years and comes in here for self-harming and over-dosing that she is not being punished when the abuser is walking about freely on the outside? [...] How do you explain to her that it's not punishment when she comes in here and is mixing with children serving sentences?' (Secure unit team leader in Goldson 2002:120)*

### ***Why focus on the girls?***

My interest around girls in secure accommodation was sparked by research data collected whilst working on an ESRC project titled 'Pathways Into and Out of Crime' in 2003. The 'Pathways' project was a longitudinal project which explored the offending behaviours of young people referred to the Youth Offending Team (YOT). The study collected data from 110 young people in the different institutional settings of social services, special needs education and the criminal justice system. Children were recruited via the relevant agencies and participants were chosen to fairly represent the attributes of the service population. After recruitment we found that a large majority of the participants were boys (74%). However, we found that when girls were interviewed, they had faced more tragedies than their male counterparts (Ellis and France 2010).

Within the Pathways project, there was also a marked difference in the ways that boys and girls were perceived by the different professionals working with them. For instance, staff in a mixed special school explained that 'nobody likes working with the girls'. This attitude coincides with

research by Barter (2006) which found that both male and female residential care workers were negative about the girls in their care. Furthermore, other research has shown that whilst boys are believed to be 'straight-forward', 'open', and 'honest', girls are often viewed as being 'bitchy', 'nasty' and 'manipulative' (Barter 2006:354; Travis 1984:16; Brown and Chesney-Lind, 2005:76). This seems particularly significant, especially since the girls in the Pathways Project had often committed less serious offences than the boys. Indeed official statistics have repeatedly confirmed that boys are much more likely than girls to offend and girls are much less violent than boys; in fact violent offenders make up only 16% of incarcerated women (Geoghegan 2005).

Following the murder of toddler Jamie Bulger in 1993, the political agenda became noticeably more punitive towards children, placing an emphasis on 'teaching young people a lesson' (Muncie 2005; Walkerdine 1999). Indeed, the media focus around youthful offending in this time has caused some to report that it was effectual in 'killing the age of innocence' (Parton 2008). Within this new climate of public agitation, girls have been viewed harshly and the media message that 'girls are getting worse' has been clear (Jackson 2006). This has meant that girls have been penalised more harshly than ever and the numbers of girls imprisoned increased by 175% since 1995 compared to a 50% rise for boys (Howard League 1997). Even so, statistics from the Youth Justice Board (2010) show that in October 2010, only 95 girls were held in custody compared to 1900 boys.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter has considered contemporary research around the position of children in secure accommodation and has explained the necessity of

positioning this thesis around the experiences of girls and young women. The next chapter will apply sociological theories of power and discipline to further our understandings of young people in secure settings. In addition, the next chapter will explore the theory of 'caring power' and will consider secure accommodation as an institution in which young people are 'cared' into emotional reform.

## **Chapter Three: Discipline and Emotion in a Secure Setting**

### ***Chapter Introduction***

The secure care home is a curious institution in contemporary British Society. It is a place of contradictions where locked doors and friendly hugs dominate daily life and a place where the key themes of youth, gender and power are played out every day. Viewed sociologically, secure accommodation becomes a social space in which meanings are constructed and where societal uncertainties and tensions are negotiated. I will bring classic sociological literature into an emerging specialised literature around secure accommodation by exploring the contributions of Goffman and Foucault and their theories around the institution as a space for making and reforming characters.

However, as this chapter will explore, even when we draw on Goffman (1961) to explore secure accommodation as a total institution, and locate its purpose inside Foucault's (1991) framework of discipline and control, the theoretical picture of Hillside Lodge does not match with everyday life in the unit. Therefore, by introducing theories of emotional management (Hochschild 1983) and the caring power (Van Drenth and De Haan 1999), we can understand Hillside Lodge within the framework in which it sits, as an amalgamation of different institutions, 'Between Hospital and Prison or Thereabouts' (Harris and Timms 1993). This chapter will explore these four themes and will draw them together to illustrate how, when viewed alongside an agentic approach, each offers valuable insight in understanding girls' experiences of secure accommodation. I will therefore consider secure accommodation as a hot house for emotions and will use

the sociology of emotion as a lens to explore the theoretical debates set out by classical social theorists investigating the construction of society and societal constraints within a disciplinary model of control and reformation.

### ***Goffman and the Total Institution***

Erving Goffman was a Canadian born sociologist who studied at the Chicago School. Goffman was pioneering in his approach to everyday human relationships and his book 'The Representation of Everyday Self' (1959) unpicks everyday interactions and frames them around a theatre, where subjects acquire the necessary script for the part in which they are playing. Goffman's work has been influential in sociological thought and 'The Representation of Everyday Self' has been cited in over 20,500 published pieces of work. This study, however, takes its main themes from Goffman's later work, 'Asylums' (1961) which investigates the micro effects of institutionalization and its abilities in reforming individuals. Indeed, although Goffman's work is over fifty years old, as this thesis will show, it maintains its relevance.

British society is full of institutions that people enter and leave as they change life stage or working preferences. For instance, a child enters infant school at age four, where, for the following years he or she will be expected to follow certain rules which are suggested and implemented by the school. During this time, the child will be taught a number of skills, and in addition to learning how to read and count, he or she will be socialised to follow the social rules that are needed to participate in society (Forero, Ellis, Metcalfe, and Brown 2009). This socialisation takes many forms and engages with children in a variety of settings within the school. For instance, children are taught to eat with their mouths closed in the dining



room and taught not to shout in the classroom. These social norms are taught subtly but are often reiterated with social chastisement, for instance, in school a teacher might make fun at a girl who displays half-eaten food when she speaks (Forero, Ellis, Metcalfe, and Brown 2009).

Adults have their own institutions, and within them, social rules that must be adhered to. For example, an employee of a children's hospital would be expected to dress appropriately, be polite and not to swear, smoke or shout at work. Therefore, in order to be successful, the child and the employee have to construct an image of themselves that will be judged accordingly (Hochschild 1983:48). However, as controlling as these everyday institutions are, when the agreed period of time passes and the work or school day has been completed, the school child and the employee walk free of the rules that bind them during the day. Once away from the grounds, both child and employee are temporarily free from the gaze of their institutional supervisor and misdemeanours committed outside of the institution are of little interest to either teacher or employer:

*'In civil society, by the time the individual is an adult he has incorporated socially acceptable standards for the performance of most of his activity, so that the issue of the correctness of his action arises only at certain points, as when his productivity is judged. Beyond this, he is allowed to go at his own pace.'* (Goffman 1961:42)

In a total institution however, such separations between home and work are withdrawn and inhabitants are not permitted to leave. So whereas the off-shift employee may be rude, shout, smoke, swear and dress as inappropriately as they would like, the inhabitant of a total institution is never permitted to do so. Thus the ordinary and taken for granted norm of societal separation becomes a luxury. Surveillance upon the inhabitants of

total institution is omnipresent and, as this thesis will show, teenagers in secure accommodation are subjected to an unusually intensified professional gaze. Ervin Goffman (1961) draws three main distinctions between the ordinary institution and the total institution:

*'The central feature of total institutions can be described as a breakdown of the barriers ordinarily separating the three spheres of life. All aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority [...] all phases of the day's activities are tightly scheduled, with one activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole sequence of activities being imposed from above by a system of explicit formal rulings.'* (Goffman 1961:17)

In Goffman's view, total institutions offer a single space where every part of every day is geared around the implementation of the institutions' overall objectives. In the case of Hillside Lodge, the overall objective is already conflicted in its design and whilst some interpret the unit as an alternative to prison, others consider it a therapeutic home for exceptionally vulnerable children. Hillside Lodge therefore differs from other penal institutions and although unit objectives are guided tightly towards discipline, it also advertises itself as being 'child-centred' and committed to improving the lives of children. So although Hillside Lodge has many similarities with Goffman's example of the total institution, one of the key differences is that Hillside is designed specifically for children and young people. Whilst Goffman presents the notion that asylum patients are often treated as children, the inhabitants in Hillside actually *are* children and therefore an extra layer of stereotype is placed on the relationships between the staff and the residents they hope to reform. Christensen (2000) reminds us of an accepted view of adulthood which deems it natural instinct to care and nurture children:

*'Children are constituted as essentially vulnerable beings who can only survive and develop successfully if intensely nurtured and*

*protected by adults [...] Paradoxically, while we are moved by the image of a sorrowful child, we also welcome it, for it can arouse pleasurable emotions of tenderness, which in themselves confirm adult power.'* (Christensen 2000:40-42)

Within Hillside each resident is encouraged to discard their previous identity and to assume an identity appropriate to that of a 'reformed' individual emerging from an intensive and therapeutic institution. As new army recruits are expected to change their appearance to embody that of a soldier (Foucault 1991), Hillside residents are likewise forced to change their appearance to aid institutional 'transformation' (Goffman 1961). In discarding their old lives, residents experience 'ritual stripping' and are hence deprived of everyday symbols, such as jewellery, make-up and clothing, which help to project a particular impression of themselves (Goffman 1965):

*'On admission to a total institution, the individual is likely to be stripped of his usual appearance and of the equipment and services by which he maintains it, thus suffering a personal defacement.'* (Goffman 1961:29)

As well as changing their physical appearance, new recruits are also expected to take on a particular manner that is welcomed by the institution and hence, 'the image of self [s]he presents is attacked in another way' (Goffman 1961:30). In being 'resocialised' residents are told how to speak, how to stand, how to eat, how to work and sleep, amongst other things. Since seemingly insignificant requests can be refused, residents adopt a 'forced deference' and 'humbly ask for little things such as a light for a cigarette or a drink of water, or permission to use the telephone' (Goffman 1961:31). In order to lay out strict guidance to new residents, Hillside Lodge, like Goffman's asylum, supplies each resident

with a set of 'house rules' and with a list of 'sanctions' that follow non-compliance. Goffman claims that the reason for enforcing strict rules rests on the belief that the institutions' residents are those who have a history of being uncooperative (Goffman 1961).

Goffman considers that residents who feel that their incarceration was unnecessary might feel degraded in showing deference and obedience to an authority that was not seen as legitimate. He therefore claims that some of the asylum inmates learned to portray a 'cynical performance of compliance' and to present a view of themselves as being accepting of the regime (Goffman 1959:28). In this way, Goffman suggests that inmates *play* the part of a reformed patient, rather than *becoming* a reformed citizen. By offering an expected view of obedience, the new resident is forced to 'engage in activity whose symbolic implications are incompatible with his conception of self' (Goffman 1961:31). So, within adopting a persona, or an altered representation to portray, Goffman suggests that inmates are forced to present a view of themselves which differs to the one they believe represents their true identity. In addition, since 'the inmate is never fully alone' the mask of acceptance and conformity has to be maintained at all times during the institutional stay (Goffman 1961:33). Hence, the resident finds it necessary to adopt a face that can be shown to authorities in an attempt to secure the professional opinion that they have benefitted from the institution and are ready to fit into a normal civil society:

*'When an individual plays a part he implicitly requests his observers to take seriously the impression that is fostered before them. They are asked to believe that the character they see actually possesses the attributes he appears to possess' (Goffman 1959:28)*

This re-representation of identity is made increasingly difficult by the fact that each resident enters the institution with a complex set of notes about their character, compiled by previous professionals. Indeed, to display a character different to the one set out by case files is greeted by suspicion:

*'During admission, facts about the inmates social statuses and past behaviour – especially discreditable facts – are collected and recorded in a dossier available to staff.'* (Goffman 1961:32)

Goffman claimed that in maintaining a 'face' or 'show' for an extended period of time, individuals can unintentionally start to embody the identity of the person they were impersonating (Goffman 1959). Therefore, 'act' integrates into the actors 'real' identity and so by acting out a particular role, subjects themselves can come to embody that role and consequently become the persona that they have been struggling to enact, meaning, that eventually 'our conception of our role becomes second nature and an integral part of our personality' (Park 1950:250 in Goffman 1959:30).

Although Goffman's work has been instrumental in shaping the provision for patients with mental health, there has been a general reluctance in academia to embrace Goffman's theoretical findings. Indeed, academics have accused Goffman's research of lacking rigour and showing an excessively negative view of mental health provision using observations from a single institution (Davies 1989; Hacking 2004; Psathas 1996; Scott 2010; Smith 2006; Weinstein 1982; Williams 1986). Goffman has provoked criticism for only collecting inmate experiences through his own observations (Weinstein 1982). Therefore, because he did not attempt to ask patients for their own views or interpretations of life in a total institution, Goffman, tells their story from his own perspective. As a result,

Goffman's work does not consider the fact that some patients found the total institution a helpful intervention (Scott 2010; Smith 2006).

Goffman responded to these criticisms by claiming that he hoped to portray a true account of the perspectives of those he studied, the inmates in the asylum (Scheff 1988). However, Goffman legitimates his critics by ignoring the agentic capabilities of inmates and reading their actions at face value instead of asking inmates for their own explanations (Davies 1989). In this way, Goffman appears to render asylum inmates as 'powerless' beings in an organisation that they cannot shape or contribute to (Scott 2010; Williams 1986). Furthermore, since the time of Goffman's 'Asylums' research in 1961, the view of professional views and perspectives have changed and it has become normalised 'to seek help' in search of an improved quality of life (Rose 1999; Scott 2010). In addition, research has claimed that in the UK, we seek professional approval and look to professionals to tell us 'where it all went wrong' and to make helpful recommendations (Rose 1999; Svensson 2003). In this way, we could reconsider the claims that Goffman makes about the negative view that inmates have of the total institution and enquire as to whether it is possible that some inmates find their stay more beneficial than damaging (Davies 1989).

Although Goffman does not make any particularly insightful distinctions about gender differences within the setting of a total institution, he does approach gender in his later work and subsequently creates a useful framework for deconstructing and conceptualising gender that feminist writers have been instrumental in building upon (Goffman 1977; West 1996; West and Zimmerman 1987). In his later work, Goffman exposes

societal flaws in the classifications of gender and explores the real possibilities that biological differences in fact make only an insignificant contribution to the ways that women, and gender categorisations have been used to mark differences within modern society:

*'More to the point, for these very slight biological differences - compared to all other differences - to be identified as the grounds for the kind of social consequences felt to follow understandably from them requires a vast, integrated body of social beliefs and practices, sufficiently cohesive and all-embracing to warrant for its analysis the resurrection of unfashionable functional paradigm.'* (Goffman 1977)

Goffman provides a wonderful example of this in his explanations of the provision made for human waste disposal, highlighting that men and women are separated and that men are provided with alternative 'tools' for disposal in the form of a urinal, although toilets are acceptable for both sexes in the home. It is in these aspects, that Goffman claims that we are bound by social constructions of gender rather than biological constructions of gender:

*'Sex differences, in other words, are socially and culturally interpreted as "requiring" different kinds of treatment but such differential treatment is not "required" or "inevitable" because of sexual differences.'* (Psathas 1996)

Goffman does not specifically extend his analysis to cover the experiences of children, however, he does comment in his later work that children are 'a distinctive disadvantaged category' (Goffman 1997). Other scholars have offered useful insights about the implications of Goffman's work around children's issues on his behalf. Davies (1989) for instance, acknowledges that children are bound to otherwise voluntary institutions

where 'their status as minors' makes it impossible to opt out. Indeed, even a voluntary institution becomes a 'total institution' for children who are 'too young' to remove themselves without the legal parameters that adults are able to employ.

In defence of Goffman, his insights are useful, and although his research might not provide a 'full' picture of life in a total institution, his arguments enable one to question and to consider his findings within parameters which might not otherwise appear apparent. However, it is by listening to the criticisms made of Goffman's work that this thesis gathers its strength. It has been argued that Goffman attempted to make his theoretical debates more generic than his research allowed, leading others to make references to 'total institutions' that were not 'total' in their organisation, namely that they were not always involuntary (like monasteries), and there was not always impenetrable hierarchical boundaries between inmates and institution staff (Davies 1989; Hacking 2004; Scott 2010). Indeed, it was building upon these criticisms that Davies (1989) calls for a new, cohesive theoretical framework 'which will enable us to classify the differences between total institutions and to see the implications of this for their internal operations and their relationship with wider society' (Davies 1989:83). Hence, by approaching total institutions using a wider theoretical lens, this thesis seeks to offer an alternative way of exploring Goffman's use of the total institution to make the everyday become more relative to human populations in general:

*'Goffman was clear in showing how remarkably able and skilled human beings are in their interactional repertoires, how sensitive they can be to subtle changes in face-to-face displays, appearances, bearing, conduct, demeanor, etc., and how they nevertheless are caught up in and involved in structured or institutional configurations, normative entanglements, obligations, and moral considerations.'* (Psathas 1996)



It is within these musings that Goffman's work proves its use. For although the main criticisms of Goffman focus around the fact that he considers inmate actors as static and unagentic, he exposes links and relationships that humans create with one another and allows us, as researchers, to see the possibilities that inquiry in this field offers:

*Human beings live in inextricable entanglements with others. One part of their being consists of diverse physical and biological features which are noticed, responded to, and evaluated by others as well as themselves. In such noticing, responses, and evaluations, social considerations are paramount.' (Psathas 1996)*

### ***Disciplinary Power and Reformatory Control***

Foucault was a notable French Philosopher and an influential social theorist. His work around discipline and power has changed the way that sociologists write about power and discipline both in mainstream society as well as in the margins. His major work on disciplinary power was first published in 1975, and since then has been cited in approximately 19,000 published pieces of work. Although Foucault's work has been criticised for its lack of grounding in primary research (Alford 2000), it would be difficult to argue that Foucault's thinking has not had a huge impact on the current debates around disciplinary control in most aspects of modern life (Arditi 1996; Bartky 1988; Deveaux 1994; Hacking 2004). Indeed, Foucault's idea that people monitor their own behaviour and create a self-disciplining internal gaze, has become ingrained in a number of sociological debates (Alford 2000; Bartky 1988; Deveaux 1994).

To Foucault, discipline is something that is subtle in its approach but is omnipresent nevertheless. That is, through everyday observations and

assessments, behaviour is normalised and governed so that individuals can be analysed and understood in accordance with their aspirations and motivations (Rose 1999). Through the prevalence of a system of surveillance, disciplinary forces are always watching, without the individual being aware of the identity or the purpose of the viewer. This increases the likelihood that people will self govern, for they are never sure when they are being watched (Foucault 1991). Secure units, as institutions, fit into Foucault's disciplinary model since their surveillance is ubiquitous. Surveillance is expanded by unit staff who facilitate the collection and analysis of intricate details about the units residents. Indeed, the disciplinary model of a secure unit is enhanced by the strong relationships that residents make with members of staff, in addition to strict timetabling which controls activity and ensures that time is used productively (Foucault 1991:149).

Foucault claims that discipline has shifted from corporal punishment, inflicted upon the body, to mental reformation, aimed at changing offenders into 'civilised' beings (Foucault 1991). The shift that Foucault championed has become increasingly ingrained in society and modern social policy seeks to 'understand' its victims and offenders rather than punishing them (Rose 1999). This movement in focus is noted by Boutellier (2004), who judges that due to the decline in religious accountability, health and welfare in the 'here and now' contain more relevance in order to ensure 'safety' for the majority of the population. Hence, in order to ensure that dangerous populations are managed and controlled adequately, professionals seek to change the very core of their being. In fact, every 'abnormal' action has to be informed by 'reasonable' explanation, compiled and sought out by professionals (Rose 1999).

However, since this type of power operates over the soul instead of through the body, it seeks 'docile bodies' that can be moulded and shaped to follow instruction (Foucault 1991). To explain his point, Foucault refers back to his example of the newly recruited soldier (who has already been dressed to 'look the part') who is then physically shaped to become a strong and fit individual with an aptitude for teamwork. Indeed, discipline is extracted from residents in secure care in a similar way. Therefore, by strictly timetabling each fragment of time and setting an achievable goal for each period, young people are led towards obedience by completing small tasks (Foucault 1991). For example, the Roman Commander Hadrian instructed his fit and fierce Roman soldiers to build Hadrian's Wall simply to keep them physically fit and occupied. Whereas, staff in a secure unit might encourage young people to complete a 'painting by numbers' picture, simply to encourage residents to read and follow instructions whilst sitting quietly. In this way, the individual remains unaware of the overall purpose of their task, instead being told only, 'dig', or 'paint'. However, the desired outcome is that soldiers and penal inmates alike become disciplined in following orders, regardless of their perceived relevance. Hence it is through the methods of training that Foucault believes that disciplinary power is made possible (Foucault 1991).

Foucault claims that discipline is maintained by keeping the subject under close surveillance at all times. As we shall see later, in the secure accommodation setting, residents are under constant surveillance. However, whilst offenders are generally sent to penal facilities especially designed to reform criminal behaviour, those who become residents at Hillside experience a different type of disciplinary control. So whilst Foucault's model of discipline (1991) provides a useful frame for analysis, we need to consider that there are other regimes at play within a secure

unit. That is, rather than posing as a disciplinary power to simply control children, professionals within secure accommodation set out to 'help' and 'save' young people (Harris and Timms 1993).

One of the main criticisms of Foucault is that in ignoring the differences between men and women, he takes their similarities for granted and thus writes a 'male centred' discourse (Balsamo 1995; King 2004). However, feminist authors have taken much from Foucault's later work and have applied his theoretical discourse in a number of ways. For instance the feminist theory around the 'beauty myth' comes directly from Foucault's ideas around self governance and self discipline (Deveaux 1994; Duncan 1994). Indeed, feminist writers have argued that as long as authors acknowledging gender neutrality, his work can be 'exposed, explored and remedied' (King 2004). Since Foucault's theoretical underpinning was not based on empirical research, and does not explore the effects on disciplinary institutions for women or children (Alford 2000; Hacking 2004), it is important to consider other research that coincide more comfortably with the reformation aspect of penal intervention. Thus, within the shift that Foucault describes as the 'entry of the soul' (Foucault 1991:24), it is important to consider work that focuses on the reformatory nature of penal incarceration.

Caring power is theorised by Van Drenth and De Haan (1999) who, by building on work by Foucault, note the shift from pastoral care to a new type of 'caring' power which offers the promise of a better life in this time (Van Drenth and De Haan 1999). Caring power considers Josephine Butler's and Elizabeth Fry's philanthropist work with 'fallen' women, which encouraged them to change their ways in return for care and respect. The

women who accepted the terms of 'caring power' were required to give up bad habits in exchange for 'help' in the form of improved prison conditions and kindness. The ideology behind this movement was to make 'fallen' individuals into useful members of society able to uphold middle class ideal and morals (Van Drenth and De Haan 1999:47; Svensson 2002).

*'A caring power is exercised with kindness and in a spirit of doing what is said to be the best for the person helped. The helper defines what is best for the one who is to be helped and then promises him that he will have a better life if he follows the advice given by the helper.'* (Svensson 2003:85)

Women participating in Fry and Butler's work received help providing 'they were willing to help themselves'. Although women were bribed to accept 'help', it is important to consider that the philanthropists working with them did genuinely care and believed that they were acting in the prisoners best interests (Van Drenth and De Haan 1999). Similarly, although criticisms have been made of secure accommodation, most professionals working in this area also believe that they are working in the best interest of the children who are referred to them (Harris and Timms 1993b):

*'Secure accommodation is used when less intrusive forms of kindness and persuasion have failed. Crucially, however, secure accommodation is itself characterised by both kindness and persuasion as well as by sufficient coercion to compel acceptance of them [...] Power is not merely control masquerading as care, but both, not simultaneously but inextricably linked, as the flour and egg, when beaten in a mixing bowl, yield a compound which, though comprising flour and egg, is recognisable as neither'* (Harris and Timms 1993:29)

Harris and Timms therefore argue that the power operating in secure accommodation is bound with a notion that the unit is 'doing its best' for

each young person. However, whether or not secure accommodation, or indeed the philanthropist work of Fry and Butler, has been and is still effective shall be explored in more detail throughout this thesis. For even though care was, and still is, given 'in the best interest' of the prisoner or child, care is still coercive since the 'inmates' are not free to leave if they decide that 'caring power' is not what they had hoped for (Epps 1997; Goldson 2002; Harris and Timms 1993a; Harris and Timms 1993b; O'Neill 2001; O'Neill 2005; Rose 2002; Smith and Milligan 2005).

If we keep in mind the oppressive version of caring power, it is interesting to see that at the time that Fry was practicing her reformatory care, newspapers reported that her interventions were not always received as well as Fry believed them to be. A biographer of Fry writes that when Fry was preparing her Newgate girls for their exile into Australia, a boatswain reportedly 'heard the Newgate girls wish she might fall overboard and be drowned' (Rose 2007:120-121 cited in Van Drenth and De Haan 1999). Even so, this claim does not refute the success of Fry's approach, and indeed, as Foucault (1991) maintains, 'resistance is inherent in any power relationship'. Keeping this in mind, we can explore caring power as something that is both caring but also condescending and whilst women *did* work with Fry to become 'respectable', they also understood that short term care was given in exchange for short term reformatory behaviour. These findings raise questions about whether Fry's women, and their modern day counterparts, truly embrace change suggested by the institutions that 'care' for them or whether they simply 'act' their part whilst they are forced to (Goffman 1959).

### ***Critical Considerations: Foucault vs Goffman***

Although critics of Foucault and Goffman accuse the theorists of constructing social theory based on research conducted at the margins of society, it has been argued that both theoretical debates transcend from the margins and into mainstream culture. Indeed, Foucault's concepts of disciplinary penal power 'surveillance, categorization and classification, the time-table, non-idleness, and regimentation of the body' all appear frequently within mainstream society (Alford 2000). As a social researcher, one can consider the main criticism of these theoretical perspectives being that both theorists overlook the agentic nature of human nature. Although both theorists do hint at individual agency, Goffman in the form of his 'cynical performance of compliance' and Foucault in his claim that 'where there is power, there is resistance', neither used empirical research to explore the implications of individual power within the boundaries of institutional life. In this way, both Foucault and Goffman undervalue agency and therefore perceive their respective inmates as 'passive victims' rather than 'active agents' capable and responsible for arbitrating their own experiences (Deveaux 1994).

Although Foucault, Goffman, and Van Drenth offer useful alternative perspectives on the experience of confinement, their theoretical foci ignore the hearts and emotions of those imprisoned within disciplinary institutions. So whilst we are informed that residents change outward appearances to play the part of the 'reformed', little is known about the emotional journey of being reformed. With this in mind, the next section will focus on work around the sociology of emotion to draw together the experiences of being disciplined, cared for and remoulded within a total institution. Therefore, we can see how these apparently opposing spectrums of thought interlink. Indeed, by drawing on the sociology of

emotion and the perspective of the agentic child, this thesis offers contributions to academic debate in an area which is presently lacking.

*'We are presently confronted with a richness of theoretical approaches in the sociology of emotions, which is hardly backed by empirical studies.'* (Karstedt 2006)

Whilst some suggest that conducting research in marginal spaces is futile (Williams 1986), I respond to these criticisms by taking forward the view of Foucault who claimed that the study of the margins is fundamental when exploring the effects of the rest of society (Alford 2000). Indeed, it is by exploring these human and emotional structures in marginal spaces that we can understand how human emotion is dissected and uniformly changed. As Foucault says, power starts at the margins and moves to the centre. So by exploring emotional architecture in an isolated space of a total institution, we can consider it thoughtfully before it becomes emotional reformation becomes a perpetuating form of 'the way things are, and the way that things *should* be' (Jenkins 2008).

### ***Emotional Discourse***

Sociology has taken an increasing interest in emotion and the emerging literature in the sociology of emotion has become increasingly popular, taking its focus from Arlie Hochschild's book *'The Managed Heart'* (1983). Hochschild considers the commercialisation of human feeling and explores the emotional aspect of human interaction in a professional capacity. Although Hochschild's work was published almost thirty years ago, its relevance remains pertinent for contemporary consumer society.



Understandably, enforced confinement is an emotional journey for those who experience it (Karstedt 2006). Indeed, reactions to crime, formations of laws and the sentencing of criminals are born out of emotional responses too (Foucault 1991; Karstedt 2002; Sherman 2003). Following on from Durkheim's work, criminologists have linked the role of shame into discussions about crime and the role of shame in disciplinary practices (Karstedt 2006; Scheff 1988; Scheff 2009). It is with this in mind that I will draw upon the work in the discourse of the sociology of emotion to explore emotion in relation to secure accommodation. As we shall see, secure accommodation forms an unusual setting, and whilst its subjects are locked inside, the unit offers a window into the soul of human interaction which is usually hidden from the public view. A secure unit forms an intense emotional space which is moulded around carefully scripted interactions between children, adults, carers and teachers (Hochschild 1983). Interactions are controlled and regulated to form careful boundaries with the aim of shaping and challenging already identifiably 'troubled' children in a heightened state of hopelessness.

Emotion and reason are usually held as a dichotomy, separate and apart from one another, with emotions being seen as inferior, irrational and biologically tied to women (Bendelow and Williams 1998; Boler 2005). However, reason and emotion cannot be simply separated and, as Hochschild (1998:6) reminds us, emotion is our 'most important biologically given sense'. So whilst the assertion that emotion needs to be 'tamed' in order to achieve rationality, authors such as Bauman, in his writing about modernity and the holocaust, have exercised concerns about theorising a world without emotion (Bauman 1989). Indeed, most of the dichotomies applied in sociological thought are separated on the basis of whether they are seen as 'rational' or 'emotional' responses (Bendelow

and Williams 1998). In this way we link reasonable and rational thought to the mind and emotional responses to the heart, so whilst we cannot necessarily help how we 'feel' about something, we can decide how to act upon it. This can be understood in the social idiom, given as a caution 'don't let your heart rule your head'.

The sociology of emotion adds significant strength to sociological enquiry since it allows analysis to cut across sociological dichotomies (Bendelow and Williams 1998). It is almost impossible to detach emotion from rational thought and as much as we try to rationalise our feelings and share only those emotions we feel to be 'appropriate', we are still bound by a deeper emotional language that often remains private (Hochschild 1979). Like all other things in human society, emotional responses are shaped and managed by the society and culture which surrounds us and from being very young, we are each taught a culturally embedded 'emotional dictionary' which enables individuals to portray correct emotions at the correct time (Gordon 1989, Hochschild 1998). For instance, one would not grin when another tells us of a bereavement that they have suffered, even if we have not known the deceased and feel no loss at their passing. We learn the correct emotional response required to fulfil our role as listener (Hochschild 1979). It is through this cultural learning that citizens come to learn the emotional language that is appropriate for their acceptance into mainstream society. We learn to test out our emotional responses by framing unwanted feelings into a language of regret and disappointment in our own emotional incompetence, as Hochschild explains below:

*'We often speak of 'having the right' to feel angry at someone. Or we say we 'should feel more grateful' to a benefactor. We chide ourselves that a friend's misfortune, a relative's death, 'should have hit us harder,' or that another's good luck, or our own, should have inspired more joy. We know feeling rules, too, from how others react to what they infer from our emotive display.'* (Hochschild 1979)

Hochschild reminds us that we are able to look for reassurance that our feelings are appropriate, and when we hear confirmation that 'you shouldn't feel guilty' we accept and express our feelings without guilt. As we are reminded by Goffman, one who acts a part can become that part, therefore it is easily imagined that one can change their feelings too (Goffman 1959; Hochschild 1979). So although one could imagine that emotions are natural feelings, beyond control, sociologists remind us that, like laws, feelings are socially constructed and formed by appropriating socially and culturally acceptable norms of feeling:

*'If we conceive of feeling not as a periodic abdication to biology but is something we do by attending to an inner sensation in a given way, by defining situations in a given way, by managing in given ways, then it becomes plainer just how plastic and susceptible to reshaping techniques a feeling can be.'* (Hochschild 1983:27)

As well as being born into a social identity, we are socialised into a cultural identity too (Elias 1994; Karstedt 2006). In his book *'The Civilizing Process'* Elias claims that our emotions and urges are socialised to ensure that we display only respectable forms of behaviour, mainly, Jenkins reminds us, because 'we expect to be rewarded when we do and punished when we do not' (Jenkins 2008). It is through the use of shame that law and order seeks to reform the criminal, since one can imagine the shame of being caught before committing a *faux pas* and hence correct their own behaviour before deviating from acceptable norms (Foucault 1991; Jenkins 1998; Karstedt 2006; Scheff 1988). Presumably though, those incarcerated within secure institutions are those who are not so adept at monitoring their own responses, and in addition, have been caught neglecting to do so. Therefore, they can be seen as being emotionally inept and in need of emotional remodelling (Weinstein 1982). It is therefore the institution that

takes on the task of 'transforming' social deviants to conform to moral codes and practices that are consistent with societal expectations (Karstedt 2006; Smith 1991).

In order to reorder the emotional architecture of the hearts of the children placed into secure care, reformatory institutions such as Hillside Lodge, seek to employ carers or 'emotion managers' (Hochschild 1983), able to portray an image of care and concern, whilst working unilaterally to influence a change in behaviour. Emotional management requires a host of techniques to be convincing and while in some professions pretending to embody concern, or 'surface acting', the intensity of a secure setting means that only those capable of 'deep acting' are chosen to represent the system (Hochschild 1979, 1983). Indeed, such workers require adept skills in emotional management, for 'to be warm and loving toward a child who kicks, screams, and insults you requires emotion work' (Hochschild 1983:52). This is not to suggest that staff would be disingenuous towards those they were paid to look after, indeed, research confirms quite the opposite, suggesting that staff employed in such positions developed genuine feelings of care for those in their charge:

*'The concepts that children form about emotion are of course not entirely their own creation, but usually represent widespread cultural ideas [...] children may be exposed to beliefs, vocabulary, and norms about an emotion as often as they are to actual episodes of the emotion.'* (Gordon 1989)

In this way, the sociology of emotion adds to Goffman's (1959) work about self representation. Although Goffman talks about social actors *displaying* particular behaviours deemed as relevant to a role, the sociology of emotion considers the actors *feelings* about the role they occupy. Notable

work by Crawley (2004) and Van Stokkom (2011) has looked at this type of emotional management from the point of view of prison officers and police officers. These studies found that these employees experienced a tension in managing their own emotions, whilst also working to manage the emotions of those around them (Crawley 2004; Stokkom 2011). Furthermore, similar research with social workers found that found that employees also experienced tensions between their own feelings about the clients that they were paid to work with, and the organisational procedures that were put in place to protect professionals from personal liability (Pinkney 2011). Within these discussions about payment in exchange for emotional care, there is an absence of research looking at the experiences of those populations on the receiving end of this type of caring relationship.

Secure accommodation attempts to reinstate the 'childhood training of the heart' (Hochschild 1983). Since emotion is a key factor in the 'reformation' that institutions seek to impinge onto its residents, emotion management has been used to teach residents 'how to imagine and thus how to feel' (Hochschild 1983). In addition to the view that institutions have been employed to correct the emotional management of those unable to do it for themselves (Crawley 2011), Hochschild considers the analogy of the blinkered horse who is directed in his vision, just as institutions are designed to control how its residents feel (Hochschild 1983:49). Institutions therefore seek to shape the feelings of their residents, including an assertion that residents should revisit the motivations that led them into secure care. In line with Goffman's suggestion that acting in one way eventually leads an individual to become the act, the sociology of emotion also expects that surface acting can lead to deep acting, meaning that a person's emotions can be genuinely reformed:

*'As enlightened management realises, a separation between display and feeling is hard to keep up over long periods [...] Maintaining a difference between feeling and feigning over the long run leads to strain. We try to reduce the strain by pulling the two closer together either by changing what we feel or by changing what we feign. (Hochschild 1983:90)'*

As sociologists of emotion remind us, we are culturally conditioned to feel and act in particular ways depending on those surrounding us (Gordon 1989; Hochschild 1979; Hochschild 1998; Karstedt 2006). So whilst adults are reminded not to swear in front of children, lest they corrupt their 'innocent' minds, children are simultaneously reminded not to swear in front of adults, since they will face retribution if they do (Mayall 1998). Emotional management is considered a largely middle class practice and most middle class professions require a degree of emotion management (Hochschild 1979). Since the majority of professionals in charge of secure resident referrals are middle class, we can expect that the regime of secure accommodation will attempt to instil the middle class ideals of the professional class onto young people, arming them with a new emotional dictionary, suitable for a 'proper' and more fulfilling life (presumably without drugs, alcohol, crime or welfare dependency) after leaving the unit (Perkin 1990; Rose 1999). Hence they are stripped of an insufficient emotional dictionary and armed with another, which in theory, arms them for their 'time-futures' of employment and participation in mainstream society (Mayall 1998).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has explored the links between a range of different theoretical perspectives that might be used to account for the experiences of girls in secure accommodation. This chapter has considered secure

accommodation as a corrective facility of modern society aimed at changing and reforming those in its care. To do this effectively, I have employed the theories of Goffman and Foucault and placed them within a framework of the sociology of emotion. This permits us to understand the experiences of young people as deviants living under a disciplinary yet caring regime, as well as placing this into the context of a total institution. As a result, I have employed the view of the 'caring power' and the 'emotional manager' to explore how young people are managed, within the remit of both the loving carer and the strict disciplinarian.

The following chapter will explain the research methods that were used to explore these issues further and will explain why the researcher felt that collecting girls own views was a fundamental aim in generating a picture of the experience of one who experiences being controlled, managed and cared for by members of staff who are literally paid to care.

## **Chapter Four: Methodology and Data Collection**

### ***Introduction***

This chapter will explore the research techniques that were used to conduct the field work. I will start by introducing myself as a researcher and share details of my research background. I will also describe the different methodologies that contributed towards data collection and will explain the importance of triangulation in offering a detailed insight into the everyday emotional patchwork of secure accommodation. In conclusion this chapter will consider the ethical implications of researching in a secure setting with media made notoriously vulnerable children and young people.

### ***The Role of the Researcher***

Before starting my PhD I had been working at the University of Sheffield for five years as a contract researcher. During this time I worked on a large range of projects funded by an extensive range of funding councils. The projects differed in subject and context, ranging from small community projects looking at drug abuse and teenage pregnancy, to a *Learning Skills Council* project looking at the difficulties of 'High Achieving Women' and a large national *ESRC* project looking at children's 'Pathways Into and Out of Crime'. As my research career progressed, my interests settled around the views and experiences of children, and I became more and more interested in the experiences of those labelled as 'troubled'. Working on a range of different topics, and with a range of different academics gave me valuable experience in data collection and meant that I was accomplished in interviewing vulnerable participants seen as being 'hard to reach'. It was



from my past research experiences of trial and error that the research methods for this project have been based. Indeed, embarking on a PhD enabled me to set my own research agenda for the first time. Therefore, this study has been formulated by using the most effective methods of previous studies whilst being unrepentant about discarding those deemed ineffective and disengaging to children in custody.

### ***Entering the Field***

From experience of conducting interviews inside the secure estate, I predicted that gaining access to the research site would be the most problematic aspect of this research project. Gaining access was actually much easier than I anticipated and I discovered that I had a personal contact in the unit who was able to put me in touch with a research enthusiastic manager. After receiving provisional access permission from the unit, I set about fulfilling the Universities own ethical guidelines. I submitted a proposal to the ethical review panel at Sociological Studies and quickly gained ethical approval. Since many young people living in secure accommodation are 'looked after children', it was necessary however for me to also gain local authority research governance as well as university ethical approval. To gain 'Local Authority Research Governance Approval' I submitted a fifteen page proposal detailing all aspects of my research, including which methods would be used and how and where data would be stored and anonymised. Eventually the proposal was accepted with no changes requested, providing that I updated my criminal records bureau check.

Working with children in schools and other institutional settings has taught me that adults can be suspicious of the motivations behind

research. Therefore I selected an appreciative inquiry method (Liebling, Price, and Elliott 1999) when conducting observations with members of staff. Appreciative inquiry encourages the researcher to be positive about the institution being studied and works on the assumption that, although the institution may not be 'perfect', some things about it are positive. I hoped that the appreciative inquiry method would put staff at ease and assure them that I was not working to expose their shortcomings. I hoped that once the staff were at ease, and certain that I did not want to damage the units professional reputation, the staff would act naturally in front of me, and treat the young people as they usually did (Denzin and Lincoln 1994). I found this method of inquiry to be an effective one, and, as I will show later, the level of data gathered was both rich and valuable.

### ***Data Collection***

I employed a number of different research methods to collect data, including: participant observations; in depth semi-structured interviews with young people; content analysis of Hillside resident case files; timelines charting significant life events so far; personal diaries of young people's every day experiences of Hillside Lodge; and semi-structured interviews with staff.

<b>Type of Data Collection</b>	<b>Hours of Data</b>	<b>Method of Analysis</b>
Participant Observations	200 plus	NVIVO
Interviews with girls	45	NVIVO
Interviews with staff	5	NVIVO

This mixture of methods meant that residents were seen in a variety of contexts which allowed the researcher to triangulate data, building up an image based on a mixture of talk and action (Lucchini 1996). I felt that such an approach would ensure against criticism inspired by others (such as Goffman) who base their research solely on ethnographic observations:

*'Goffman's observations were selective and impressionistic, and there is no supporting evidence from interviews with staff or patients (Smith 2006), which may in turn have meant that he misinterpreted the inmate experience as wholly undesirable.'*(Scott 2010)

Indeed, by incorporating a number of different research methods, I finished data collection with a complex assortment of rich data, enabling a rigorous triangulation which worked to enrich and add value to the research (Denzin and Lincoln 1994). I shared Richardson and St. Pierre's crystallization method in exploring my data, taking the view that in order to understand secure accommodation and the experiences being played out inside, it would be necessary to incorporate different perspectives:

*'Crystals grow, change, alter [...] creating different colours, patterns, arrays, casting off in different directions' (Richardson and St. Pierre, in Denzin 2000:934).*

The plurality of research methods used meant that data collected was multi-faceted, which in turn offered a greater understanding of the complexity of life in secure accommodation. For instance, when Natalie claims in an interview 'I hate MOS<sup>3</sup>-Darren', I was also able to see that she subsequently requested to sit with him during mealtimes, watched

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<sup>3</sup> MOS has been used to indicate when a participant is a 'member of staff' rather than a young person.

television with him in leisure times and hugged him every night before bed. The triangulation of methods thus made it possible to contextualise information and not attach undue overt significance to statements made in haste following an unusual outburst. In this way it was easier to grasp the circumstantial aspects of young people's experiences and also to understand the depth of the relationships that young people made with members of staff working with them.

All data was written up and uploaded into NVIVO software where it was analysed into the following thematic codes:

- **Children's Agency**
  - Types of agency
  - Bending the rules
  - Staff responses to agency
- **Children's Identity**
  - Being 'girly'
  - Criminal identity
  - Vulnerable identity
- **Relationships**
  - Negotiations with other young people
  - Negotiations with staff
  - Relationships outside Hillside
  - Trusting relationships
- **Perceptions of the unit**
  - Hillside as a prison
  - Hillside as a children's home
  - Preparing to leave

## **Participant Observations**

I conducted participant observations of one secure unit in England over a nine month period. Participant observations were the important first steps of developing data collection since they permitted access to the daily routines and rituals of the unit (Wallman 1984), meaning that I was able to form a good understanding of the unit (and its staff and residents) before I structured interview schedules. Observations were a valuable form of data collection since they allowed me to observe the differences between what people said they did and what they 'actually did' (Meyer 2001).

I arranged with the unit manager that I would spend a month 'on shift' in Hillside Lodge, and was scheduled onto the rota to observe an equal number of morning, afternoon and evenings as well as weekend shifts so that I could gain an overall perspective of the unit. I also attended Hillside School and observed young people at work as well as observing them in their leisure times. Intensive observations enabled me to gain a clearer perspective of the holistic purpose of the unit and also to observe the differences in relationships that young people negotiated at all waking hours of the day.

My aim was to become a 'familiar figure' within the unit and one that staff and residents felt comfortable to be around (Mayall 2000:123). Over the twelve months I spent in Hillside Lodge, I was present for all parts of the day, such as: breakfast, TV time, maths lessons, PE, 'game night', lunchtime, break-time, sports day, 'life skills' classes, 'targeting offending behaviour' classes, Easter and Christmas holidays, Saturday nights, Bank Holidays and

'normal days'. Before long, I was accepted into the unit as a 'non-official adult' (Mayall 2000) and was referred to as 'it's only Katie'.

*'It also seemed like they identified me as a 'non-official adult' at school: a person to whom adverse comments about school could be made, twisted ankles and grazed elbows displayed and discussed, but, they said, not mentioned to staff' (Mayall 2000:124)*

As a 'non-official' adult, I was present for staff 'fag breaks' as well as team meetings, and unit manager meetings. Since I attended the unit for an extended period, I was able to build relationships with both members of staff and young people and therefore interviews were enhanced because of this. Even so, placing oneself as a researcher was difficult at times and although it was necessary that I had an emergency alarm device (known as a blick) to call for help if it was needed, I agreed with the manager that it would be more appropriate if I was not given my own set of keys. Since every door inside Hillside Lodge was locked at all times, my lack of keys meant that I was unable to move independently between rooms as members of staff were. Instead I had to be delivered from one room to another as residents were. The fact that I did not have access to keys meant that I was able to reiterate my position as a researcher and not a member of staff, which, in time proved to be a very useful way of defining my position as an independent observer.

Due to the numbers of visitors and professionals visiting Hillside Lodge on an infrequent basis, it was important that I defined my role clearly to both residents and staff. I found that it was necessary to explain my presence continually for the first couple of months in the unit. I described my study in simple terms to those who asked in passing 'I'm looking at young people's experiences of secure accommodation' but as time went on and I

became more familiar to residents and staff, I became more descriptive about my project. Although most young people accepted my presence almost immediately, I noticed that some members of staff were more suspicious of my intentions, and I had to repeatedly reassure them that I was not assessing them or their working practices. One of the ways I did this was by using the 'appreciative inquiry approach' (Liebling, Price, and Elliott 1999) which focuses on the positive aspects of the research site. I found myself doing this automatically and as staff (especially unit managers and shift leaders) kept asking me 'what do you think of Hillside then?' I always replied 'it's really nice here, I really like it'. When pushed to offer further clarification, I would add 'there's such a friendly atmosphere and there is always lots of laughing and hugging going on'. Luckily, my responses did reflect my true feelings of Hillside. This part of the study would have been *much* more difficult I had found the working practices of the unit to be inadequate.

Once I became a recognizable face around the unit, my lack of keys became a blessing. As they got to know me, both staff and young people asked me to do things with them or for them. For instance one resident, Brittany, asked: 'Katie, will you take me to my room to fetch a jumper?' Although a seemingly insignificant request, due to the rules and dynamics within Hillside, it was important that I did not become involved in making decisions about what young people did or where they went. By being *unable* to take a Brittany from one room and into another, I was able to present myself as being powerless rather than unwilling 'I'm sorry Brittany, I can't. I don't have any keys'. In this way I avoided being seen to take sides by either permitting young people to break rules set by staff or by refusing to help young people based on a staff ruling. Being neither a member of staff nor a resident could have easily placed me in a difficult

position between both, since when young people were refused something by one member of staff, they would quickly move to see if another member of staff would be more lenient.

Often, requests that staff refused seemed insignificant to me, as an outsider, therefore I could have easily overstepped the line and agreed to help young people when the reasons for a particular decision were not explained immediately. For instance, providing a hair band to a girl with long hair might seem insignificant to an outsider. However, members of staff might have spent the previous night using specialised cutters to remove a ligature of hair bands from her neck. Therefore acting on the instincts of 'normal' in everyday life could have put young people in danger and quite rightly severed my links with the unit.

I felt that to maintain my access to the unit, it was necessary for me to quietly observe everyday life as it unfolded without making life more difficult for either Hillside residents or staff. So although I would have liked to help young people and made their time more enjoyable by being a lenient key-holder, it was necessary to remain neutral and therefore refrain from carrying keys. This way I was literally unable to help move young people from one place to another and was therefore able to remain an observer rather than an active participant. It also meant that I did not have to ever tell young people 'no' when they asked for help and meant that they did not view me as a member of staff and someone that had control over them.



As one might imagine, in a living environment where eight young people and lots of staff work in close proximity twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, confrontation occurred frequently. In order to build trust with both young people and staff, it was important that I was able to appear neutral at all times. Therefore, whenever there was any conflict, I kept my opinions to myself, meaning that sometimes I appeared slightly unhelpful to staff, for instance, when one team leader asked me, 'how was Callum at lunchtime?' I answered 'Fine. He's nice Callum'. Another member of staff looked up in surprise, 'No. Callum wasn't fine; he tried to saw his table!' The team leader looked at me and declared 'you've got to stop being so nice'. I repeated this formula every time I was asked how a young person had behaved, and eventually was not asked anymore. I was distinctly aware of my position as a researcher and also aware that I had entered the field with the objective of exploring young people's perspectives. Remaining distinctly separate from staff was an important strategy in reassuring young people about my research objectives. All of the project information that I handed out to both young people and staff declared that I was an independent visitor. Therefore, I felt that being seen to 'tell-tales' in staff meetings would damage my future relationships with the girls that I hoped to recruit as participants.

So that I did not forget important events during the day, I carried a pad of paper and a pen with me at all times. Often it was not appropriate to scribe individual conversations because it might have made people feel uncomfortable, instead I made lots of drawings of the unit and sketched intricate plans of rooms, adding in where young people and staff were sitting. In these sketches I often wrote a handful of words to act as prompts when I expanded my fieldnotes later. This proved invaluable as only one or two words can act as a powerful memory jog (LeCompte and

Schensul 1999). Some young people liked me to record specific events as they unfolded, and if I had been laughing with young people, I felt that it was acceptable to write what had made me laugh in front of them. One young person, Luke, said to me on many occasions, 'I've got a joke for you, will you write it down?' I always did. Another young person, Oliver, used to announce (after someone had said a funny joke) 'that was a good one, Katie, did you get that?' Aside from recording jokes, the notepad was used to play hangman and noughts and crosses, to practice signatures and to draw puzzles. It acted as a good ice breaker and as a game for one young person, Ben, who used to try and pinch my pen at every opportunity and giggle gleefully if he managed it; he always gave it back.

I was aware of the power imbalance between myself as an adult and the participant as a young person, and in addition, a young person locked into an institution under the power of adults. Although I could not change this, I did my best to minimise it and was careful never to reprimand young people or to assert control over them. Only in one instance did I do this when a young person was sat with me and started trying to cut their arm with a knife. I told him, in a firm voice, 'stop it' and he did. Although I didn't mean to be so stern, it was an automatic response as a human when being faced with a small child trying to harm themselves (Goffman 1961). The fact that he listened to me and responded so suddenly illustrated an important fact though, that is, even when one is careful not to construct their presence as an authoritative one, the difference between adulthood and childhood is powerful. That does have an implication on how adults are seen and perceived by children (Thomas 2001:106).

As I became more familiar with all the residents in Hillside, they were all keen to know exactly who I was and what I was doing. When I explained what the project was about the girls seemed pleased but some of the boys started asking me, 'can I be in it?' and although I told them, 'you are in it' what they meant was, could they be interviewed. I said that I would think about it and talk to my supervisors, after which we agreed that if they asked again, then I would interview them. However, in the meantime, we started conducting 'mini-interviews' together whilst in the dining room waiting for meals and young people (especially Oliver) would order me to 'ask some questions then'. So I did. I asked Oliver about how he came to be in the unit and what it was like being arrested. After each answer I wrote his responses down dutifully and at times he would ask, 'can I read that back?' after which he would make corrections if he felt that I had misrepresented him. From doing these mini-interviews I discovered the importance of language and its many different meanings. For instance, I asked Oliver what the best part of being in Hillside was for him, and he told me:

*'I don't know, I'm not sure really, but do you know what, have you seen the keys in the cupboard at the front? They're sick!' (Oliver)*

I had seen the key cabinet and indeed it was filled with around thirty sets of keys. In my own mind I was imagining what it would be like to be locked up and under the control of all the people wielding keys. I asked him, with a sympathetic look, 'what is it about them that makes you feel sick?' and he tell me, 'oh Katie, don't you know what sik is?' I shook my head and he informed me, 'sik means good!' This highlighted the importance of asking for clarification and meant that I often asked 'why' whenever it was appropriate to do so.

Another important aspect of conducting participant observations was attending the daily hand over meetings which happened whenever one team of staff switched with another. These meetings were useful as they allowed me to 'see the other side' and provided greater understanding about the regimes and procedures that staff had to follow. Attending meetings also allowed me to hear how members of staff felt about young people and also how they discussed their relationships with young people in their absence. Often actions that had seemed 'harsh' were explained during these meetings and the teams were reflexive about how they handled individual situations. As a researcher, it was interesting to attend these meetings as I learned that the management of daily life at Hillside Lodge was much more intricate than I had first realised. Almost every action created a reaction and although some small deviance from the rules seemed to go unnoticed, it was in these team meetings that I noticed that almost every action employed by members of staff had a strategic placement in controlling or maintaining standards of behaviour (Foucault 1991; Goffman 1961).

As my agreed one month period of formal observations came to an end, I felt that there was so much of Hillside life that I had yet to experience. For instance, there were planned and formal group work sessions with young people, bike clubs, sports days, Christmas plays, Easter festivals, special awards assemblies and other such occasions. With the agreement of the senior management team, I extended my observation time and continued accessing the unit on a regular basis until I had collected the full sample of fifteen girls to take part in the study. During this time I continued attending classes at Hillside school, sat in on team meetings and also continued to drop-in for lunch with young people and staff. My observations became more informal at this point but I continued to carry

my pad and paper at all times. By the time my fieldwork ended, I had accrued hundreds of hours of observations and 90,000 words of fieldnotes.

### **Interviews with young people**

Since history is always told by those who are in power, children's accounts are barely reported in history (Hendrick 2000; Leeson 2006). Academic and historical accounts are offered as a 'god's eye view' but they are not so, instead they are firstly told by the ruling authorities and from the perspectives of those who are in charge. Therefore, 'standpoint matters' and to redress the imbalance of accounts, I wanted to collect and report girls' own experiences of Hillside Lodge in order to offer an accurate portrayal of the experiences of children in secure accommodation (Alanen and Mayall 2001; Hendrick 2000).

Research with children and young people has shown that rather than the passive subjects that they were assumed to be, children are competent social actors and therefore have responsibility for shaping their own experiences (James and James 2004; James, Curtis, and Ellis 2009). My research follows the lead of those concerned with the new theory of childhood and offers young people the chance to put forward their own views, therefore treating them as 'beings' rather than 'becomings' (Punch 2002; Punch 2003). Since girls locked in secure units are the 'experts' of their own experiences, my research sets girls at the heart of the secure accommodation debate (Coy 2007:4; Thomas and O'Kane 1998; James and James 2004). Through a series of interviews with all of the female residents in Hillside, I gained a rounded view of the trials and challenges facing girls residing in Hillside Lodge.

In total, each female resident participated in three research interviews during their stay in Hillside Lodge. Interviews were conducted over a six week period with roughly one interview every other week. The timing of the interviews was planned so that each participant was able to adapt to life at Hillside before they began to reflect on their experiences of being placed there. Conducting interviews over an extended period of time also allowed me to see the girls in the unit during my observations and to construct relationships with them built on shared experiences, such as eating lunch together, watching tv, playing pool, etc. Due to the spontaneity of placements in secure accommodation, it was not always possible to strictly adhere to rigid interview timeframes; however, in most cases it was achieved. Data was analysed using NVIVO and all interviews and fieldnotes were scrutinised using content analysis.

Often admission to the unit came as a surprise to the girls and proved to be traumatic (Goldson 2002; O'Neill 2001), hence participants were given two weeks to settle in to everyday life in Hillside before they were invited to take part in the project. Due to the way that section 25 welfare orders were granted, occasionally young people were placed in secure accommodation for only seventy-two hours. In these cases, residents were not invited to take part since they were already under close scrutiny by adults who had a fierce power in determining their future. Although it would have been interesting to gather the views of these residents, I felt that it would be unethical to ask these young people to accept another name and job title whilst understanding the differences between voluntary and compulsory participation.

The interviews room was carefully chosen so that it was not in young people's personal space (Punch 2002), for instance, their bedroom, and was also away from the rest of the unit so that neither young people or staff could 'listen in'. Finally the 'conference room' was chosen and agreed with management as being the most appropriate setting for interviews as it was bright and airy and had a big table where we could spread out and eat lunch. During the interviews I made a point always to sit next to the girls and never opposite them, this was to prevent the interview feeling like a police interview or an interrogation.

Gaining consent from the girls was very important to me and I continually reminded my contacts at the unit that I would only include girls who were happy to take part. To ensure that consent was given whole heartedly I asked young people to take part at two separate stages. Initially I explained the project to young people informally when they were in the group and in the main part of the unit. If they were interested, and wanted to take part, I accepted this as verbal consent and left them a leaflet to read in their own time. A couple of days later, I arranged an interview and met with young people in the conference room (shown above) where I would go read through the leaflet and ask young people to sign a consent form. At this stage, participants were reassured that their answers would be anonymised and that Hillside employees would not have access to their responses. I reminded the girls that they could withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. I reiterated the differences between a researcher and professionals such as social workers, care workers and YOT officers, making sure that young people knew that I would not report back on their behaviour. I assured participants that I would never discuss their answers with members of staff, unless what they said contravened child protection legislation. I did

not request parental consent for young people to take part in the study since most young people living in Hillside Lodge were not under the care of their parents. Since my research centralised the opinions and experiences of young people, and granted them a voice, as competent actors, I believed that they *should* have the final say whether they participated in the research or not (Punch 2002).

Interviews were chosen as an important part of data collection as they allow for a flexible approach for participants. Past research has shown that there are often low levels of literacy among young people in custody, meaning that written forms of data collection are deemed inappropriate (Connell and Farrington 1996). In my experience as a researcher working in youth custody, I had already encountered the difficulties of using inflexible paper based methods. The most common responses to one of my previous projects, a large scale paper based youth offending survey included: 'I'm NOT doing it' and 'are you having a laugh?' Learning from past experiences, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method since they offer flexibility for participants to expand topics which interest them and to skip over topics that are too painful to recount (Bosworth, Campbell, Demby, Ferranti, and Santos 2005). The adaptability of the interview method allowed for interviewer discretion to steer conversations swiftly away from subjects that participants found difficult to talk about. For instance, because lots of young people in secure accommodation come from local authority care, and had suffered abusive family relationships, it was not always appropriate to start a conversation with 'small talk' about things they might miss from being at home (Johnston, MacDonald, Mason, Ridley, and Webster 2000). All interviews were recorded so that the quality of the interviews were not compromised by the researcher being distracted by taking notes and



hence allowed for full concentration to remain on the research participant (Meyer 2001:338). Once the recordings had been transcribed, they were deleted from the recorder and were stored on the university secure drive which remains password protected.

The interviews followed three themes. The first interview had the theme of 'how I came to be in Hillside Lodge' and during this interview, girls were encouraged to draw a timeline of their life so far. This proved to be a good way to get to know the young person and to get a feel for which areas of conversation might be difficult for them (Coy 2007; Fetterman 2009). For instance, talking about school often led to discussing leaving one area to move to another when entering or changing local authority care placements. Timeline data also enabled both researcher and participant to view significant life events in a chronological order and allowed for both to comment on possible links, for instance, the possible link between the death of a parent and beginning to use drugs (Coy 2007; Goodley 1996; Yin 1981). Chronologically ordering events also proved useful in acting as a memory jog for young people, who would go up and down their timelines adding and correcting information that came to them later on in the interview.

At first it was difficult to effectively explain the timeline method, and although I supplied a list of prompts, such as: changing school; first boyfriend; starting smoking; etc, I found that this method became much more successful once I prepared a timeline of my own life (up to eighteen years) and gave it to participants at the start of the interview. I allowed time for participants to read my timeline and to ask any questions they wanted. I tried to be very honest but did not add anything which I thought

would 'condone' anything illegal. My timeline included things like: my parents separating; gaining a new brother; living with a new step family; changing schools; moving house; my brother going into care; and finished where 'I go to university and live with my friends'. Although this is all true, I was conscious to give my timeline a happy ending to illustrate that 'things can always work out well'. I found that giving my own timeline to participants was extremely beneficial as it enriched our relationship and built crucial feelings of trust almost immediately (Fetterman 2009). Because girls felt that they knew something about me, they were eager to share their life stories. I was surprised that many of the participants felt that our timelines were similar and although I considered our lives to be vastly different, at a glance a couple of young people excitedly pointed out 'this is exactly like mine!'

The second interview had the focus of 'life at Hillside Lodge' and centred around issues that affected young people on a day to day basis. The purpose of this interview was to encourage girls to express their views about the regimes and routines of Hillside and to give examples of ways that they could negotiate everyday practices to make their lives in the unit more pleasant. This interview also encouraged residents to explore their experiences of being in the unit and their perceptions of the other young people living with them. Some examples of questions asked during this interview were: What has been your favourite day in Hillside Lodge so far? Who is your favourite member of staff? Have you made many friends at Hillside Lodge? The second interview schedule was specifically framed around the appreciative inquiry research method (Liebling, Price, and Elliott 1999) since research has shown that young people often have negative experiences of secure accommodation (Goldson 2002; O'Neill 2001) and I wanted to encourage residents to discuss their experiences on

an everyday level and to consider positive aspects of secure accommodation (Coy 2007; Harris and Timms 1993b). Indeed, since I had already gathered an understanding of daily life in Hillside at the time of structuring the interview schedules (Fetterman 2009), I was already aware that many residents enjoyed large parts of their daily activities in the unit and therefore felt that asking residents to reflect on positive experiences would ensure that they did not specifically focus on the negative aspects of their incarceration (Liebling, Price, and Elliott 1999).

The third interview theme was entitled 'Life After Hillside' and asked young people to consider what they might have gained from being in the unit. This interview also asked the girls to consider their plans post release and to explore how their lives might change as a result of being in Hillside Lodge. Some examples of questions asked during this interview were: Who do you think that Hillside Lodge is designed to help? Do you think it does help? Do you think you have changed since you have been in Hillside Lodge? How easy do you think it will be to go back to your old life?

At the beginning of each interview, participants were given question cards so that they could look through the questions that were going to be covered during the interview. The cards were intended to put young people at ease so that they could flip through the questions and know what was coming, rather than being faced by someone asking them questions that they knew nothing about. Some participants liked the cards and used them as a tool to be the interviewer whereas other young people did not use the cards at all and left them in a pile on the table.

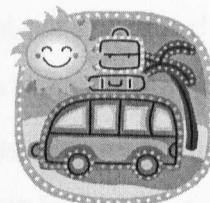
### ***Leaving Hillside Lodge and moving on ...***

*When do you leave and how long will you have been here?*

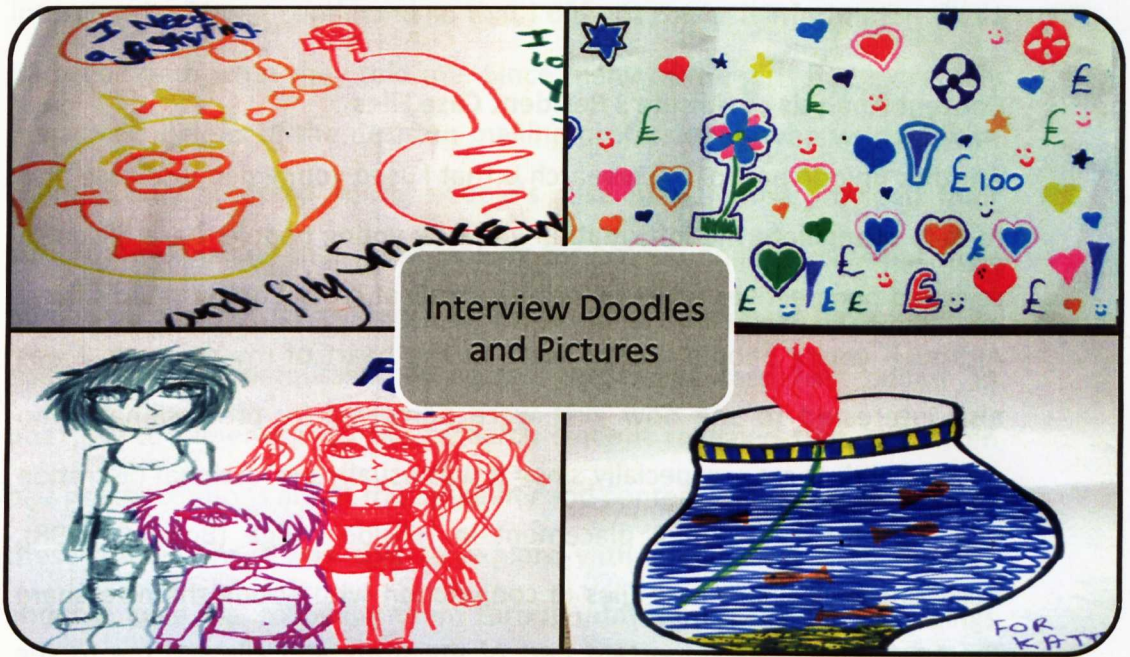
*Do you know yet where you will be going on to?*

*In an ideal world, would you stay longer or leave sooner?*

*Where do you think you will live eventually, either when your sentence ends or when you are old enough to choose for yourself?*



In addition to using interview prompt cards, I also took a big pad of paper and a packet of felt tip pens to all of the interviews conducted with young people. Before each participant arrived I laid them on the table and invited young people to use them to draw whatever they wanted. Some of the girls immediately picked up the pens and spent a long time drawing as they chatted, other young people doodled absent-mindedly whilst others ignored the paper altogether. Drawing was completely optional and I acknowledged that, like adults, some young people do not consider drawing enjoyable (Punch 2002). I also felt that offering participants some control over the research process would further differentiate my role from that of 'care worker' and show that I was not a 'Hillside Lodge' authority. Some participants used the paper as an opportunity to draw pictures for me to 'put up on the wall at work' and each interview I left with a bundle of sketches (see below).



Hillside girls seemed to enjoy taking part in the project interviews, and in one case, an interview with Brittany went on far longer than an hour, as originally expected. When the recording reached one hour and ten minutes, I apologised and suggested to Brittany that we finish so that she could have her free time with the others. Brittany instead insisted that we continued: *'No, I like it! Let's carry on'* (Brittany)

Young people were given a thank you card containing a £15 music voucher for taking part in the research. Although there is an ethical debate about paying research participants, I felt that young people *should* be paid for their time, as researchers are, and so that they, like us, can 'share in the profits of research' (Wendler, Rackoff, Emanuel, and Grady 2002). Offering participants a voucher for their participation showed them that their contributions were much appreciated and that, without them, the study would have been severely lacking.

### **Content Analysis of Hillside's Resident Case Files**

Another unique part of my research is that I used young people's case files to help triangulate the information given by young people. Case files also revealed perspectives taken by professionals at crucial times in girl's lives. Although young people's views were at the heart of my research, I was also interested to see how girls were perceived by professionals who worked with them – especially since it was usually professional discretion that was the cause of a placement in Hillside Lodge (Boswell 1998). Accessing participant case files in conjunction with asking them to share their stories was an important part of my study and allowed me to see how girl's situations are interpreted by professionals working with them (Goldson 2002; Lees 2002). For instance, Abbie reported during her interview that she frequently ran away from her children's home because she was bullied by other residents. Professionals reported this differently: *'she continues to put herself in risky positions and frequently absconds from her current placement'* (from Abbie's case file).

Accessing participant files was a beneficial tool in gaining a holistic picture of the girls' pathways into secure accommodation (O'Neill 2001). Since files were written by and for professionals, they offered important context for a young person's placement in Hillside Lodge. Case files contained reports from a variety of different services, such as: social services; youth offending teams; courts; psychiatrists; police; residential units; schools; etc and so it was useful to see how professionals made judgements about young people and how these judgements were interpreted by different services. I therefore gained a 'multiagency perspective' on each young person's case. I was careful to read young people's notes after their last

interview had been conducted so that I did not confuse information that I had read with what they told me. Since many of the girls had extremely negative opinions of the decision making professionals who worked with them, I only accessed young people's case files if they provided their consent. I explained that I was looking for professional views about their admission and not for evidence of any trouble they might have been in. Asking girls for permission to access participant case files added an unexpected dimension to the research since it revealed that girls often had preconceptions about the reliability and content of their notes. Due to these discussions, I was able to explore with participants their feelings about a 'case file' following them through different institutional settings and explore how they felt this affected them in subsequent placements.

Case files were obviously all different but were laid out in a similar format, which allowed certain components to be analysed numerically. For instance, young people were assessed in terms of 'vulnerability' and professionals were asked to indicate which of a list of 'risk factors' the young person presented. The list consisted of items such as: the young person is living with known offenders; the young person is living in an unsuitable abode; the young person has previously been reported as a missing person; the young person's carers are involved in criminal activity; etc. Case files also contained detailed information about professional interpretations of participant's life histories. Each set of notes were extensive and detailed information such as when the young person's family was first known to social services, the concerns that were raised at the time, and the outcome of social services investigations. If a young person had been placed in care (most had), then the notes included each and every foster family or care home that the young person had lived in, reports from each 'placement' documenting the young person's behaviour

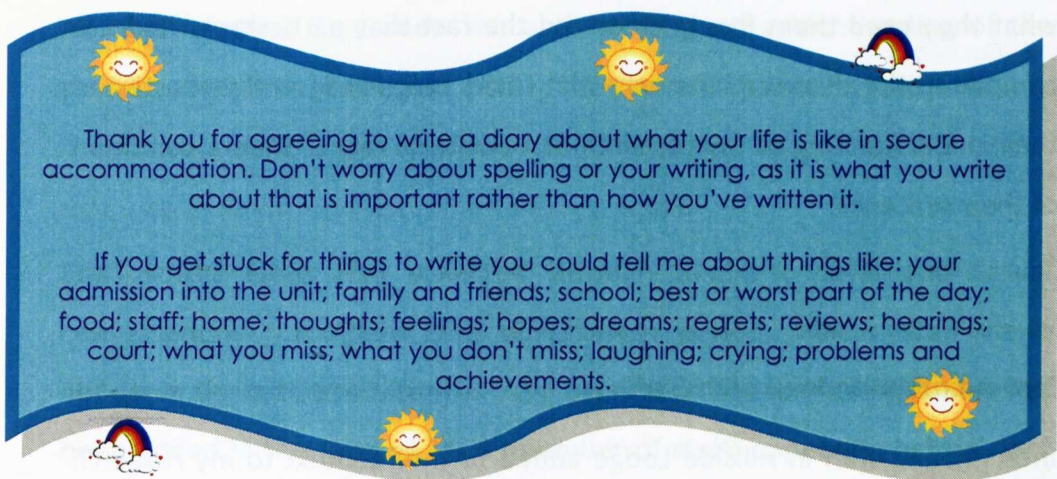
and personality 'traits'. More disturbingly, the notes often contained details of abuse that the young person had suffered. Case files made difficult reading and again reiterated the importance of confidentiality. I was pleased that I had decided to conduct all three interviews with young people before accessing their notes, as I may not have treated them in the same way afterwards. Also, I might have appeared too knowledgeable about events mentioned in passing which they may have preferred not to discuss. In addition, young people could have also asked me what was in their notes, putting me in a difficult position of not wanting to be untruthful but not wanting to jeopardise their current relationships either.

### **Diaries**

Although my own previous research experience has proved that diaries can be an ineffective method of conducting research within a youth offending cohort, Foreman (2004) found that diaries were a successful research tool when working with young people in secure accommodation. I mused that this might be because young people with restricted liberty have more time to sit and reflect than other young people who are not locked up. I discussed my thoughts with my potential future participants in the unit and after they agreed that it was something that they would like to do, I began a search for a 'suitable' diary for them.



Due to the presence on self harm in the unit, it was difficult to find a diary that was 'low risk' enough to be kept in young people's bedrooms at night. This meant that the diary had to be free of any metal or plastic and did not have a cord that could be used as a ligature. At the same time I wanted the diary to feel special and to look nice so that it was something the young people could feel proud of. The search for such a diary was difficult but eventually a suitable one was found. I decided to use the same approach as Foreman (2004) and also used her introduction at the start of the diaries. I added the same words to a laminated piece of paper to make a bookmark.



Before distributing the diaries, I asked the girls whether they would be interested in keeping a diary for four weeks and told them that although I would like to read them, I would keep what they said confidential and that they could have them back to keep afterwards. Most of the girls agreed that they would like a diary and so they were handed out during the first interview with each participant. The first diary was completed comprehensively, and the young person used it to write letters every day, starting each page with 'hiyaz' and ending with 'see ya' or 'night night'.

However, the next six participants claimed that they had not written in them at all, or if they did, they did not want to share what they had written with me. When Abbie told me that she would not do her diary during her second interview, I casually asked why and was told with remarkable honesty: *'I can use it for much better things than writing down my feelings!'*

After this I acknowledged that some participants wanted a diary because it was a nice book and not because they planned to write the diary as I had intended. I continued to give dairies out but only made casual reference to them and reiterated that it was up to young people to decide what they used them for. I celebrated the fact that participants had not completed the dairies in the way that I had suggested, as this illustrated their understanding of my research as voluntary, rather than a condition of their sentence.

### **Structured Interviews with Staff**

Interviewing staff in Hillside Lodge added further context to my research findings since staff perspectives allowed me to place young people's experiences amongst legislative controls and unit constraints. I agreed with the unit manager that I would interview five members of staff and two team leaders. I choose staff who were varied in terms of sex, race, age, attitude to young people and educational background. I sent my selection to the manager and she agreed with my choices and commented that I had chosen 'a good mix'.

As a few members of staff remained wary of my presence in the unit, I used the appreciative inquiry method which focuses on 'what works' rather than what doesn't (Liebling 1999:75). Each research question was posed in a positive way, for instance: What is the most rewarding thing about your job? What is the nicest part of your day at work? What do you think that young people gain from being in Hillside Lodge?

Although I selected staff that I would like to interview, I also made sure that I asked staff whether they would like to be involved and made it clear that their participation was voluntary. Since I had been in the unit six months before the staff interviews started, when they were approached, all staff felt that they knew me and had a good understanding of the project, and perhaps because of this, they were all happy to take part.

Staff voices were also collected through mini-interviews and casual conversations throughout the observation period. Where staff views appear in the text, pseudonyms have been used and further indication has been added in the form of MOS (member of staff) appearing before their name, in order to avoid confusing them with young people.

### ***Ethics and the Role of 'the Researcher'***

I considered ethical matters very seriously and stand by my promise that my research did not harm participants or unit staff. I ensured that all responses were anonymous and was careful never to repeat information which could be used to identify either staff or participants. Building relationships and cementing trust were a crucial component in ensuring that participants were not compromised by taking part in the research:

*'Actions speak louder than words. An ethnographer's behaviour in the field is usually his or her most effective means of cementing relationships and building trust. People like to talk and ethnographer love to listen. As people learn that the ethnographer will respect and protect their conversations, they open up a little more each day in the belief that the researcher will not betray their trust.'* (Fetterman 2009)

I offered frequent opportunities for participants to drop out of the project and worked only with participants who chose to take part. The project was explained carefully to each participant and informed consent was collected before each interview. At the start of each meeting, I set clear boundaries about the meaning of anonymity and to explain the situations where anonymity could not be maintained – such as if a participant makes it clear that someone is harming them or that they are about to harm themselves or someone else. All interviews were recorded and transcribed either professionally or by myself, during which process, all participant names were replaced with a pseudonym. All data has been coded and stored in a locked filing cabinet in my University office.

Due to the closed nature of Hillside Lodge, internal confidentiality was of utmost importance. There were regular squabbles between young people and also between young people and staff. Although I was always on hand to offer a friendly ear, I was careful never to make my own comments or judgements, indeed, this could be more difficult in some circumstances than in others, as Fetterman (2009) explains when describing his ethnographic relationship with a Nazi admiring participant. I often used non-committal reassurances so that it was clear that I was listening and empathising but yet did not openly agree or disagree (Powdermaker 1967). For instance, when Robyn tells me that a member of staff has refused to give her medication, instead of responding to the comment *'she's a bitch'*

I instead focussed on her headache: *'Oh dear. Does it hurt very much? You poor thing. Headaches are horrible!'*

My role as a researcher at 'Hillside Lodge' was a difficult one, especially since I visited the unit for such an extended period of time. Trying to be friendly and reassure people that I was not looking to 'find fault' was difficult even without the extra burden of maintaining professional boundaries and not appearing to 'side with staff' against young people or management. One strategy that I employed to help me do this was to be quickly diverted somewhere else when a disagreement seemed imminent. Usually I was unable to leave the room during these moments, as I did not carry unit keys, but I removed myself from the situation casually by walking to pick up a magazine, or to look out of a window. Even though I did not want to be called upon to witness what had transpired (which would often land a young person in trouble), I was still interested to hear how the conversation progressed and to see how residents negotiated their disagreements with staff.

Maintaining a 'professional distance' when emerged in participants' everyday lives is notoriously difficult (Fetterman 2009) and involves both 'involvement' and 'detachment' (Powdermaker 1967). Involvement is necessary to understand participants and to sympathise with their experiences, but a researcher must also remain detached so that one is able to consider participant experiences outside of a socially constructed reality (Berger and Luckman 1966) that might seem understandable only in the context of the field that is being studied (Powdermaker 1967). Due to the extreme vulnerability of residents in Hillside Lodge, it was important that I did not promise anything that I was not able to deliver

(Alder 1990). This included saying that I would help them when I wasn't able to. Although I often longed to help young people, I had to step back and remind myself of my role in the unit. For instance, Oliver, who I became very fond of, was sent to his room on a 'red card' for unacceptable behaviour. He was away from the group for a number of days. When I visited and chatted to him in his room, he showed me the painting by numbers that he had been working on, the result was amazing. He had enjoyed painting and wanted another kit. He was told that the painting sets had all gone. I badly wanted to buy him one because he looked so sad. Financially the painting sets were affordable, I could have easily bought one, and I nearly offered to, but something stopped me. I thought about Luke, the young person that Oliver had 'assaulted'. If I had bought Oliver a painting set, Luke might have believed that I condoned Oliver's actions towards him. The politics in Hillside were volatile and part of the role of staff was to address aggressive behaviour, hence, by buying a gift, however inexpensive for one young person, might have contradicted the messages that the unit were trying to transmit. However, I did want to show young people that I appreciated them welcoming me into their home (Sherry 1983) and instead of doing this by buying things, I made sure that I always offered my time. I was never too busy to attend a drama performance or play a game of pool, and would always willingly respond to requests for hugs or chats.

Another important factor that I had to consider as a researcher in Hillside Lodge, was that I remained fair as an observer. The staff who allowed me to 'shadow' them for twelve months were welcoming and friendly and came to confide in me more as time went on (Alder 1990; Fetterman 2009; LeCompte and Schensul 1999). I liked most members of staff on a personal level and had to remind myself frequently of my role as a researcher. I was

genuinely impressed by the child centred ethos of Hillside Lodge and the way that staff treated the young people in their care. As expected, there were odd days when 'everything went wrong', and very occasionally, staff did lose their temper – although NEVER towards a young person. In these instances, staff sometimes 'had a rant' in the duty office. I often discounted things I heard in these settings and always kept them in context in my research diary. It could have been easy to use such quotes out of context '*he's a little shit*' to show that staff were enforcing a negative self identity upon young people, but this would not have reflected the truth of the situation. To do that would have ignored the fact that the young person had just unexpectedly thumped the member of staff who had referred to him as '*a little shit*' and that the member of staff had remained calm and not shown a glimmer of anger towards the young person.

### ***Methodological Critique***

The research methods chosen for this study were informed by my previous experiences of conducting research with young people. One of the major strengths of this type of field work is in the triangulation of methods which ensures that data takes increased rigor and reliability (Denzin and Lincoln 1994). By conducting participant observations, the researcher is able to witness everyday life as it unfolds and in the context of which it occurs (Lucchini 1996), whilst interviews allow participants to define their motivations and explain motivations which might otherwise remain hidden (Meyer 2001). In this way, the girls were given the chance to share their own narrative (Walkerdine, Lucey, and Melody 2001) whilst the researcher was able to understand the context in which their answers were grounded. By giving girls a chance to express their own views, this

research invites young people to be considered the 'experts' of their own experiences (Coy 2007; Thomas 2001). My project preserves young people's views instead of downplaying them as 'childish' and therefore illegitimate (Castañeda 2002; James and James 2004; James and Prout 1997). Of course, it is important to highlight that this research does not speak on behalf of all girls in secure accommodation, instead it shares the voices of those in a particular place, in a particular time and indeed, in a certain moment. As later chapters show, institutional living is bounded with conflicted feelings. This research therefore aims to explore social processes as they occur and to make sense of them in relation to the context in which they appear.

Although there is an assumption that children might 'lie' in an interview, or seek to please the (adult) researcher by supplying 'correct' answers (Punch 2002), childhood researchers maintain that adult participants too might answer dishonestly if they fear rejection or ridicule (Gersch 1996). Therefore, in order to minimise this, researchers conducting all types of qualitative study need to concentrate on building trust with their participants (Alder 1990; Fetterman 2009; Punch 2002; Walkerdine, Lucey, and Melody 2001).

It is important to address the fact, that, like adults, some children are more articulate than others. I accept that some girls appear more than others in the chapters that follow. It is not the case that some views were given more weight than others, rather it should be considered that those who appear more frequently were girls who were able to vocalise their feelings more easily. Where certain voices may seem to dominate, the reader should appreciate that observations and informal conversations



with other girls validated group cohesion around certain topics. For instance, later we will see that whilst Abbie expresses her frustration with staff by physically pushing them and withdrawing verbal communication, Hayley is able to articulate similar feelings into lengthy descriptions. Informal conversations with Abbie and Hayley during participant observations show that although Hayley is able to verbally express her frustration with her placement, Abbie also agrees with Hayley's description of events:

*Hayley: It's shit. I hate it here!*

*Abbie: me too!*

*Hayley: we're locked up with criminals! [...] We should be somewhere separate, we're being punished but we haven't done anything wrong.*

*Abbie: we've not done anything!*

Therefore, Lola, Hayley, Robyn and Natalie sometimes appear as spokeswomen on behalf of others in Hillside Lodge. Coincidentally, two of these girls (Lola and Hayley) entered Hillside on welfare orders whilst Robyn and Natalie entered via criminal sentencing. It may seem that some of the girls have more of a say than others, but this is not the case. In addition, since the unit did house boys as well as girls, participant observations did not exclude boys and therefore their voices also appear in places in the findings chapters. This is not to say that their voices were heard in opposition to the girls, but instead to show that some experiences were unanimously acknowledged by both sexes.

Ethnographic observations meant that I was able to maintain an additional knowledge of most incidents that the girls mentioned in their interviews

(Alder 1990; Punch 2002). So whilst some of what is reported may sound unrealistic in real terms, and more like 'bravado', observations proved that when Chantelle explains 'I might punch him', she actually *might* punch him. By observing participants for an extended period of time, I did get to know most of the girls on a personal level, and understood from their body language and conversational tone when they were being serious and when they were joking. I built good relationships with lots of the girls who took part in the study and have presented their feelings as they reported them but also as they portrayed them in other ways, taking into account body language and actions outside of the interview room (Denzin and Lincoln 1994; Fetterman 2009; Flick 2002; Meyer 2001).

### ***Conclusions***

This chapter has described the methodological approach used to collect the research data and has considered how the research process succeeded in making my research notably different from previous studies in this area. In unpicking the methods used to collect data, the reader can place the discussions that follow into consideration of the context in which they were collected. The next chapter will share some of the participant observations collected over twelve months spent conducting ethnographic research. This will set the scene for the discussion of findings and will allow the reader to understand the context of life in the unit before they consider the feelings and emotions of those housed within it.

## **Chapter Five: Ethnographic Observations - Structuring Time and Space**

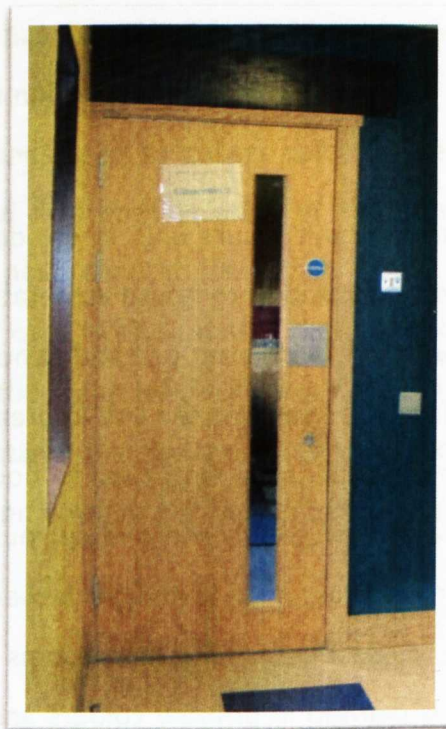
### ***Introduction***

In order to understand the context of young people's statements, it is important to consider the space and time in which they were uttered. Therefore, this chapter will set the scene for the rest of the findings chapters by exploring Hillside Lodge as an institution and examining the purpose of its existence. I will detail the daily routines of Hillside Lodge and lead the reader into an understanding of the structures of institutional life. This chapter will enable the reader to understand the later findings chapters in the context of which they were meant, and hence to understand the experiences of those describing their experiences of life in Hillside Lodge.

### ***Setting the Scene***

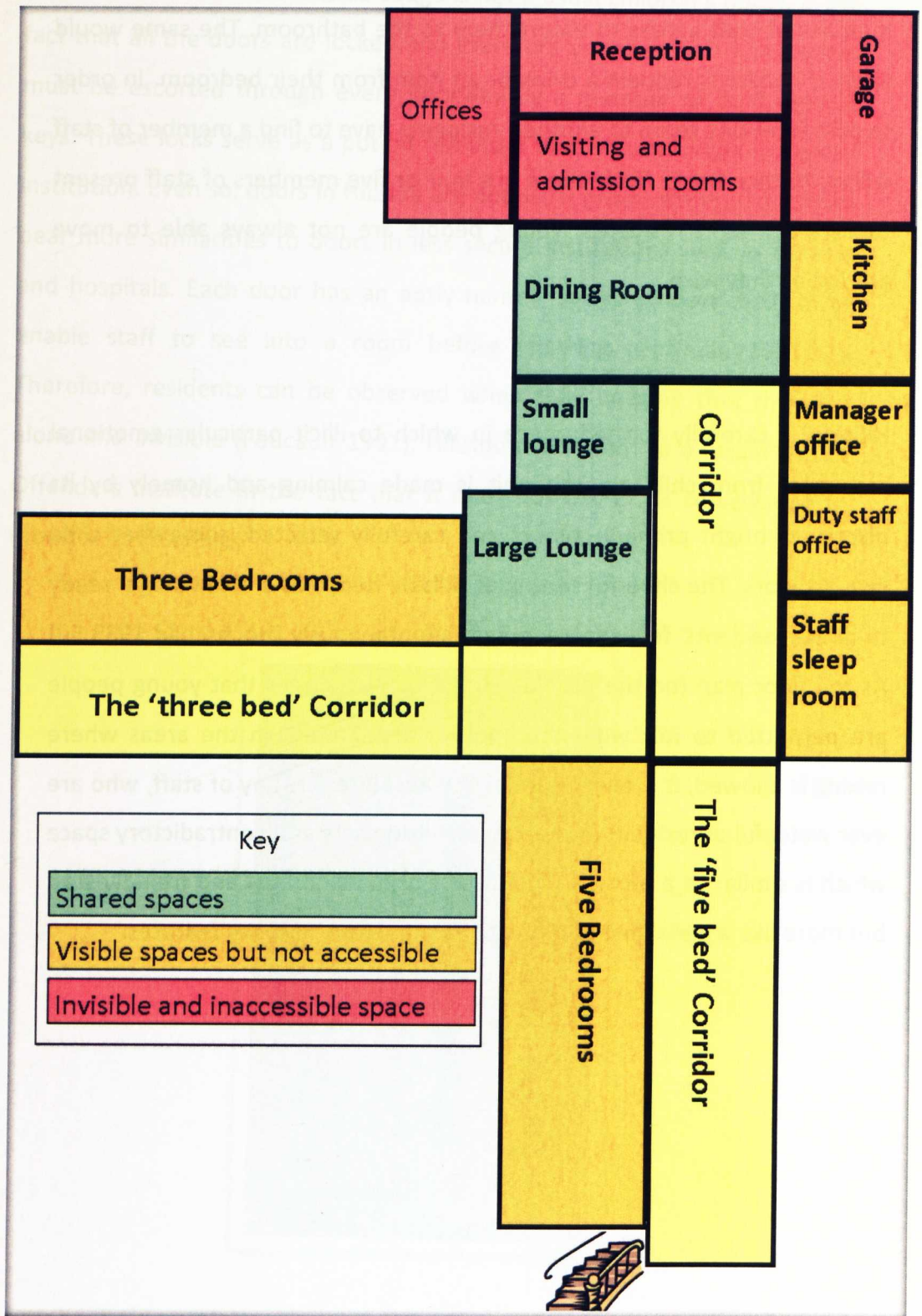
Hillside Lodge is a purpose built secure unit. It was designed and carefully planned to provide accommodation to house vulnerable young people in a secure setting. The building is a pleasant one and although safety measures are carefully built in (such as strengthened and unbreakable windows), it is markedly different to other penal settings used to house young offenders. The building sits on a plot of green land and surrounded by trees. Little rabbits hop around on the grass outside and can be seen through the many (unbarred) windows. Inside the building, the rooms are bright and airy, most of the building is painted in primary colours and the walls are hung with artwork. The staff wear their own clothes instead of an institutionally branded uniform and are addressed by their first names.

The only reminder that Hillside Lodge is not a usual children's home, is the fact that all the doors are locked and therefore young people and visitors must be escorted through every doorway by a member of staff holding keys. These locks serve as a potent reminder that Hillside Lodge is a penal institution. Even so, doors in Hillside are not usual prison doors in that they bear more similarities to doors in less secure institutions such as schools and hospitals. Each door has an aptly named 'Judas window' built in to enable staff to see into a room before entering (Goffman 1961:32). Therefore, residents can be observed when they imagine that they are alone and invisible (Foucault 1991). Hillside is different to a 'usual' Youth Offenders Institute in the fact that it does not use CCTV surveillance to monitor its residents.



All of the doors in the unit are kept locked **at all times**. If a young person is in the lounge and needs the toilet, he or she would have to wait until a member of staff agrees to escort them to the bathroom. The same would apply if residents request a drink or an item from their bedroom. In order to pass from one room to another, residents have to find a member of staff willing to take them. Since there are four or five members of staff present to care for eight residents, young people are not always able to move around as they wish.

Hillside is carefully formed space in which to illicit particular emotional responses from children. The unit is made calming and homely by its display of bright primary colours and carefully selected, somewhat child like, art work. The cheerful setting of Hillside becomes a 'front stage' ready to direct residents' feelings, seemingly spontaneously (Hochschild 1983:50). As the floor plan (on the next page) shows, the places that young people are permitted to mix with one another are limited. In the areas where mixing is allowed, it is always under the absolute scrutiny of staff, who are ever watchful of resident interactions. Hillside acts as a contradictory space which is similar to a nursery in its use of primary colours and friendly staff but more like a penal institution with its regulatory security features.



## ***Rules and Routines***

Despite its cheery impression, there are lots of rules at Hillside and because it houses residents in a capacity as both a secure children's home and as a unit for sentenced young people, discipline is strict. Hillside residents are admitted to the unit by professional escorts and are often driven in a mini bus with blacked out windows. Most young offenders enter the unit from court following sentencing but the entry of welfare young people is more varied. Most enter following a period of trauma and are often transferred from care homes, hospitals or as a result of being 'on the run' (Coy 2007; Epps 1997; Goldson 2002; Harris and Timms 1993a; Harris and Timms 1993b; O'Neill 2005; Rose 2002)

Once a new resident arrives at the unit, regardless of their legal status, they are thoroughly searched using 'a dressing gown search' during which young people privately change into a dressing gown, while staff search their clothing for items that are forbidden in the unit. The Hillside search differs vastly from a police strip search, which most residents had previously experienced. Hayley describes her entry search:

*'Staff here can't actually look at your private parts [...] so basically you're naked but with a dressing gown. But you have to be wanded<sup>4</sup> and patted and then they search through all of your clothes and stuff as well'. (Hayley)*

After being searched, new residents are given a tour of the unit and are allocated a bedroom. Rooms are colour coded and named according to the

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<sup>4</sup> Being 'wanded' referred to staff waving a metal detecting wand around the outside of the young person to check for forbidden items that might have been concealed from view.

paint colour on their walls. When rooms are first allocated to new residents, they are furnished only with a bed (which is built into the room using set concrete), a desk, a bean bag, radio alarm, and toiletries (including soap, toothbrush, toothpaste). During their stay at Hillside, young people are encouraged to 'earn' points so that they are permitted additional items inside their rooms. The owner of the bedroom shown above, had been a resident of the unit for a number of weeks and had earned the privilege of a television in his room as well as a number of posters on his wall. Young people are able to choose from a range of duvet covers belonging to the unit. Most residents had Disney character bedding such as Winnie the Pooh or The Aristocats. The prominence of Disney characters once again highlighted the contradiction of the unit as both a child friendly facility and a prison.

Due to the prevalence of self harm amongst the Hillside residents, a number of items, normally considered mundane, are forbidden from being kept in young people's bedrooms. These are known as 'controlled items' and include such things as perfume, scissors, sewing kits, hair removal cream, nail varnish, strainers, nail clippers, medication, etc. Residents instead 'borrow' controlled items and hand them straight back immediately after they have used them. These items are checked twice daily and counted at the start and end of each shift.

Each bedroom has its own en-suite facility, and although residents initially did not speak fondly of its stark interior, for most, an en-suite bathroom was an exciting luxury, often providing a stark contrast to the life that they had left behind on entry to Hillside. As Abbie explains, *'it was a surprise because I've gone behind bushes and trees before'*.

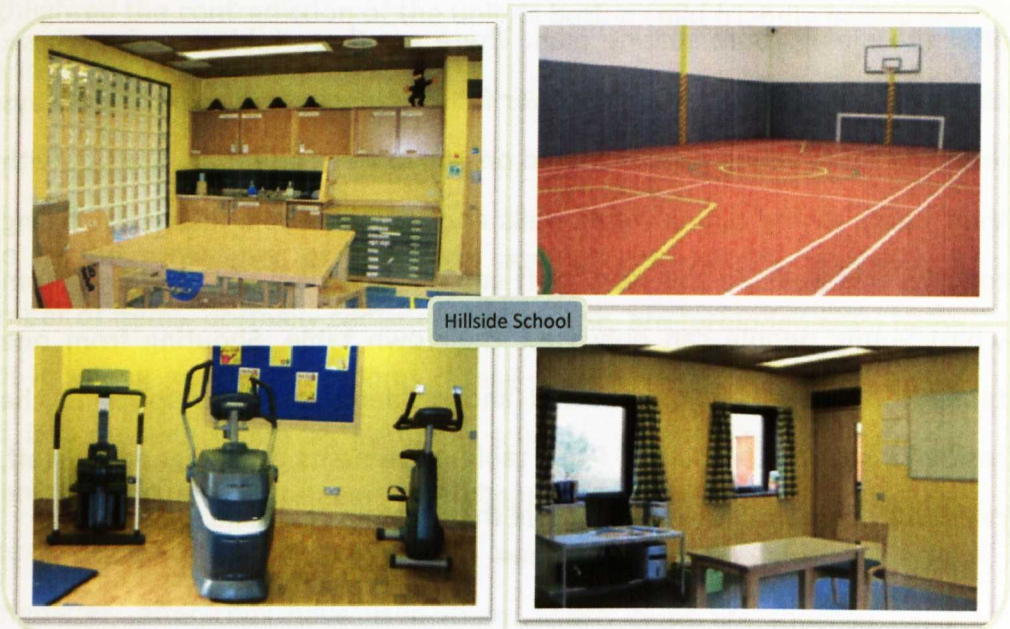




All meals are eaten in the dining room, which is bright and airy with art work covering the walls. Residents are allocated a particular seat upon arrival and cannot change places unless they persuade a member of staff to alter the dining room seating plan. There are three tables, each with six chairs around them. Tables are never full to capacity and there are always less than three young people seated on any table at one time. Staff sit with their backs to the dining room walls and young people always sit facing towards the walls. In this way, staff command a view of the dining room whilst young people can only view their own table. Shouting from one table to another is not permitted and residents can only speak to the residents sharing their table. Since table placements are assigned by staff, residents often sit with young people they profess to dislike.

Food is prepared by professional chefs and individual portions are chosen by residents from a hatch at the front of the dining room. Residents choose food from a selection of different dishes. Portions are controlled by the chefs and young people are not permitted more than one portion of carbohydrate per meal. Chefs spoon individual portions, ensuring that portions are uniform.

During the day, all residents have to attend Hillside Lodge School, regardless of age or usual schooling status. This means that if a sixteen year old has completed school before they receive a placement in Hillside Lodge, they will still be expected to attend Hillside School. Residents are taught in two classes of four pupils and class groups are mixed regardless of gender, age and legal status. The school follows a curriculum of maths, English, science, RE, PE and woodwork. The teaching staff are trained teachers and life at school therefore seems to take a different form from that of life in the 'living space' of the unit upstairs.



During lessons, teachers are in charge of controlling and disciplining their pupils. However, if teaching staff find that a resident is being uncooperative or disruptive, they can call care staff and ask for the troublesome pupil to be removed.

In dry weather, break times are spent in the playground where a variety of sports equipment is provided. and sports equipment like footballs, basketballs and badminton rackets are always available. Residents are encouraged to be active at break time and refreshments are provided. These consist of fresh fruit and drinks of squash. Like mainstream schools, Hillside follows the 'healthy schools' agenda which encourages schools to promote health and wellbeing through diet and exercise. Hence the snacks provided at Hillside are similar to those given free to primary school aged children in schools (Forero, Ellis, Metcalfe, and Brown 2009). The difference of course being that the food provided in Hillside is free and so residents who might usually disregard healthy options for sweet treats in school tuck shops, have no alternative option and therefore seem content to munch on grapes and bananas. At lunchtime residents return to the unit and eat lunch in the dining room with care staff.

The daily routines of Hillside adhere to strict timetables, and residents are busy at most times of the day. This likens Hillside children with prisoners described in Foucault's (1991) disciplinary regime as well as with Mayall's (1998) description of much younger school children:

*'At school, children's ability to manage their bodies is severely limited. They are required to subordinate their bodies to the formal regime. Children have to ask permission to go to the lavatory, can only exercise and drink at adult-specified times and places. Whilst children may be in tune with their bodily needs, they may not be able to satisfy them' (Mayall 1998:147)*

There are small 'pockets of time' in Hillside when residents *can* choose what to do. In these times, there are a range of activities that young people can choose from, providing that there are enough staff to facilitate the chosen options. There are two lounges that are used for leisure time, the

aptly named 'small lounge', and the slightly bigger 'large lounge'. The lounges sit side by side and are connected by a locked door. The large lounge is dominated by a large television which has access to SKY TV, whilst the small lounge has a smaller television but offers connection for games consoles such as XBOX, Nintendo Wii and PS3. Although media debates have condemned the use of game consoles in youth prisons (McGee 2008), in Hillside, residents only have limited access to such facilities and even when there is free time, with only one television and eight young people, individual access is heavily restricted.

### ***The Rules and Earning Points***

By all intents and purposes, Hillside Lodge is a total institution, defined in part by Goffman (1961) as:

*'as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time together lead an enclosed formally administered round of life' (p.11)*

In keeping with the purpose of a total institution then, each part of everyday activity is regulated to make sure that Hillside residents conform to all aspects of the regime as expected. If we take the view of Hillside Lodge as a total institution, we can consider its aims to be in line with those as suggested by Goffman (1961) but reformed by Hacking (2004). That is, as a place of 'coercion' used to 'change people', 'such as the cure of the patient, the reform of the criminal or the sound education of the schoolboy at boarding school' (Hacking 1999).

To initiate young people into everyday life at Hillside Lodge, and to describe the changes of behaviour that the unit was seeking to illicit, a scoring system, similar to the 'privilege' system that Goffman (1961) described, is swiftly introduced to new residents. Each new resident receives a blank score card listing the following rules:

1. *Respond to adults without comment or delay*
2. *Try not to invade other people's personal space*
3. *Accept responsibility for your own behaviour*
4. *Try not to make offensive remarks or verbal comments*
5. *Try to keep yourself, room and unit clean and tidy*

Hillside residents can earn a maximum of one hundred points per day for good behaviour. Points can be lost for displaying even a hint of defiance. For instance, if a young person is accused of spilling orange juice on the floor but insists that they had not, they would lose point for aim three. If then a member of staff asks them to clean the orange juice from the floor and they refuse, or even groan about being asked, they can lose points for aim one. If the resident then shouts at the person who actually has spilt the orange juice, they will lose more points under aim four. Hence earning and keeping points is sometimes like walking a tightrope in which young people have to be sure that every comment, sigh and glance can be seen as being appropriate. This is similar to Goffman's (1961) descriptions of the Asylum for which deviant actions can be used to confirm unwanted diagnosis.

Behaviour is discussed in 'points meetings' which occur at a number of structured times during the day. These meetings add to the daily routine of Hillside Lodge and are held after breakfast, after morning lessons, after

lunch, after school, and after dinner at 6pm. If residents adopt Hillside rules and change their behaviour accordingly, they are able to earn points to gain minor privileges (Goffman 1961). For instance, if a young person collects 240 points, they are able to decorate their room with posters (providing that they are 'appropriate' and do not contain bad language, reference to drugs, or show racist or sexist displays). 240 points also enables a resident to access five books or five magazines, as well as the privilege of keeping writing material in their bedroom over night. Once they score 480 points, residents may have a CD player and five CDs. At 640 points residents are allowed a television in their bedroom and, once they reach 720 points, they are permitted a DVD player to accompany it. Treats continue until young people reach 1000 points, at which they are deemed 'a graduate' and do not have to be scored daily in points meetings. If residents score a 'perfect' score every day, they can graduate after ten days and be excused from future scoring. However, to ensure that residents do not become complacent, graduate status is not granted permanently and can be removed if young people behave inappropriately and receive a sanction.

Earning and keeping points is made difficult due to the web of surveillance which surrounds young people in their daily activities. Every minute action is monitored and reflected upon during points meetings and staff hand over meetings, and residents are scrutinised by a number of different gazes at once (Goffman 1961). Lauren describes this particularly well:

*'You get told what to do, everything you speak about here, unless you're speaking to yourself or speaking in your head, everything you say has to be heard, staff have to know, you have to get took everywhere and doors get locked behind you, you can't be left in any room with another person.'* (Lauren)

It is through this tightly ordered system of disciplinary control that the focus around the reformation of behaviour becomes first visible. Residents are informed of the behaviour that is expected by the unit and deviance from this behaviour is sanctioned accordingly. Therefore, only those who are able to conform to the behaviour specified by the unit are able to make the most of the benefits on offer (Goffman 1961).

Contact with friends and family members outside the unit is extremely limited and although there are cordless telephones available for resident use, most residents are only permitted supervised calls. The most controlled category of phone limitation is 'dialled and supervised', and in these instances, staff dial the number for residents and put the phone on loud speaker so that they can hear both sides of each telephone conversation. Phone calls are limited to twenty minutes, per child, per day and can be taken any time after the points meeting at 6pm until bedtime. As there are only two phones and eight young people, phone time is allocated according to a timetable, with residents taking it in turns to choose phone time slots. Visits to the unit can be arranged providing the intended visitor is on a young person's specified 'contact list', usually compiled by a social worker or youth offending worker. For instance, if a child had been sentenced through the youth court, their YOT worker might place restrictions on contact with a co-accused. In the same way, social workers have the final say over a welfare child's contact list. Parents are *almost* always allowed to see young people, but friends and peers are vetted to make sure that they are 'suitable' and not a 'bad' influence.

## ***Keyword and Professional Assessments***

Assessment in Hillside Lodge is a complicated matter and although some children are formally assessed by professional psychiatrists, all residents are continually assessed informally through the points scoring system and more formally through 'keyword' sessions which are designed to gather a holistic picture of a young person's life. Each resident is assigned a small group of care workers who, from then on, act as their 'keyword team'. Keyteams are assigned via Hillside bedrooms, each bedroom having a keyteam attached to it. In this way, keyteams are free to concentrate on a new child as soon as their current 'keychild' leaves.

Keyword sessions are conducted flexibly to fit into the weekly routines when it is convenient for staff. Keyword sessions have a number of functions. For example, young people complete the 'getting to know you' package when they first enter Hillside Lodge. This package enables the keyteam to identify areas in which young people might need further help. Young people identified as suffering from bereavement would complete a bereavement package, whilst those using drugs would complete a package around drug abuse. Most of the girls who took part in the research also completed the 'sexual exploitation' package. Therefore, by using set keyword packages, staff routinely ask young people to disclose information in all areas of their lives, including friendship groups, leisure pursuits, drug use, family structure, living arrangements, negotiation techniques, personality traits, personal beliefs, sexual experiences, etc. Most topics are approached by directly asking young people prescribed questions about a particular topic. For instance, to explore how young people feel about themselves, they are asked to identify statements from a list according to those they agree with and those they disagree with. For example: I am trustworthy; I often feel alone; I am kind; etc. After deciding



which statements suit them, residents are asked to explain their answers to their keyworker.

In these sessions, girls are asked to share their most intimate and personal experiences with their keyworker. Hence, somewhat unsurprisingly, relationships between residents and keyworkers were often identified by the girls as being important relationships. Increasingly, girls made personal disclosures to their keyworker and often shared information that had not previously been previously shared with professionals. Although this could, and indeed did, act as a safeguard in ensuring children's future placements, it also meant that young people often could in fact end up sharing more than they wished to (Ellis and France 2010).

Through keywork sessions, staff are able to explore young people's feelings and emotions around particular topics where they are seemingly 'safe' from sanction. However, keywork also allows staff to acknowledge the 'real' attitudes of residents and can therefore pinpoint the areas needing more work. In this way, staff are employed as 'emotion managers' and work with those in their care as a 'caring friend' employed to ensure their future safety, or as Mayall terms it, their 'time futures' (1998). In addition, keywork sessions allow staff to work towards an exploration of each residents' moral outlook and can work at shaping them into socially acceptable emotions (Karstedt 2006).

Hillside staff training consists of emotional management techniques, calling for staff to use empathy towards young people, and ensuring that staff share management beliefs set out in the *Hillside Training Handbook* that

'behaviour is learnt and therefore can be unlearned' (Cherry 2005). Hillside literature therefore constructs its residents as children who have lacked emotional guidance and who need to be shaped and formed into successful future citizens (Devine 2002). Hillside staff are therefore employed and paid to show affection and care for emotionally vulnerable young people, their feelings are 'commoditized' and sold to service users as a service (Hochschild 1979). Whereas everyday personal relationships are built on give and take (we give love and affection as an investment, knowing that the recipient will usually repay our advances like for like), Hillside staff trade their affection for monetary gain in place of reciprocal care and concern (Hochschild 1983). In this way, the give and take aspect of Hillside relationships are changed and instead of a return of feeling, care staff are paid in cash for their emotional labour (Hochschild 1983). Another contradiction occurs in this instance, for whilst Hillside staff are employed to 'care' about those in their charge, Hillside residents are of course not paid. This is to suggest that although we can consider that a member of staff might be required to 'act' in a particular way to complete their employment task (Hochschild 1979), young people do not have to employ the same rules in return, and hence good feelings accrued during the relationship term might be construed as being genuine. We shall consider this issue in detail in chapter seven.

As well as allowing staff to grade the emotional responses of residents, keywork sessions also provide 'emotional lessons' and aid residents in building an 'emotional dictionary' (Hochschild 1998). Indeed, through keywork, the keyworker is able to instil a new moral code which reflects the 'emotion culture and emotion ideology of society' and works to dissuade residents from following an inferior moral strategy (Karstedt 2006). In this way, keywork sessions operate within residents' 'time

present', working to ensure their time futures by encouraging girls to share emotional burdens whilst simultaneously building 'appropriate' emotional responses (Mayall 1998). So, although control might appear helpful, this kind of control is in no less prescriptive than other forms of control in that it forces young people to consider and reframe their past and future behaviours (Berger and Luckman 1966; De Haan and Loader 2002; Jenkins 2008).

Following each keywork session, a summary is typed and then presented to the young person to sign. We will consider the importance of this consent later, as much research has shown that there is an important correlation between literacy and social exclusion (Ball and Connolly 2000; Berridge 2006; Berridge, Brodie, Pitts, Porteous, and Tarling 2001; Davies 2005; Visser, Daniels, and Macnab 2005). After being signed, the session summary is inserted into the resident's case file, which will follow them to any subsequent placements. Therefore, a personal 'chat' between a young person and a trusted member of staff becomes entwined in a generic case file which is accessible to any professional who subsequently works with that young person. Young people's views of case files and meeting documentation will be explored later in chapter ten.

## ***Conclusion***

This chapter has set the scene for the next chapters by describing and explaining the everyday rules and routines of Hillside Lodge. The chapter has shown that young people are framed within the unit as a child to be socialised and disciplined and has considered the unit's intention of personal reformation. Within this, I suggest that that the unit's disciplinary

routines and everyday rules portray emotional reformation as an important part of Hillside's socialisation agenda.

The next chapter 'Meet the Girls' will give a short overview of the participants, allowing the reader to contextualise resident's past experiences and backgrounds. In doing so, chapter six will enable an understanding of difficulties and experiences of those admitted to Hillside for emotional reform. The second part of the chapter will explore the girls' first impressions of Hillside Lodge and place their experiences according to their entry route into the unit, considering the emotional impact of being placed into a Local Authority Secure Children's Home.

## **Chapter Six: The Girls: Characteristics and First Impressions**

### ***Introduction***

Research by Goldson (2002) and O'Neill (2001) indicates that young people are ascribed a position in secure accommodation based on binary oppositions of offender or non-offender. However, this research shows that there are important parallels to be made between categorisations and that there is often little difference between residents who are sentenced via the courts and those who are placed on welfare grounds. That is, all but one welfare young person had committed a crime and many of the young offenders too had experienced a deal of trauma in their early childhoods. This chapter will explore the characteristics of the girls who took part in the study, drawing upon important parallels between their cases to show that distinctions cannot easily be made on the basis of entry labelling.

Indeed, by examining the circumstances of the girls inside Hillside Lodge, we can see that Hillside is set as an all encompassing model to achieve the same end with young people displaying different needs. However, the fact remains that there are stark differences between the two groups of girls and although it can be argued that all of the young offenders were 'vulnerable', the welfare girls had not committed crimes of the same seriousness as the young offenders. Therefore, the provision needed for the different categories of offenders can be sometimes starkly different. In this way Hillside Lodge sets a contradictory message for young people. Since the unit was set up to be caring and helpful, as well as punitive, the next chapter will explore the effects that the mixed messages gave residents. This chapter explores the effects of being placed in Hillside as a

result of either a welfare or youth justice order. In addition, this chapter considers children's own experiences of secure accommodation and examines their understandings of the function of Hillside Lodge. To be certain, the story of girls' experiences in secure accommodation is not a simple one to tell – as similarly it is not an easy one to live – instead it is filled with conflicting opinions, emotions, beliefs and practices. Hence, for the author as much as for the girls, this story is one of contradiction and ambivalence.

### ***A description of the sample***

*'Children who come to be looked after by public agencies have almost without exception suffered forms of deprivation or disturbance before their admission. Apart from poverty and poor housing, they are likely to have suffered from one or more of the following: the illness or incapacity of a parent; parental conflict, perhaps including extreme violence; parental departure, which may have been sudden or repeated; abuse or neglect; lack of warmth or consistency of care; lack of stimulation or support for learning; disrupted schooling; poor health; stigma and prejudice.'* (Thomas 2000:74)

During the time I visited Hillside Lodge, fifteen girls were placed under the justification of either a criminal justice or welfare order. Of these, seven were placed by their local authority on a Section 25 welfare order and eight were placed on criminal justice grounds, either on remand or as the result of being found guilty of committing a criminal offence. Hence the mixture of girls living in the unit was fairly even in terms of placement status.

There were clear similarities between backgrounds of the girls in Hillside. The table below sets out some of the characteristics of the sample so that they can be compared in relation to one another.

	Age	Months in unit	Order	Abuse history	Abscond history	SEN <sup>5</sup>	LAC <sup>6</sup>	Self harm <sup>7</sup>	Drug user <sup>8</sup>
<b>Brittany</b>	16	3	DTO <sup>9</sup>	yes	No	yes	no	no	yes
<b>Natalie</b>	16	12	DTO	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>Abbie</b>	14	12+	Welfare	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
<b>Gretchen</b>	15	1	DTO	?	no	yes	yes	no	yes
<b>Hayley</b>	15	8+	Welfare	Yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
<b>Robyn</b>	16	3	DTO	Yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>Lauren</b>	15	3+	Welfare	No	no	no	no	no	yes
<b>Chantelle</b>	15	3+	Welfare	Yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
<b>Gracie</b>	16	5	Both	?	yes	?	yes	yes	yes
<b>Lola</b>	13	12+	Welfare	yes	yes	no	yes	past	yes
<b>Gabriella</b>	15	2	Welfare	?	yes	no	yes	no	yes
<b>Freya</b>	13	2	Welfare	Yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>Rhianna</b>	14	1	DTO	Yes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes
<b>Carly</b>	15	3+	Both	Yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>Daisy</b>	13	2+	Both	?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

There were a range of ages within the unit, with ten girls being fifteen or over at the time they entered Hillside Lodge. Five girls were thirteen or fourteen at the time of entry. Although boys were not the focus of this study, during observations I noted that in general, boys seemed to enter Hillside Lodge at a younger age, with two boys being ten years old, one being twelve and none being over aged fifteen.

<sup>5</sup> Special Educational Needs

<sup>6</sup> Child in looked after Local Authority Care

<sup>7</sup> Has a history of serious self injury or a history of attempted suicide

<sup>8</sup> Child or child's case file indicates frequent use of illegal substances and/or alcohol use

<sup>9</sup> Criminal Justice Detention Training Order

From the fifteen girls who participated in the project, thirteen were already subjected to a local authority care order before they entered Hillside Lodge. All thirteen of these girls had experienced high instances of professional intervention, with many appearing on the child protection register before birth. The girls living in local authority care reported a high turnover of professionals intervening in their lives, with many stating that they had moved children's homes at least twenty times since entering the care system.

Nine girls were currently out of the mainstream education system and were attending schools for children with Special Educational Needs. This reflects literature which recognises the link between poor educational outcomes for children living in local authority care and also the link between incarceration and low educational achievement (Ball and Connolly 2000; Berridge 2006; Fernandez 2008; Jackson and Martin 1998; Lees 2002; Mendes and Moslehuddin 2006). Since they were seen as 'hard to reach', all of the girls in the research had experienced intervention from a range of practitioners, including: Youth Offending Team workers; social workers; drug and alcohol workers; sexual exploitation workers; specialist education workers; learning mentors; family support workers; care workers; and others. Due to the prevalence of being 'worked with', most of the girls reported being disillusioned with 'professionals' and were reluctant to engage in professional relationships.

Section 25 legislation states that in order to be secured, young people must have '*a history of absconding and is likely to abscond from any other description of accommodation*'. At a glance it is perhaps unsurprising to



discover that twelve of the fifteen girls interviewed were frequent absconders. Interestingly, of the three who did not abscond, two were those who still lived at home with their families. Although it is tempting to consider the possibility that 'being in care is bad for young people' it is of course important to make the distinction that young people's case files concluded that that these children frequently absconded before they were placed in local authority care too. Indeed, analysis of young people's long term chronologies showed that absconders had experienced a deal of trauma throughout their lives, often being added to the 'at risk' register before reaching school age.

Since Section 25 legislation details that young people should be secured *'if he is kept in any other description of accommodation he is likely to injure himself or other persons'*, eleven girls had been known to self harm. Two of the four girls who had never self harmed were also the two girls who lived at home with their families. The other two non-harmers were later going into care than the rest of the sample and had lived at home until they were past 14 years old. There was a strong correlation between sexual abuse and self harm (Lees 2002). There was also a direct correlation between those who did not self harm and those who did not abscond, with three of the four non-harmers also being non-absconders.

In line with research by O'Neill (2002), this research found that most of the girls (thirteen) were frequent drug users before being placed in the unit. All but one reported being drug on a regular basis and also reported that they regularly used a range of class A drugs, with many also stating that they felt that they had been addicted to drugs before entering Hillside Lodge.

Although we have considered comparisons of the girls in a numeric sense, the short thumbnail summaries below draw out specific elements of each girl's story so that their experiences of Hillside can be contextualised against their backgrounds.

1. **Brittany was 16. Before coming to Hillside she lived at home with her mum and dad in a house characterised by domestic violence. Although Brittany was not categorised by professionals as an absconder, Brittany admitted that she had been imprisoned for three months by a boyfriend who had abused her. She was not formally reported missing. Brittany frequently used drugs and alcohol and was registered with a special educational needs centre which she attended a few hours a week instead of going to school. Brittany received a short Detention and Training Order sentence for assault.**
2. **Natalie was 16. Before coming to Hillside Natalie lived in a variety of placements, shifting between her mum, maternal grandmother and local authority care. Both of Natalie's family carers had serious problems with alcohol and drugs and Natalie repeatedly reported to social services that she felt unsafe at home. Natalie was sexually abused when she was small and also suffered a significant family bereavement. Natalie was known to social services to be a frequent absconder, and was known to abuse class A drugs and to seriously self harm. Natalie received a significant Detention and Training Order sentence.**
3. **Abbie was 14. She was placed in care and was reported as being violent in all of the children's homes that she lived in. She was a frequent absconder. Abbie had attempted suicide in the past and repeatedly self harmed. Professionals feared that Abbie's life was in danger and that she was being sexually exploited by a group of older men. Abbie received an ongoing welfare order and stayed in Hillside Lodge for around 12 months.**
4. **Gretchen was 15. She was moved into care during her late teens after years of social service intervention at home. Gretchen attended a special school and although she had experimented with alcohol and drugs in the past, she had stopped using them for at least a year before entering Hillside Lodge. Gretchen lived in a long term foster placement and**

received help in caring for child. She received a short Detention and Training Order sentence for arson.

5. Hayley was 15. She entered the care system in her early teens but had been known to social services since early childhood. She reported that she had been raped repeatedly from a very young age. Hayley had a volatile relationship with her mum and was a frequent absconder and prolific self harmer. Hayley had abused most drugs since she was in her early teens. Professionals feared for Hayley's life and believed that she was being sexually exploited by a group of older men. Hayley received an ongoing welfare order and stayed in Hillside Lodge around 12 months.
  
6. Robyn was 15. She lived in the same children's home as Hayley and considered herself to be Hayley's best friend. Like Hayley, Robyn also entered the care system in her early teens but was known to social services since early childhood. Robyn reported being raped repeatedly from a very young age. Robyn had a volatile relationship with her mum and was a frequent absconder and prolific self harmer. Robyn had sporadically used class A drugs and reported being in a violent relationship. Robyn received a short Detention and Training Order sentence.
  
7. Lauren was 16 and lived at home with her father. She had achieved well in school and was predicted high grades in her GCSE's. Lauren was planning to go to college after her GCSE exams. Lauren had sampled both cannabis and alcohol but was not a frequent user. She attended mainstream school, did not self harm, and did not abscond from home. Due to her unlikely admittance to Hillside, both management and staff were in agreement with Lauren when she insisted '*I shouldn't be here*'. Lauren was placed in Hillside as a result of a witness protection programme in which she felt she had been wrongly identified. Lauren stayed at Hillside Lodge for approximately four weeks.
  
8. Chantelle was 15 when she entered Hillside lodge. She had been in care since she was a baby and had moved between more than twenty care homes, often to different cities. Chantelle experienced limited periods of time living at home, during which she was abused. She was a prolific self

harmer and made multiple attempts on her own life. Previous carers described Chantelle as an angry person. Chantelle had a string of past offences such as assaults and robbery. Chantelle received a welfare order of around six months.

9. Gracie was 16 when she entered Hillside Lodge. She had an eating disorder and was on remand for a crime that she did not want to disclose. Gracie was raised in a drug abusing household and was often forced to steal food so that she and her siblings could eat. She finally entered local authority care as a young teenager and was placed in special education provision at the same time. It was suggested, but not confirmed, that Gracie had been abused as a child. Prior to entry into the unit, Gracie was dealing drugs. Gracie went to court to be sentenced for a criminal offence but returned to Hillside with a six month welfare order instead.
  
10. Lola was 13 years old when she entered Hillside Lodge and was perceived by those working with her as being the 'most mature' resident in Hillside. Lola was articulate and intelligent and was one of the few young people who had stayed in mainstream education. Lola spent her early childhood being moved between her separated parents before absconding and residing with a known paedophile. Lola was a drug user, a prolific absconder and had worked frequently as a prostitute to secure lodging. Lola received a welfare order and stayed in Hillside Lodge for over 12 months.
  
11. Gabriella was 15 and a latecomer to local authority care. She had previously absconded from her family home and had been missing for a number of months. Gabriella had been brought to Hillside Lodge following capture by the police. Gabriella had suffered a significant bereavement in her mid teens and lived amidst serious domestic violence. Gabriella was a recovering drug addict and professionals feared that she was being sexually exploited by older men. Gabriella received a welfare order and stayed in Hillside approximately two months.
  
12. Freya was 13 when she entered Hillside Lodge. She was best friends with Rhianna. Freya was brought up amidst serious domestic violence and had been abused at home. Freya's immediate family were in prison and she

lived in local authority care. Freya had an extensive criminal record, including arrest for threatening behaviour and robbery. Freya was a frequent absconder and a prolific self harmer. Professionals feared that Freya was being sexually exploited by older men. Freya received a welfare order and spent around seven months in Hillside Lodge.

13. Rhianna was one month older than Freya, and was 14 when she entered Hillside Lodge. Rhianna had a volatile relationship with her mother and shifted between living in local authority care and living at home. Rhianna was a frequent absconder and a prolific self harmer. When she was missing, Rhianna was usually found with Freya. Rhianna had an extensive criminal record, including arrest for threatening behaviour and robbery. Professionals feared that Rhianna was being sexually exploited by older men. Rhianna received a short Detention and Training Order sentence.
  
14. Carly was 15. She entered Hillside Lodge on a welfare order following the completion of a Detention and Training Order at another secure unit. Carly was a frequent absconder and a prolific self harmer. Carly was out of mainstream education and instead attended an education centre. Carly had an extensive criminal record for petty crimes. Carly was sexually abused as a child and had been labelled as having post traumatic stress. Carly was a self harmer and a frequent absconder. She spent her childhood living between her mum and grandma and entered the care system after being found guilty of assault. Carly was still in Hillside when fieldwork finished. She did not know how long her order would last.
  
15. Daisy was 13 when she entered Hillside. Like Carly, she came to Hillside on a welfare order after completing a Detention and Training Order at another secure unit. Daisy was a self harmer and a frequent absconder. She used drugs from an early age and was in special education. Daisy was unhappy in the care system and had a volatile relationship with the carer's in her children's home, which resulted in Daisy receiving a sentence of 'actual bodily harm'. Daisy came to Hillside as part of a deal that she had made with her social worker, and had promised 'to be good' so that she might be returned home to her mum instead of being made to go back into care. Daisy was still in Hillside when fieldwork finished. She did not know how long her order would last.

These thumbnails show that there were indeed similarities between the girls. Even so, there were also stark differences between them. For reasons on anonymity, it is necessary to omit particular details from these thumbnails. Where profiles state that 'professionals feared that this child was being sexually exploited by older men', these statements often referred to instances of sexual grooming and child prostitution. Indeed, at the time that I conducted my research, there was an increasing concern about the grooming of girls in care by gangs of paedophiles and the girls themselves referred to their own exploitation in varying measures<sup>10</sup>. O'Neill (2002) also found that lots of girls entered secure accommodation because they were believed to be at risk of sexual harm. The rest of this chapter will explore what these differences meant to young people and their experiences of being detained in Hillside Lodge.

### ***First Impressions***

One of the main discussions outlined in the secure accommodation literature (Goldson 2002; Harris and Timms 1993a; Harris and Timms 1993b; O'Neill 2001) has been the complexities and contradictions of mixing seemingly different children together. As I shall explore in chapter eight, the main defence in mixing welfare cases with the criminally sentenced, has been that young people in both instances are 'children' first and foremost. That is, that they are seen as being children rather than offenders, and as vulnerable rather than evil (Goldson 2002). Even so, the fact that children were admitted to Hillside Lodge via different legal routes led to confusion among young people and staff.

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<sup>10</sup> For more information, visit [http://www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/ceop\\_thematic\\_assessment\\_executive\\_summary.pdf](http://www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/ceop_thematic_assessment_executive_summary.pdf)

One of the two main criteria for incarcerating Section 25 young people is *'if they will harm themselves or others'*. All of the seven welfare girls were incarcerated because professionals feared that they were endangering themselves rather than others. The separation between sentenced and welfare young people was complex and interchangeable. For instance, three of the girls changed legal status from that of 'criminal justice' to 'welfare' while they were inside the unit. This means that ten girls qualified for a welfare order and therefore met both sets of criteria simultaneously:

*'I think the welfare kids have often had a shit life and then committed crimes and I think the youth justice kids often commit crimes and have had a shit life. So I think they're very similar. And they're just defined by different sentences.'* (MOS-Jayne)

Hillside staff confirmed that there were only minimal differences between residents. However, rather than seeing all young people as vulnerable and in need of help, occasionally similarities were expressed in the opposite light, with one member of staff declaring that *'there are no good kids here'*. This statement suggests that Hillside residents unfairly assumed the identity of 'criminal' in the eyes of the unit. Since similarities could be made in terms of criminal sentencing, it is important to note that often, those coming from local authority children's homes received criminal sentences for minor incidents. For instance, the three girls whose legal status was changed, had received a criminal sentence as a consequence of an 'altercation' in their care homes, resulting in criminal damage charges being passed against them (Thomas 2000). Furthermore, some of the girls sentenced under welfare means have never committed crimes. These girls expressed understandable anger that they had been incarcerated unfairly.

Hence to be locked up alongside those serving a criminal sentence made a welfare placement in Hillside Lodge harder to comprehend:

*Hayley: we're locked up with criminals! All we've done is run away and now we're being punished! We should be somewhere separate, we're being punished but we haven't done anything wrong. It's not fair. We're treated like criminals.*

*Abbie: We've not done anything!*

Regardless of the route taken into Hillside, all of the girls described being shocked by their placement. A number of welfare girls also described feeling deceived by their placement. Since young offenders attended Hillside following arrest and an appearance in court, they had received legal advice and knew that there was a possibility (however remote) of being imprisoned. Welfare girls were rarely informed that professionals were seeking secure orders on their behalf and welfare children were frequently admitted to Hillside based on professional discussions unbeknown to them. Most of the welfare girls described being lied to about the likelihood of a secure placement:

*'I was sitting in my living room and three escorts come [...] I was like 'where am I going?' and they were like 'oh you're going back home', meaning going to live back with my grandparents. So I got in the car and then they started driving down the motorway in the wrong direction and I'm like 'why are we going the wrong way?' And they were like 'Oh you're moving to another care home'. And I went 'It's not secure is it?' and they was like 'No' and then I seen on the paper 'S. Centre' and I was like 'Does that' S. stand for secure?' and they were like 'No'. When I got here, I asked MOS-Darren and I*



*was like 'Is this a kids' home or a secure unit?' He said 'It's like a kids home with locks on the doors' [...] They lied to me' (Chantelle)*

Entry was especially hard for those arriving on welfare orders, and as some of the girls suggested, being lied to on the journey to Hillside made admission more traumatic. It is accepted in the literature (Harris and Timms 1993b) that most young people enter secure accommodation in a time of crisis and this was certainly the case for all of the Section 25 girls who participated in the research. The process was more transparent for girls entering Hillside following legal advice and a court appearance:

*'My barrister told me to bring an extra pair of clothes [...] if someone tells you to bring another pair of clothes, that's what it means isn't it.'* (Rhianna)

Even so, many of the girls entering by the criminal justice route were surprised to receive a custodial sentence, even after attending court to be sentenced for a serious crime. Girls who had expected to be 'sent down' still found it hard to accept their sentence when the time came:

*'It was proper scary. I couldn't talk when they sentenced me [...] tears came to my eyes and I said 'no', and they came running in to put handcuffs on my arms and I thought oh my god [...] I didn't have any breath or anything, I thought I was going to faint'* (Brittany)

A number of sentenced girls expressed relief about their placement in Hillside. Many were aware that they had 'got off lightly' and felt that Hillside was an easier placement than they had expected. For instance, Robyn had expected to be imprisoned following her offence and instead of feeling distressed about a placement in Hillside, she was relieved to have been judged 'vulnerable' and permitted to serve her sentence at a secure

unit instead of in a YOI. Her first impressions of the unit were more positive than other girls who had been admitted:

*'I was fifteen when I come here [...] if I had have been sixteen they would have sent me to a proper prison like Newhall or something [shudders] I wouldn't like to go there.'* (Robyn)

The dual purpose of Hillside led the girls to question the intended purpose of secure accommodation and interview discussions reflected on the question of whether Hillside Lodge was designed for 'troubled' children or whether it was indeed a prison intended for young offenders. The next sections will explore this in more detail.

### ***A 'Nice' Prison or a 'Strict' Care Home***

Since fifty per cent of the accommodation in Hillside was designated for young offenders, it was perhaps unsurprising to find that initially, the majority of children viewed Hillside Lodge as a penal facility:

*'It's a prison [...] because you're locked in, you can't smoke, you can't do anything [...] you can't willingly leave. The staff might be nice and it might be for kids, but it's still a prison.'* (Hayley)

*'Everyone knows it's like prison.'* (Daisy)

The provisioning of the rooms in the unit reinforced the view of Hillside as a prison and those who had been arrested previously were able to compare its facilities to police stations that they had visited:

*'Everything here's metal [...] metal bath, metal shower, metal toilet [...] it was just like being arrested [...] it was like being in a police station but with a carpet.'* (Chantelle)

Understandably then, for those who had not committed a crime, Hillside felt like an undeserved punishment:

*'Other people are not here because of what I am here for [...] they should be here because they have done a crime. I am here because of my own safety so it's strange to be around people who have done something bad'* (Gabriella)

Such views of Hillside as a prison were not consistent with its stated aims of providing 'a safe, caring yet controlled environment in which young people are enabled to address personal difficulties' (Hillside Lodge statement). However, despite its austere fixtures, once young people had recovered from their initial shock of being secured, they subsequently perceived Hillside Lodge in positive terms, concurring that Hillside acts as a therapeutic facility to help residents to be rehabilitated towards a 'better' life (Van Drenth and De Haan 1999):

*'It's for young children to get better. To sort out things that happened in the past [...] you're locked up and you're getting your mind sorted and you're thinking a lot'* (Gabriella)

### ***Punishment or Therapy***

Although residents often contemplated the mixing of offenders with non-offenders, the girls themselves found that they had much in common with one another, regardless of their legal status. For instance, out of the fifteen participants: thirteen girls had lived in local authority care, fourteen had drunk alcohol and had taken drugs, fourteen had been arrested at least

once, eleven been excluded from mainstream school; and ten had sexual relationships that were deemed as 'inappropriate' by professionals working with them. It was because of these similarities, that some welfare girls felt that their placements were justified, since they believed that they would have been sentenced sooner or later.

*'I have a saying that I like to say, it's 'welfare girls are just YJB<sup>11</sup> that don't get caught' [...] like YBJ probably also need to come in for their own safety as well. And I think that welfare have probably been involved in quite a lot of crime, or even just a bit of crime.'* (Lola)

More troubling than the insistence that most Hillside residents were either known or future offenders, were the serious parallels that became evident after analysis of young people's case files. Indeed many of the girls' similarities were rooted in the parts of their lives that were out of their control. These things included: experience of a traumatic childhood; frequent abuse; domestic violence; being placed in care; and experiencing the death of a family member. Since Hillside served a particular local authority, girls sometimes entered the unit and found that they were placed with children who they had known previously whilst being in care. Four girls had been 'best friends' with another Hillside resident before they entered the unit. In both cases, the pairs of 'best friends' were placed in the unit on different grounds, with one friend being sentenced, whilst the other received a welfare order. This served to illustrate the close parallels between the girls. Especially since these two pairs spent most of their time outside the unit together and conducted their daily activities together, sometimes appearing as a co-accused in each other's case files. It became increasingly apparent that young people were labelled by whichever agency they became first known to (Goldson 2002).

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<sup>11</sup> Youth Justice Board

The close parallels between the lives of young people meant that staff often did not question the conflicting purpose of the unit. More confusingly, members of staff differed in their opinions about the purpose of the unit and whilst most staff insisted that Hillside was a LASCH<sup>12</sup>, a minority of staff believed that Hillside was a penal facility first and foremost:

*'I always say 'It's quite simple, don't moan to me [...] your actions made you get locked up. If you want a toilet seat, don't get locked up, go to The Ritz.'* (MOS-Terri)

*'I know they're children but these are children who've broken the law. It takes a lot for a young person to be secured, to be locked up.'* (MOS-Darren)

This contradictory view of Hillside was upsetting for young people who felt that they had been detained for being abused at the hands of someone else.

*'MOS-Terri is saying 'everyone who comes in here is bad, they don't lock good kids up' [...] I was thinking about it last night when I was in bed, and I was thinking, 'I'm a good kid' I don't get myself into no bother, I smoke the odd spliff but I don't drink, I don't go out and start fights, I don't cause no trouble, I come in when I'm told. That doesn't make me a bad kid. I always listen to my parents. I would have a criminal record by now and I would be known to social services. I am a good kid.'* (Lauren)

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<sup>12</sup> Local authority secure children's home.

These views also had a profound effect on young people's views of themselves and their own situations, and indeed the trust they invested in the professionals who had placed them in Hillside (Goffman 1961):

*Abbie: I don't want to stay in, I want to go outside.*  
*Oliver: Well don't get locked up and you can go out when you want.*  
*Abbie: We're in a LASCH Oliver.*  
*Oliver: Where are we MOS-Holly?*  
*MOS-Holly: In a secure unit.*  
*Oliver: See! I told you.*  
*Abbie: but it is called LASCH!*  
*MOS-Holly: We call it LASCH but officially it is a secure unit.*  
*(From fieldnotes)*

The dual function of the unit was confusing to the girls, and welfare young people sometimes stated that they also 'deserved' to be in secure accommodation because of minor infringements that they had committed in the past. Young people were aware of the routes that other residents had taken into the unit and although they were formally forbidden from discussing their entry circumstances, residents often risked disciplinary measures to share their experiences with other residents. It was hearing these descriptions that sometimes convinced welfare girls that they should be subjected to the same rules as young offenders:

*'Criminals aren't allowed sovereign rings because they could punch each other and [...] most of them are here for assaults or something related to assault [...] welfare aren't allowed sovereigns because we could potentially punch someone as well.'* (Chantelle)

Even within group work sessions aimed solely at offenders, there was confusion about the purpose of secure accommodation and its function. When asked in a Hillside questionnaire: 'would you say that you were any of the following: vulnerable; a risk to staff; violent or abusive to others?'

Natalie answered: *'Yes. I can be all three!'* Although Natalie was one of the highest profile offenders in Hillside, she identified more with the idea of being vulnerable than being an offender. In a discussion about the purpose of Hillside, Natalie explained that the unit was to provide help for 'vulnerable' young people, 'we're all here because we're vulnerable!' (Natalie)

The term 'vulnerable' was frequently used in Hillside. Although the idea of vulnerability was frequently ascribed by staff, aside from Natalie, most young people firmly rejected this description of themselves. Indeed, when staff suggested to young people that they were vulnerable, the girls believed instead that staff were seeking to justify professional interventions that had been imposed on them. In contrast, most of the girls strove to be independent and resented the claim that professionals had made on their lives, insisting instead *'I can look after myself'* (Lola, Hayley, Abbie, Gretchen, Lauren, Gabriella and Freya). In looking after themselves, the girls explained that they had two methods to choose from, *'fight or flight'* (Natalie) and it was for these decisions that young people attracted the gaze of the professional. For instance, many of the girls chose 'flight' and ran away in an attempt to take control over difficult situations (Lees 2002). Once they had absconded, girls lived in a variety of settings, and stayed with friends and family members, as well as boyfriends, or even complete strangers. This led professionals to believe that they had put themselves in danger and that they were therefore in need of professional protection (Coy 2007). This flight for safety was often influential in professional decisions to apply for a welfare order:

*'I lived everywhere. Everywhere. Everywhere. Everywhere [...] with everyone. Anyone who would have me. Did prostitution.'* (Lola)

For these girls, being taken forcibly and placed in a secure setting triggered an angry reaction and even girls who had the most horrific histories of abuse felt that they could have cared for themselves if they had been left alone. So whilst offending girls felt that their own actions had landed them in secure accommodation, welfare girls found it harder to accept the professional reasoning behind their incarceration. Furthermore, welfare girls did not understand professional concern over their daily activities and lacked awareness of the legal responsibilities of social workers. This often led to a negative feeling about professionals who worked with them, and often prompted young people to see their social worker as someone employed simply to make their lives difficult:

*'She's just causing trouble all the time. She just causes trouble for me, she's a nuisance, she's a pain in the bum' (Robyn)*

*'Social services like to make problems that aren't there' (Hayley)*

The idea of being seen as 'vulnerable' was unwelcomed to such an extent that some welfare girls preferred to accept the label of 'young offender', thereby striving to control the reason for their placements rather than accepting that they were victims. For example, Lola went to great lengths to explain why she could have been sentenced under criminal justice circumstances rather than been held in a welfare capacity. Nevertheless, the crimes Lola explained were not of the same nature of some of those who were serving sentences. Even so, by placing herself into the identity of 'criminal' she was able to explain that she was a *risk to society* rather than *at risk* from society, and hence retained some feelings of control about the nature of her sentence (Goffman 1961). In this way Lola attempts to make a retrospective story to fit with the notion of identity the she feels most comfortable with:



*'Actually I've committed looooooooooooooads of crimes - I've just not been caught for them [...] I feel like I have done something wrong this time [...] the fact that I'm here to keep others safe, as well as keeping myself safe. I've been put here on welfare grounds, but it could be seen from either side' (Lola)*

It was hard for welfare girls to separate the purpose of secure accommodation from its penal function. So whilst some felt punished for doing nothing wrong, for the welfare girls awaiting criminal sentencing for unrelated incidents, Hillside felt like a punishment that had been served in advance. This means that for all the positive messages about providing a provision of care, young people often could not separate the punitive messages that twinned the therapeutic ones (Goldson 2002; O'Neill 2001). Chantelle, for example uses Hillside Lodge as an interchangeable provision that could be viewed as fulfilling a prison sentence in advance of being tried for an offence:

*'My record varies from little things to big things. Like I'm locked up here til October, so effectively I've done a three month sentence [...] because I've done nothing wrong to be here at the moment. So they could class this as my DTO and just allow it to run when I get out' (Chantelle)*

Although young people were mixed with other residents who had often committed serious and high profile offences, all of the girls were forgiving of other residents and, unprompted by research questions, almost unanimously agreed that *'everyone deserves another chance'* (Robyn). This is indicative of the British criminal justice system in general in the way that it illicit emotional responses both towards the offender as well as to the victim (Karstedt 2006). Most welfare girls drew empathy for offenders from the knowledge that they too had done things that they regretted and hoped that others would forgive them for their mistakes:

*'What's done is done. You can't go back and change things. People might think what I've done is bad and horrible but like I can't do anything about it.'* (Daisy)

The only occasions that welfare girls were less accepting of being mixed with young offenders were when offenders bragged about serious offences. For instance, a boy accused of murder was condemned for joking about the media portrayal of his case. Whilst offenders and welfare girls both condemned his actions, his comments caused some of the welfare girls to reflect on the injustice of their placements. After this incident, some of the welfare girls shrugged away from the offender status that they had previously adopted. In this sense, girls were able to call on their own version of morality and shame to cast disgust on the actions of others, who had offended in ways that they had not (Karstedt 2002). In this way, their sympathies were transferred from the life history of the offender to that of the victim (Karstedt 2006).

*I said 'that's nothing to brag about you fucking murdering twat' [...] he gets more privileges than me and I think 'but I haven't murdered somebody' [...] he gets treat better than me, and I think 'as if you should treat him better than me'. They treat him with more respect, I get shouted at but he never gets shouted at, and he's murdered someone but I haven't.'* (Daisy)

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has considered the backgrounds of the girls who took part in the research and has made reference to the similarities and differences between them. Keeping these similarities and difference in mind, I have

considered the impact of legal status in understanding young people's perceptions about their secure placement.

The next chapter will explore relationships between Hillside residents and Hillside staff, considering their purpose in providing therapy and reforming the 'childhood training of the heart' (Hochschild 1983).

## Chapter Seven: Care(ful)ing Relationships

### *Introduction*

It is within the framework of a caring power, operating within a risk society, that I will begin to explore the relationships between staff and young people in Hillside Lodge. The relationships between staff and residents are difficult to describe as they routinely shift from being authoritative and punitive to therapeutic and helpful. However, it was the times between these moments which illustrated the profound strength of feelings that staff and young people developed towards one another.

This chapter will explore the nature of relationships within Hillside Lodge and will consider the complexities of relationships based on their grounding of care, coercion and discipline. In addition, this chapter will consider the parameters that the punitive model Hillside sets upon relationships, that is, the contradiction between the assertion that the girls could not 'answer back' with the finding that relationships between staff and residents did nevertheless flourish. Whilst exploring the nature of intergenerational relations, this chapter will consider Hillside relationships in terms of emotion management. Residents and staff entered into relationships with one another with different motivations and strategies and whilst one is kept in Hillside, often against their will; the other is choosing to be there and in addition, is being paid to display contentment in being there. Therefore, young people are forced to engage and staff are paid to give an impression of voluntary concern (Hochschild 1979). In this way, individual members of staff advocate for the institution as a service and express a genuine concern for the well-being of children in their care. Furthermore, they are employed to encourage positive emotional changes

in the young people they are paid to care for. Staff are therefore staged as 'emotional managers' and work to instil an acceptable moral etiquette into young people (Hochschild 1983; Karstedt 2006).

Hochschild (1983) reminds us that emotional managers sometimes have to act when the demands of their role do not represent their own beliefs. In these situations, staff must take direction from the unit's management or the 'emotional director' (Hochschild 1983:52). Although it is the job of the senior management of the unit to ensure that members of staff 'feel' appropriately about the young people in their care, some members of staff were better than others at portraying these feelings. Complexities were increased by the fact that these intergenerational relationships were conducted in a setting which was contradictory in its terms as both a caring and disciplinary total institution. Therefore, whilst staff were employed to care for young people, they were also paid to control them, meaning that staff understanding about their roles as adult nurturers could be conflicted (Christensen 2000).

### ***Caring relationships: Staff and young people***

Relationships between the girls and their care workers were complex. Whilst they were mostly positive, there were times when events caused stresses and fractures (Mayall 1998). Therefore, as I will explain later, relationships between staff and young people did change over time, and as a consequence, decisions were not *always* agreed harmoniously. It is important to remember that times of conflict were not the dominating feature in relationships between the girls and members of staff, rather relationships shifted with the routines of the unit. So while relationships

were usually strong, it was still common to witness disagreements and fracture even within the closest relationships.

*'At one extreme the generations may be experienced as separate, firm, congealed, and standing face-to-face or in opposition to each other, to the extent that the child feels controlled, excluded or defined as an object. At the other extreme, children may be engaged in joint enterprise, in harmony, with similar goals, and with mutual emotional reinforcement of their satisfaction with the enterprise and the social relationships embedded in it and strengthened through it.'* (Mayall 1998:138)

Important work in childhood studies has impacted on the way that children's relationships are understood. Rather than viewing adult-child relationships as being dominated by adults, childhood studies research has shown us that children and young people play an important part in negotiating the terms of their relationships (Alanen and Mayall 2001; James, Curtis, and Ellis 2009; Mayall 2000). Indeed, seemingly straightforward power relationships, such as those between parents and children, are often met with resistance (Foucault 1991). Therefore, relationships between girls and Hillside staff need to be considered in terms their inter-dependent nature, viewing girls as agentic, rather than passive beings (Alanen and Mayall 2001).

In Hillside Lodge, relationships between staff and young people were mostly positive. Due to this, the atmosphere in the unit was often jovial and interactions between staff and young people were punctuated by hugs and frequent bouts of laughter:

*MOS-Benny, Ben, Oliver, Brittany and Callum were sitting on a three person sofa. Suddenly everyone jumps up and groans. Someone had 'broken wind'.*

*MOS-Benny exclaims 'Oh My God' with a comedic expression on his face.*

*Oliver laughed hysterically.  
'I'm eating!' MOS-Benny exclaims, with exaggerated shock. 'Oh my god!'  
Ben stood against the wall, a little away from the sofa and laughed out loud.  
'Who farted?' demanded Callum, enjoying the drama.  
MOS-Benny pointed at Oliver. Oliver laughed and shook his head, 'no! You know I would be proud and admit it!'  
'Please don't say farted' interjected MOS-Benny, seriously enough for him (but with the ever present twinkle in his eye) 'you should say, 'broke wind'.  
Everyone howled with laughter and asked each other, 'did you fart?'  
Once again MOS-Benny pipes up 'broke wind people, broke wind'.  
By this time MOS-Benny has finished his toast and returned to the offending sofa.  
Everyone continues to blame Oliver until MOS-Penny exclaims, 'Oliver would have lifted his leg up if it'd have been him!'  
Oliver nods in agreement and all eyes shift to Ben, he laughs but doesn't deny it, the culprit has been found and everyone wafts the air around their noses. (From fieldnotes)*

As an outsider, it was clear that relationships between staff and residents were built upon genuine affection (Hochschild 1979) and interviews with both groups confirmed this to be the case. Since the nature of Hillside meant that staff and young people shared significant periods of time in joint confinement, relationships formed inside the unit were significantly different to relationships that young people usually made with professionals:

*'They never leave [...] you get to know them so much better and I think that's what makes it so different. You get to know every little thing about them you know, their past, you get to read their files but it's then the silly things, like you know, how they wake up in a morning, what kind of moods they're in [...] all these little things that that's what makes it so different.'* (MOS-Jayne)

Case files confirmed that before entering Hillside, all but two of the girls had been living, what professionals had termed, a 'chaotic life'. That is to say that they were often reported to the police as missing, did not attend school, did not eat regularly, often had no fixed abode, used a variety of illegal drugs and alcohol, and committed crimes (Thomas 2000). Girls frequently exclaimed that entering Hillside had acted as a 'culture shock' for them, explaining that they found it strange to go to bed at a set time and to sleep in the same bed on consecutive nights.

For the girls, being secured meant that they were prevented from absconding and at the same time, forced to engage in interventions that were deemed appropriate for them. So whilst the girls described being able to avoid professionals in their day to day lives outside of Hillside (Bell 2002), inside the unit they were literally held in waiting for professional appointments. Of course this was not the direct aim of Hillside, which policy reports as keeping young people 'safe', but, it was an unavoidable consequence of the institution. So, whilst the girls were used to preparing a mask to show to professionals to demonstrate that they were coping and capable of caring for themselves, inside Hillside, masks were not so easily applied or kept in place (Goffman 1959; Goffman 1961). In addition, no part of a young person's day could be conducted in private, and from being observed during sleep to being woken in the morning, young people were under a constant gaze (Foucault 1991; Goffman 1961).





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Surprisingly, although young people were aware of the intense gaze that rested upon them, it was something that was omnipresent but often unacknowledged. Instead daily routines seemed to operate within a structure that could be seen as a 'normal' family routine:

*One by one sleepy faces emerge. Abbie appears in a pink fleecy dressing gown. Oliver comes out of his room with a rumpled face, it is clear he has just woken up, but already he wants to talk to MOS-Benny. 'Alright MOS-Benny' he stands in companionable silence, still looking asleep. Natalie comes out of the far end of the corridor, she stands with her arms folded in the doorway, and huffs: 'can you open my locker please MOS-Benny? Locker please! Locker!' MOS-Benny is in the middle of the corridor and is opening Ben's locker, he calls to Natalie 'I'm coming'. He hurries along to her locker making no comment of the way in which she asked. 'Oh it's hard' feigns MOS-Benny with mock drama. He laughs. Ben comes out of his room and tells MOS-Benny that he has no toothpaste, MOS-Benny asks him 'can't you squeeze a bit out?' 'Nope' Ben replies. 'Not at all?' MOS-Benny checks. Ben shakes his head and MOS-Benny rushes off to fetch more. He returns quickly and he squeezes toothpaste onto Bens' toothbrush. Suddenly there is a burst of loud music, Oliver has turned his stereo on. It is really loud and I ask*

<sup>13</sup> This point is not unique to children in Hillside Lodge, rather it is frequently recognised as a drawback of being in local authority care. In a demonstration of this, one participant in the 'Children in Care Exhibition' constructed her bedroom in a town centre to illustrate the fact that, 'nothing is private in care' (BBC news, 10/12/08).

*MOS-Jenny, 'is it always like this?' She laughs, 'no, sometimes there's five lots going off all at once' (From fieldnotes)*

Once all of the residents had been woken up, the day shifted its pace and members of staff rushed around to fill young people's requests for all kinds of everyday items, from clean clothes and towels, to hair straighteners and blow dryers, to razors and perfume. As a researcher I was whisked into the view of Hillside as a 'unique family':

*'It can feel really homely and it can feel like we are like a strange unique family. That's a really weird word to use but it is and that's what I like about it, that feeling that you know, you've built up those rapports with those people you know.'* (MOS-Dawn)

Hillside did indeed share resemblances with family life, however there were marked differences. For instance, by late teenage years, young people in family settings are usually able to find their own clean towel and access hair dryers and razors without asking for permission. Certainly in a family setting, these items are unlikely to be locked away in a drawer marked 'restricted items'. However, rather than rejecting the amount of freedom they were permitted, the girls occasionally embraced the idea of being a looked after child and enjoyed being 'cared for' by new and improved parents. Indeed, so apparent was the likeness of institutional life to that of family life, both staff and young people referred to it with regularity in their interviews. In addition, girls frequently ascribed the title of mum or dad to members of staff, *'It's like having 30 or 40 mummies and daddies'* (Natalie).

Of course, this was not the case really, and for as much as young people wished it to be so, for staff, boundaries between themselves and young people were always maintained as professional ones (Hochschild 1983) and behaviour displayed by members of staff was (almost) always 'appropriate'. Staff rarely lost their temper and did not often raise their voices. Since staff were paid to provide a service to young people, they acted professionally, dressed appropriately and behaved generally as one would expect to see an adult behave at work (Hochschild 1983). More explicitly, staff saw young people at all times during the day, from when they woke up until they went to bed (and then even in sleep), whilst young people only ever saw staff dressed and in 'work mode'. This was something that staff were implicitly aware of but that many of the young people did not realise. Hence the professional face of each care worker was one that young people accepted and became attached to. By using research by Rose (1999) we can see that for young people, carers were able to fill an idealised role of a perfect parent:

*'The almost inevitable misalignment between expectation and realization, fantasy and actuality, fuels the search for help and guidance in the difficult task of producing normality, and powers the constant familial demand for the assistance of expertise.'* (Rose 1999:132)

The bonds that staff forged with residents were often influential in determining how carers viewed young people's parents and when children's 'real' parents came to visit, some members of staff found it difficult to hide their displeasure in young people's familial relationships. Most staff agreed that young people's parents were to blame for the way in which their child had turned out (Drakeford and McCarthy 2000). Even the most calm and seemingly placid member of staff expressed a strong emotional repulsion towards the parents of Hillside residents:

*'I can work with any kid but I could never work with the parents. I would just want to take a baseball bat to them!' (MOS-Benny)*

Most of the Hillside care team were experienced youth workers and had worked with 'troubled' young people for a number of years. From learning about residents' life histories and parenting history, most carers believed that the children they were caring for '*had no chance*' of breaking away from their difficulties by themselves. Moreover, staff clearly positioned residents as children who had been 'done to' instead of being proactive citizens who had a choice in defining the people that they had become (Devine 2002; Galloway, Armstrong, and Tomlinson 1994). Even though young people did also feel close to members of staff, it nevertheless was hurtful for them when they felt that negative judgements were being made about their families:

*'They say stuff about me that makes me sound horrible and [...] they talk about my family, I don't like that either [...] Sometimes they say 'she can't live with her dad, she can't live with her mum yet'. I ask staff and I say 'well why?' and when they don't give me an answer it gets me mad. Like I'm not on child protection or anything and none of my family is a risk to me, so I don't see why I can't live at home [...] they say 'well you just can't just yet' (Daisy)*

Although staff did form close and personal relationships with the girls, they were always one sided, so whilst young person shared their feelings and experiences with staff, care workers did not share their own experiences and at times, did not share their true feelings either (Hochschild 1983). For instance, when they were engaged in debate, care workers often acted to defuse a situation instead of debating their own viewpoint. So whilst young people might have taken staff silence for agreement, just as often it was a reflection of professional restraint (Hochschild 1983):

*'They don't get to know us. They get to know this kind of, it's not false but they get to know this guarded side and only a little bit, because we don't talk about our lives you know' (MOS-Jayne)*

Staff were encouraged to use pro-social modelling and to demonstrate to young people, through their own actions, that there were 'appropriate' ways to deal with difficult situations (Cherry 2005; Rose 2002). Hillside staff worked under a principle that the units' residents could be reshaped and reformed (Foucault 1991) if staff demonstrated 'correct' or 'pro-social' ways of acting:

*'All behaviours are learnt, therefore they can be unlearned. If we do not believe in this principle then the system will not work. Our belief must be that no young person's behaviour is non-redeemable.'*  
*(Hillside staff training booklet)*

It is within this statement that the underpinning of Hillside Lodge can be understood theoretically. In declaring that behaviour can be 'unlearned', Hillside sets its purpose in the reformation of its residents. In order to do this, staff used techniques of 'pro-social modelling' and conducted themselves in ways that they would like Hillside residents to reciprocate (Cherry 2005). Hillside staff were also instrumental in shaping girls' internal and emotional responses too and through their use of pro-social modelling, staff portrayed an exaggerated calm and empathetic façade with which they articulated their feelings and discussed the appropriateness of them (Hochschild 1998). Staff composed themselves with a professional demeanour as well as dressing, speaking and acting in ways that they encouraged young people to mirror (Cherry 2005). In addition, the handbook given to new members of Hillside staff encouraged new employees to promote 'self management' and set achievable targets for young people to meet 'in a positive and encouraging manner such as 'try to

avoid swearing' as opposed to 'do not swear'. In this way, Hillside armed its employees with an 'emotional dictionary' suitable for use in situations that might usually cause stress or 'inadequate' emotional responses (Hochschild 1998). So, rather than losing their temper with residents, or shouting with frustration, staff were unanimous in their approach of walking away from heated exchanges and later explaining how the young person's 'inappropriate' behaviour had made them feel. In this way, the institution worked to socialise young people who had not been taught correct emotional conduct, such as 'not to hit people [and] learning to take turns' (Mayall 1998:145), into socialised citizens by equipping them with an emotional dictionary for future use (Hochschild 1983). Since moral order is encouraged through 'embodied emotional activity' in functional family life, it is therefore no accident that Hillside girls entered secure accommodation from similar backgrounds and came from families with a history of continuous state intervention (Mayall 1998). Staff interviews confirmed that Hillside Lodge is considered a 'last resort' in saving those who would otherwise have 'no hope' and is used to intervene to stop a replicating cycle of societal dysfunction (Held 2006; O'Neill 2001).

Despite the fact that staff were clear about their role as professional carers, professional boundaries were often unclear to young people, who, for the most part believed that they knew their carers well. Indeed, there were only a minority of girls who understood that professionals adopted a façade of concern as part of their employment agreement:

*MOS-Penny and Oliver make a fleeting reference to the fact that MOS-Penny is Oliver's key worker. 'It's my pleasure to be your key worker Oliver' they cuddle, Natalie comments, 'yeah cos they pay you'. (From fieldnotes)*

However, since most young people were unaware of the contractual agreements of their caring relationships, and the subsequent boundaries attached to such relationships, some girls felt that the boundaries set by professionals were not always appropriate. Rather than protecting their interests, some girls felt that professional boundaries acted as a justification for keeping important information from them:

*'I've been told I'm moving out of a kids home before, been given a date and packed my stuff and that but then nobody's picked me up and then I've looked a fool in front of ten other kids [...] the staff should know whether I'm going or not or whether that car's going to turn up or not, but they didn't say anything. They let you embarrass yourself.'* (Natalie)

Indeed, 'hiding' information that might be upsetting for young people has been something that has been attributed to adult understandings of children's emotional instability (Mayall 1998; Lansdown 2000). This binds children to an inferior status, as being in need of protection from adult carers who are deemed able to make decisions on children's behalf without 'overburdening' them and hence denying their 'childhood' (Morrow 1999). However, from a staff perspective, keeping unwelcome information from residents was seen as being fundamental in protecting them from potential heartbreak when plans changed. 'Plans of protection' often had the reverse effect however, and instead of feeling grateful that carers had tried to protect them, young people felt hoodwinked and angry that staff had 'set them up' to be a laughing stock. Professional boundaries were also frustrating for members of staff at times, especially when they were required to maintain confidentiality to other professionals who did not have the same personal bonds with young people. For instance, local authority social workers sometimes visited young people in Hillside Lodge to discuss exit plans with a young person's keyteam. Mostly these plans were provisional and so care workers were not at liberty to share them

with young people. However, since relationships with Hillside staff and residents were based on daily interactions, instead of formalised and infrequent visits, young people felt let down if Hillside staff withheld information that they felt that they were entitled to know. Furthermore, since Hillside staff felt that they had genuine relationships with young people, they often felt that they should ensure young people's best interest rather than following social work orders (Gaskell 2010). In this way, Hillside staff were conflicted when they felt that external professionals were making decisions that went against the best interests of the child:

*'Well if he [social worker] doesn't come in and tell him, then I will. I don't care if I get into trouble. It's not fair to him to keep him in the dark.'* (MOS-Alfie)

This display of emotion by MOS-Alfie illustrates that although staff were paid to care for residents, they also built strong attachments to many of the young people in their care and hence undertook a phase of 'deep acting' described by (Hochschild 1979). In addition, since all of the residents had histories of abuse and neglect, it was perhaps understandable that the staff found themselves drawn towards comforting and caring for them (Thomas 2000:75; Christensen 2000):

*'I love that girl to bits. I'm like a father to her.'* (MOS-Alfie)

*'If I had a kid, I'd want them to be just like Ashley.'* (MOS-Felicity)

For some of the girls, the relationships that they made with staff became blue prints for the relationships that they wished to share with their own parents:

*'MOS-Janet is the mum I want'* (Hayley)



*'MOS-Alfie's like my dad. I love MOS-Alfie, he looks after me' (Brittany)*

Staff presented an image of both carer and controller, and would create happy and playful scenes with young people, whilst simultaneously maintaining authority:

*'MOS-Alfie will play with them all though, all eight of them and just him on his own and he wouldn't mind [...] he'd be able to keep control as well' (MOS-Terri)*

Staff also seemed to enjoy the close relationships that they shared with young people, though not to the extent that the girls did. Even so, staff often became particularly fond of individual young people and sometimes made comments such as *'I could take you home'* to those they favoured most. Relationships between staff and residents were absolutely maintained as relationships between adults and children, and rather than becoming 'friends' with young people, staff and residents felt that carer's suited the role of parent more than anything else:

*'I am a jack-of-all-trades really. If you're not fixing light bulbs or making the kids' breakfast, you're key working, you're playing sport with them, you're planning a programme for them you know, counselling them. Restraining them if need to, disciplining them. There's just so much to do.'* (MOS-Jayne)

Although the girls obviously were aware that staff were paid to work with them, they also believed that members of staff cared for them in a personal capacity in addition to a work related one. However, not all staff agreed with this more 'caring' view of their profession and a minority instead felt that young people were confusing their role of employed carer to that of friend. These members of staff refused to employ surface acting

(Hochschild 1983) to reassure young people of their concern, instead they identified with the disciplinary requirement of their role and positioned themselves as prison guards (Goffman 1961) instead of 'care staff'. The girls were critical of this professional positioning and for them, it highlighted clear differences in staff approaches. It also highlighted a contradiction in the units function, since prison guards are needed to discipline (Foucault (1991) and care staff are needed to offer loving support (Hochschild 1983). Of course, the emotional response needed for each role also differs, and therefore the role in which staff saw themselves impacted on their view of the unit and its residents:

*'He said 'we're NOT your friends, we're your carers! We're never going to be your friends. We have a duty to look after you' and I'm like 'you're not the chosen one MOS-Darren – a duty?! You're making it sound a bit like Buffy the Vampire Slayer here!' That made me laugh but then he started all this shit like 'we're not your friends' and I thought to be honest, there's a more likely chance that I'm going to smack my carers in the face than I'm going to smack my friends in the face, so I was like, your rules have absolutely no logic to them!' (Lola)*

It was for precisely Lola's reaction that MOS-Darren expressed his frustration at other members of staff. MOS-Darren felt that some members of staff acted unprofessionally, 'befriending' young people in order to keep on the 'right side' of them and lessen the chance of being the target of a violent episode:

*'Someone said 'If a kid likes you he won't assault you'. So I'm thinking we're being over-nice with the kids now, because 'They'll not assault me, I'm really nice with him'. [Like they'll tell the kids 'you've got to go to your room now because you've been swearing but that's not my decision, that's the team leaders.' (MOS-Darren)*

However, despite MOS-Darren's assertions, young people often *did* hurt their 'favourite' member of staff:

*'MOS-Janet used to say it about Natalie, that sometimes the closer you are to somebody, the more at risk you are of them hurting you. And she often used to think that Natalie would do something to her before she left. I think it's that thing that they don't really want to say goodbye as well. It's them trying to sever those ties because to have that attachment to you and actually they don't want it because they know it's going to end.'* (MOS-Dawn)

Since there were only eight young people in the unit at any one time, and many more members of staff to monitor behaviour and share observational information, the care team built up a detailed view of each young person and their individual motivations. This meant that rewards and punishments were appropriated to fit each individual child. For instance, because Abbie loved to be alone in her room, when staff felt that Abbie deserved a sanction, they would ensure that she was kept with the main group for longer instead of sending her to her bedroom:

*'Abbie likes being on her own, so a red card wouldn't do anything, she would like it. Instead she got an early bed tonight.'* (MOS-Terri)

Therefore, residents were treated as individuals instead of *en masse*, allowing training and discipline to be applied to each young person on their own level (Foucault 1991). Residents noticed this individualised treatment and felt that it was a positive element of their care in Hillside, since it proved that staff knew them and had acted fairly, instead of jumping on them if they were having an unusually bad day:

*'Well, everyone gets tret different. Like I get tret different because of my behaviour, like they just take me to my room and ask me to*

*calm down. They treat me different because I'm mature. All the others aren't, they're immature.'* (Brittany)

Hence by treating young people as individuals, and by being calm and reasonable, staff used subtle coercion to encourage young people to emulate positive behaviour:

*Luke asks MOS-Dawn, 'please can you fetch me a magazine from the office?'*

*MOS-Dawn leaves to get it but by the time she comes back, Luke is outside. Callum sees the magazine asks MOS-Dawn if he can read it. When Luke comes back in, he asks Callum, 'can I see the magazine please?' Callum is about to go and make a phone call but he says 'no, I'm taking it'*

*MOS-Borris intervenes, 'no Callum, give it to Luke, it's not yours!' 'Why should I?' Callum asks.*

*MOS-Dawn tells him, 'because you're more mature'.*

*Callum throws the magazine on the floor and Luke picks it up.*

*(From fieldnotes)*

In this way, MOS-Dawn avoids an altercation with Callum by praising the behaviour she hopes he will display, which he eventually does. Hence, through this example, we can see that the behaviours sought by staff were clearly identifiable and openly encouraged so that young people knew what staff were looking for them to do. Indeed, staff behaviour taught Hillside residents that emotional outbursts are inappropriate and hence aims to socialise them for inclusion in society outside the unit.

### ***Caring for Financial Gain***

On a day to day level, the subtle form of coercive power described in the previous section was a successful mechanism in maintaining group harmony:

*'We do control so much [...] you're subtly challenging and moving and directing behaviour. (MOS-Dawn)*

Young people also found this form of coercive power more positive than other forms of power that they had experienced in previous care settings. Positive experiences expressed by the girls suggests that Hillside encouraged passivity by treating their residents kindly (Svensson 2003: 98).

*'I haven't really got into trouble here. Where I was before, they didn't, erm, in here if they tell you to move and you say no, like I used to do all the time, in my other unit, they would just drag you. But in here if you said that you didn't want to move then they would just say 'ok then I'll just wait until you are ready to move' they won't just take you, which ends up with you fighting with them all [...] it's like their last resort restraining someone' (Carly)*

Since professionals did generate positive relationships with young people, they then tried to influence young people to negotiate differently with external professionals who came into Hillside to work with them:

*The door opens and Hayley comes in the dining room on her way to her review meeting, MOS-Darren shouts after her, 'don't get cross and lose your temper – assertive not aggressive - be professional'. She shouts back to him, 'I'm not a professional'. (From fieldnotes)*

This conversation highlights the complexity of the different relationships in and around Hillside Lodge. For, as Hayley rightly explains, she is not 'a professional' and hence does not feel that she should have to regulate her actions in the same way that professionals do. MOS-Darren however, is aware that Hayley has the capability to communicate her needs more effectively with her social worker, and so tries to encourage Hayley to adopt a professional language. This strongly highlights the differences in

relationships between Hayley and MOS-Darren to that of Hayley and her social worker. That is, MOS-Darren knew Hayley well and was aware that her usual techniques of negotiating with professionals did not give her the outcome that she desired. Hence MOS-Darren works to ensure that Hayley displays a positive impression of herself and negotiates a placement that is suitable for her needs. In this way, positive relationships with carers meant that girls were able to enlist extra advocates to help them to achieve their desired outcomes.

Young people usually forged their closest bonds with the member of staff who acted as their main key worker (Bell 2002). Since all of the girls had case files which indicated that they had experienced tragic childhoods, it was perhaps unsurprising that when sharing their stories, carers were emotionally drawn to protect the child that they worked with (Christensen 2000). Keywork relationships acted as a positive factor in the success of Hillside Lodge, since residents were assigned different keyworkers and therefore felt the strongest attachment to different members of staff. It also meant that a representative from each of the staff teams had a good knowledge of a young person's whole situation and were able to feedback issues to the rest of the units' employees whilst representing young people's best interests. Indeed, keyworkers could be trusted to act as an advocate for young people in their absence. This was demonstrated in a disagreement between two members of staff in the staff office, well away from the earshot of young people.

*MOS-Penny: 'they're a horrible family, I told Brittany 'I wouldn't associate with you or your family on the outside' and she said 'why?' and I said, 'you're not the kind of people I want to know'*

*MOS-Jenny: 'it's not her fault, she's only copying what she's learned [...] I know you don't like Brittany'*

*MOS-Penny: 'I do like her, just not her attitude!'*

During this exchange a number of other staff were present, and when MOS-Jenny tells MOS-Penny *'I know you don't like Brittany'*, there is almost an audible gasp and MOS-Jenny smiles while MOS-Penny tries to take back her comments. Later, MOS-Jenny explains:

*'I had to say that, she doesn't like Brittany, she's always pulling her down! This time I thought I'd just say it! I thought, 'you're not slagging my key child off!'* (MOS-Jenny)

This example illustrates the finding that staff built up genuine emotional relationships with young people and genuinely did 'care' for them (Hochschild 1983). Although this was the most extreme example of this finding, staff frequently corrected each other about a young person's situation if they felt that a child was not getting the benefit of the doubt.

Occasionally girls were seen to place too much emphasis on their relationship with a particular member of staff. In these times, staff sought to distance themselves to encourage young people to form bonds with other members of the care team:

*'Gracie is very clingy and it's getting too much now and we're having to challenge her about it. She made a disclosure to me this weekend and it was through a letter, and it shook me up, because what was in the letter was horrible and she was trusting me and she didn't want me to pass it on. However, I had to.'* (MOS-Jayne)

If young people were seen to be getting 'too close' to staff then staff instructed others to help them to create distance. In the above situation, MOS-Jayne created distance by making herself scarce in whichever room Grace was in. Although the action might have made life easier for MOS-Jayne, who felt that she was becoming too emotionally involved, it was increasingly frustrating for Gracie since she felt that she and MOS-Jayne had formed a genuine friendship:

*'He read through the things I'd wrote down, just for MOS-Jayne and he went in and read them all. So I was peed off about that. I got angry later on and smashed up my room.'* (Gracie)

This example explores the links between surface acting and deep acting. Since it is the job of care staff to 'care' for their keychild, MOS-Jayne had played her part as a suitable employee. In the role of emotion manager, MOS-Jayne had also proved a successful employee, since she had worked with Gracie to consider her circumstances in a different light and to employ a revised emotional dictionary (Hochschild 1983). However, in order to achieve success in both of these roles, MOS-Jayne felt that she was not able to assert the professional boundaries that she needed to secure her own emotional boundaries. Of course this highlighted an important problem regarding the relationships between Hillside staff and residents, because, as much as staff genuinely cared about the children they worked with, individual residents represented only a tiny part of a care worker's career. Hence, whilst young people treasured their relationships as unusual and special, staff generated the same positive relationships again and again with different children:



*'There are hundreds of Brittany's. As soon as she leaves we'll get another one in. As bad as it sounds to say, it isn't possible to remember them all.'* (MOS-MOS-Harry)

Apart from the 'special' relationships that young people forged with their keyteam, the girls also grew close to other members of staff and links were made depending on shared interests, shared humour and shared localities. Furthermore, due to staff rotations, incidents like the one raised above (with Gracie) were minimised since residents became familiar with different members of staff, and by the time they had completed their time in Hillside, young people had a good knowledge about all members of the care work team. Those who young people believed 'cared' about them most were those who were 'kind', 'caring', 'funny' and 'trustworthy' (Bell 2002; Horwath, Hodgkiss, and Spyrou 2011). However, the girls felt that there were a small minority of staff who did not fit into the 'caring' category and rather than feeling that these members of staff were in Hillside primarily for their welfare, young people believed that these carers were driven by financial gain. Hence Lola and others vented their feelings of rejection towards those who they believed were 'only there for the money' by trying to make their life at work more difficult in the hope that they would leave:

*'She doesn't like working here, she just does it for the money and she said that to everyone. I don't see why I should like her if she just does it for the money! I am so tempted to make her life a living hell, since she doesn't even like just doing this job, it's just for the money. I was just going to kick off just to piss her off because she doesn't like working here.'* (Lola)

This comment thus highlights the idea that the girls really **did** feel that most staff did not work at Hillside 'for the money', which of course all did. Even so, Lola highlights a key distinction in staff attitudes in relation to

young people. So whilst most members of staff are convincing in their surface acting of being the 'good carer', those who are not convincing are perceived as being 'bad carers', since 'seeming to 'love the job' becomes part of the job' (Hochschild 1983:5).

Although most Hillside employees reported that they enjoyed their work and found it 'rewarding' not many felt as positive about it as the residents believed they did. In this way, presenting a brand of a 'caring' and 'supportive' place to stay was fundamental to an emotional exchange, where 'emotional labour is sold for a wage' (Hochschild 1983). Indeed, staff who did not conform to the emotional guides that were set out for them were rejected by the residents and the girls aptly judged that these members of staff were not fulfilling the aims of the organisation:

*'To show effort is to do the job poorly. Similarly, part of the job is to disguise fatigue and irritation.'* (Hochschild 1983:8)

Hochschild (1979, 1983) reminds us that 'as customers, the greater our awareness of social engineering, the more effort we put into distinguishing between gestures of real personal feeling and gestures of company policy'. Indeed, this was relevant to some of the girls in Hillside and whilst most believed that care was genuine and unassuming, some the girls linked staff 'care' with payment. We have seen an example of this above when Natalie refers to Oliver's key worker being paid to care about him, but other residents mentioned it too. These young people had a clearer vision of the 'emotional exchange' that was required of staff, and indeed, frequently reminded other residents that staff were 'employed to care'.

*'I realised right, staff don't even care man, they just come in and get paid and then they go home man, it's just a straight thing. But staff pretend that they care but they really don't care at all' (Rhianna)*

Since staff were employed to alter and reform resident behaviours, they had to conduct their own behaviour impeccably. Indeed, staff felt that their own actions were under resident scrutiny, as indeed they were:

*MOS-Alfie: (Alfie drops something on the floor) Shit!  
Natalie: Ahhhhhh! Language MOS-Alfie  
MOS-Terri: MOS-ALFIE! Stop swearing!  
Natalie: Staff are meant to be role models!  
MOS-Alfie: Sorry.  
(From fieldnotes)*

Most members of staff embraced their position as role models and offered positive examples of how adult role models should behave:

*'I'm a role model. That's what I'm supposed to be and as such, I expect them to treat me with the same respect as what I do with them. It's a mutual understanding I have with the kids that come to us. I'm one of the strong members of staff, quite firm but I'm very fair. And if I say that I'm going to do something, I do it. I don't make false promises. I don't say I'm going to do something if I can't.'  
(MOS-Terri)*

Young people also commented that they found staff to be good role models who demonstrated new ways of negotiating difficult situations:

*'They are [good role models]. When they discuss Peter or Lewis, if they're been rude and they don't know what to do with them, they discuss it. They said something about that they won't be allowed to go and play pool and they have an early bed time, and I thought that it was a good idea.'* (Gabiella)

Most of the girls felt that Hillside had been instrumental in helping them to learn new ways of negotiating their emotions. Staff encouraged young people to do well and to fit into society when they left Hillside. When someone *did* do well, staff were genuinely pleased and duly rewarded residents with praise and attention, hence encouraging the others to emulate positive behaviour (Foucault 1991; Cherry 2005):

*MOS-Darren tells the group that Brittany has won a work placement. 'Brittany set a goal and she managed to achieve it! Well done Brittany.'*

*Callum quickly informs the group 'you see, I was right, everyone said you can't get a job if you're a criminal, but I was right you can.'*

*Oliver is still not convinced and shakes his head, 'it's too late for me, I've messed up too much'.*

*MOS-Darren disagrees, 'age is a positive thing in your favour Oliver, there's always a chance to change. We've all been young, we know what it's like. We've all made mistakes and had more chances.'*

*(From fieldnotes)*

In this way, Hillside was markedly different from other care homes that the girls had lived in, where they found that the only way to attract professional attention was to behave inappropriately (Bessell 2011). Girls reported that in previous placements, being 'good' was equated to them 'settling in' and adjusting to their new lives:

*'I show that I'm being good and tell them [social workers] that I'm being good but they're not bothered [...] When I'm naughty they're like always on the phone and always coming, but when I'm being good, they're never really bothered.'* (Daisy)

### ***Staff are in Charge: 'you have to sit and put up with it'***

Relationships between young people and staff in Hillside were grounded in the understanding that they were not equal relationships. This power imbalance was clear in all aspects of life in Hillside (Goffman 1961). There

was a strict hierarchical order within the unit and residents were separated in status from staff both in terms of their insubordination as a resident and their insubordination as a child (James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; Mayall 2000; Mayall 2001; Punch 2002). The hierarchy of the unit denoted that all members of staff were more powerful than all residents, either collectively or individually. Therefore, young people had to monitor their behaviour to suit the different requirements put forward by different members of staff. Even though many of the girls had been abused and harmed by adults before entering Hillside (Hill 1999; Coy 2007), they were required to subordinate themselves to all members of staff and forbidden to question requests made of them. Furthermore, during the day, young people were always in the company of *at least* one member of staff. Since personalities differed, so too did the boundaries of acceptable behaviour (Goffman 1961). Hence young people were expected to maintain a standard of behaviour that would be accepted by all members of staff, and not simply their preferred ones:

*'Any member of staff has certain rights to discipline any member of the inmate class, thereby markedly increasing the probability of sanction [...] In total institutions staying out of trouble is likely to require persistent constant effort.'*(Goffman 1961:46)

The clearest reminder of the differences between the girls and Hillside employees were the keys that carers, teachers and managers wore at all times. Residents were unable to complete seemingly minor and everyday tasks without asking for permission and assistance, and were therefore forced to play a subservient role which allowed them to be 'teased, denied, questioned at length, not noticed [...] or put off' (Goffman 1961:45). It was during these times when tensions arose between staff and young people. Since most of the girls were in their mid teens, and unused to attending

institutional organisations (such as school), asking for permission to perform mundane tasks often caused a reaction:

*Natalie asks MOS-Dawn 'can you take me to get the chocolate out of my bedroom please?'*

*MOS-Dawn tells her no.*

*'Can I go to the toilet then?'*

*'No' MOS-Dawn exclaims*

*'I need the toilet! Take me or I'll go in the bin!' (From fieldnotes)*

So, despite the generally positive relationships that girls shared with Hillside carers, difficulties did arise from time to time. When disagreements arose, residents never came out victorious. Disagreements highlighted Hillside's hierarchy and young people were not allowed to argue back. Since the 'good child' does not argue with adults (Galloway 1994), when disagreements arose, residents were expected to accept responsibility without discussion (Foucault 1991). This unequal basis of the relationship terms could lead one to the conclusion that positive relationships between staff and young people were built out of necessity and not out of genuine feeling (Goffman 1961), however, the strength of the feelings that young people expressed towards members of staff in their individual interviews showed that this was not the case. Rather, the girls stated that they appreciated the clear boundaries that were set at Hillside and felt that this was something that they had missed in their lives so far:

*'Hillside is teaching me that I can't do what I want [...] when I kick off here, and threaten them, they show me that I can't do that and it's starting to actually work. [In my old care home] they used to just go on at me and say 'you can't do that' and I'd just say 'fuck you' and then just go out but here you can't do that, you have to sit and put up with it.' (Daisy)*

The unit represented a contradictory setting where care and punishment were set into a dichotomous relationship, where staff were employed to care for residents but also to implement boundaries that would teach them right from wrong. The tension between punishment and care meant that relationships could be at times contradictory, as care could not be given unless behavioural conduct was submissive and subservient, 'since caring power is exercised with kindness, it requires amenable clients' (Svensson 2003). When caring relationships switched to disciplinary ones, residents risked rejection and withdrawal from those they cared about. In this way, Hillside created a dependency within caring relationships, in which staff used kindness to influence and direct resident behaviour (Hochschild 1983; Svensson 2003).

### ***Negotiating Relationships***

There were around thirty members of care staff employed to work at Hillside Lodge. Staff worked in teams of five and rotated in a shift pattern of mornings and afternoons. In addition, there were four teachers, a head master, three teaching assistants, a handful of night staff and around eight front-of-house administrators and managers. As expected, each member of staff brought their own experience, personality and moral code with them, meaning that everyday rules and routines were not always consistent (Shemmings 2000). Since staff and young people built up positive and close relationships with each other, tension occasionally arose when other members of staff differed in their approach to a particular young person. This was especially prevalent because of the large numbers of staff working with such a small number of young people. Since staff came from a variety of professional and personal backgrounds (Shemmings 2000), they sometimes differed in their understanding of the unit's ethos (Paul 2004). So, whilst most of the staff described themselves as 'child focussed' and

felt that they were in Hillside to care for 'vulnerable young people', a minority viewed Hillside Lodge as a unit for offenders and hence were critical of the 'overfriendly' attitude that other members of staff offered young people:

*'We should hug kids but it is more like a nursery. These kids get better treated here than they do in open units. And you'll hear kids say it. And that to me is a concern. Yes, I know they're children but these are children who've broken the law. It takes a lot for a young person to be secured, to be locked up. These people have been deemed fit not to be allowed into the community, yet you're throwing your arms around them and bringing them sweets.'* (MOS-Darren)

With differences of opinion present within the staff team, it was unsurprising that staff conflicts arose over the treatment of young people and that there were sometimes tensions and disagreements between staff. Usually these disagreements were aired away from young people. Occasionally though, because of the necessity for speedy responses and fast action, disagreements occurred which staff felt needed to be addressed immediately:

*'The other day MOS-Terri went 'You're a little girl, be quiet'. I was getting annoyed. MOS-Alfie was like 'You can't talk to her like that' and she was like 'Why can't I?' And he was like 'because look at her, she's well annoyed now and she can't say anything because she'll get in trouble' [...] and she was going on and MOS-Alfie was sticking up for me and then she was being arsey with me because MOS-Alfie was sticking up for me. And it was like it wasn't my fault because I was in the right, even MOS-Alfie could see that I was in the right.'* (Chantelle)

Due to the extended daily contact that young people had with staff, it was unsurprising that they quickly learned which member of staff would agree to which demands. As we shall see later, many of the girls learned to



decipher staff intent and became adept at making requests at the appropriate moment to an appropriate member of staff:

*'Girls probably have their ways of like through their relationships that they build up with staff, that probably gives them room to manoeuvre [...] they're very, very clever [...] they think 'oh yeah, I'll speak to MOS-Dawn about that because I'll probably get the answer that I want.'* (MOS-Dawn)

Hence, by building up a 'special' and trusting relationship with a particular member of staff, the girls were able to enlist individual employees to help them to negotiate the rules. As Hayley explained when a member of staff removed an 'inappropriate' item from her bedroom:

*'I'll get it back, I'll just wait until MOS-Janet is on [...] she was the one who let me have it in my room in the first place when I wasn't meant to.'* (Hayley)

Staff were generally aware of the methods that residents used to get their own way, but most felt that it was a '*normal thing for anybody to do*' (MOS-Terri) and likened it to the way that children 'play' their parents in a family setting:

*'I'm very aware that that probably happens but as long as clear boundaries are kept, I don't think that's a problem as long as we're all singing from the same hymn sheet for the big things [...] you ask your dad for certain things you wouldn't ask your mum for.'* (MOS-Dawn)

Choosing a 'favourite' member of staff and enlisting them to help fulfil wants worked as an effective strategy in improving everyday life. Even

though some carers were 'softer' than others, generally young people bonded with different staff depending on their personalities. For instance, whereas one resident might seek out MOS-Janet to ask for a teddy bear, another might ask MOS-Tal for a risqué magazine. Although having a member of staff 'on side' was useful as a support for everyday situations, complications arose for girls when their favourite member of staff rotated off shift. Members of staff often circulated around different sections of the unit as and when they were needed, so a member of staff might be asked to move from an activity in the small lounge to set up for dinner in the dining room. So whilst one member of staff might agree to a request, even for something as trivial as taking a resident outside for some fresh air, they might be suddenly called away to another room leaving the young person behind. As children could not follow staff to another room without invitation, they would then be left with the decision to either wait and hope that their preferred member of staff would return, or risk asking someone else, who might then say no. Either option presented a risk of not getting the preferred outcome as, if they waited, the member of staff might not return for hours or may even go off shift, but if they asked another member of staff, they might be told 'no'. The girls quickly learned that different staff had different ideas about what they thought to be an appropriate request, so whilst one might respond to a request for fresh air with a comment such as *'there are no staff to facilitate that'*, another would instead deliver a solution rather than a problem, such as *'I'll ring for MOS-Mark and then we'll go'*. Residents learned to bide their time and wait to ask the member of staff who would be most likely to provide the answer that they were looking for:

*'I think before I ask. I wait and ask someone who will say yes.'* (Freya)

*'I just wait for the staff who said yes to come back.'* (Daisy)

## ***Educational Learning versus Emotional Learning***

Teachers working in Hillside School occupied a distinctly different role from the care staff. Care staff were employed to reshape and reform behaviour and teaching staff were employed to impart educational knowledge. This meant that the expectations placed on teachers and care staff were also different, and whilst care staff encouraged residents only use 'appropriate' words, teachers were not governed in the same way. This was sometimes confusing for young people, as Natalie found out when she tried to describe the treatment of a prostitute in her English text book *Of Mice and Men*, to her teacher MOS-Holly:

*MOS-Holly reads from Natalie's essay, 'they visit town and pull a girl'. She asks Natalie, 'what do they really do? They don't just 'pull a girl' do they?'*

*Natalie giggles and looks embarrassed.*

*MOS-Holly presses on, 'what does it suggest if you say 'pull a girl', what does it suggest about that relationship?'*

*Natalie knows the answer to this, 'it suggests an equal relationship'.*

*MOS-Holly agrees, 'that's right, but it's not equal, they got her from the whore house didn't they! From a brothel, not just from a bar in town. To 'pull' you need to build up a nice relationship, but with a whore, you don't build up any relationship at all.'*

*'I was just trying to be polite' Natalie explains.*

*MOS-Holly nods but then tells Natalie 'the GCSE marker will be an adult and not a child. You need to be brutal!'*

*Natalie argues 'we wouldn't be allowed to talk about that in the unit'.*

*MOS-Holly nods 'but this is school, you need to say the facts'.*

*(From fieldnotes)*

In this situation, Natalie justified her use of language as being appropriate for care staff upstairs. However, whilst residents in Hillside Lodge were encouraged to act in ways that were not reflective of their age, downstairs in Hillside School, teachers had different opinions of behaviour expected from teenage students. This is further illustrated when Natalie is ignored

for shouting out a lower case alphabet letter in response to a maths question:

*Natalie: 'He doesn't understand a word I'm saying!'*

*Teacher: 'I want you to talk properly and not like a child!'*

This extract highlights the contradictions that the girls faced in attempting to appropriate their behaviour. So whilst daily encounters in the 'home' section of the unit were concentrated around 'being appropriate', Hillside School operated with a different purpose and rather than imparting 'appropriate' emotional knowledge, school work was focused around a national curriculum agenda of 'factual' thinking. In school therefore, girls were treated in relation to their actual age, rather than as the children that the unit sought to form them into. Therefore, MOS-Holly felt it appropriate to engage sixteen year old Natalie using language which would be familiar to most sixteen years old girls. However, Natalie has been encouraged to unpick and amend the language from her past in order to present herself as a newly reformed 'innocent' child (Goffman 1959). Indeed, as a graduate Hillside citizen, Natalie is able to interpret the words of the author and frame his story into her new emotional dictionary of acceptable emotions (Hochschild 1983).

This instance shows us that Hillside residents learned to adapt their understandings of their new emotional dictionaries and frame situations in ways that become more acceptable to the listener (Hochschild 1983). However, the difficulties that girls experienced in adopting this approach are uncovered when MOS-Holly explains that Natalie's use of language interprets the tale into a fantastical endeavour rather than a factual account. This situation further highlighted the unrealistic terms in which

young people are bound into a 'caring' terminology which might not be reflective of everyday life outside of Hillside Lodge. In asking residents to deny their knowledge of certain factors, the girls were forced to be dishonest about their knowledge, since they were not able to erase it. In addition, it also highlights the fact that care staff perhaps did not treat young people in an age appropriate way and called on them to deny knowledge that they had acquired many years earlier. Conversely however, as an outsider, it *was* uncomfortable to hear MOS-Holly's description of the 'whore' in *Of Mice and Men*. Since many of the girls were in Hillside as a consequence of sexual exploitation, MOS-Holly's language sounded insensitive and somehow malevolent.

The difference between the two settings inside Hillside Lodge illustrated a key difference in the function of the staff employed to work in the different areas of the unit. For instance, while care staff upstairs, were employed to 'care' and to look after resident's physical and emotional wellbeing, Hillside teachers were in a setting which was closer to a 'normal' or everyday setting, a school. Since young people already had experiences of school, they attended Hillside School with prior understanding about the aims of school being to expand cognitive learning instead of fulfilling emotional needs (Mayall 1998:141). Hence, the role of the teacher was an easy one for residents to comprehend and the boundaries between girls and their teachers were maintained as pupil teacher relationships where teachers have direct 'authority' over children (Mayall 1998:143). Contact with carers was more intense than contact with teachers and since care staff were given more information about young people's previous circumstances, they consequently became much closer to them as individuals.

### ***Divide and Rule: Keeping Young People Apart***

Findings that show that when children and young people attend institutions which are divided into strict generational groupings where adults make up a 'separate' social group, such as schools, 'children put great value on activity and achievement and on child social groups as sources of reward and enjoyment' (Mayall 1998:144). Since young people in school are in the presence of adults who are 'less reliable' at tending to their emotional needs (Christensen 2000), and are non committal in their advice for minor complaints, such as 'he banged into me' or 'I have a headache', pupils learn to draw emotional support from one another (Mayall 1998:149). In Hillside, where young people were secured together twenty four hours a day under the direct control of an 'adult social grouping', it was surprising to find that there was little sense of camaraderie between them. Instead the frequent view that girls had of other Hillside residents was that they were 'immature' and in direct competition for staff attention:

*'I get proper pissed off with people. I know it's not their fault but then they get loads of staff attention and I've been having a shit time as well but I don't get any' (Lola)*

Since residents were dependent on staff to fulfil even minor needs, it was perhaps unsurprising that girls cherished their relationships with staff more than their relationships with their peers (Goffman 1961). The positive relationships that young people built up with staff therefore acted to dilute the relationships that young people might have otherwise made with each other. This could be seen as in terms of Hillside working to 'divide and conquer' potential threats placed by young people acting in allegiance with one another:

*'They could choose not to get out of bed, yet they know there are consequences for not getting out of bed. But then they know that we can't yank them out of bed either. So a lot of the whole day is build around the fact that they will be [...] I hate this word – compliant – I hate that word. The house wouldn't work if they all just said one day 'Oh none of us are getting out bed'. But yet they've probably not realised that. They're not very aware [...] but really and truly, the whole day, we are banking on the majority doing what we tell them.'* (MOS-Dawn)

Teen friendships are often perceived as providing a breeding ground for deviant peer subcultures (O'Connor, Haynes, and Kane 2004). This view was also dominant inside Hillside Lodge and residents were restricted in their access to both peers outside of the unit and in forming peer alliances within the unit. Since the girls in Hillside were viewed as being 'vulnerable', members of staff were keen to ensure that 'bad habits' were not passed from one girl to another (HowardLeague 1997; Thomson, Henderson, and Holland 2003). When residents did form bonds with one another, staff viewed this as being delinquent and disruptive (James and Prout 1997), especially since these peer alliances replaced resident alliance with staff:

*'The girls actually sometimes can be quite destructive in their friendships, as in they can have negative influences on each other. Like Gracie and Hayley, I feel like they're in a strange pact, where one's stronger than the other maybe. I think Hayley potentially is a stronger character and can maybe influence Gracie and sometimes will get Gracie to react and she takes a stand back and watches it all happen.'* (MOS-Dawn)

Despite sharing similar life experiences, girls were discouraged from sharing their stories with one another. Instead the girls were taught to trust only in their professional and practitioner relationships, and to be wary of relationships that were not grounded by professional constraints. These messages reinforced the notion that caring relationships were

constrained by strict rules determined by a professional agenda of 'best interest' and child protection (Holland 2001; Thomas 2000) and denied girls the chance to develop relationships with their peers. Furthermore, the devaluation of resident peer relationships meant that young people were given the message that adults were more trustworthy than their peers.

*'Hayley is very open and talks about things on her mind. MOS-Dawn explained that 1:1 this is fine but to be mindful that talking in the group about personal issues should be avoided. Hayley didn't understand the reason for this rule but MOS-Dawn explained that it was so her personal issues couldn't be used against her.'*(Hayley's case file)

As James (1998:77) explains that 'trust takes time to develop' and since Hillside residents are not permitted time to engage with their peers, they are not able to get to know other residents before deciding whether to invest friendship with them. 'Self-disclosure' is limited since the routines of Hillside mean that relationships between young people remain only acquaintance like at best.

*'You don't get friends in secure really. I'm not going to talk to them when you're on the out. I might keep in contact with them for like a week or something but, no, not friends, not in here.'* (Daisy)

*'None of these people are my friends, these are my acquaintances.'* (Rhianna)

Carers actively discouraged the girls from sharing their stories with other residents and implied that other young people could not be trusted to keep confidences in the same way that Hillside carers could be. Generally the girls accepted this view of each other and subsequently expected other residents to let them down:



*'You shouldn't trust any of the young people with your secrets because they're going to be angry at some point with you, and then they're going to blurt things out. Like, I've said something to someone and then they've blurted it out to everyone, and now everyone knows why I'm here, which wasn't very nice! I don't like him now, at all, I can't stand him. But **what did I expect really.**' (Lola)*

Lola repeats staff instructions that *'you shouldn't trust any of the young people with your secrets'*. Her experience with Lewis confirmed that she had been let down by her own emotional intuition, thereby confirming that staff had her 'best interests at heart' when they tried to teach her not to listen to her emotional gut feelings (Hochschild 1998). Indeed, Lola's comment, 'what did I expect really', highlights the fact that she had anticipated being hurt after following her own feelings about who to trust. These things acted as a reminder that staff knew better, and that Hillside placements were justified (Goffman 1961). By warning young people that residents were untrustworthy and likely to betray them, staff turned resident disagreements to their advantage by retaining resident trust and severing potential alliances.

Even so, and despite the warnings about making friends with other residents, occasionally some of the girls did form friendships. In these instances, relationships were scrutinised closely by members of staff and were discussed frequently in staff meetings. The girls were generally aware that all aspects of their friendships were monitored and controlled:

*'You can't talk to your friends in private, you're not allowed to whisper, staff have to listen in to your conversations. You can't play fight, you can't joke, you can't bitch with each other, you can't mess about. You can't go in each other's rooms, you can't share things, you can't do each other's hair or nails. Not allowed to do much together really' (Chantelle)*

Staff discouraged resident alliances and worked to physically separate them if young people were seen to becoming too close. Some of the girls felt that they were personally targeted and restricted from forming friendships with the rest of the group but this was not the case. Instead, these girls were in the minority by the fact that they invested time and effort in attempting to form peer relationships. Chantelle observed strategies that members of staff employed to create distance between residents who might potentially become friends:

*'If you want to do something and they want to do it, you can't necessarily do it with them, you have to do it with somebody else because you get too close to each other. You're not allowed to give each other hugs before you go to bed.'* (Chantelle)

Since resident relationships were discouraged and friend associated young people separated, those who did form close relationships with other young people learnt to hide the fact from staff. Robyn shared her secret in her first interview:

*'I've told them that my boyfriend's called Kyle, but really that's Ben's middle name. When me and Ben are sat next to each other they go 'how's Kyle?' and I go 'we're fine' and we're both sat there laughing. Come and see us when we're sat next to each other and say 'how's you and Kyle then?' but watch him, we'll be like, ha ha ha.'* (Robyn)

### ***Opposing Relationships: Young People as Enemies***

Since Hillside residents were encouraged to distrust one another, it was unsurprising that relations between them were often fraught. As a consequence, girls often sought to discredit other girls with members of

staff in order to present themselves in a better light (Goffman 1961). Residents constantly scrutinised the actions of their peers and as well as 'telling tales' on those who broke Hillside rules (Scott 2010), some residents also tried to get other residents into trouble undeservingly. In most instances, care staff were aware when a young person was being unjustifiably blamed for something they had not done and worked to tackle the behaviour of the 'tale teller' rather than to sanction the accused:

*Ben tells MOS-Mark, 'Luke just said my mum was a slag under his breath' MOS-Mark replies to Ben, 'well, it's up to you then Ben, either you ignore it or you deal with it!'*

*Luke looks indignant, 'I didn't say anything!'*

*MOS-Celia tells him 'I know Luke'. Luke relaxes.*

*Ben moans, 'so what can I say when he slags my mum off?'*

*MOS-Felicity asks Ben, 'what would you do if someone said that to you in the street? Either you'd walk away or deal with it! You'll have to do the same thing here.' (From fieldnotes)*

Of course different members of staff differed in their approaches (Shemmings 2000; Paul 2004), and some believed that '*there is no smoke without fire*'. Regardless of their personal opinion, all complaints made about young people by other residents were reported in shift handovers. Therefore 'tales' were officially recorded and readily accessible for scrutiny by members of staff who were not present at the time of the accusation:

*Two hours after the 'slag' incident and after staff hand over MOS-Terri reads Luke's scorecard out loud to the group: 'try not to offend staff or young people living in Hillside Lodge! Yes you did say something to upset young people, have a three out of five'*

*Luke shakes his head, he has been punished after all.*

*MOS-Terri continues 'Do you agree with that? Do you take responsibility?'*

*Luke sighs, and knowing that he has no real alternative, nods. (From fieldnotes)*

Children in the nineties post-Thatcher Britain have been described as forming a 'me generation', and acquiring a sense of individualism which suggests they are 'not like everybody else' (Archer 1995; Sharpe 1994). This was apparent in Hillside, with each resident believing themselves to be different from their peers. Rather than embracing the group identity of 'resident' the girls fought against it and adopted staff language when addressing other residents and members of staff in the unit (Goffman 1961:195). Words which are uncommon in everyday language became entrenched in young people's everyday conversations, for instance, acronyms like 'YP' (for young people) became commonly used by residents to describe those around them.

*'Like the YP's watch the clock and like say 'she's been on for ages'. Everyone is always like in everyone else's business, I'm like, who's talking to you.'* (Lauren)

As Lauren explains, many of the girls were keen to distance themselves away from the resident or 'YP' identity and instead adopted professional language in an attempt to align themselves with staff rather than young people. In this way, residents sought to claim their own identities as 'normal' and therefore more in line with employed staff rather than the incarcerated (Goffman 1961):

*Luke says out loud: 'did you know that I was going soon?'  
Natalie and I both nod.  
Luke continues: 'Nobody will miss me. I always break everything!'  
Natalie tells him, 'but that's only your behaviour Luke, it's not you!'  
Luke smiles at Natalie.  
(From fieldnotes)*

In this circumstance, Natalie replicates language that professionals have used to comfort her in the past, illustrating that she has taken on board

another emotional language in addressing situations that she might have previously managed differently (Hochschild 1983). Natalie shows that she has learned methods of making other young people feel better by reciting language that has been used to make her feel better. Although some of the girls embraced their new emotional dictionaries, such advice was not always well received by others girls. This was illustrated in Chantelle's response to Abbie when she attempts to share her knowledge about diet and weight control:

*'I goes 'I'm starving' and Abbie went 'You carry on eating and you're going to end up fat'[...] Coming from her! I said 'Shut your fat self up', as if she can even say that to me. I'm a size 8 figure!' (Chantelle)*

Although girls embraced the idea of being individualised and 'different' from other residents, staff did not view any of the residents in this way and instead instructed that young people should stay out of 'other people's issues':

*Ben points to Brittany's legs and says 'Brittany's got pyjama bottoms on'  
Brittany is furious: 'shut up Ben, you're always there! Stay out of it'  
MOS-Mark agrees: 'yes Ben, she has a point, it isn't your issue'  
(From fieldnotes)*

Therefore, despite young people's ideas of individualism, to staff, all of the residents were seen as a group rather than as individuals (Moss and Petrie 2002; Thomson, Henderson, and Holland 2003). The girls were therefore bound into an identity of 'Hillside Resident' and were not able to claim an individualised identity. Where Goffman describes hospital staff using mental health diagnoses to discredit patient opinions, Hillside staff used their superior adult identities to discredit children's claims:

*'Callum's getting to the point where he's very similar, he'll be the same and he's forever saying 'she can't do that because it's not appropriate', and I'm like 'whoa, whoa, whoa, you're a child, not a member of staff' (MOS-Darren)*

Older and 'Hillside wiser' residents acted to mentor and socialise younger (or newer) residents into the regimes of the unit. As shown by Punch (2003) with regards to children in sibling relationships, Hillside girls adopted an adult role when dealing with other residents. In this way, the girls worked to prove their difference from other residents and placed themselves closer to members of staff.

*'Marianela, as the oldest sibling present, stopped playing with the dolls and automatically assumed a parental type role. She served lunch, which her mother had left prepared for them, ordering her younger siblings about in a competent, organized way. Her actions, choice of words and tone of voice echo her mother's style of speech when she is telling the children what to do and how to behave.'*  
(Punch 2003:283)

For instance, when Natalie is asked to share her experiences of Local Authority care with Oliver, she takes on a supportive and caring role and offers him reassurance about entering the care system:

*'You can't choose a children's home but you can say whether you prefer to be in a big or small one. I prefer small, you have more time with staff then and there are less people to get mad with. It's not that bad. You get your own keyworker and they'll take you shopping. They give you a budget and you can buy whatever you want.'*  
(Natalie talking to Oliver)

As a result, Oliver felt that he had made the right decision in voluntarily entering local authority care. Natalie later revealed that rather than sharing her genuine experiences of living in a children's home, she offered Oliver a

romanticised view of life in care. Indeed, since care staff had requested that Natalie 'speak to Oliver about being in care', she had believed herself to be a 'trusted' informant and altered her story to help him feel better about entering local authority care, instead of sharing her real experiences with him so that he could make an informed decision: *'It's alright [...] not as good as I told him like.'* (Natalie)

### ***Moving on and Growing Up***

Despite occasional spats and disagreements, at some point during their stay, most of the girls came to view Hillside as 'the best children's home ever' (Harris and Timms 1993:609). By the time placements came to an end, most residents had settled into institutional life and no longer quested after freedom in the way that they had initially: 'release is likely to come just when the inmate has finally learned the ropes on the inside [...] he may find that release means moving from the top of a small world to the bottom of a large one (Goffman 1961:69-71). Residents were aware that once they left the unit, another young person would imminently arrive to claim their bedroom and their keyteam. As a result, longer serving residents disliked the arrival of new children within the unit. Staff suggested that this dislike stemmed from young people's own feelings of temporality within the unit. In addition, and perhaps because of the need to feel important and 'remembered', residents expressed a need to make their mark on Hillside Lodge and to ensure that the marks of previous residents were not erased:

*There is a dispute between the old and new residents. There are a number of files stored on the game consoles belonging to past residents.*

*Newer residents want to delete the files. However, longer serving residents don't want the files to be deleted.*

*MOS-Darren tells Callum, 'if you haven't heard of them, delete them'.*

*Luke shouts at MOS-Darren and Callum: 'you can't delete Sharon's game, she'll go mad. Stop, stop. That's Tom's.'*

*Callum ignores him and keeps deleting files. MOS-Darren watches and nods.*

*Luke bursts into tears and hides his face.*

*MOS-Darren is unsympathetic 'those kids won't ever see those games again, they're just filling up the memory cards'.*

*(From fieldnotes)*

In opposition to research that shows that children in local authority care often look forward to discontinuing professional relationships (Bell 2002), for Hillside girls, leaving Hillside was twinned with the unexpected realisation that they had to leave their favourite members of staff behind too.

*'Do you know, this is one thing I'm proper disappointed with, you can't have contact, like MOS-Alfie, I don't think he can give me his mobile number [...] If they see me on the out, they can say hello to me but they can't come shopping with me. They can only stand and talk to me for two minutes and then they have to come back here and report that they've seen me. I think that's proper wrong think that you should be allowed contact with them no matter what.'*

*(Brittany)*

The issue of separation was one that members of staff often felt uncomfortable with too. When asked what they would do to improve Hillside Lodge to make it more effective as a service, some members of staff commented that they would like the opportunity to offer young people more support following discharge. Furthermore, some staff wanted to unit to provide a 'halfway house', staffed by Hillside carers, as 'a stepping stone into their everyday lives' (MOS-Mark). MOS-Alfie claimed that he felt that this provision essential and claimed that he would invest his own money to make sure it happened ... if he won the lottery. Instead when girls were released, it was to either previous care placements or into



new ones. When their time for release was upon them, some of the girls resorted to serious measures to ensure a longer stay in the unit:

*'She is refusing to eat and drink. She doesn't want to leave Hillside [...] 'she says that she wants to die one way or another, well, not on this watch she won't!' (MOS-Janet)*

Such strategies never resulted in a longer stay but were traumatic for staff and young people all the same:

*'They came to pick Hayley up and she was just hanging around my neck saying 'don't let them take me' it was fucking horrible! She asked me, 'can they make me go? Can they make me MOS-Tom?' and I said 'yes, there's no point' so she went with them and there were tears all round.'* (MOS-Tom)

MOS-Tom's admission that he cried when Hayley left his care illustrates the finding that staff actually did form attachments to the young people in their care (Hochschild 1983). In order to minimise such occurrences, Hillside management planned 'mobility' excursions in an attempt to undo the institutionalising effects of the unit and to encourage further independence:

*'We need to weigh up institutionalisation with the risks of them running off but we have to take them out and it will all be on public transport. It's got to reflect how they will live when they leave! So you can't have tea with them every time you go out. You'll have to take a packed lunch, it's not realistic, they won't have the money to eat out every day when they leave!' (MOS-Jess)*

Although the girls were encouraged to be more independent in theory, in practice, once back inside the unit, obedience and compliance were expected once more:

*MOS-Mark asks, 'will someone PLEASE teach her how to put make up on?!'  
Everyone laughs.  
MOS-Tom tells the group, 'I'll talk to her'  
(Staff hand over)*

Even though Hillside believed that it was illustrating 'realistic' methods of reintegration for young people, no attempts were made to extend resident independence inside the unit. However, in this situation, it was important to consider the cost of compliance to the girls who were forced to keep it. The justification that adulthood was a sign that someone could be trusted was a potentially dangerous message to convey to Hillside residents, especially since most of them had already experienced serious abuse by adults (Coy 2007; Hill, Davis, Prout, and Tisdall 2004; O'Neill 2005). Consequently, one needs to question whether Hillside in fact made residents increasingly vulnerable by instilling them with discipline and the idea that debate and disagreement would result in sanctions. By encouraging young people to accept rules as they were presented, Hillside undoubtedly encouraged residents to portray a presentation of a 'good child' willing to do as they are told (Goffman 1959).

Furthermore, by playing their roles effectively, staff unconsciously undermined the relationships that the girls had, and the care which they received, from their families outside of the unit, '*I want my family to care, not just professionals*' (Hayley). In this way, Hillside encouraged girls to play a role that was very different to the one that their parents played, hence teaching them that their parents were not good role models (Rose 1999). Of course this made it more isolating for residents leaving Hillside and the carers who they had begun claim as surrogate parents. One might argue that staff demonstrated the role of a 'good' and 'trustworthy' adult as they

set out the rules that defined their relationships with young people, that included a, somewhat one sided, 'no secrets' policy. However, Robyn reminds us that, although she was encouraged to view carers as professionals who needed to be held accountable for their actions, she insisted that she would protect those staff she cared about from disciplinary measures if they treated her badly.

*INT: If a member of staff was bullying you, what would you do about it?*

*Robyn: Nothing, I'd just laugh, so they thought it was a joke, so then they'd have to walk away because they'd think that I'm not listening to what they've got to say, you know what I mean.*

*INT: And then would you tell a manager or something?*

*Robyn: No.*

*INT: No, you'd just not say anything?*

*Robyn: No, I'm not a grass.*

*INT: You wouldn't? Even if you thought it wasn't their job and they shouldn't be doing that?*

*Robyn: No.*

Robyn shows that although staff kept their boundaries in professional constraints and were able to disengage when relationships became intense, young people did not instil these same boundaries. As a result, some residents formed strong emotional attachments to staff, and furthermore, believed that these attachments were reciprocated. Staff concern for residents was often genuine (Van Drenth and De Haan 1999), but their care was still bound up with payment exchange and was therefore limiting (Hochschild 1983.) Although surface acting and deep acting became part of 'the job' for Hillside staff, Hillside residents believed that high regard and loyalty were mutual, leading to the inevitability that residents would be hurt when placements and relationships, expired.

## ***Conclusions***

This chapter has explored the complexities of relationships inside the unit and has unpicked the everyday intricacies underpinning Hillside's emotional and relational dynamics. We have considered young people's relationships with their peers and explored the nature of Hillside in creating fracture amongst residents. As a result young people were set against each other and generally declined to form close or personal relationships with their peers. Furthermore, by discrediting resident's peer relationships, staff sought to bind resident loyalties more evenly to their own. Consequently, relationships between staff and residents were frequently incredibly close. By having and forming good relationships with Hillside staff, the girls were able to learn what 'good adults' and indeed 'good carers' acted like and perhaps changed their perceptions regarding the adults that they previously associated with. Even so, the positive relationships that young people built remained within the confines of a professional relationship and, therefore, somewhat artificial (Hochschild 1979). For instance, even when residents pushed staff to the limits of their temper, staff were never permitted to act outside the bounds of professionalism and instead called for other members of staff to relieve them. In the 'real world', relationships that young people would go on to make would not be kept within these bounds, hence young people were not taught to negotiate and debate with those they cared about. Instead they were graded as in-compliant on a behaviour sheet. Therefore, young people were never regarded as equals and hence not taught to negotiate their needs and feelings in everyday situations, neither were they taught how to react if someone they cared about was very angry with them. Furthermore, since Hillside rules stipulated that staff could not stay in touch with young people after their placement, girls often left Hillside feeling rejected by those they had come to care for.

The next chapter 'Forming Good Children' will explore the perceptions of childhood in Hillside Lodge and will consider the way in which resident experiences were constructed by those employed to care for them.

## **Chapter Eight: Forming ‘Good’ Children**

### ***Introduction***

As discussed in the previous chapter, close relationships often formed between the girls and their carers. As a result, the majority of girls concluded that Hillside Lodge was a good place to live, and in many cases *‘the best children’s home ever’* (Hayley). This chapter will explore the impact of Hillside’s caring relationships and the reformatory implications that they had on the girls in the unit. I will argue that it was precisely these relationships that made the emotional management of Hillside residents possible, thereby enabling staff to form residents into good children.

### ***Rewriting Childhoods***

In the UK, competency is linked to age and scales of development that show professionals what they can expect from children at different ages. James, Jenks and Prout (1998) suggest that in their precise recounting of age, for example Lola’s assertion that *‘I’m nearly fourteen’*, children understand that age is restrictive. Hillside girls were regularly informed that they should refrain from sexual activity, drug taking, drinking alcohol, because they were too young and too inexperienced. Their plea for independence was greatly restricted by the fact that the law also frames these activities as being age dependent activities. In legislative terms, it is clear that young people are described depending upon the route they have taken, so whilst youth justice case notes referred to offending minors as ‘young people’, social welfare notes discussed clients as ‘children’. These descriptive terms thus draw distinctions between legislatively different categories of children in society, and whilst criminal young people are

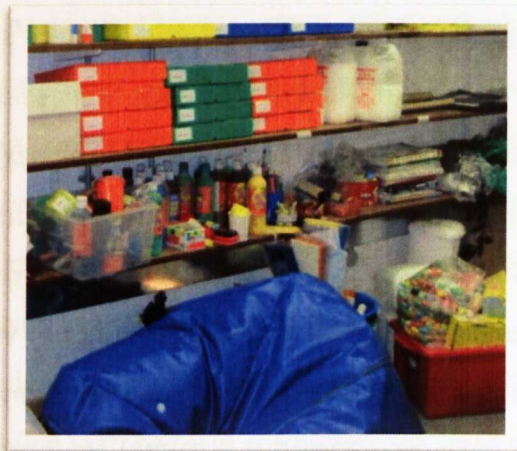
perceived as needing to be 'held accountable', welfare young people are seen as needing protection (Muncie 2005).

Therefore although there were differences in resident's life histories, these differences were bridged in the unit by claims that residents were 'children first and foremost'. Since Hillside residents had experienced complex difficulties, staff felt that it was their duty to give young people a 'proper' (middle class) childhood (Castañeda 2002). Staff attempted to reunite residents with the classic western view of childhood, viewed as a carefree time of playfulness where children are protected from the wickedness in the 'adult' world (Mayall 1998; Punch 2003). Part of this care involved minimising emotional distress and censoring information deemed 'unsuitable' for children to possess:

*'The requirement that children be happy can lead adults to protect them from knowledge that might sadden them, such as the death of a relative, or the cruelty people enact towards each other.'* (Mayall 1998:139)

Since western conceptions of childhood are believed to be bound up with 'play', many of the daily routines of Hillside were geared to achieve this effect (James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; Punch 2003). Young people were encouraged to re-enact child-like 'play' activities, a factor often found in institutional settings, where it is 'the image of the young child that is taken to be iconic of children in general, and indeed of childhood itself' (Birch, Curtis, and James 2007). These 'play' activities were referred to as 'enrichments' and included: painting by numbers; modelling; drawing; colouring; baking; drama and music making. Enrichments were mandatory and were closely timetabled for weekends, school holidays and 'leisure' times. If young people refused to participate in enrichment activities, they

received a sanction and were confined to their bedroom corridor. The 'enrichment cupboard' (shown below) was locked at all times and only staff were permitted access.



Because children are seen as being unable to manage their own emotional wellbeing, their lives are the most tightly controlled of all groups in society (Muncie 1998). Whilst children are seen to focus on 'having fun' and optimising their 'time present', professional adults often work to instil the middle class notion of deferred gratification in an attempt to optimise children's time futures (Mayall 1998; Berridge 2006). Enrichment activities were, therefore, aimed at improving resident extracurricular skills by focusing their minds and bodies towards 'specific agendas' necessary to form a successful citizen (Mayall 1998). These activities cemented the purpose of Hillside as a total institution and provisioned against the possibility that residents would view their placement as being time wasted (Goffman 1961). Although enrichments were obligatory, they were seen by residents as being 'fun' and were eagerly anticipated. Enrichments highlighted the institutional ethos of Hillside as being to help and resocialise children, rather than to rehabilitate offenders. Enrichment activities contributed to the reforming aims of the unit by turning seemingly fun activities into tasks of work, which had to be completed



within specific conditions, thereby producing 'useful and trained' citizens (Mayall 1998; Lister 2006; Read 2011). Rather than aiming to punish young people, the unit aimed to offer children a 'proper' middle class childhood, from which they could enter into adulthood as socialised citizens (Hochschild 1983):

*'They're not just people, they're children. And if we don't invest in them now, then they're definitely going to be lost.'* (MOS-Jayne)

Most staff took their role as carer seriously and as well as attempting to direct the behavioural responses of residents, they were also instrumental in challenging their beliefs and morals too. Since they were seen as being emotionally incompetent, staff frequently attempted to socialise young people into displaying 'civilised emotions' and therefore acted in chastising young people as a parent might a naughty child, *'give it back Callum, that's not kind'* (MOS-Dawn). On one occasion, Natalie was refused chocolate and complained to MOS-Tal, *'it's not fair'*. He responded immediately and replied *'that's ok because you don't believe in fair. You've seriously assaulted people for no reason and that wasn't fair'*. Staff were rigorous in their attempts to deconstruct young people's moral and emotional architecture and openly explained that their aim was to reform young people into citizens able to participate in society (Goffman 1961; Hochschild 1983). The fact that residents were kept inside a secure unit made this reformation more plausible as they were under constant scrutiny, and because of this, all actions and responses could be counteracted as soon as they were displayed or uttered. Staff felt that their chances of reshaping residents' moral and emotional architecture were increased since Hillside residents were children and, therefore, in their opinion, still not fully formed. Indeed some felt that if children did not come to them

early enough, then they would be powerless to help them to reform their behaviour:

*'We need to catch them young, and say 'Look, this is it, this is what you should be doing, this is not a bad thing you know, going to bed at ten o'clock'. I think sometimes it's hard when they come to us and they're older and we feel like we can't help them change, we feel like it's too late.'* (MOS-Jayne)

Because of the perception of a childhood as being a malleable stage in life, there was a strong feeling between staff that Hillside could 'save' children from the adulthoods that they were travelling towards (Hill, Davis, Prout, and Tisdall 2004; James and James 2004; Parton 2008). Hillside rules and routines sought to instil young people with public and moral codes in line with societal norms. So whilst reminding residents 'don't use drugs', 'don't smoke or drink' and 'don't get into trouble', Hillside routines encouraged young people to fit into mainstream society (Karstedt 2002). Subsequently, enrichments were used as tool to enrich impoverished lives and to socially educate children who had been previously uneducated. The girls were frequently reminded, 'you're just a child, you're a little girl' (Lola). Some of the girls embraced the day-to-day ideal of childhood that Hillside Lodge introduced to them:

*'I feel different now. I feel like a child. I'm doing sport, I'm drawing things. I haven't done this before, when I started using drugs, I just fucked everything off. I didn't care about anything, only drugs. But before I used drugs, I was still a child, I'm back to that now [...] I'm still the person that I am but I'm doing things that I used to do and I feel different, I feel nice.'* (Gabriella)

However, although the girls generally enjoyed partaking in child friendly games and activities, they were unable to reconcile the identity of childhood with their own identity. For instance, Gabriella was distressed to

learn that professional notions of childhood incompetence meant that she would be restricted from making her own decisions, especially those that were deemed important decisions. Gabriella learned that acting the part of the compliant and obedient child would not help her to get what she wanted, *'they don't want the best for me, they don't want me to go home so I don't care anymore. What they do to me is just their problem'* (Gabriella). Indeed, rather than the idealised view of younger childhood that was integrated into the unit (Birch, Curtis, and James 2007), many of the girls perceived themselves to be at a different stage of their lives and so felt that being a child meant something different than playing board games, *'[we do] crap stuff, like play with board games. I'm fifteen, not twelve!'* (Hayley). Young people's view of childhood varied from staff notions of what childhood should be (Castañeda 2002). Most of the girls felt that being young was supposed to be a time of experimentation and of doing things that professionals did not find appropriate, namely taking drugs, drinking alcohol and having sex:

*'Thirteen year olds hang around with their mates, but I'm in secure, so how am I meant to be doing that? Like that's what thirteen year olds do isn't it! Experiment with alcohol, and cigarettes [...] but I've already done all of that, so I'm not experimenting, I'm just carrying on drinking and smoking and taking drugs and having sex.'* (Lola)

Staff sought to instil a western notion of childhood that asserts that play is 'what children do' (James, Jenks, and Prout 1998; Punch 2003). The girls were often aware of the type of childhood that staff expected them to display, as Lola describes when trying to obtain a tattoo magazine, *'I wouldn't ask MOS-Janet for that, she'd go 'um, um, um' because she likes me to be a little girl'* (Lola). The idea of introducing young people into an idealised notion of a 'happy' childhood was prevalent in many areas of life in Hillside Lodge (Mayall 1998:139). From the exchanges between girls and

staff, it appeared that Hillside staff had a prescribed notion of childhood, and of how children should be treated based on their perceived emotional capabilities (Mayall 1998). Lola and other girls frequently demonstrated that their own ideas about childhood were markedly different from the ideals of childhood that staff championed. Indeed, like adulthood, all childhoods are different (James, Jenks, and Prout 1998) and girls entered the unit with their own emotional histories. Through their aims of unifying girls' experiences into that of an innocent child, Hillside minimised the diversities that existed between residents who were of varying races, ages, genders and backgrounds (Qvortrup 1994).

Although staff encouraged residents to 'act like children', in the times when they did act accordingly and became exuberant and boisterous, they were accused of being 'childish'. These contradictory messages were played out on a daily basis and staff frequently changed between encouraging young people to be children, to berating childish behaviour. For example, when children disagreed with staff and presented as being a 'wilful child', they were punished and expected to 'own their behaviour' and to 'grow up'. In the times when girls became giggly and playful, they were told to be quiet and escorted to their bedrooms if they did not comply. The girls expressed their discontent with the unit's contradictory messages:

*'One minute I've got them saying 'You're just a child, you're a little girl' you know, when it suits them but then I'm an adult; it's right annoying.'* (Hayley)

Despite the differences in opinion about behaviour, staff were in agreement about the fundamental needs of children, and felt that 'all children need TLC, tender loving care' (MOS-Aflie). It was felt that without love and care, children could not be expected to be emotionally competent

(Hochschild 1983). Staff worked to instil their own perception of childhood onto residents. It could be argued that staff were attempting to restore innocence that had been taken from residents, or seeking to reform young people into an idea of childhood that sat more comfortably with what they, as adults, believed that children should be like. Furthermore, staff sought to socialise residents' emotions and to equip them with socially acceptable methods of managing emotion:

*'We're showing them that you can have fun [...] be angry but don't be aggressive. And you can have a laugh and you can be a child and show them that they can be children again I think a bit because a lot of them come and have missed big chunks of being children [...] It might be their last few months they'll ever be able to be childlike again.'* (MOS-Dawn)

By imprinting their own ideals of childhood onto Hillside residents, staff conveyed to young people that their experiences of childhood were inadequate, since 'to claim knowledge of children by way of adults' memories or fantasies of childhood is once again to realize adult worlds while erasing the existence and experience of 'actual' children' (Castañeda 2002). As a consequence, the encouragement that they should 'act like children' left some girls feeling dejected that they did not conform to the type of childhood activity that 'delighted' members of staff:

*'They colour in, play football and play different games with staff. Activities are drawn from staff strengths really, one member of staff plays football with them, one member of staff likes to cook with them and another is in to bikes so he works on those with the ones that are interested. Over the weekend, MOS-Penny taught them a new game called 'rotten eggs' now they all love it. The aim of the unit is to give them their childhood back. I mean the other day, I was delighted because Ashley and Callum asked for some crayons and then they just sat colouring. They'd never do that on the outside, they come across as far too tough!'* (MOS-Harry)

Young people were conflicted when they did not ascribe to the notion of childhood that they were presented with. Lola felt that by denying the interests that her keyworker selected for her, she was *'letting her down'* and disappointing her in some way. Hence Lola was left *'trying really hard'* to be the child that she felt that MOS-Janet wanted her to be:

*'I think she wants me to enjoy my childhood, and I'm like 'yo, listen, I can't be a child, I'm nearly fourteen so I kind of missed out now'. But I don't think I could, even if I tried really hard, because I don't really want to act like a child because it's not very me.'* (Lola)

Perhaps, what made it harder for young people to fit into the roles of prescribed childhood was that, like Lola described, the girls did not embody the *'playful'* and *'carefree'* notion of childhood that staff sought to return them to (James 2004). Instead, the girls were frustrated with the idea that competence was linked to age and rightly excised their beliefs that knowledge is built on experience rather than age (Punch 2003:285). Many of the girls had experienced the darkest side of adulthood and had already encountered situations that most adults *never* experience. To act under a charade of *'childhood innocence'* presented a mockery to girls who had already experienced the cruel brutality of adulthood. Although Hillside formed a safe and child centred environment for the girls, the unit could not unmake resident's previous experiences and enable them to *'go back'* to a state of childhood innocence. The girls were unable to simply forget the experiences that had *'corrupted'* their childhood in the first place.

*'They say 'but we're adults and you're children, we know what happens in life' and I think 'you probably haven't seen half of it!' They try and tell me that I'm vulnerable and I don't know what goes on in the world.'* (Lola)

Therefore for Hillside girls, the term 'inexperience' did not equate with their own life experiences. The girls asserted that, like adult identities, children's identities are 'multiple and fluid' (Thomson 2007). They argued that as young people, they could not be treated as a homogenous group any more than 'adults', who are also 'emergent subjects, in a constant state of becoming' (Butler 1990; Holland, Renold, Ross, and Hillman 2008). Therefore, in their opinion, age was not an appropriate indicator to give staff claims to a superior knowledge over them as children:

*'She'll always make comments about the way I dress and she's like, this is her favourite saying 'you're only thirteen' and I'm like 'yeah and your point is?' I hate it when people say that 'you are only thirteen' and then they don't follow it up with anything, it's like it's just a statement and I'm like 'thank you, but I did know my own age'[...] They mean, you shouldn't be dressing like that, you shouldn't be doing that, you shouldn't be having boyfriends, you shouldn't be smoking, you shouldn't be drinking, you shouldn't be going out to clubs, but that's just an easy way of saying it, 'you're only thirteen'. (Lola)*

### ***Rejecting Vulnerability: 'I'm a poor helpless girl'***

According to Christensen (2000), childhood can be viewed in two stages; the first being exposed and external, and the other internal and vulnerable. Indeed both of these ideas of childhood are apparent in Hillside Lodge, and whilst I will explore the external and exposed body of the child in the next chapter, this section will consider the child as internal and vulnerable. Whilst the external part of the child needs to be cleaned and dressed to display the care it receives, the internal child instead requires nurture and care (Christensen 2000). Whilst most children are understood as being 'vulnerable', the fact that Hillside residents had experienced serious abuse and disadvantage, meant that they were seen as being doubly so (Thomas 2000:74). Perhaps due to this, the overarching theme within the staff

notions of childhood was the idea that Hillside residents were vulnerable and in need of protection.

*'I reflect that, if they are like that, what have they seen and what have they faced in their childhood, because they have faced some serious stuff and have seen some serious things to be like that. And to think you can treat people how you want. That's kind of the behaviour, and when you get to 13 or 14, and you've seen 10 years of that in your own home.'* (MOS-Alfie)

Being vulnerable was an emotional state that residents believed to be applicable to most of the children living in Hillside. Most of the girls believed that their fellow Hillside residents were vulnerable:

*'Natalie and Abbie are proper vulnerable [...] Natalie just craves attention all the time, all the time. [...] She] gets them to worry about her and that, yeah? By saying stupid things, like she'll make people think that she's going to kill herself and stuff, like she sleeps with plastic paperclips in her mouth.'* (Hayley)

Whilst The Oxford Dictionary claims the definition of vulnerable to be 'susceptible to physical or emotional attack or harm', there was much discussion with the participants about what the word 'vulnerable' meant:

*'It means that you have got specific things in your life that are like a risk to you or a risk to others. So it could be my offence or it could just mean that I've got things on the out that make me at risk, like my self-harm.'* (Natalie)

*'I haven't heard the word vulnerable, but I know what you're saying. They talk that way about me. Like I'm a high risk out there,*



*like I might harm myself if I run away again and stuff like that.'*

*(Gabriella)*

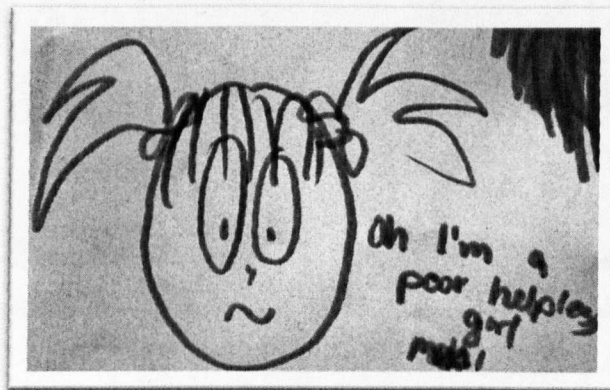
Although all of the girls had a good idea about what the word vulnerable meant, most denied that they represented an example of 'being vulnerable'. Resident case files illustrated that professionals working with each girl felt that they were vulnerable and indeed children were legislatively described in these terms too:

*'Abbie is a vulnerable young girl with high levels of risk and need.'*

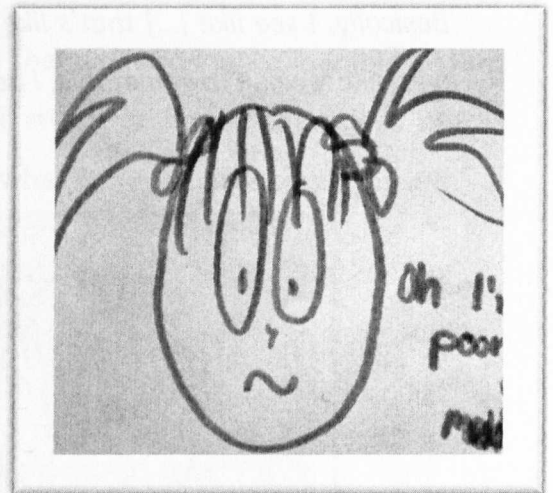
*(From Abbie's case file)*

In her interview, Lola drew a picture of the 'vulnerable little girl' that she thought that Hillside was supposing she was. The caption reads *'Oh I'm a poor helpless girl. Meh!'* For Lola, being vulnerable was physical too:

*'Basically, I see like [...] that's like vulnerable hair. Like big droopy eyes, like 'eek, I'm vulnerable, I need somebody to save me'. (Lola)*



Hillside girls strongly disagreed with descriptions of themselves being vulnerable and rather than embracing the identity of a '*child in need of protection*', suggested that professionals had acted unnecessarily in restricting their liberty. Since responsabilization policy and cultural messages stipulate that young people must take responsibility for their own actions (Muncie 2005), it was unsurprising that girls rejected assertions that they were unable to care for themselves (Harris 2004; Stephen 2000). Indeed, the contradiction between 'taking responsibility' for criminal actions and being 'too vulnerable' to manage everyday activities did not sit comfortably with most of the girls. Lola separates herself from the imagery of a vulnerable girl and depicts herself in the strong and independent image that she feels that she embodies:



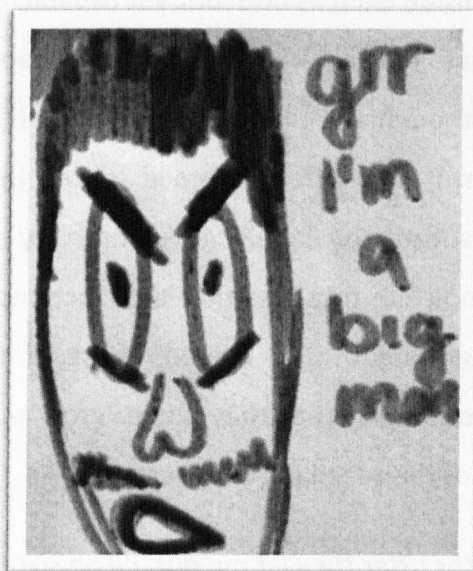
Out of fifteen girls interviewed, only one described herself as being vulnerable. All of the other girls fiercely rejected the notion of vulnerability and instead insisted that they could care for themselves:

*'I can actually look after myself [...] I don't think I'm vulnerable.'*  
(Brittany)

*'I know I ain't vulnerable [...] I know about me and nobody can tell me what I am, they don't know me. I know I'm not vulnerable so if anyone called me vulnerable I'd say 'you don't know me to call me vulnerable.'* (Lauren)

The girls fiercely rejected staff assertions that age made them vulnerable and in response asked staff to identify instances that made them more exposed to risk than adults. Rather than offering useful explanations about the systemic disadvantages of childhood (Hill, Davis, Prout, and Tisdall 2004), staff sited instances of physical vulnerability and suggested that young people could be overpowered by someone bigger than them. Rightly so, Lola makes the point that vulnerability is relative and not dependent on age or size:

*'They're like, 'well, when a big strong man comes and tries to take advantage of you, and they're much stronger than you ...' and if a bigger stronger man got the big strong man, then they're vulnerable!*



*Everyone is vulnerable like that.'* (Lola)

Rather than feeling that their difficult experiences proved their vulnerability, the girls felt that they had demonstrated their strength and independence by surviving these experiences (Thomas 2000):

*'People say I'm vulnerable because I do let people take advantage of me but I'm not vulnerable because if I were vulnerable I wouldn't even be alive now, never mind alive and looking well.'* (Hayley)

In addition to their denial of vulnerability, all of the participants rejected the idea that they were 'children', and as Lola demonstrated, suggesting that merely occupying the legal status of 'child' was making her vulnerable and was something that did not fit into her own notion of what her life was like. As Lola explained, vulnerability was not restricted to children! So, for Lola and others, being a child was not an adequate reason for adult justifications that they 'know more about the world'. Most girls claimed that they had experienced more than most adults ever experience. Hence the view of the Hillside child as one 'not yet capable of reason' and 'not yet fully agential' was felt by the girls to be inappropriate (Castañeda 2002:143). So although the unit did work in keeping young people safe from physical harm, and indeed, a child locked inside cannot walk the streets as a prostitute, by labelling vulnerability as a consequence of childhood, girls took the message that their actions would be acceptable once they reached adulthood. Indeed, most of the girls instead saw vulnerability as something that they could 'grow out of' at sixteen when they become out of the reach of social services:

*'Two months after they let me out, I'll be sixteen, I can do what I want [...] I've always wanted to be sixteen [...] everyone's racing to get to sixteen.'* (Hayley)

*'My social worker's [...]getting a psychiatrist to see me but she can swivel, I ain't seeing a psychiatrist. I'll be 16 in 25 days.'* (Chantelle)

## **Conclusion**

This chapter explored the apparent contradictions that young people faced in Hillside Lodge and considered young people in terms of the status of 'childhood' that was applied to them within the unit. In exploring Hillside's daily activities and routines, we saw that Hillside residents were perceived as being emotionally and behaviourally malleable. However, although the message of 'real' childhood and expected behaviour was unanimously agreed by staff, girls felt that this type of childhood was one that could not be blended with the experiences that they had encountered. Indeed, through a discussion of vulnerability, we are able to unpick different notions of competency and explore young people's views of their own capabilities. From doing this, we learn that young people cannot be judged on the basis of their age; rather they need to be understood as individuals, with different views and experiences. The girls therefore rejected the 'vulnerable' labels that staff applied to them and instead asserted that they were capable and independent young people, able to survive and flourish in times of adversity.

## **Chapter Nine: Making Girls and Appropriating Girlhood**

### ***Introduction***

There has always been a professional concern about the morality of young women (Barter 2006; Barton 2000; Chesney-Lind 1989; Hutter and Williams 1981; Kitzinger 1988; Leonard 1982; Miner 1912; Zedner 2006). Perhaps because of their reproductive capacity, girls have been judged more harshly than boys in the past and professionals have typically acted sooner if girls (rather than boys) engaged in unruly behaviour as they saw this as a rejection of femininity and a transgression of gender 'norms' (Heidensohn 1997:779; Hudson 1984:44). This chapter will explore girls' experiences of Hillside Lodge in respect of their gender and consider how girls are controlled and shaped towards a form of girlhood that is seemingly 'safe' for them to inhabit. This chapter will consider Hillside as a controlling space used to form docile bodies (Foucault 1991) equipped to portray and present a particular type of girlhood (Goffman 1959).

### ***'I'm a growing girl': Food and the Healthy Female Body***

Traditionally, children's wellbeing has been measured through observations of their visible body, with a nourished child equating to a loved child (Christensen 2000). In this way, 'children's bodies [are] regarded as more informative than their words' (Thomas 2000). Visits made to Hillside by a multitude of medical professionals meant that resident bodies were assessed by a range of professional disciplines. Furthermore, residents in Hillside were closely monitored and conditioned to make sure that they made 'positive' decisions regarding their health.

Body size was a complicated issue within Hillside and at least three of the fifteen project participants expressed unhappiness with their current body size. Since most of the girls had been living independently and often with no fixed abode, they frequently entered Hillside with irregular eating patterns. The structured and compulsory eating times at Hillside meant that girls had to sit at their assigned dining table four times a day for breakfast, lunch, dinner and supper. Although residents were not forced to eat, they were required to sit in the dining room and to interact in appropriate conversations. As a result, most of the girls reported that they ate four times a day, and as a consequence, all put on weight:

*'I don't eat on the out and here you have to walk in the dinner room and you need to have something to eat. It makes me feel like eating when I'm sat in the room. I've put on proper weight since I've been here and I'm proper mad about that! I do exercises but, I'm not doing enough exercise like I do on the out.'* (Brittany)

Whilst some of the girls welcomed the changes that regular meals made to their bodies, others were unhappy in gaining weight:

*'I know I'm slim now but I was slimmer and I was white, no colour to my face, my hair didn't look very good, I looked terrible [...] I've got more meat on my figure.'* (Hayley)

*[They will] 'start to look like me. A big fat flump.'* (Natalie)

Staff were aware that most young people put on weight once they entered Hillside Lodge and did not see this as a positive change. Staff attributed children's change in body size to the fact that with restricted movements inside the unit, residents were not as active as they would be in their

everyday lives. In response to this, carers tried to help girls stabilise weight gain by monitoring food intake and encouraging them to eat a balanced diet. Residents were unable to serve their own food and were instead given prescribed portions by the kitchen staff. Most disliked being told what they could eat and some reported still feeling hungry after meals. In allocating portion sizes, staff did not discriminate on the basis of body size and, served girls equal portions, regardless of body size or appetite:

*'Food here so far has been fine, but the portions are limited. Like I go into the dining room hungry and I leave the dining room hungry [...] if I say, 'can I have some of this' they say 'well, we can only give you a limited portion.'* (Lauren)

Girls who felt that they were able to control their own body size, believed that Hillside rules restricting food intake were unfair:

*'You can't have a lot really and say if you've got jacket potato, you're not allowed pasta as well because that's two carbohydrates. So you've got to choose between your favourite foods. [It's not fair] It's not like I'm fat.'* (Hayley)

Since the majority of residents gained weight following admission, staff felt that they were helping the girls by controlling meal sizes. Hence it was within their capacity as adult carers, paid to take care of and to safeguard children's bodies, that staff restricted young people's food choices. In this way, some carers adopted a 'cruel to be kind' approach and despite young people's protests, restricted the foods which they felt were inappropriate for young people to eat:

*MOS-Terri is angry, 'they're ALL putting on weight'. She takes a jar of chocolate spread and flings it in the bin – it isn't empty. 'They shouldn't be having that on toast, have you seen how many calories are in that!?' She picks up the peanut butter, 'they wanted this for*



*supper last night and I said, 'you're not!' They shouldn't be eating this! Brittany had four pieces of toast last night [...] I wouldn't let my kids have that!*  
(Extract from fieldnotes)

Although staff encouraged girls to be mindful of what they ate, some of the girls also developed their own strategies of controlling weight gain:

*'Every time I eat I spew up. I make myself sick because I don't like the food being inside of my stomach [...] Me and Natalie were both doing it [...] we had proper full plates and then went to our rooms after we'd ate [...] we used to fill up on juice so that it would come up.'* (Brittany)

Although young people did not always realise, strategies such as these were quickly identified and counteracted<sup>14</sup> but their prominence illustrated the strong feeling that girls had about their appearance. Indeed appearances were a major source of struggle between the girls and their carers. This was most clearly illustrated in the discussion with girls about their clothes, which will be explored in the following section.

### ***Becoming a 'Young Lady'***

The unit confiscated all personal belongings deemed 'inappropriate' (Goffman 1961). As a result, most of the girls were forced to surrender the majority of their clothing, including vest tops, tight tops, short tops, leggings, tight trousers and all types of skirts. As well as revealing clothing, other items were also listed as 'inappropriate' due to the prevalence of self harm in the unit. For instance, clothing containing cords or belts (hooded tops, tracksuit bottoms, etc) or clothes containing metal (metal zips, shoe

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<sup>14</sup> See Chapter Ten - 'Control within the Contradiction' for more information.

heels, etc) were confiscated to ensure that residents did not use them to self injure. For the minority of girls who did not self harm, these rules seemed excessive and unfair:

*'You can't wear metal and stuff because of self harm and stuff like that, I don't really know why. You're just not allowed stuff. They say 'this is a secure unit. If you don't like it, don't get locked up' (Lauren)*

Not all of the rules regarding clothing were to protect the girls from self harming. Part of the ethos of Hillside Lodge meant that girls were expected to dress and behave 'appropriately'. Hence clothing viewed as 'too short', 'too tight', 'too revealing', or 'too provocative' was taken away before residents left the admission suite. All of the girls were forbidden from wearing clothes or make-up considered to be risqué, and aside from clothing, all make-up and jewellery was also confiscated during admission. After all forbidden items were sequestered, the girls were permitted to choose three outfits to keep with them in their bedrooms. If none of the clothing brought into the unit was classed as 'suitable' new clothes were bought for them. Indeed, since decorating the body is seen as being linked with femininity (King 2004), the removal of personal possessions and clothing often left girls with the sense that they were not allowed to be themselves, and indeed, this was perhaps the intention. Goffman describes the idea of ritual stripping as 'personal defacement' and explains that 'loss of identity equipment can prevent the individual from presenting his usual image of himself to others' (Goffman 1961:30).

The experience of ritual stripping was an emotional one, but because residents were scored against their ability to follow rules, without question, and were expected to appropriate their own appearance and behaviour to avoid punishment (Foucault 1991). Most understood that Hillside was

aiming to change them in a more perplexing way than to simply stop them from wearing revealing clothes:

*'Everything is different in here, my personality, how I am, everything is different. I don't like anything, they've changed me [...] by taking my clothes away, my jewellery. I'm not allowed to wear the shoes I want to wear or anything like that.'* (Daisy)

In line with the ethos of Hillside being a place for children to be reformed and made into 'socialised' adults, any type of bodily decoration that linked young people to their 'normal self' and life outside Hillside was removed. In this way, Hillside aimed to strip residents of their former identity, enabling them to be resocialised into conforming citizens (Goffman 1961). Since girls often considered their appearance important in making them who they were, rules around appearance frequently became contentious, leading some girls to feel stripped of their female identity:

*'You can't be girls in here. You can't do jack shit. You can't wear girly clothes [...] skirts, nice tops, boob tubes, you can't wear them!'* (Abbie)

By undressing and redressing the girls, Hillside sought to restore them to 'innocent' and asexual children (Lorber and Farrell 1991). Indeed, the image of thirteen year old Abbie in a short skirt, low top and stilettos did not fit into adult notions of idealised childhood (Castañeda 2002). Therefore, in forcing the girls to wear trousers and loose fitting clothing, Hillside forbade girls to inhabit the costumes of the 'knowing' sexually active teenager. Discussions with some of the girls revealed that clothing choices were something that previous adult carers had also attempted to appropriate:

*'Someone had a go about the way I dress, and the way she said it, it was like all the staff seemed to think that [...] They said that if they'd been sexually exploited that they wouldn't be wearing clothes that would attract men. I was like, 'woah, what are you actually thinking? Where is that actually coming from?' I didn't even used to dress provocative and things still happened, so it's not about what you wear and they say 'well if that happened to me then I wouldn't want to look provocative for men.'* (Lola)

This statement from Lola is a powerful one, and indeed aptly questions societal motivations in prescribing blame for sexual exploitation. This leads us to question the motivation for dressing young people asexually and recalls Castañeda's (2002) argument that adults preoccupation with children's clothing stems from the fear of their own feelings of inappropriate desire. The girls were encouraged to clothe themselves appropriately to avoid stirring the desire of adult men and, indeed, Lola felt that she was blamed for being abused because of the way in which she dressed (Green, 2005:473). So, as well as hiding their bodies to detract male adults, the girls also felt that they had to be covered up to hide their bodies from the boys in the unit. The girls were therefore given the message that they had to appropriate their behaviour and make their bodies less desirable (Barter 2006).

*[They say] 'It's not 'appropriate'. It's because there are stupid bastard dumb boys in this shit hole [...] on the out I'd wear long skirts, short skirts [...] I even wore shirts with holes in the back of them.'* (Abbie)

Although the mixing of girls and boys in the criminal justice system does not happen in any other type of institution, the branding of secure units as Local Authority Secure Children's Homes (LASCH) means that girls and boys are housed together. Furthermore, as we have explored in previous chapters, it is quite possible that a boy criminally sentenced for rape can be

placed with a girl who has been held under a section 25 welfare order (Goldson 2002; O'Neill 2001). Although the concerns of this are real, it has been justified by claiming that all children in secure care have similar backgrounds and all are children in need of care (Harris and Timms 1993b). However, research by O'Neill (2001) found that although mixing girls who had been abused with boys who had acted as abusers was seen as being therapeutic to the boys, the same experience was seen as being detrimental to the girls:

*'They've got to be able to mix at some point [...] the person who's in for rape has got to face that situation.'* (Care worker in O'Neill 2001:154)

In order to resocialise boys into appropriate ways of treating girls, male residents were often reprimanded for being impolite towards fellow female residents. Often reprimands were prompted by contraventions of gendered social etiquette. For instance, boys were told that criticising a woman's weight or asking a woman her age were not appropriate. Inadvertently boys were taught, by male staff, that girls were over sensitive and needed looking after, whilst girls were taught, by female staff, that boys were stupid and often made hurtful comments because they were too stupid to know better.

*Brittany is at the hatch choosing a dessert.  
Oliver shouts, 'you're putting on weight Brittany!'  
Brittany glares at Oliver but MOS-Darren quickly intervenes, 'Oliver, never say that in the dining room and especially NEVER say that to a woman!'  
Oliver apologises.  
Brittany chooses yogurt instead of the cake she was admiring.  
Later Brittany sobs about it and MOS-Dawn tells her, 'it's just a stupid man thing to say, try and ignore him!'* (Fieldnotes)

So although it has been argued that mixing the sexes together acts as a socialising lesson to both (O'Neill 2001), the girls felt that they were the subjected to more social learning than the boys. Indeed, rather than feeling that they were teaching the boys how to act appropriately around women, the girls instead felt that they were being taught to regulate their dress sense so that they did not 'lead the boys on' (Sanders 2005):

*'You're not allowed to wear shorts or short skirts or owt like that [...] it's because we live with boys.'* (Daisy)

The idea that girls should take responsibility for the sexual desires of men is one that has been deeply imbedded in society and walking the 'tightrope of femininity' between 'easy' and 'frigid' whilst ensuring that men do not 'take it too far' has been the responsibility of girls and women for decades (Barter 2006; Chambers, Tincknell, and Van Loon 2004; Griffin 1993; Kitzinger 1995; Lees 1986; Lees 2002). The idea that girls should 'police' the behaviours of boys was also found in the local authority care system for children:

*'Boys are positioned as being doubly victimized: victims of both female provocation and their own hormonally driven sexuality [...] thus, girls require regulation, while boys are in need of protection (from girls and themselves).'* (Barter 2006:352)

Hayley too felt that girls were judged for their sexual behaviour much more readily than boys, stating that girls often ended in secure accommodation for issues relating to 'sexual exploitation' when similar behaviours were ignored when shown by boys:

*'There are not many boys who are here on welfare [...] girls get 'sexual exploitation' but boys don't. Boys just get it easier in life altogether [...] most girls I know that have been in a secure unit have been here for sexual exploitation and running away, like I am.'*

*But boys usually come under totally different circumstances, like if their family don't care about them, or neglect or something like that.' (Hayley)*

### ***Learning Femininity***

If an aim of Hillside Lodge was to form female residents into 'respectable' girls who did not encourage boys to pursue them, it was surprising to find that girls were also criticised when they did not seek to 'make the most' of their appearance. For example, Natalie was a self professed tomboy and who refused to wear make-up and wore tracksuits and t-shirts. Instead of being praised for following Hillside rules around 'appropriate' dress, Natalie was instead openly criticised for not making 'an effort' to look nice:

*'Natalie needs to put more effort in with her appearance because when she does she has attracted positive comments. She has recently had her hair cut by the visiting hairdresser. She had her hair dyed by a member of staff and this looks good.'* (Extract from Natalie's case file)

Therefore, it appears that the unit was seeking to form a particular type of girl, one who is 'sugar and spice and all things nice'. So although Natalie conformed to Hillside rules, she did not conform to Hillside ideals about appropriate girlhood. Therefore, attempts were made to resocialise girls into 'proper' girly girls (Hochschild 1983:163). This was illustrated in staff notes which positively referenced girls who 'improved' their appearance, and especially in relation to girls being 'nicer' and 'more girly'. In turn, the 'nice' girl also seemed to be one who dressed as a 'girl' rather than a tomboy or a 'ladette' (Jackson 2006):

*'YOT staff watched Robyn transform from a tomboy to having a more feminine image and beginning to wear make-up [...] It has been visually noticed by staff but also documented that Robyn*

*appears to be dressing and walking like a young woman now and that her body language is much softer'*  
(From Robyn's case file)

It becomes apparent therefore that femininity was not something that young people and staff agreed on, and whilst the girls themselves felt that being feminine was making the most of their bodies, through make-up and tight fitting fashion clothes, staff styled idealised femininity in terms of being 'soft' and demure (Hudson 1984). Due to this, the ritual stripping of resident identities was difficult for girls to accept and proved to be one of the most contentious debates between the girls and their carers (Goffman 1961). However, carers genuinely believed that they were doing the best for the girls in their care, and rather than simply confining their appearances to create tension, the staff believed that they were educating the girls about staying safe:

*'I got told that I'm not allowed to wear red lipstick, and that's like my trademark. I said, 'well I have red nails, red clothes and red hair, so why not red lips?' [...] prostitutes! I think that's what it is.'* (Lola)

In this way, it was possible that the staff, as adults, restricted young people's behaviour based on their own ideas about sexually explicit connotations:

*'May they indeed not be afraid simply for the little girls and perverted paedophiles, but also with the problem of their own, so confused, both suppressed and ever present, desire?'* (Walkerdine 1997:167)

Although Lola felt that staff attributed young people's clothing choices to their experiences of sexual abuse, it was clear that Hillside staff did not



share the view that any of the girls were sexually predatory. Indeed, staff frequently expressed outrage at the treatment the girls had received prior to placement in Hillside. In these discussions, staff described the girls as innocent children who had been corrupted, and never as predatory beings:

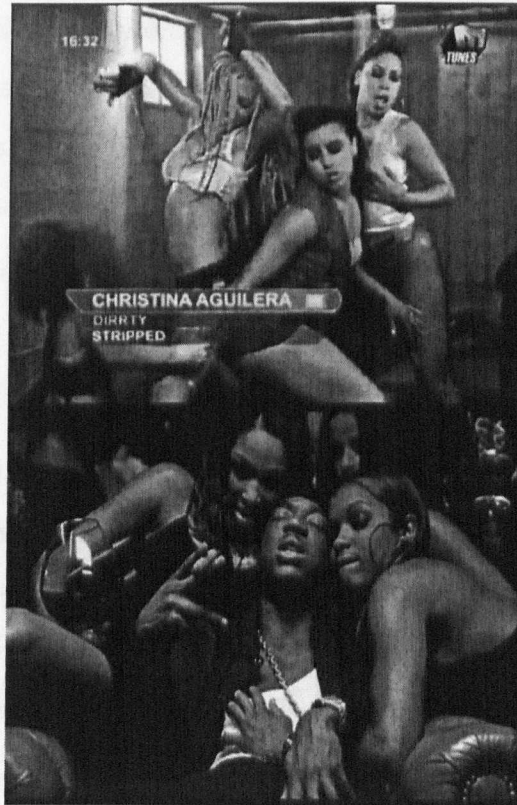
*'men should look at her and think 'no', just from looking at her face they should be able to look at her and think 'no, you're just a baby', her structure, her build, her face [...] because she's big breasted and curvy, she looks like an adult, but if you look in her face, you must know she's a baby.'* (MOS-Alfie)

Despite being told that they should strive for the contrary, to be seen as being sexually attractive for boys was something that was important to the girls. Furthermore, although Hillside operated as a temporal space, glimpses of 'normal' everyday life crept into the daily fabric of Hillside, mainly because much of the limited free time at Hillside was spent watching music channels on television (Blakeborough 2008). However, usually without exception, the content of most of the music videos was sexually charged with frequent discriminatory remarks made towards the scantily dressed dancing girls, such as 'bitch' and 'hoe'. For the Hillside girls, the viewing of these videos raised questions about staff assertions that their clothes were 'inappropriate'. The content of the videos also made some of the girls question the validity of the messages that Hillside was offering them about their apparent 'inappropriate' sexual relationships outside the unit:

*[The rapper] 'Akon for instance, [sings] 'smack that. #I see you winding and grinding up on that pole, I see you looking at me and you already know, I wanna fuck you'#. Does he actually think about her? It's her job. She's probably doing that job because she has three kids at home that need feeding. She doesn't want to have sex with every man she meets, even if he is famous! I hate it. Its bit like hiring a hooker, or an escort should I say [...] When I first heard that song 'Candy Shop' #I'll let you lick the lolly pop#. I was like 'you can't*

*be serious'. Ugh! Don't get me started because I can go on forever about that! (Lola)*

Indeed, Lola was incredibly knowledgeable about life in the sex industry, and certainly, her past experiences qualified her opinions to be based on facts. Since all free time was controlled and items were vetted by their level of appropriateness, it was surprising that such videos were permitted. Furthermore, the cultural messages transmitted by the television reiterated particular messages about appeal and sexual appropriateness (Coy 2010). Girls were thus able to see that scantily dressed girls were celebrated as being attractive or 'fit' by both male carers and male residents. Indeed male responses towards these sexualised images of women undermined the arguments made about the appropriateness of girls own actions 'on the out'. The sexual imagery detailed in such videos acted as powerful contradiction to the messages that carers strived to teach the girls about the ways in which they had lived their lives before Hillside. So, for girls who had been working in lap dancing clubs and working as prostitutes, the message that this vocation was unacceptable as a life choice was suddenly diluted by the celebration of glamorous women doing exactly that.



*(Typical music videos shown on the main television in the lounge)*

The girls' notions of acceptable 'girlhood' was not indifferent from the cultural notions that surround them in their 'outside' lives (Blakeborough 2008; Coy and Horvath 2010). It seems then, rather than discouraging the sexual exploitation of all women, Hillside seemed concerned with the sexual exploitation of children. Hence while it was seemingly acceptable for women to appear naked to receive the admiration of the male staff, it was strongly discouraged that girls emulated this behaviour, since as chapter eight illustrated, the girls were seen as children. Therefore the messages to girls were clear, they could act in the ways in which they had been accustomed before entering Hillside, but only once they had 'grown up'. In this sense, Hillside Lodge acted within the culture in which it is set (Walkerdine 1997). By reasserting the message that girls must refrain from 'sleeping around', or from wearing suggestive clothing and red lipstick,

Hillside attempted to reduce girls' sexual knowledge and return them to the status of an innocent child (Kitzinger 1988). Indeed, much of what young people were supposed to be forgetting was that they were sexual beings.

### ***The Private Body***

As well as restricting residents' physical appearances, Hillside rules also stipulated that girls were restricted in their management of their naked bodies too. All of the girls interviewed for the research were post pubescent and all were in the habit of shaving their underarms and legs before they entered the unit. However, due to the prevalence of self harm, razors were forbidden and girls were issued hair removal cream instead. Most of the girls were critical of the cream and were angry that they were not permitted to use razors, especially since the male residents were:

*'They're allowed a razor, but we're not. But I can't use hair removal cream because I've got really bad eczema [...] it's weird that I'm not allowed and the guys are.'* (Daisy)

When girls reached 'graduate' status, they were permitted to buy a 'lady shaver' from their personal finances. However, young people were critical of these too:

*'I can have a razor in here, but it's just them lady shavers and I don't like lady shavers, they don't get your hairs properly and it hurts when it gets them, like tweezers.'* (Brittany)

For the girls who had not yet reached graduate status, removing body hair was more complicated, *'Natalie's supervised now [...] for her legs and her armpits, because she's on proper supervision, she can't shave anywhere*

*else'* (Brittany). Although most of the girls agreed that it would be embarrassing to allow staff to see their naked bodies, Natalie used her body to embarrass members of staff. For instance, when she is denied a lady shaver, she asks staff to shave her body hair instead. Hence despite being on 'high risk', Natalie was able to keep her body groomed as she wanted. Brittany recounts the tale with horror, *'she gets them to do it! I'd feel uncomfortable [...] It's my personal body'* (Brittany).

When girls lacked confidence and preferred not to discuss their personal needs with members of staff, the use of euphemisms sparked confusion, and sometimes misled carers of girls' intentions. For instance, Abbie was embarrassed to talk to staff about her personal needs and rather than describing what she wanted, she politely referred to her 'down below'. As a result, Abbie's intention of trimming her bikini line became misconstrued to the extent that MOS-Anna believed that Abbie wanted to remove all of her pubic hair and hence withheld access to a razor:

*'You can't be girls in here, you can't even shave your bits [...] I REALLY need a lady shave because I don't want my down belows looking like a bloody bush! Yesterday, when I was in the shower, I tried pulling them out. I tried grabbing one hair, just getting one by itself and just pulling it, and the root comes out as well but it bloody hurts! I asked MOS-Borris if I could have a lady shave and he was asking why and MOS-Anna comes out being the big bitch that she is and starts asking me why I want one and I said 'I need one' and she said I have to use veet and I told her 'I can't use veet for the part that I need doing' and she's being all bitchy [...] I'll just have to yank it out, I got quite a few out yesterday but it really killed.'* (Abbie)

Hence by taking control of young people's private body, Hillside takes the last part of their external 'identity kit' (Goffman 1961:29). For girls who were unwilling to co-operate in the system of mortification involved in

personal grooming, a new reformation of a particular Hillside identity was created which could be presented with humour, *'I ain't even bothered about having hairy legs, me, it keeps me warm'* (Hayley).

As well as appropriating girls' clothes choices and make up applications, Hillside sought to manage its residents' personal bodies too. Since Hillside staff had access to resident medical records, they had access to private information that young people would not usually choose to share with others. For example, Chantelle loaned her towel to another resident but was reprimanded and humiliated in front of other residents:

*'There's being upfront, and then there's being God damned rude. She just said, 'You're not allowed to use that towel because you've got that rash'. People aren't going to catch my rash, because it's a stress rash [...] but she's telling me about my rash [...] four doctors have told me, and two nurses, that it's a stress rash, she ain't a qualified doctor. (Chantelle)*

Despite being medically unqualified, MOS-Terri discredits Chantelle's analysis of her own condition and make it likely that other residents would not believe Chantelle's diagnosis. Girls' periods were also a topic of discussion for staff and if girls tried to excuse behaviour citing 'women's troubles' they could be discredited by being informed that their period was not due. Periods were often discussed in staff handover meetings and staff were aware when the girls were on their period and when they were due a period. Menstruating was linked by staff to emotionality and staff frequently connected overly emotional responses to girls' menstrual cycles (Leonard 1982):

*'Brittany got tearful and emotional, she said she was on her period so I don't know if this had anything to do with it or not.'* (MOS-Harry)

Periods were also an issue for discussion throughout the day and some girls used their period as a means of excusing their behaviour or to escape a PE lesson. In this way, 'PMT' became a joke aimed at anyone who was offhanded:

*Ashley shouts at Callum, 'don't bite my head off! Have you got PMT?'*

Female staff did make a special effort to be protective of girls suffering from 'women's troubles':

*Brittany glares at MOS-Alfie 'don't wind me up MOS-Alfie, I'm on my period'. He holds up his hands 'okay, okay, okay, I'm sorry'.  
(Fieldnotes)*

Staff were more knowledgeable about girls' bodies than the girls knew. However, some of the girls reported that they found being a girl helpful at times, especially in attempts to conceal objects from male members of staff. For instance, Robyn reported hiding sharp pieces of plastic in her sock so that she could self harm in her en-suite bathroom, and, since cigarettes were *strictly* prohibited in Hillside, Chantelle and Hayley used their bras to smuggle in cigarettes and a lighter following a court appearance:

*'They were feeling my bra and they said 'what's that?' and I went 'padding' and they believed me [...] and then when I got to court, my mum passed me a lighter and I put it in my bra, then when they said 'why's the metal detected beeping' I said it's my bra wires. And I got away with it for five days! I smoked a lot.'* (Hayley)

## ***Gender Identity***

Although most members of staff believed themselves to be broad minded and politically correct, some undoubtedly brought their own prejudices into Hillside with them (Paul 2004). Although staff came to the unit from a variety of personal and professional backgrounds, most were certain about the types of behaviours that were inappropriate for girls to display:

*'Robyn's more boy than girl because she doesn't know girly things, do you know what I mean? She operates like a boy [...] it's all sexual. Whereas you can accept if a guy's being very sexual toward you, you can accept that more than a girl being sexual towards you.'*  
(MOS-Darren)

In line with this, and due to the fact that some of the girls had been accused of being sexually predatory in the past, Lola and others were nervous about seeming provocative towards male members of staff. For Lola, the insistence that male staff had to 'be careful' around her, was upsetting and frustrating:

*'In my old secure, I got accused of being over friendly with the male staff because he came and sat down next to me and I smiled at him right, so I got like proper bollocked because the woman was a proper bitch and basically she said, 'Lola, we know why you're here and we have just got to be careful' and I was like 'What? I'm going to rape him now am I?!' I was like 'excuse me, I'm here because men have being abusing me, not because I have being abusing them you silly cow!' (Lola)*

The view that Lola might have been predatory had a deep impact on Lola. Even in her subsequent placement at Hillside Lodge, Lola was wary of being alone with male staff and of hugging men who were 'seen as the attractive males' out of fear that she would be accused again. Lola demonstrates her attempts to manage male emotions through the presentation of her own



body. She is therefore taught to control her emotions and to self govern her actions in order to protect herself from the desires of others:

*'I don't tend to hug certain male members of staff, like I'll hug the fatherly ones, but, like MOS-Tom, MOS-Mark, they're seen as the 'attractive' males and all the girls fancy them. I just think 'goofy' but because everyone else likes them, I don't feel comfortable hugging them. I have hugged MOS-Mark, but only when I was really upset. Like I couldn't have a laugh with him and then hug him, that'd be weird.'* (Lola)

Hillside staff tried to make an effort to challenge the ideas that young people had about men and women and therefore sought to resocialise girls into a view of femininity which challenged gender typecasting. Indeed, female Hillside staff in particular felt that they should show girls a strong and assertive female role model:

*'MOS-Benny and MOS-Alfie are very positive role models, definitely. I think it's fantastic. They see men in that light you know, a caring kind of way but they also see women in a more stronger role, because if you think about where they've come from, and I know I might be generalising, but their mothers in the family unit are quite weak and maybe get beaten up and do drugs or drink or don't really have much power over what's going on. So I think it's really good to see the other side of it, women making decisions and enforcing decisions and bantering with the blokes.'* (MOS-Jayne)

Staff maintained that their own relationships with other Hillside employees offered residents positive examples of conflict resolution, demonstrating that disagreements did not have to lead to violence. However, in contrast to the view of the strong and independent woman that some members of staff strove to display, other members were instrumental in inadvertently strengthening sexist gender norms:

*Brittany tells the group, 'my ex used to beat me up. When my boyfriend comes out [of prison], he's going to knock him out!' MOS-Anna interjects, 'well, I don't think that anyone should ever hit a woman, but I don't think battering him is the way to deal with it!' (From fieldnotes)*

Discussions staged by staff to encourage a respect of 'diversity' showed that although racist and religious discrimination were taken seriously, sexism was still treated as a light-hearted subject:

*MOS-Mark starts off, 'cleaning is usually all female, whereas you don't see many female formula one drivers!'*

*MOS-Tal adds, 'there are no famous male models, that's because women are good at standing around doing nothing.'*

*Some of the boys laugh and the female care workers groan.*

*MOS-Mark tells the group that being discriminated against can be hurtful and that it can have damaging effects on people. He uses the example of over publicised male offending, 'boys get into more trouble than girls'*

*The boys call out that it is a myth, and he assures them by claiming, 'yes, there has been a massive rise in female crime!'*

*(From fieldnotes)*

As the exchange above shows, sexism was something that male staff felt acceptable to joke about. The most contradictory point however, was the apparent rejection of the media 'scare mongering' about teenage boys in conflict with the easily believable counter mongering that 'girls have got worse' (Jackson 2006), despite the fact that female offenders make up only 4.9% of the prison population<sup>15</sup>. After the 'diversity' discussion, gender stereotyping continued:

*Natalie is unhappy to be told that as a girl, she must have a pink poster with a puppy on as a reward for competing in the 'diversity*

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<sup>15</sup> Prison Population & Accommodation Briefing 04/02/2011

<http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/resourcecentre/publicationsdocuments/index.asp?cat=85>

*debate'. Instead she wants a black pirate poster: 'I don't want a puppy in my room. I want a pirate poster!'*

*MOS-Mark explains 'I only have enough pirate posters for the boys, and they won't want a pink puppy will they!' I unethically step in and ask (with a grin) 'can you say that after a discrimination debate?' He laughs, 'I know, it's bad isn't it!'*

*Natalie repeats, 'I am not having a puppy poster'. MOS-Mark relents and gives Natalie a pirate poster. Together we carry the posters through to the rest of the young people - Callum and Ashley immediately reach for a puppy poster.  
(From fieldnotes)*

## **Girls Against Girls**

Much of the literature around secure accommodation focuses on the contentious issue of mixing girls and boys in one unit (Goldson 2002; O'Neill 2001; Harris and Timms 1993). However, within Hillside, it was almost unanimously agreed that mixing was a good idea and responses aligned with research by O'Neill (2001:155) who felt that mixing worked because it emulated the 'real world':

*'We live in a world where we have brothers and sisters, aunties and uncles, mums and dads and we go into the workplace which is mixed [...] boys can abuse boys and girls can abuse girls. I don't really see why there's an argument to separate them.'* (MOS-Dawn)

However, after only a little discussion, it became clear that the real reason for the positive response for mixing boys and girls together was that the prominence of boys in the unit diluted the impact of the girls. That is, both young people and staff agreed that having only girls in a unit '*would be a nightmare*' since girls are naturally bitchy and mean (McRobbie 1979):

*'A lot of us think for God's sake, just give us eight boys because they're easier and there's no bitching, no talking about each other, no nail sharpening.'* (MOS-Terri)

*'There is like bitchiness and all that [...] I get on with lads better than I do girls.'* (Gracie)

*[Being with boys is] 'better than being mixed with girls, they're all mardy.'* (Freya)

However, when girls talked about individual residents, it appeared actually that girls did get on better with each other than they did with boys, despite the overall view they had of girls in general:

*'I get on really, really well with Robyn, she's lovely. She is ace. And Hayley, I love Hayley to bits. Like Hayley will do my nails and my hair and I'll do hers and we'll go to the gym together'* (Chantelle)

*'I love Chantelle, she's mint. I do like her, her and Hayley. I think she's dead, dead nice. Gracie is funny, I love Gracie. I think she's mint.'* (Lola)

Observations also showed that girls argued far more frequently with boys in the unit:

*'Lewis is just a little shit, I don't get on with him at all. And Peter, he's funny sometimes, but mostly he's just a little shit!'* (Lola)

*'I hate every one of them! The boys are really weird, boys are pathetic [...] Sometimes Callum calls me a fat bitch and when Oliver was here, he used to be a right verbal little cow!'* (Abbie)

Even so, and despite being friends with individual girls, most participants still maintained that they did not like 'girls, in general'.

*'I don't like girls. I don't get on with girls.'* (Robyn)

*'You still hear them saying 'Oh I don't like girls, but you're alright Hayley, you're alright Robyn, you're alright'.* (MOS-Jayne)

Care workers believed that girls were reluctant to be friends with other girls initially because they had a low self esteem and were jealous of what the other girls had:

*'It's like well you do like girls, it's just obviously their self-esteem. I took Chantelle out on mobility and two girls a similar age walked past us, they were very slim, very well-dressed. And she's like 'I don't like girls, they're snobby'. And I was like 'Well I'm a girl', she's like 'Yeah, you're snobby then' (laughs), 'All girls are snobby' (laughs). It's crazy but they do get along really well with each other, most of the time.'* (MOS-Jayne)

*'I think because girls go through mild body dysmorphia, where they don't like something about themselves and it magnifies onto everybody else and they'll see somebody who's thinner than them, and opposed to saying, 'God, I wish I had a figure like hers' they don't at that age because they don't know how to express that, so they just bitch about each other [...] girls are naturally bitchy until they get older.'* (MOS-Terri)

Even when girls had seemingly parallel case files, they often did not see similarities with one another and were able to pick out small differences which they thought set them apart. For instance, Hayley explains why, as a fourteen year old prostitute, she was in a very different position from

Abbie, a thirteen year old prostitute with a similar history of abuse and violence:

*'I said to her 'At least I don't let men take advantage of me'. I know that it's happening but she doesn't. Like she thinks her boyfriend loves her and he doesn't. Not at all.'* (Hayley)

It was surprising to find that girls preferred being with boys, especially given that many of the girls had been seriously abused by men. Lola was more wary than most:

*'I still think that men are idiots. I don't think I could change the way I think about men, the guys here are really nice but I don't know them well enough. Like if I'm sat in a room with them on my own, I don't think 'shit' but I don't feel 100% comfortable.'* (Lola)

In opposition to a typical 'girly girl' staff saw Hillside girls as those who had transgressed gender norms, aligning them as tomboys who had chosen to emulate male traits instead of female ones (Heidensohn 1997):

*'Most of the girls here have always hung around with a group of lads. For want of a better word, they're tomboys aren't they? Robyn's a tomboy. Robyn's more boy than girl because she doesn't know girly things, she operates like a boy, do you know what I mean, it's all sexual.'* (MOS-Darren)

Only one member of the Hillside care team felt that they preferred working with girls, despite the 'bitching':

*'I like having the girls on the unit, I can handle the bitching and stuff like that. You don't get many girls who are as violent as boys and I prefer that. They'll be more bitchy and louder, but I feel that you get your point across easier to girls. With boys you've got this testosterone, you've got this fight, you've got who's hard and you've*

*got to try and get through all that before you get to the real person. Girls are a lot easier, easier to talk to.'* (MOS-Darren)

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has explored the understandings and social constructions of femininity and has shown that Hillside seeks to offer girls a certain type of girlhood, which is separate from popular culture and is foreign to the girlhood in which the girls are familiar. In this way, Hillside girls are encouraged to embody the body of childhood and girlhood, rather than that of womanhood. The repercussions of this can be seen in the way that girls strive to 'grow up' and to reach sixteen in order to display their preferred femininity. Of course this type of teaching does not enhance girls' feelings of empowerment, or deconstruct the subjectification of women in Western culture. Indeed, rather than attempting to empower girls, Hillside undermines its own messages around girls selling themselves and their bodies. In addition, by offering an idealised view of femininity, Hillside encourages the girls to leave their pasts behind and to relearn girlhood. Of course lives cannot be un-lived and knowledge cannot be unknown (Berridge 2006). Therefore the girls fought against this view of alternative girlhood and instead suggested that they would abide by Hillside rules, but only as long as they were placed at Hillside Lodge.

Hillside therefore tries to remake its female residents into girls who are innocent and girly. However, since the girls are unable to unlive past experiences, attempts to reshape them from young women into unknowing and innocent girls are unsuccessful. These findings illustrate that Hillside sometimes acted as a contradictory setting for its residents and therefore, in order to be a successful resident, girls had to embody

different personas at different times (Goffman 1959). The next chapter will explore attempts that girls made to take control of their Hillside experience and will consider them as agentic beings, able to circumnavigate and influences the formal structures around them.



## **Chapter Ten: Control within the Contradiction**

### ***Introduction***

In response to the assumption that 'children will do as they are told by whichever adult assumes to have authority over them', this chapter considers children as agentic social beings, able influence people and circumstances around them (Thomas 2000). This chapter will link to work in childhood studies (James and James 2004; James and Prout 1998) which stipulates that children should be regarded as 'subjects and not as objects' (Thomas 2000). This chapter will consider the specific power hierarchy of Hillside Lodge while keeping in mind that the girls within this study are both in the position of 'the incarcerated' and as well as that of 'child' or 'minor'. Hillside girls were therefore doubly disempowered. However, as this chapter will illustrate, although one would expect Hillside's power structures to position young people firmly at the bottom, residents were able to gain a proportion of control for themselves. Through the use of mediation and negotiation, residents found that they were about to influence parts of their Hillside experience by either overt or covert means (Liebling 2000). Indeed, as Foucault himself asserted, 'where there is power, there is resistance' (Foucault 1991). This chapter will therefore explore children's agency and will examine how Hillside residents were able to turn the strict and careful regime of Hillside Lodge to suit their own individual needs when they felt it was necessary.

### ***Playing the game: Passive Agency***

This section will consider the issue of passive agency in secure accommodation and will explore young people's attempts at 'playing the game' (Goffman 1961:151). Since Hillside rules were presented to all

residents upon arrival, young people were immediately aware of the behaviour that staff expected them to display. Staff were open and honest about the behaviour that they were seeking and openly praised residents who acted accordingly. Young people considered to get along 'best' at Hillside, and who quickly won the respect and sympathy of the staff, were those who followed the rules without argument. Therefore, showing compliance and acceptance were key factors of being seen as a 'good' resident (Foucault 1991). As well as complying with Hillside rules, Hillside girls were also expected to believe in the foundations of these rules, and as a result, to be reformed into moral citizens capable of remorse and genuine regret (Sherman 2003). For instance, because Brittany was charged for committing a violent crime, staff expected her to *feel* sorry for her actions and although she agrees, under duress, to write a formal apology to her victim, Brittany is chastised for not *feeling* sorry (Karstedt 2006).

Hillside residents were expected to alter their feelings as well as their words, but 'playing' the part of a good resident was not the same as becoming a good resident (Goffman 1961). So, when their feelings did not equate to the feelings that they were expected to have, some young people admitted 'surface acting' and pretending to feel the way in which staff hoped (Hochschild 1983). By playing the part of a compliant resident, many of the girls were able to act along with the regime without embodying its messages and ideals (Goffman 1959). Goffman terms this as 'playing the game' since residents essentially recognise and negotiate the system without conforming to its aims (Goffman 1961).

Appearing to adhere to rules and to embody Hillside ideals was important to the girls since many of them believed that those who acted 'appropriately' would be permitted to leave the unit earlier than those who resisted. Although this was not the case, residents believed that completing therapeutic tasks would equate to professionals considering them cured (Goffman 1961:202):

*'Do as you're told and just cooperate. Don't argue, just chill and have the right attitude [...] just do as you're told and cooperate and then you can get out fast.'* (Lauren)

When they first entered the unit, early release was the desired outcome for most of girls. Therefore, most stated that they would 'act' the part of a compliant resident to ensure a speedy release. Staff were aware that this sometimes happened, although they never offered an example of someone they perceived as 'playing the game'. Instead they referred to a minority of young people who they believed were paying 'lip service' to the intervention packages that they received. In this way, some of the girls were able to 'surface act' and hide their 'real' emotions from staff (Hochschild 1983). Even so, these young people *did* participate in the intervention packages that were designed for them and thereby partook in the learning that the professionals placing them had intended:

*'Obviously I just don't want to be here. I'd rather be locked in my room 24/7 than participate in activities but obviously I have to cooperate or otherwise it doesn't look good by me. So I just cooperate.'* (Lauren)

In order to persuade staff that they were participating and embracing Hillside rules, residents had to maintain a pretence of conformity at all times. Those who were effective at playing the game would apologise

when prompted and accept responsibility for behaviour that they had not felt to be inappropriate. Those who were effective at playing the game were able to present a calm exterior despite raging inside: *'I just always smile'* (Gabriella).

In addition to the constant monitoring at Hillside, keywork sessions formed an emotional space where young people were questioned and 'tested' about their motivations. Although most daily conversations were monitored and reported, keywork discussions were afforded an increased credibility and were written up and placed in resident case files. Keywork sessions offered girls one-to-one time with staff, and often covered sensitive topics which prompted girls to think about traumatic and upsetting times in their lives. These sessions therefore created space in which staff felt sympathetic and protective towards young people (Christensen 2000):

*'I love MOS-Anna [in my keywork session] I was crying but she wun't let me go [...] she just laid there cuddling me and I said 'I'm alright' and she said 'no Hayley, I'm not letting go of you', and she was like going mwa and kissing my head' (Hayley)*

Since the feelings of care and concern expressed by members of staff frequently occurred within keywork meetings, it was in these times that the girls had to act their hardest to convince staff of their sincere motivations (Hochschild 1979). Keywork meetings were conducted by preferred members of staff, and those who had often shown feelings of care towards young people, most of the girls were uneasy about 'acting' with those who they felt had befriended them. Therefore, when they were asked about their participation in keywork sessions, most of the girls said that they were usually honest with their keyworker. Even so, most were

aware of the professional boundaries separating keyworkers from 'real' friends and demonstrated that, at times, it was necessary to hold things back in keywork sessions. Indeed, most were able to think of an instance of when they had 'fibbed' or downplayed a situation in order to avoid further professional intervention:

*'Like I'll say 'I'm not going to do drugs no more, but what I say in here to get me out of here and what I do when I get out of here ain't the same thing.'* (Chantelle)

Staff were aware that young people sometimes withheld information from them, and staff notes in young people's case files illustrated perceived 'fibs' and highlighted them for other members of staff to work on later. In this way, it was difficult for young people to hide information indefinitely.

*'When I asked her how she funded her drug use, she said that she shared when friends got some and that she knew dealers who would supply her, apparently for free. Hayley, I believe, was choosing not to tell me the whole truth.'*  
(Note in Hayley's file)

Since part of the unit was focussed on reform and correcting criminal behaviour, for those who had been sentenced, victim awareness packages were a large part of the intervention work provided. Although some girls did express genuine regret about the crimes that they had been sentenced for, others seemed only to regret that they had been caught and subsequently sentenced. For those who did not regret their past crimes, playing the game included withholding certain information that wouldn't be welcomed by professionals. For instance, showing regret and willingness to change were seen as desirable qualities for young people to have, so during her 'victim awareness' package, Brittany expressed regret to her keyworker despite feeling that she had not acted wrongly:

*'I'm doing this victim awareness thing and it's like right crap really because you have to put yourself in the victims shoes [...] they asked me if I would go into a room with the person I assaulted, and I said 'no' [...] I would batter him again [...] but I like say, 'yeah I am sorry and I won't do it again' and put myself in their shoes just to get it over and done with quick. I don't see why we have to do it. I blame him for me being in here.'* (Brittany)

Most of the girls knew what was expected of them as a Hillside resident and knew that whilst placed in a criminal and reformatory institution, they were expected to conform to societal norms where it is not judged 'moral' or 'right' to feel satisfaction in beating someone (Kardsted 2006:229). Although most of the girls knew that they were expected to show shame and regret (Scheff 1988), it is not to say that their outward actions always reflected their internal feelings. Playing the part of the passive and compliant citizen was difficult, and because the gaze at Hillside was omnipresent, girls had to constantly monitor their behaviour so that neither bodily nor facial expressions gave away their 'real' and hidden emotions (Gordon 1989). For instance, as Rhianna explains, to convince someone that you are 'sorry', it is necessary to also appear sorry and regretful. Scowling betrays the emotional impact of the apology:

*'I'll like say 'yes, I've had a think' but because I frown, MOS-Mark will say 'well obviously you're not ready, take another twenty minutes, ra ra ra' so I'm on the corridor for another twenty minutes.'* (Rhianna)

When residents were unable to hide inappropriate emotions, they experienced what Goffman described as 'looping', and were punished further for displaying behaviour that might act as a 'face-saving reactive expression' for them, but was perceived as disobedience by the institution:

*'The individual finds that his protective response to an assault upon self is collapsed into the situation; he cannot defend himself in the usual way by establishing distance between the mortifying situation and himself' (Goffman 1961:41)*

Residents had to create a mask of compliance in the event of disagreements with other residents. While in an open institution one can remove oneself from stressful or upsetting situations, in a total institution, one is held at the mercy of those with power. Indeed, as Lola explains, a request for time out had to be verbally requested and justified before it was accepted or rejected depending on staff opinion. Hence residents were made to stay 'on stage' and were not permitted to vent their emotions unseen and in private (McCahill and Finn 2010). Keeping the mask of 'compliant child' in place could be a testing matter, and one that was not easily maintained:

*'You can't even open a door, so if you're getting stressed, or vexed, you can't open a door to just go out and get some fresh air, like you have to say 'can you please open the door to let me out, I need to cool down' [...], they're like 'why? why? You need to give us a reason why' and I say 'because I feel like I need to punch someone' and they go 'yes, but why? Why?' You're like 'it could be you'.'* (Lola)

Spatial control was something that young people found most difficult to negotiate and both Abbie and Lola reported that they had 'kicked off' in order to be removed from the group and hence allowed to be alone in their bedrooms like they had wanted:

*'Yesterday I wanted to go to my room, I was proper upset and I just wanted to go to my room all day and it was 8:45pm and I still wasn't allowed to go to my room so I had to literally get myself sent to my room [...] I just started shouting and swearing at staff and they said 'right Lola, you're going to have to go to your room' and I said 'oh, go to my room! I've only being trying to get in there for the last six hours!'* (Lola)

However, if young people were not careful to keep their motives hidden, staff quickly sought to find sanctions that would withhold the desired outcome away from the resident. For instance, because Abbie liked being sent to her room because it meant that she could get away from the other young people, staff ensured that Abbie's were served with the group instead of in her bedroom:

*'Abbie's behaviour has become heightened, Abbie states that this is due to her wanting a red card. Abbie is choosing to behave in this manner and is manipulating the situation to suit her.'* (From Abbie's case file)

As much as Hillside residents felt that they were being scrutinised by staff, staff also felt that they were under constant scrutiny too (Foucault 1991). Young people permanently watched for rule breakers, and furthermore, took delight in exposing rule breaking behaviour (Goffman 1961):

*MOS-Alfie drops something, he utters the word 'shit' under his breath and is immediately reminded by Natalie, 'staff are meant to be role models'.*  
(From fieldnotes)

Residents who questioned staff authority were quickly counteracted and given a different set of 'aims' to meet on a daily basis. Therefore each time Natalie questioned staff actions, she lost points, making it harder for her to become 'a graduate', hence demonstrating to others that the 'good' citizen of Hillside should not ask questions or attempt to argue with staff:

*[My aims are] 'To respond to adults requests without comment or delay, try not to advise adults of their roles and responsibilities. Try not to make suggestions of comments to those who work at Hillside Lodge, and try to take responsibility for your behaviour.'* (Natalie)



Other young people were quicker in learning how to 'play the game' and were able to appear content and compliant when inside they were feeling angry and upset. Acting the part of a compliant resident involved agreeing with staff assessments of their situation and condition, and, as a consequence, accepting recommended treatments too (Rose 1999).

*'On no! She's not here to see me is she? It's the psychiatrist [...] she keeps saying that she wants to see me but I don't wanna [...] but it'll help me in court if I say that I'm trying to deal with my anger and stuff, but I don't want to.'* (Daisy)

Playing the game successfully depended on residents' abilities to hide their true feelings and show their compliance to staff in difficult circumstances. Because inappropriate feelings led to punishments, residents were unintentionally encouraged to hide their real emotions when they did not match with Hillside aims. Some found this easier than others, and Chantelle described feeling as though she was being blackmailed to be quiet whenever she disagreed with members of staff:

*'I don't see why I should have to keep my mouth shut to satisfy other people. If I've got an opinion, I should be allowed to say it [...] you could know you're in the right and you could have an argument with them and you'd have to accept that you were in the wrong and staff were in the right. It's like being blackmailed.'* (Chantelle)

Because Chantelle was unwilling to present herself as being compliant, she was sanctioned and restricted from unit privileges. Those who were most successful at hiding their emotions and presented themselves as being reformed were praised and subsequently rewarded by staff. Residents were encouraged to display total obedience, in this, Oliver was an expert.

By being aware that other members of staff would report his wrongdoings anyway, Oliver took points from himself during points meetings and hence appear honest by confessing before being prompted:

*Oliver: 'I'll do my scores MOS-Mark. Try to respond to requests – that's a three (out of five). Try not to invade space - that's a three (out of five).'*

*MOS-Mark: 'Thanks son. Just don't lose one more mark then you can get your graduate status back!'*

This demonstrates how Hillside Lodge encouraged young people to become 'docile bodies' able to self govern and regulate their own behaviour (Foucault 1991). However, it also illustrates that young people were able to counteract previous misdemeanours and control the way that staff perceived their integrity. It also led staff to the conclusion that Hillside was working in reforming the young people in its care:

*MOS-Darren reports to the group: 'Oliver has been fine over the weekend. He is the first kid I've known, in the years I've worked here, who will score himself down.'* (From staff meeting)

Some of the girls were able to present themselves as being compliant, even though they did not feel that they were (Goffman 1959). For example, Gracie used compliance in order to receive the benefits given to the compliant. Therefore, although Gracie did not always agree that staff were in the right, she was able to recognise that she would not be permitted to get her own way and instead agreed with staff 'just to get the full points':

*'I just shut up [...] I ignore them and they just say what they want and they just score me and that's it. All I think is TV, DVD player and all that [...] I go 'Alright then, I accept', just to get the full points.'*  
(Gracie)

Although Gracie felt that she was acting in opposition to her own feelings, she nevertheless did not argue back when she usually would have done. Regardless of the reasoning behind this, Gracie did indeed act the part of the compliant child. Although we can argue that the girls were not 'feeling' different, the Hillside regime did indeed change their behaviour, at least temporarily. Not all of the girls adapted to the rules so easily, and those who did not found it increasingly frustrating when they saw other children conforming and accepting the role of the compliant child:

*'The kids in here, yeah, they'll be told to do something, yeah [...] and they all just shut up, yeah, whether they're in the right or in the wrong, they all be quiet and let staff say what they've got to say and accept it [...] If I'm in the right, I will argue and argue and argue.'*  
(Chantelle)

Those who openly rejected Hillside rules and argued back to staff were never successful in their arguments. Instead these young people were given 'time out' to calm down, and then were sanctioned afterwards. As MOS-Alfie explained:

*'I always say, 'when I'm addressing you, I'm addressing a young woman, a child, a teenager effectively. So I'll just walk away from you [...] I won't stand and go toe to toe with you, because all you're going to do, is draw me in and make me be at your level. Me and you, it's not adult to adult. It's adult to young person.'* (MOS-Alfie)

The unit hierarchy was clear and residents were held tightly in their place. Furthermore, regardless of the issue being discussed, unit hierarchy dictated that unit staff, as adults, were always in the right. Out of all of the

girls, Lola seemed to be the most aware of her position in Hillside Lodge and understood that she had to simply 'act' in a certain way regardless of her feelings:

*'If you were just sat on the street and someone says 'will you please move?' I'd say 'fuck off' and the naughty police wouldn't come and arrest you would they [...] in here isn't the real world [...] but I just say, [in a baby voice] 'yeah, I understand, yeah, I'm good, I won't be naughty again' like that. It's easier than arguing. I've just learned that it's easier than arguing because arguing doesn't really get you anywhere.'* (Lola)

This shows that indeed Hillside Lodge aimed to form its residents into submissive and obedient beings. However, although the girls resisted this aim in a variety of forms, the outcome was usually that girls did do as they were asked, when they were asked to do it. In this way, acted compliance became actual compliance, since residents followed orders without question and kept quiet when they wanted to argue. The strategy of 'playing the game' therefore became an intelligent method of negotiation and one that could pass undetected by staff and other young people. The outcome, which was achieved regardless of the method, was that girls learnt to 'do as they were told' and to follow the orders given to them by staff without argument. The girls learned different and more covert means of negotiating and resisting Hillside rules. In addition, Hillside residents were taught that negotiation and debate were ineffective methods of engagement, learning instead to hide their feelings and motivations in order to get what they wanted.

## ***Physical Negotiation***

Since verbal disagreements with staff often left young people feeling frustrated and unheard, some of the girls used their bodies to create a physical barrier instead (Ellis and France 2010; Ward 2004). When they were feeling unheard or ignored, these girls often resorted to physical violence:

*At first I start shouting [...] If I've shouted at the top of voice and no-one's listening, I just punch them.'* (Natalie)

Despite appearances which suggested the contrary, even the longest serving care workers confirmed that they were sometimes frightened by violent episodes. So although violence often did not win residents the outcome that they had hoped for, it sometimes, in the short term, gave them a sense of control:

*'He put batteries in a sock and he commanded the whole corridor. Alarms were going off and everybody was buzzing around and saying 'he's gone mad'. I was his case manager, and I thought 'I know he's big, I know what he's in here for, but at the end of the day, he's a child [...] He's not taking control, he's obviously lost control'. So, I go down to him and I am no threat at all, my body language, everything about me, even though I am scared, you just go in and be calm.'*(MOS-Alfie)

Some of the participants described instances when they had used their bodies as a mark of protest against actions they did not agree with (Ward 2004). For instance, in order to avoid a change of placement, Natalie began a hunger strike and declared that she would rather die than leave Hillside. However, as much as residents tried to take control, staff always had new ways to make young people conform again:

*'They took everything out of her room, down to her toothpaste. I think she's trying to hurt herself or something, so they just took everything [...] she's stopped eating now because they took everything out of her room. They've locked her en-suite and give her a potty [...] She's not allowed toilet roll or anything - she has to ask.'* (Chantelle)

By taking small privileges away and by simply showing their displeasure, staff sought to carefully shape young people's actions (Foucault 1991):

*'I'm quite observant [...] whether it's just the situation of working here that makes you more observant, but you pick up things and you just notice things [...] you're subtly challenging and moving and directing behaviour.'* (MOS-Dawn)

One of the most frequent methods that girls used to assert control, without being punished, was to opt out of activities that they were expected to partake in. For instance, Natalie knew that if she refused to have a keywork session, she would be sanctioned, so instead she agreed to take part but only gave one word answers in response to all questions. Natalie asserted her authority by disengaging but yet still avoided punishment since she formally agreed to take part. As MOS-Jayne noted:

*'Natalie put on her dressing gown, put her hood up and sat on her bed. She gave one word answers [...] it was clear she was not going to respond so I told her I'd write it up for her to sign.'* (Note in Natalie's case file)

One of the ways that young people could invoke a form of control over their treatment in Hillside Lodge was to self harm (Epps 1997; Laye-Gindhu and Schonert-Reichl 2005). For many, self harm was used as a coping strategy for externalising emotional pain (Austin and Kortum 2004) and, in

a place where the girls had little or no control over their daily lives, self harming was something that could be done in private, and at their own bidding (Epps 1997; Hutson and Myers 2006). Since there were usually five members of staff on duty and eight vulnerable (and sometimes volatile) young people, circumstances could quickly develop requiring staff to stay with a particular person on a one to one, or even two to one basis. These situations proved frustrating for residents left in the main group, leading some to suggest that residents created situations so that they could get more attention. Although the researcher did not attempt to question the girls about self harm, it was a matter that arose frequently unprompted. There was a conflict within the unit about the purpose of self harm with some staff and young people alike believing that certain young people resorted to self harm only to gain attention from staff (Hutson and Myers 2006):

*'If you're quiet, you don't get any staff attention. Literally not any. You have to like self harm or like head butt the walls to get attention, or proper kick off.'* (Lola)

*'I don't think we've got any serious self-harmers in this unit. I think we've got a lot that use it as a way of getting attention, which in itself is quite sad but I don't think we've got any serious self-harmers. I think it's superficial a lot of the time [...] from my experience from having really close contact with self-harmers, they do it in places where you can't see. They do it at the tops of their legs, their bums, the tops of their arms, they do it in places where they don't want you to see what they've done.'* (MOS-Terri)

Staff and professionals outside of Hillside Lodge felt that self harm was used instrumentally by young people in an attempt to either get their own way or to display a view of themselves as vulnerable (Epps 1997).

Therefore rather than eliciting sympathy and support for often extreme and horrific circumstances which had prompted self harm, girls instead received distain for their actions of intended harm (Hutson and Myers 2006). Because most of Hillside's self harmers sustained visibly injuries, non-harmers assumed that residents harmed to gain attention. Rather than giving harmers more attention, staff withheld attention and downplayed harming behaviour (Solomon and Farrand 1996):

*MOS-Mark enters the management office carrying a sharp piece of plastic. 'This was in Robyn's bathroom, down the side of the toilet. There was blood on the floor - Robyn says she's had a nose bleed. Should we confront her about it or should it just disappear?' 'Just disappear' the manager replies. MOS-Mark throws it in the bin. (From fieldnotes)*

This method of dealing with self harming young people had two consequences. Firstly, it avoided giving young people attention that they might have otherwise received from harming, and secondly, it led young people to believe that their hiding places were more secret than they imagined. Ignoring a situation was not always straightforward and staff often had different views about harmers and methods of reducing self harm (Epps 1997; Goffman 1961). Indeed, where some staff responded to self harming residents with feelings of care and protection (Christensen 2000), others felt that 'pandering' to harmers only made things worse (Solomon and Farrand 1996). Consequently, self harm became an issue of conflict between members of staff and also between residents (Epps 1997). Furthermore, living with self harmers was difficult for those who had chosen not to harm. For Lola, Hayley's harming was difficult to deal with and because she handled this situation in her own way, she was perceived by some staff as being uncaring:

*'They made it like I was encouraging Hayley to self harm. Because she said 'I want to cut myself' and I said 'just bang your head*



*against the wall' and I was only joking, because I know she has a really serious self harm thing [...] I just don't know how to deal with it so I was just making a joke about it [...] and they were like, 'oh Lola you're encouraging her' but I wasn't.'* (Lola)

The perceived extra attention that harmers received made harming look like an attractive option to the girls who did not harm already, and, as Lola described, some resorted to self harm to try and divert attention for themselves (Hutson and Myers 2006):

*'I was banging my head off the wall and I cracked my head open at the back, but no, because Hayley cracks her head open at the front, she gets attention but I don't. I said 'I've got a cut in my head because I banged it against the wall' and they said 'well it's your own fault then'. But when Hayley bangs her head on the wall it's like 'poor Hayley, we'll give her 2:1 staff attention' [...] yes I did say that but with a lot more f's in! But they just went 'Hayley's having a hard time' and I said just because I don't talk about my hard time, it doesn't mean that I'm not having one.'* (Lola)

The same was true for young people who shared their inner most experiences and emotions with staff. So because Lola would not talk about her problems, staff had more sympathy with those whose experiences they could empathise with. Staff worked very hard to clamp down on young people self harming, and when they felt it was appropriate, they took drastic action to remove items that could be perceived as dangerous:

*'I'd go in and I'd say 'Right, I'm taking this, this and this ...' [and they say] 'What are you taking them for?' [and I tell them] 'Well if you're self-harming, I'm minimising the risk', 'Oh don't do that because I'm not going to self-harm with that'. 'Well if you're going to self-harm, you're going to self-harm, you can't pick and choose what you're going to self-harm with' [...] that normally works quite well for me.'* (MOS-Terri)

Although MOS-Terri's approach did reduce self harming incidents, it also created tension between other members of staff who felt that this strategy amounted to punishment rather than support (Goffman 1961:80):

*'I had a bit of a crazy moment and I smashed everything in my room and then cut all of my hands and my neck and they were like 'she's trying to kill herself' [...] I had unrippable bedding which is like the most awful, horrible thing in the world. It's like a blanket that you get in the cells. You don't get a pillow. You don't get anything on your bottom sheet, you just have that blue horrible mattress and a plastic blanket, that's all you get. And some pyjamas with no cords in or anything. I mean, and your bathroom door is shut, and that's all that you have in your bedroom, apart from tissues and a potty!'*  
(Lola)

Although some staff felt that harsh reactions to self harm did discourage girls from harming, for some, self harm was the only way that they felt they could keep control away from the professionals who claimed to be in charge of them:

*'At the end of the day, if somebody wants to self-harm they're going to self-harm anyway [...] look, that scar, that scar and that scar is from my nails.'* (Hayley)

### ***Managing Case Files***

Despite the fact that some of the girls learned to withhold certain details from members of staff, the relationships between girls and their carers were often built on genuine feelings of care and concern (Hochschild 1983). Consequently, a number of the girls made upsetting disclosures to members of staff who they felt they could trust and who cared about them. However, once disclosures had been made, they could not be 'unmade' no matter how much a young person wished it. Once disclosed, information was presented in the young person's file for other professionals to see. The

consequences of multi-agency working and sharing sometimes came as a shock for young people who thought they were simply sharing their worries with a friend (Ellis and France 2010). Although it could certainly be argued that professionals were 'looking out' for residents, it was also true that they often made unwelcome decisions based on second-hand evidence. For example, before entry into Hillside, Gabriella had been addicted to heroin and frequently absconded from home. Following her admission into the unit, Gabriella detoxified her body and swore never to take drugs again. However, social workers judged that she would not be safe to return home. Consequently, Gabriella disengaged from professional services aimed at helping her:

*'They want me to be safe and don't see how I can be safe at home when I wasn't safe before, but I think that I will be safe at home [...] They don't want me to go home, so I don't care anymore [...] I won't say anything to anyone' (Gabriella)*

Hayley also made a conscious decision to withhold information from her social worker following an extension to her original three month welfare order:

*'They're going to go for another three month order [...] when I first come in here I was like open and honest about my life but now I'm starting to disengage and not talk to them. Talking to them is making it more worse and making them want to keep me in here longer. So if I get another three month order, I'm never going to trust anyone in here ever again. So when I get to the outside world, if anything did happen to me, I wouldn't tell them, because I wouldn't want to risk getting out back in a place like this [...] and they'll realise that. They might not realise whilst I'm in here because they might just think 'she's angry, she'll get over it' but I won't.'*  
(Hayley)

Girls who had been in the professional spotlight for longer were more adept at keeping their activities private. These girls were capable of having some control of the stage in which they were judged and were able to conceal items and information that would not be judged favourably by the professionals sent to assess them (Hochschild 1983; Ellis and France 2010):

*'I don't really talk to them that much. They ask me what I've been up to and I go 'Oh I've been in the house watching a film' or something like that [...]they started coming round every day, so I just made sure I was out every day' (Gracie)*

Avoidance was not a luxury afforded to girls inside Hillside. The intensive unit surveillance meant that most actions were seen and scrutinised (Goffman 1961). Those entering the unit from other local authority arrangements were more familiar with routine observations and reporting. These young people also commented about the negative impact of having 'case notes' that followed them around, making their actions auditable (Berridge 2006; Donzelot 1979). To counteract professional judgements becoming a factual account of their files, some young people were instrumental in challenging professional reports before they were added to case files. In order to control case notes more specifically, some of the girls sought to replace professional jottings with their own notes:

*'Chantelle is keen to participate [...] although she showed signs of wanting to do things in her own way and keep control of the situation. For example, she wasn't keen on me filling the forms in.'*  
*(MOS-Jayne's notes in Chantelle's file)*

Lola was also aware of the risk that incorrect information could have if it was incorporated into her notes, and, for this reason, she requested to 'proof read' professional notes before they were inserted into her file. Professionals were not always keen to do this, and sometimes found it

amusing that young people assumed that they had power to amend documents. Despite to joviality, below, MOS-Ann did make Lola's changes:

*MOS-Ann tells MOS-Len, 'Lola has reviewed her report and made some changes.' MOS-Len laughs, 'in her editorial capacity?' MOS-Ann chuckles, 'yes'*  
(From fieldnotes)

Perhaps MOS-Ann did not understand the lasting effect that her musings had on Lola's situation but the fact that Lola was aware of this was apparent. Lola had already learned that once a professional judgement became logged about her, it often became fact and thus could not be amended, especially when the judgement gathered scientific backing (Rose 1999):

*'In the inmate's career from admission suite to burial plot, many different kinds of staff will add their official note to his case file as he temporarily passes under their jurisdiction.'* (Goffman 1961:74)

Young people who had been a part of the care system had realised, by the time they entered Hillside Lodge, that every aspect of their existence had already been documented and passed on, hence, the girls sought to protect their reputation from damage caused by untruthful documentation:

*'Lola paused for a short time before deciding that she didn't want to tick any of the statements as she felt it depended where she was [...] It was obvious from my interaction with Lola that she feels an element of distrust towards professionals due to previous experience.'* (Extract from Lola's case file)

Lola also confirmed that she was able to read between the carefully constructed lines that professionals wrote about her and learned that

professional labels were not always straight forward, and therefore, notes that sounded complimentary often had a hidden and possibly darker meaning:

*'They like say, 'she's a really lovely girl, she's very bubbly and chatty' but that's another way of saying 'difficult with ADHD'. [laugh] Yes, bubbly and chatty and 'a bit too much' in brackets!' (Lola)*

Although most girls were reluctant to share information with professionals, those who had been sentenced under a welfare order were extra careful about what they admitted. For example, Hayley knew that her future was still being decided from information that she had shared in the past:

*'In order to make me stay in here, they might drag up everything that I've ever done.'* (Hayley)

### ***Resistance in a Total Institution***

When residents successfully broke the unit rules, they were desperate to share their achievements, even if it only served for them to feel as though they 'got one over' on staff:

*'I'm not allowed contact with none of my friends. It's stupid, well ridiculous. I just ring them, without staff knowing. They do know about it though because I grassed myself up, to piss them off. I told them 'your security is that tight I got away with ringing who I wanted to ring'.'* (Hayley)

Although residents did not have many opportunities to exercise control in Hillside Lodge, the daily running of life at Hillside meant that there were instances where young people could have choices about what they did, although, only within prescribed boundaries. These times were always

supervised by staff and residents were never permitted to conduct activities without an adult being present. Even so, some of the girls developed strategies to have 'inappropriate' conversations with peers, without being detected by staff. For instance, Robyn and Gracie whispered to each other and when Robyn was asked to repeat what she had said '*so that staff can hear*', she changed the content of the conversation so that MOS-Darren, as a male member of staff, would be embarrassed to ask more questions, '*we were talking about us minges*'. This had a different impact though, and unbeknown to Robyn, MOS-Darren staff believed what she told him and reported at the meeting that Robyn was overly sexual and hence particularly vulnerable:

*'Whenever I see her whispering I ask her 'what are you talking about' and she might say something like 'shaving my bits' or something like that, but whatever she says, there always seems to be something sexual behind it [...] later on I says to Robyn, 'what were you and Gracie talking about?' and again she said 'we were talking about us minges' and it hurts and it saddens me but there's always a sexual innuendo with Robyn and I don't think she's aware of it.'* (MOS-Darren)

Young people tried to give other unit members code names so that they could discuss them without being reprimanded. As Daisy discovered, the invasive surveillance of secure accommodation meant that coded speak was almost impossible since staff '*clicked on after a couple of days*'. Even so, residents felt that, despite staff assertions to the contrary, '*staff don't see everything. There's seven other people, so they've got to watch everyone*' (Robyn). Just as young people found it difficult to communicate secretly, staff also felt that they had limited time to communicate and to share information. Interestingly, staff also employed the method of speaking in code when trying to prevent young people from hearing what they were talking about:

*'I can say something to you which I think I'm talking code [...] 'You know so and so, room ... yeah ... you need to watch' and we don't think she knows but she knows every word I'm saying. And I'm going 'Alright, do you remember that thing? Go and check it' [...] We've got lives outside of work. She hasn't got that, her sole life is secure. All she thinks about is what's happening in secure, and she's in the office, the door's open, and I say 'Hayley's made a disclosure', and MOS-Alfie says 'Oh right, yeah, just shove it in the office'. You haven't said what it is but you've said something about Hayley. Hayley's with a member of staff in her room, it doesn't take too long... we think we're clever but we're not... she knows what we're talking about.'* (MOS-Darren)

Natalie confirmed that staff were correct about young people's code breaking abilities:

*'I know one staff member, I'm not going to say his name like but left the unit because [...] him and his wife were having a lot of troubles (laughs) and he needed to go, so he could be with his wife. But they wouldn't let him. He went off sick and he's been off sick for ... October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May ... nine months. [...] I heard the staff talking.'* (Natalie)

Since the smooth running of Hillside Lodge relied on resident compliance, any form of resistance was potentially countered by punishment. However, staff often resorted to lighter tactics of 'caring power' (Van Drenth and De Haan 1999) and instead of sanctioning young people, they used gentle coercion to encourage positive behaviour. For instance, when Daisy refused to go to bed, rather than sanctioning her, MOS-Mark smiled and invited her to sit down so that he could 'bore' her to sleep instead, following which he began reciting 'interesting facts' about birds. Daisy laughed and begged him to let her go to her bedroom. However, although staff admitted that they relied on resident compliance, residents also accepted this to be the case.



*'You have to have key work sessions. I have refused a couple but they try and force you. They say 'You've got your key work sessions, you're not allowed to not do them' and I'm like 'Shut up; not allowed to not do them - shut your mouth - no, no, no, not doing it' and then they can't do nowt about it.'* (Hayley)

Unlike Goffman's Asylum patients, Brittany believed that Hillside residents could command short-term control of the unit, if they stuck together (Goffman 1961:193). However, these periods of alliance between young people were usually short lived and before long, young people argued amongst themselves and sought staff to assert control over other residents for them:

*'I'm a leader, people copy me [...] the other day, with school, I refused to do my work and so I got took out, and Abbie refused to do her work and she got took out, somebody else refused to do their work and got took out and Ashley scored zeros because I got took out and he wanted me to be in there. So everybody like follows me.'* (Brittany)

Between them Hayley, Gracie and Lola demonstrated that even with a confined space such as Hillside Lodge, social order is socially constructed and therefore vulnerable to collapse (Allen and Hawkins 1999; Berger and Luckman 1966; Burr 1995). The girls tested the boundaries of Hillside control by refusing to move from the corridor. Instead they sat in one place, in the corridor between the dining room, lounges, bedrooms and staff offices for a number of hours. In the end, two of the girls were 'removed' and all three were heavily sanctioned for causing 'a security breach'. For Lola, her restrained removal was a contradiction to her understanding of the units' purpose, since they were all welfare girls and not prisoners. The girls felt that staff had been unreasonably harsh and that they had been treated like prisoners and not vulnerable girls in a secure care home:

*'I got into trouble for sitting on the corridor because it was a security breach. They always say 'if there's a fire' but it's not like we'd sit there in a fire saying 'no we won't move'. We're not that stupid. And then being in our rooms for three days, three days! Just locked in our rooms. That's what they do in YOI's you know, 'lockdown'. I got put basically on lockdown, for three days for sitting on a corridor and refusing to move for a few hours. I'm sure they shouldn't be allowed to do that here, it's pretty harsh.'* (Lola)

Members of staff viewed the 'security breach' differently and in line with the strategy of caring power, MOS-Dawn recounted that staff resisted intervention until both young people and staff were getting hurt (Christensen 2000). Hence in the event that subtle coercion failed, routine discipline made up the forefront of the units' function once more and the girls received a tough sanction and were separated from each other and the rest of the group for three days:

*'Three of them decided that they weren't going to move from the corridor and kind of got themselves riled up, smacking their heads, kicking the doors and working themselves up into a frenzy [...] I think some places would have gone in there all guns blazing straightaway and dragged them to their bedroom. But we're not like that, we just wait and see what happens. But it got to a point where that couldn't happen any longer [...] Hayley really lost the plot and ended up assaulting MOS-Janet quite badly, you know.'* (MOS-Dawn)

As MOS-Dawn explained, Hillside did rely on compliance and because of that, when young people were not compliant, the sanctions were, as Lola described them, 'very harsh'. However, for the most part, punishment was discrete and instead relied on subtle coercion and positive staff relationships. There were a minority of girls who were 'switched on' and realised that the smooth running of Hillside relied on their compliance. When these girls were successful in their rule breaks, although they never realised it, they did alter the unit's structure. For instance, when Natalie

was sanctioned and made to stay on her corridor, she refused the provision of a cardboard potty, and instead 'pissed' on her door. When asked if her actions had helped her case, Natalie felt that it hadn't and instead felt that she had been punished more: *'it got me two extra days on my corridor'*. However, her actions did have an impact, and unbeknown to Natalie, management spoke to staff sternly about it and insisted that young people should be allowed access to a toilet if they needed to go. Although Natalie never knew the outcome of her actions, the next time that Oliver was on a red card, staff left his bathroom unlocked.

Rooms were routinely searched to ensure that young people did not access forbidden items. The girls were mostly aware that their rooms were searched during the day. A notable exception of this was Chantelle, who believed that staff were not legally permitted to perform room searches. Other residents knew that their bedrooms were routinely searched and constructed strategies to enable them to hide things in their bedrooms. Robyn explained how she was able to hide small objects and Hayley described how she set little traps so that she would know when staff had been in her bedroom:

*'There are not many places where you can hide things anyway. Well in your bean bag you can because your bean bag opens and then you know where all the polystyrene balls are, that opens as well.'*  
(Robyn)

*'I make my bed in a special way. I lift my mattress up and tuck it all under and then lay my mattress back down rather than laying it flat and then tucking it in because it doesn't look the same. I know when they've been in.'* (Hayley)

Most of the residents were keen to assert some control over the unit regimes and, many proudly announced instances where they had obtained 'illegal' items:

*'I get illegal items all the time [...] anything and everything I can get [...] illegal pens, this memory stick! I got it out of the office believe it or not. I could take it apart, with the memory bit still intact and use the outer shell to break stuff. Done it before. You could take screws out of walls, anything.'* (Natalie)

Residents also sought to claim small victories by making calls to those they were forbidden from contacting. Although a handful of residents admitted to doing this, most were careful not break rules in case they were found out. Despite the fact that the girls could break the rules, the fact that most of the time they did not, meant that Hillside was effective in forming its residents into compliant and docile bodies able to self discipline in the absence of a professional gaze (Foucault 1991):

*'I could if I wanted to but I wun't because it would give me more time, because I've got six month and I'm getting out on my third month but then they'd make me stay in if they found out.'* (Brittany)

### ***Being found out***

Residents in a total institution live under intensive amounts of scrutiny. As in Goffman's *Asylum*, every minute detail of activity in Hillside was logged and filed away for later interpretation. Therefore small interactions that would go unheeded in normal circumstances were frequently analysed and discussed as important findings:

*'I'd rather someone say 'Yeah, I know great, I'm telling you again', rather than they weren't telling me.'* (MOS-Darren)

The intense sharing of information therefore meant that it was difficult for residents to hide information from Hillside staff (Goffman 1961):

*'They go 'what have you eaten?' and I'll just make up a load of lies. And they go 'Oh you've done well' [...] but some of them know that I've not because they do it and say 'Oh have you eaten?' and pretend they don't know and then I'll tell them that I have and make up a load of rubbish and then they know that I haven't because they're just testing me [...] then I have a big argument with them and I eat something.'* (Gracie)

Because surveillance was so strict, events unseen by staff were greeted with covert suspicion when reported by residents (Goffman 1961:149). Furthermore, if residents had been reported telling untruths previously, their stories were greeted with overt scepticism:

*'When I tell the truth they don't believe me. I only ever lied about one thing, and that was to stop me going in secure, but that didn't work did it! [...] That's what they think and they don't believe me now.'* (Daisy)

The nature of surveillance inside Hillside meant that rule breakers were usually 'found out'. This was made especially likely since staff were able to triangulate young people's stories with observations and accounts from professionals, staff, managers and even parents. For instance, when Chantelle tried to excuse disruptive behaviour by telling staff that her grandma had died, staff rang Chantelle's aunt and found that Chantelle had lied. Staff confronted Chantelle, who they later reported '*seemed quite sheepish*'. It was almost impossible for residents to control where knowledge was passed once when they had disclosed it (Goffman 1961; Ellis and France 2010). Young people caught using incorrect terminology were quickly identified as being those who were trying to 'work the system' (Goffman 1961:189). For instance, suspicions were raised about Brittany's

catholic upbringing by her incorrect reference to 'rosemary beads' in place of 'rosary beads'. As Brittany found, once something was shared, it became common knowledge:

*'I got found out lying in my meeting. My boyfriend had give me some rosemary beads from prison [...] then I come here, and I got told that I could have them on as long as I was Catholic, so I said 'yeah, yeah, I'm a catholic'. Then it comes to my meeting and he says, 'by the way, is Brittany a catholic?' and my mum says 'no'. I were like noo [...] I'd been telling them which church I went to and everything [...] they were going to get a priest in to bless my rosemary beads.'* (Brittany)

Once an individual young person was found to be breaking the rules, staff tightened control and as a consequence, it became much harder for other residents to break the same rules. As Chantelle discovered:

*'Yeah, some of them have got rosary beads and they're not even Catholic! The ones that aren't Catholic can have them but the ones that are Catholic can't [...] like Robyn and Hayley for instance, them two aren't Catholic, they've got their beads but then like I am Catholic and I'm not allowed my rosary beads.'* (Chantelle)

Sometimes young people believed that they had managed to deceive staff, only to find out that staff had only been contemplating the appropriate level of sanction for misbehaviour. For instance, Natalie watched her television after she was supposed to, seemingly undetected, only to discover that whilst she had been at school the following day, her television had been removed completely:

*'I weren't expecting to lose my TV next day either, and the sequel were on that night [...] I begged for them for sanction but when you beg for another sanction, they're like 'Well this one's the sanction'.'* (Natalie)

Even though most staff reported that residents did try to manipulate the rules, most also stated that they believed that young people were only acting from a natural instinct to fulfil their own needs (Barter 2006). Some workers felt that they too would manipulate the system if they were a Hillside resident:

*'It's to do with life and it's to do with survival of the fittest and it's do with everything surrounding us as human beings, it's sod all to do with whether they're brought up in care or whatever, it's human instinct. If somebody doesn't give you something, you're going to try until you get it.'* (MOS-Terri)

However, despite the empathy that staff felt with the rule breakers, they often insisted that residents who were known to 'play the game' were no longer appropriate residents for Hillside Lodge. These young people were seen as being sly and manipulative (Barter 2006):

*'She needs to go, she's been here for too long and it's not doing her any good any more. She used to be a good influence on the group and she's not anymore. She's learnt how to manipulate staff to get what she wants.'* (MOS-Dawn)

*'They get over-familiar with staff, which makes it very difficult when you've got a group of young kids, new ones in [...] because they're over-familiar and they push boundaries massively, massively.'* (MOS-Terri)

### ***Managing Professionals: Fight, Flight or Negotiation?***

Some of the girls felt that they had been let down by professionals in the past (Ellis and France 2010). In these instances, some decided to withdraw their consent from professional interventions and refused all future

communication. It also meant that these girls stopped trying to alter their behaviour to meet the approval of professionals working with them:

*'It was just too far away from home and my contact kept getting stopped with my mum and then I just thought what's the point in being good? I just never did what they said, like they'd tell me to go to bed and I'd tell them to 'fuck off'.'* (Daisy)

Girls coming from the care system frequently spoke about their desire to opt out of social service involvement. Lots of the girls attributed the most negative factor about being in the care system was being frequently moved from one placement to another, often in different cities (Bessell 2010). Although professional decisions to move young people frequently rested on notions of protecting *'the child's best interest'* (James and James 2004; Lees 1986; Smith and Milligan 2005), moving frequently was unsettling and unwelcomed by the girls. When children felt let down by the placements they were appointed to, many of them ran away so that they could be amongst friends and family in familiar surroundings (Bessell 2010). Natalie termed this as *'fight or flight'*:

*'You have to choose fight or flight and I used to choose fight but now I choose flight! [...] I've had a lot of anger management done!'* (Natalie)

Although the girls felt they were making themselves safer by absconding, the act of absconding instead raised young people's profiles to that of *'at risk'* to professionals working with them. In these cases, those who felt that they had been sent to Hillside Lodge as a punishment for running away, being locked up seemed effective, *'Now I won't run because I know that if I run away I'll come back here'* (Freya). Even so, others maintained that they would have no option other than to keep absconding if their situation did



not change once they left Hillside Lodge, *'If I carry on getting moved around like I have been, then I'll run'* (Chantelle).

For girls who chose 'fight' rather than 'flight', displaying difficult and troublesome behaviour was often instrumental in ensuring that their voices were heard by the professionals working with them:

*'I didn't want to be in the care home and social services were taking their time to move me out of the care home. It was taking time! I didn't want to be there and I knew that the only way that I wouldn't have to go back in that care home would be if I beat her up [...] because they wouldn't want me there.'* (Carly)

Running away was seen by girls as an agentic approach to managing their own experience of local authority care (Bessell 2010). In choosing 'fight', some of the girls mistakenly believed that they could control what happened to them by threatening the decision making professionals. In these instances, professionals did not change their decisions, instead they sidestepped young people and kept their motives hidden, often surprising young people when severe action was taken against them:

*'Chantelle has intimated that she will refuse to get into any persons car who would take her to secure accommodation and she would quite happily go to prison for the damage she would cause [...] she perceives that a custodial sentence is something that she had achieved and can be proud of, whereas to be placed in secure is to make the social workers life a little easier.'* (From Chantelle's case file)

Children's agency has been regularly debated in childhood studies, with authors in a variety of disciplines concluding that children and young people are active subjects, able to shape and influence events that happen

around them (Alanen and Mayall 2001; Castañeda 2002; James and James 2004; Mayall 1998; Thomas 2000). Girls in Hillside showed that they were able to use their agency to further their outcomes too. That is not to say that young people always knew best about how to achieve the best outcomes, and as we will explore later, sometimes they used agency in ways that instead landed them in more trouble (Valentine 2011).

Successful outcomes were most likely achieved when residents were able to negotiate official channels and work within adult procedural constraints (Valentine 2011). For instance, making complaints within the secure estate was a fundamental right of young people and residents were entitled to submit official complaints about members of staff. However, like so many of the rights that are granted to children, children could not exercise their right to complain without first convincing adult members of staff that their complaints were genuine (Lansdown 2000). Furthermore, since staff controlled complaint forms, complaint procedures could not be instigated without the approval of a member of staff. Procedure dictated that children were given space to 'cool off' before they were given a complaint form. It was in this way that Daisy was persuaded not to make a complaint about staff, since she found that when she had calmed down she 'didn't really want to complain'. Although staff could try to covertly deter residents from complaining, they were not able to stop them completely. In this way, Hillside residents had more power than Goffman's patients, especially since child protection legislation means that staff can be held personally accountable when things do go wrong and that children in their care are harmed. Staff were aware that if young people genuinely did want to make a complaint, then it was their job to make sure that they could, and in this way, children did have real control and an effective complaint could lead to disciplinary measures being taken against staff:

*'They have a right to complain. We've always got to keep that in mind and I don't want an email floating round saying that staff are refusing kids to write a complaint because they have got a right. And if ever goes to 'council manager' and they take it up with 'centre manager', saying 'so and so wanted to complain three or four times, staff haven't given them the form, can you explain why?'* (MOS-Darren)

Hillside residents were astutely aware of the hierarchy operating within the unit. Since young people were contained within the unit twenty-four hours a day for extended periods of time, they quickly learned how things worked and were able to occasionally structure circumstances to get their own way:

*'They know where the power is [...] I think the team leader should be there to support the team, to manage the team, but the young people don't see it like that. They see it as they're the one with the final say.'* (MOS-Jayne)

Indeed, by working within professional frameworks, residents could recruit Hillside carers and other professionals to work on their behalf. For instance, when Natalie was having problems with social services, she appealed to her YOT worker to help her sort it out:

*'I told my YOT worker, and then he came in here and said 'at the end of the day, Natalie's had a lot of problems and she's been promised a social worker who will stick by her'. He went mad at her [...] I was laughing.'* (Natalie)

Even so, the YOT worker was not able to resolve the issue with Natalie's social worker. Therefore, as Brittany found, young people needed to choose the right professional to act in the right circumstance – that is, a

professional with knowledge about the specific system that the young person was trying to change:

*'I got put back on tag again and then over Christmas I just breeched because my tag time was 7 o'clock and 7 o'clock is too early for me because I'm sixteen and I want to do everything and I know it's my own fault but at Christmas buses run late and I had an excuse every time I was late, it was a good excuse, plus my brothers baby was due and I went to the hospital and I got a letter from the hospital saying what time I got there and what time I left but the judge wouldn't look at that.'* (Brittany)

The most effective way for young people to get their own way was to employ methods used by managers trying to get their own way, that was, to use the formal technicalities that governed the process in which they were imprisoned. For instance, senior professionals could be used to ensure that social services were providing their client with the correct rights. As the following letter shows, Hillside managers were instrumental in ensuring that young people's rights were met:

*'At Hillside Lodge we adhere to the national minimum standards and we must hold a meeting within ten days of each young person's arrival. This means that we need to have a meeting here at Hillside attended by you, your manager, Lauren, her parents, etc. before the 14<sup>th</sup> July. I understand that there is a care review for Lauren tomorrow that is being held in 'distant city' and Lauren does have the right to be present [...] arrangements should be made by you to facilitate her attendance.'*  
(From Lauren's case file)

Because professionals respected the opinions of medical and other 'scientific' assessments (Rose 1999). Young people could recruit doctors or psychiatrists to help back up their claims. For instance, Hayley persuaded CAMHS to negotiate with social services on her behalf and found that their opinion was respected:

*'It is important that Hayley feels that people take her seriously.'  
(CAMHS report in Hayley's case file)*

Girls who were able to talk to professionals 'on their own level' and use professional jargon, were often successful in recruiting professionals to fight their corner. For instance, Brittany was able to appeal to MOS-Jenny to avoid keywork even though she knew that a session was scheduled:

*'I should have had one last night but I said 'what's the point in having one tonight when I'm going to have group work session as well as the 'my thinking report' [...] I would have been in my room from 8pm and doing the 'my thinking report' til nine and then my keywork session til ten [...] I wouldn't have actually been out my room at all [...] if I refuse to do it then I have to go to my room anyway, but I told her it'd be better if I had one on Tuesday when she's next on. And she agreed.'* (Brittany)

Not all residents were able to negotiate their needs effectively. For instance, Abbie often became angry when she tried to discuss her needs with staff, and so when she tried to postpone a keywork meeting, for as equally a valuable a reason as Brittany, she could not articulate her needs legitimately and was punished for refusing to engage:

*'I say 'I'm not in the mood to have this bloody meeting' and they just take me out.'* (Abbie)

So although Abbie used agency to avoid participation in keywork, rather than avoiding her intervention, she instead received a sanction, as was seen as being resistant and troublesome (Valentine 2011). In order to convince staff that their needs were legitimate, residents had to alter their language to correlate with professional objectives. For instance, although Brittany did not like MOS-Greg, she was unable to swap him for another

keyworker since she was told that *'young people do not set the agenda'* (Bessell 2010). Callum had the same worries as Brittany but framed them differently and instead of stating, *'I don't like MOS-Ned'*, he instead based his argument around ensuring that his therapeutic needs were met. Although it was well known within the group that Callum disliked MOS-Ned, Callum persuaded Hillside management that he needed *'a female perspective'* and thus effectively swapped MOS-Ned for his favourite member of staff, MOS-Dawn. Despite her own failure in changing her keyteam, Brittany also accepted Callum's claim, hence proving that sex, and indeed race, could be used a powerful lever to ensuring positive outcomes:

*'You have to have a reason why. I said 'I don't like him. Can MOS-Jenny do my keywork session?' Callum changed one of his, because Ashley didn't have no black member of his keywork team and Callum had three but no woman [...] but he's changed MOS-Ned for MOS-Dawn so he's got black people on his team now as well as a woman. So now, Ashley's got one black person on his team.'*  
(Brittany)

Hayley also asked to change a keyworker, because she did not feel comfortable working with a male member of staff, especially since she has been abused by many older male adults. In this instance Hayley was informed that working with males would make up an important part of her therapy. She was also reassured that:

*'They said 'MOS-Evan is a very experienced and an understanding member of the care team'.* (Hayley)

Although Lola's request to swap MOS-Evan was also initially met with rejection, Lola negotiated her needs and swapped her keyteam by refusing to complete any of the keywork packages until she had a new team in place:

*'I don't have key work sessions, I refuse to do them because I don't like MOS-Evan[...] It's happening quite soon because I'm refusing to do any keywork sessions so I think they should have to swap them so that I have a female one [...] not that it has to be a female one, because I feel like I can talk to MOS-Tal because he just doesn't judge. What's on his face, he doesn't get upset, he just doesn't judge at all.'* (Lola)

Hence Lola, like Callum, managed to create a reason that staff could identify with for changing her keyworker. Although Lola claimed that she would be happy with a different male worker, management used her history of abuse to legitimise the change in keyworker to other residents, rather than acknowledging a clash of personality, as was the case with Callum and MOS-Ned.

Another way that the girls demonstrated their agency over care staff was by using managers to by-pass staff beneath them. Residents frequently observed that care staff stuck together. However, some of the girls realised that if they approached management directly, without passing messages through carers, their views would be deliberated much more carefully:

*'I'll take it to management though [...] when I've got all the girls on my side and I'm pretty sure all of them are. It's just whether we'll get it or not [...] [we'll go to] the top dog.'* (Hayley)

Carefully bound procedures meant that it was difficult for residents to negotiate preferred outcomes unless they had knowledge of a specific rule and its purpose. Even then, since Hillside's ethos demanded that young people should accept staff judgements without comment, residents were not permitted to fight their corner in disagreements with staff. Therefore, if residents could display emotional maturity and pitch their difficulties to

staff, carers would sometimes assist in searching for a professional loophole to assist residents in their plight. However, speaking to management was not straight forward for residents and if young people could not convince carers that they were being rational, staff were reluctant to 'waste' a managers time in dealing with an emotional request:

*'When I want to put a complaint in they always ask, 'can we talk about it first?' and they're only doing that so that they don't get into trouble when I put a complaint in [...] I just do it when I'm proper angry and then when I've calmed down I don't care because I don't really want to complain, it's just me being angry.'* (Daisy)

Other young people were more adept in negotiating the regime. Carly for instance, uses her knowledge of staff routines and shift changes to take up grievances with a new, and possibly sympathetic, audience. Furthermore, Carly takes time to consider her previous behaviour and actions in light of Hillside rules and is able to construct a post-hoc story for non-compliance. With a new audience, Carly is therefore able to demonstrate that she has complied with Hillside principles and thus gains sympathy from the new care team:

*'I got a sanction for not getting up but I said it was because I was in a bad mood and I wanted to **manage my behaviour** in my room. So I was meant to have a 90 minute early beds but they put it down to 45 minutes [...] I told the manager after she'd gone off shift [...] I asked for him and I told him what I've told you and he told the staff [...] He's the one that deals with that sort of stuff because he takes both sides whereas staff stick together.'* (Carly)

Carly's method of negotiating with care staff shows a particularly effective method of negotiation since she formulated a story that could not be disputed. However, realistically, she did not achieve much that would further her life outcomes, only a chance to go to bed forty-five minutes



later on one night. So although agency could be used to influence minor events inside Hillside Lodge, it was rare for young people to influence professional practice where it mattered most, outside of the unit. Indeed, only Hayley managed to recruit Hillside management to negotiate on her behalf to other agencies, and through conversations with Hillside managers, she was able to learn her rights and encourage managers to communicate with social services on her behalf. In the end, Hayley did not achieve the outcome that she had hoped for, but, nevertheless remained in contact with Hillside management to ensure that other professionals continued to meet her needs in the way in which they were legally obligated to do:

*'She asked me, 'can they make me go? Can they make me go?' and I said 'yes, they can'. So she went with them and there were tears all round.'* (MOS-Tom)

### ***Futile Resistance: All the world's a stage***

*'All the world's a stage  
and all the men and women merely players  
they have their exits and their entrances  
and one man in his time plays many parts  
his acts being seven ages'*

*(William Shakespeare, 'As You Like It')*

Although we have seen that residents were able to use a variety of methods to shape their daily experiences, we must consider how effective these strategies were in resisting the reformatory nature of Hillside Lodge. Shakespeare assures us 'all the world's a stage' and the actors of Hillside are no different. During the process of allocating a child to a secure unit, each individual has their own part to play, starting from the social workers, who enter the stage during a dramatic scene and continuing to the judge who sits in the court in his judicial finery casting decree upon the children

who are set before him (either in person or as a script written by others). Inside Hillside the drama continues as both young people and staff amend their faces, to be shown, at the right times, to the opposite members of the cast. Within this cast, staff take roles depending on their own views around the purpose of secure accommodation and their opinions of an appropriate actor. Staff adopt roles that best fit their beliefs, so, whilst MOS-Terri acts as a 'strict' prison guard, MOS-Alfie instead adopts the persona of a fatherly carer for young and damaged children.

*'I say I work in a kids prison [...] if they moan, I just say 'Well you know what the answer to that is' and they all say in unison 'Don't get locked up!' (MOS-Terri)*

*'I like to think that I'm doing a great job and I'm helping the most vulnerable people in our society [...] and I love that girl to bits. I'm like a father to her.' (MOS-Alfie)*

In turn, as we saw in chapter seven, Hillside residents also adopted characters that best fit their expectations of the 'good resident' who would be released soonest:

*'Obviously I just don't want to be here. I'd rather be locked in my room 24/7 than participate in activities but obviously I have to cooperate or otherwise it doesn't look good by me. So I just cooperate and just chill.' (Lauren)*

Though, despite the 'act' of the 'good resident' young people did form genuine opinions about the staff in Hillside Lodge and judged them according to the characters that they had played. That is, residents came to see staff in the terms that individual staff members had set for them and hence treated some staff as the families they had always wished for, whilst alternatively treating others as the prison guard that they ached to take revenge on after release:

*'I will miss it when I go because it's like me home for ten weeks really. I'll proper, I'll right miss it. I'll miss some of the staff that I proper got on with. Like MOS-Alfie, he's been like a dad to me.'*  
(Brittany)

*'I don't like MOS-Holly. If I saw her on the out I'd claw her eyes out, I'd look what car she had and follow her home and tear her eyes out! I hate her!'* (Brittany)

In forming true bonds with members of the care team, young people also admitted that they sometimes changed their opinions about appropriate behaviour, and so actually did come to embody (at least parts) of the identity of the actor they were playing:

*'Residents slip between being 'cynical' about their changed personality to being very 'sincere' [...] 'still we must not rule out the kind of transition point that can be sustained on the strength of a little self-illusion. We find that the individual may attempt to induce the audience to judge him and the situation in a particular way, and he may seek this judgement as an ultimate end in itself, and yet he may not completely believe that he deserves the valuation of self which he asks for or that the impression of reality which he fosters is valid.'* (Goffman 1959:31-32)

We can see an example of this in Carly, Daisy and Gabriella's descriptions of how they have embraced the changes that Hillside Lodge enforced upon them:

*'I won't be completely different but I'll just think differently [...] I think I'll just try not to get in trouble.'* (Carly)

*'My behaviour has got better than it used to be [...] I've changed a lot. Normally I couldn't have sat in a room like this and been calm for all this time [...] I want to change, I don't like being angry all the time.'* (Daisy)

*'I feel different now [...] I'm still the person that I am but I'm doing things that I used to do and I feel different, I feel nice.'* (Gabriella)

Although some young people insisted that they had not complied with the new forms of action that were suggested for them, it is also worth noting that at times, the girls did not admit that Hillside had effected them when clearly it had. This can be seen in Lola's statement that 'I'm not going to change' in interview one, that was replaced three interviews later with:

*'I'm not going to run away anymore [...] and I wouldn't really prostitute myself again because I've just done way to much of that and I'm just fed up of it, and I hate men to be honest [...] like before I didn't know how to talk to them, it just used to be flirt, flirt, flirt. Now, when they talk to me, it's just like they're people and not just some sort of God.'* (Lola)

Lola, like many of the other girls, did change her ideas about boys and thus altered her feelings in according emotional responses to them. Indeed, this suggests that Hillside was effective in its aim of providing residents with a new emotional dictionary and in teaching them how and when to use socially accepted emotional responses (Hochschild 1998; Mayall 1998).

### **Conclusions**

This chapter explored young people's agency in light of their incarceration in a total institution by considering the power hierarchy of Hillside Lodge and the girl's positioning as an incarcerated child within a unit aimed at reform. By examining young people's daily experiences in these terms, this chapter shows that rather than being passive objects, Hillside residents were agentic beings, able to understand and influence the people and circumstances around them (James and Prout 1998; Thomas 2000; James and James 2004). Indeed, mediation and negotiation were practiced on a day to day basis and the girls found that they were able to influence parts

of their Hillside experience by either overt or covert means (Liebling 2000). Due to the tightly controlled structures in Hillside, girls had to adopt and adapt appropriate methods of negotiation and could not rely on the confrontational methods that had proved successful in previous placements. Those who were successful in furthering their own personal agendas were those who learned to portray to members of staff that they had 'learned' how to behave. Of course, that is not to suggest that the girls changed or did not change, instead it reiterates the fact that indeed the girls (at least most of them) did learn how to behave, at least when they were being watched:

*'In the end, it seems, we make up an idea of our 'real self', an inner jewel that remains our unique possession no matter whose billboard is on our back or whose smile is on our face.'* (Hochschild 1983:34)

## **Chapter Eleven: Thesis Conclusions**

### ***Introduction***

The first part of this chapter will provide a summary of the thesis and will draw together findings and debates from previous chapters. This research has explored girls' experiences by placing them as active participants, thereby providing an opportunity for those perceived as 'vulnerable' or 'trouble' to comment on their own experiences. Instead of looking at reoffending rates and educational attainment, this research has considered Hillside's aims as being to reform not only the behaviour of its residents, but also to reform their feelings. Social institutions such as Hillside Lodge are concerned with the remaking of socialised citizens, and the previous chapters have shared girls' experiences of being remade. The second part of this chapter will consider the limitations of this research and will share the practicalities of conducting sensitive research in a total institution. The final part of this chapter will revisit the theoretical implications of this study and will underline its original contribution to academia.

### ***Thesis Summary***

This thesis has reflected upon the issue of secure accommodation as an institution to care for and to reform marginalised young people. It has considered secure accommodation from its origins in the approved school system, to its use as a social institution for those seen as being bad, mad, or vulnerable. Foremost, it has considered secure accommodation as a state tool, aimed at reforming the lives and perspectives of those who are perceived to present a future concern. In doing so, it has been important to understand that children and young people are constructed as a social category, controlled and socialised according to societal pressures, moral

panics and social shifts. I have narrated these issues and considered their relevance to girls and young women, reflecting upon the expectations placed on girls to be 'all things nice'. I have prioritised the voices of girls and made them the focus of the study rather than a complimentary narrative for the stories of boys, who seem to dominate research in the criminal justice system. My arguments about the purpose of secure accommodation have been strengthened by literature and debate about total institutions (Goffman 1961; Davies 1989; Hacking 2004). By referring to these works, it becomes clear that secure accommodation is a total institution in which every aspect of daily life is controlled and surveyed. Furthermore, by incorporating Foucault's theories of discipline (1991), the aims of Hillside stand out as attempting to form vulnerable and disengaged children into socialised citizens, with emotional responses that are compatible with the society in which it is hoped they will fit. Such social theory has therefore been useful to explore the phenomena of secure accommodation and to set it into the context of the society in which it is placed.

The multi-method approach used for this study enabled the rigorous collection of detailed data, allowing for analysis into a part of society that is usually hidden from critical gaze. Ethnographic methods of data collection enabled first-hand exploration of Hillside rules and routines, rather than a second-hand synopsis from research participants or members of staff (Fetterman 2009). By listening to the stories of those who are usually termed vulnerable and criminal, this research offers a different perspective of professional labelling. More importantly, this research has explored personal reformation and emotional exchange from the perspective of those who experience it, rather than from the professionals who generate it. By sharing the voices of Hillside's young residents, I hope to advance

understandings of girls' experiences of confinement and to start to piece together an understanding of the effects of caring reform.

Hillside children were locked up for displaying different types of behaviour and, whilst it can (and should) be argued that all of the children *did* have incredibly similar life histories, their stories also contained considerable differences. Interestingly, therefore, neither staff nor young people agreed about the function and purpose of Hillside Lodge and explanations about 'what is it' changed depending on the strength of particular voices in a particular moment. So whilst the dominance of criminal justice placements meant that Hillside was usually perceived as a prison, when verbal and articulate welfare girls were in residence, they challenged this view of the unit on behalf of other girls. Even so, secure accommodation's alternative title of 'Local Authority Secure Children's Home' was an arbitrary one, which was rarely used and often unknown by those living and working in the unit. Although residents and staff maintained that the different categories of children *should* be mixed, as a researcher, I could never completely reconcile the fact that the mix was to the detriment of some of the young people within it. Although individual residents seemed to pose little risk to the others, the labelling of 'offender' took dominance, and as such, the overall message remained with the girls that 'good kids don't get locked up' (Lauren). Despite professional assurances that sexually exploited girls had 'done nothing wrong', the girls were unable to divorce these assertions from the reality that they were in a 'kids prison' (MOS-Terri).

For girls who had not broken the law, discussing so called 'risky behaviour' became contentious. Most participants rejected professional views that their 'normal teenager' activities needed to be modified. Girls instead felt



that adults were unqualified to comment on 'normal' teenage behaviour and insisted that staff were removed from reality, claiming instead that their own experiences were 'normal'. Most of the girls rejected the idea that they could be unmade and reformed back into unknowing and innocent children. Instead they demonstrated that they were already young women, adept at circumnavigating difficult situations, and not little girls. Therefore they rejected professional constructions of age related child development and discussed vulnerability in a context specific language that was influenced by individuality and experience instead of age. As a consequence, the girls sought to reject their legal status as children, or 'minors', but accepted that they had to reshape their daily performances to portray that of the obedient 'good girl' until they reached the 'magic age' of sixteen.

### ***Theoretical Implications: Young People as Experts***

This study adds important findings to the literature around young people in secure care by considering secure units as total institutions, concerned with the care and correction of its residents. Although I have taken my theoretical underpinning from Goffman (1961) and Foucault (1991), my work also expands on these works by considering confinement and socialisation in relation to gender and age. In addition, where Foucault and Goffman consider secure institutions as rigid and unmoving structures, my research has considered Hillside residents as agential actors, able to bend and circumnavigate the institution to meet their own ends. In binding all of these issues together, my research responds to authors who consider that 'children will do as they are told by whichever adult assumes to have authority over them' (Thomas 2000:58) by demonstrating that incarcerated young people were able to negotiate their Hillside experience, overtly and covertly. By asking children about their experiences of the unit, it became

clear that often Hillside residents were able to turn the strict and careful regime of Hillside Lodge to suit their own individual needs. So although Foucault and Goffman both propose that institutions assert their power over the individual, I would conclude that this is a two way process, which can be influenced by the individual as well as by the institution.

Hillside Lodge was open in its aims to socialise the young people in its care, taking its focus from the political agenda of a social investment state, concerned with the success of future generations. Keywork packages, enrichment activities and everyday routines therefore contributed to the reforming aims of the unit to socialise marginalised young people into amenable and obedient children, who knew when they had done wrong and showed remorse and sorrow appropriately. Hillside sought to shape the moral and national identities of otherwise spoiled citizens, hoping to enforce a 'useful and trained' generation independent of state benefits in a society with less anti-social behaviour and crime (Thomas 2000; Lister 2006; Read 2011).

Hillside's reformational journey was a difficult one to experience, and became an emotional placement for many of the girls. The application of Hochschild's (1983) work around the sociology of emotion has aided the research by providing a new way to think about young people's emotions. Indeed by exploring Hillside as a tool to aid emotional reformation, this research has considered that state run interventions are geared to educate citizens into embodying particular types of emotional conduct. Enrichment activities and school work enabled residents to learn self control and to manage feelings of frustration and helplessness, by teaching young people that hard work and perseverance would ultimately prove victorious,

thereby making marginalised young people suitable to be placed back into mainstream society, with the ability to self govern and regulate their own activities (Foucault 1991).

Considering emotion work is important because, as we are reminded by Turner (2005), 'emotions pervade virtually every aspect of human experience' (Turner and Stets 2005). This thesis adds an important perspective to the sociology of emotion by considering the voices of girls who are cared into emotional reform. So while Hochschild (1979), Crawley (2004) and Van Stokkom (2011) consider the effects of emotional management from the point of employees paid to manage their emotions into organisational outputs, this thesis has considered the effects of this type of emotion work on young people who become the recipients of such emotion work.

This research focuses on relationships between Hillside staff and young people on an individual and personalised level. Rather than comparing relationships between two categories of people, it also considers the individualised aspects of these professionalised relationships. Since Hillside workers take on a role which differs from other professionals the girls had encountered before, it also meant that staff had to construct their own representation of what their role was to young people. So whereas Stokkom (2011) describes that prison officers can 'hide' behind a uniform, Hillside staff are not afforded this luxury. Instead their role is open to individual interpretation, which the staff do in different ways. As we can see by MOS-Darren's framing of his role as a prison officer, in contrast with MOS-Dawn's description of herself as a parent type role model. Hillside girls made clear distinctions between the roles that Hillside staff took on and

presented their own displays to suit particular members of staff at different times.

Hillside takes its strength and significance as a reformational institution on the basis of the powerful relationships that young people form with their preferred care staff. It is within this individualised notion of care that the unit generates its impact, for young people believe that the relationships formed in Hillside are different and special. They do not realise, like MOS-Harry claims, they are one of 'hundreds' of young people generating these 'unique' relationships. Hence whilst the care offered by staff is taken by young people and liked by them to familial love, staff instead see their role in the unit in terms of work, both emotional and physical, drawing its relevance to family life from familial chores rather than familial kinship.

However, for young people, and unlike for staff, Hillside does indeed become a home, and to some 'the best home ever'. The prevalence of dressing gowns and mundane tasks mean that the unit becomes a place in which to socialise children into everyday domestic life as well as an institution for curtaining emotional outbursts. This twinned with the expectation of 'caring' meant that the girls attached special importance to their placement and to the relationships that they generated with members of staff. The type of care, albeit coercive care, used in the unit enabled carers to illicit particular and 'appropriate' behaviour from the residents. In this way, staff benefit from the care they show young people and receive compliance in exchange for kindness and concern (Svensson 2002). Therefore in Hillside, emotion is exchanged and positive emotional input is returned with positive emotional output, this is illustrated when Brittany describes her relationship with MOS-Alfie as being 'like the dad I

wish I had'. The reciprocity of care is also seen where negative emotional input generates the response of negative emotional output from young people, like Lola reminds us *'why should I like her? She doesn't even like being here'*. In these exchanges, we can see that care and coercion have the purpose of generating particular types of behaviours and exchanges at particular moments and as MOS-Dawn reflects, *'We do control so much [...] subtly challenging and moving and directing behaviour'*. This of course highlights Vygotsky's claims that 'communication always has a purpose' (Vygotsky 1986 in Crawley 2004). Indeed, it was the members of staff who refused engage in this type of caring that were considered inappropriate and criticised by young people as being unsuitable employees (Crawley 2004).

The dual purpose of the unit meant that some members of staff disagreed about their role within it. So while most members of staff saw themselves as carers working with 'vulnerable' children, a minority instead saw themselves as prison officers, working to instil discipline and order. In these cases, members of staff attempted to each play different parts in the same play. It was surprising that residents were usually unaware of staff disharmony, and despite the personal disagreements that staff had about the children they were paid to look after, young people believed that members of staff were (almost) always on the same page. This showed that all members of staff engaged in some level of emotional display whilst on shift. It is also important to recognise that although Natalie and Lola identified the monetary implications of Hillside workers earning money by caring for them, they also felt that other members of staff worked with them because they genuinely wanted to help (Colley 2006).

Like other organisations dealing with emotionally challenging groups, Hillside lodge constructed procedures to ensure that individual employees did not put themselves at risk of personal liability if something did 'go wrong' (Pinkney 2011:39). This research shows that although guidelines are written with staff and child wellbeing in mind, these procedures also create tensions between individualised and organisational ways of working. So while an individual might be committed to their role and to providing support and care to young people, they are also constrained within their own organisational boundaries. Hillside residents were usually unaware of organisational boundaries and furthermore, sometimes felt that professionals hid behind formal procedures when they did not want to share particular information. In this way, staff are charged with the pressures of managing their own emotions about a particular procedure and also managing the emotions of those they are working to protect (Pinkney 2011:39).

Although this research was set in a particular place and in a particular time, its findings can be used as a lens through which to explore wider sociological issues. By exploring Hillside Lodge as a state socialisation tool, we learn about social policy which intervenes in the lives of troubled families. Already a number of authors explore state interventions in their capacity to socialise citizens, however, this study adds a new perspective to the debates in this area as it frames its focus on the experiences of those experiencing state socialisation techniques, rather than the views of those who create or criticise them.

In acknowledging that that girls are the real experts of their own experiences, my research has offered girls the chance to describe their lives

in their own terms, thereby replacing legislative or policy descriptions of them as vulnerable or risky with a new depth and understanding. We see how socialisation on the part of the state not only includes beliefs and attitudes, but also emotions. The reformed girl is meant to have acquired not only a set of beliefs, but also a set of emotions, appropriate for citizenship. The language of youth confinement is overwhelmingly the language of emotion. 'Vulnerability' designates an official emotional state and the institutional regime is meant to engage a process of 'care' to transform girls into citizens.

By considering Hillside as a socialisation tool, the contradictions around the unit's purpose are minimised. Although children enter for different reasons, they are all seen by the state as being marginalised and excluded from mainstream society, and therefore as presenting a risk. For that reason, placing these children together means that they can be socially reformed into successful citizens, regardless of the needs they presented before their incarceration. So whilst the state feels that young offenders need to be put in 'their place', the state also needs to ensure that welfare children who are seen as 'out of place' are taught to fit in to society in ways which are socially acceptable to the general population (Read 2011). Consequently we can see that although welfare girls might not be young offenders, the image of a thirteen year old prostitute differs from societal expectations of 'childhood' in the same way that a thirteen year old murderer does. Through building caring relationships with the girls, Hillside seeks to teach the offender and victim alike that their previous pathway had not been appropriate for them. Therefore, penal policy and welfare policy both seek to save young people from their expected life trajectories and instead deliver them as grateful citizens, thankful to a state which had saved them from misfortune.

Since all of Hillside's residents were deemed to have made inappropriate life choices, the state acted by taking away their freedom and independence. Hillside Lodge became responsible, then, for reforming these young social misfits into passive and dependent citizens, grateful when granted minor luxuries and freedoms. The unit's boundaries aimed to teach residents that they had to respect adult authority and play by the rules in order to succeed. Although staff were certain that they were acting in young people's best interests, the girls did not share Hillside's philanthropic vision and therefore frequently rejected the changes that staff attempted to illicit from them. Girls' own descriptions confirmed that, rather than being vulnerable and in need of saving, they perceived themselves as being streetwise and able to care for themselves. Between them, the girls showed resilience and perseverance and survived a number of challenges and hardships.

Thus, for these girls, professional assertions about vulnerability were unhelpful and condescending. Furthermore, constructing vulnerability as a childhood issue fed resident resentments towards secure placements and suggested that they had been wrongly targeted for interventions aimed at children. Labelling vulnerability as a consequence of childhood suggested to girls that their actions would be acceptable once they reached adulthood. As a consequence, most of the girls saw vulnerability as something that they could 'grow out of'. Therefore instead of aspiring to change their lives, they sought only to be sixteen and released from social service provision.



Hillside nevertheless became a welcome placement for some of the girls. Positive experiences were attributed mostly to the strong relationships that the girls formed with their carers and, it was clear that relationships between staff and residents were built upon genuine affection, *'MOS-Alfie is like a dad to me'* (Brittany). From the perspective of Hillside's employees, caring relationships were always maintained as professional ones. Therefore when girls were seen as becoming too close to a particular carer, staff attempted to distance themselves. This highlighted an important problem regarding the relationships between Hillside staff and residents, because, as much as staff genuinely cared about the children they worked with, individual residents represented only a tiny part of a care worker's career. Hence, whilst young people treasured their relationships as unusual and special, staff generated the same positive relationships again and again with different children, *'there are hundreds of Brittany's. As soon as she leaves we'll get another one in. As bad as it sounds to say, it isn't possible to remember them all'* (MOS-Harry). Although girls often felt that their relationships with staff were special and unique, they did understand that certain boundaries constrained these relationships. Hillside girls therefore learned that although certain workers were trustworthy, the constraints of caring relationships meant that they could not keep young people's secrets and that information disclosed in even the closest relationships would be shared openly between a range of services. Instead of being open and trusting, girls were therefore cautious and cynical, sometimes acting to purposely misguide professionals about their experiences and their motivations. In contrast to the grateful child 'saved' from a life of discontent, girls were distrusting and often resisted unit regimes that were focused on reform. Furthermore, instead of responding to professional actions intended to 'save' them, the girls believed that they were the victim of such services and were indiscriminately disparaging of those who had acted to secure them.

The unit encouraged young people to 'open up' and to share their experiences and emotional hardships with staff so that professionals could work with them to 'put things behind' them and to 'move on'. However, not all of the girls wanted to relive their past experiences and also did not want to share their life histories with staff. Instead the girls sought to form equal friendships with staff by building on shared experiences and social preferences, 'we like the same music and we go to the same clubs' (Lola). In this way the girls sought to be 'equal' rather than a saved or pitied child. Despite their own feelings about childhood, the girls discovered that it was easier to 'put up and shut up so you can just get out fast' (Lauren). By playing the part of a compliant resident, many of the girls were able to act along with the regime without embodying its messages and ideals. The system therefore encouraged girls to be secretive when dealing with professionals and perhaps other adults, meaning that they did not learn the skills to successfully negotiate their needs in the future. Rather than embracing the packages prepared to save them and to restore them into mainstream society, the girls described methods that could be adopted to circumnavigate the effects of intervention packages, albeit 'in a baby voice' (Lola).

### ***Final Reflections***

Although I have attempted to take the reader on a journey through Hillside Lodge, and to explore girls' experiences of incarceration, I have nevertheless remained the narrator. With this in mind, I feel that it is necessary to explain that while I am sympathetic and empathetic, I have endeavoured to collect a balanced view of the unit. So although my

research focuses and indeed champions the voices of Hillside girls, I also spent vast amounts of time with Hillside boys, members of staff, teachers, cleaners, cooks and visitors too. I feel that this makes these findings more robust, because listening to different sides of the same story reveals the complexities and contradictions that take place in everyday human relationships. It is possible to understand that young people's accounts are stated as truth, and in effect, they were truths to each individual. Having access to multiple accounts of young people's actions confirmed the validity of their claims, so where information looks exaggerated, for instance, when Chantelle declares 'I'll bang him out', research observations and staff descriptions lend accountability to her claims. Having an overview of the unit as a whole, and having access to staff meetings and case files meant that I was privy to information that young people were not. I never repeated information discussed in interviews or informal conversations with either group, and when prompted for opinions, always responded with 'she's lovely, bless her'.

I believe that I managed to stay positioned as an outsider and not as someone who would be capable of discussing the day's events from an analytical perspective. I feel that working so closely with Hillside residents for an extended period of time meant that my research data was enriched since participants learnt to trust that I would not disclose their triumphs or hardships inappropriately. I often reminded participants that I would have to report issues relating to child protection, but fortunately a circumstance in which this would have been applicable did not arise.

It is in this detailed view of Hillside Lodge that this thesis claims its individuality, investigating the journey and resistance of 'reform' rather

than contesting the political agenda which might have placed the girls there. This study has, therefore, increased understandings of young people's own experiences of confinement and of being reshaped and remoulded into a citizen. I respond to criticisms that the sample of girls came from just one secure unit in England by stating that I have shown a snap shot of young people's emotions in a particular time and place. I do not claim to have understood all young people's inner most feelings about secure care, nor do I claim that these positions will not change and alter over time. Undoubtedly each girl's feelings and perceptions will change over time, and will also differ from others yet to enter into this system. This research uses Hillside as a window into a particular moment in time and, thereby frames secure accommodation as a state socialising tool with the aim of appropriating and forming future citizens.

This research contributes to the literature about secure accommodation and offers accounts to fill important gaps in this area, showcasing children as the experts of their own experiences. The research also has a wider significance as it demonstrates the socialising agenda of the state and allows us to explore what it is, as citizens, we are expected to be. By exploring Hillside as a regulatory tool, we can see that children and young people are expected to embody particular roles, that of the calm, grateful and obedient child. Furthermore, my story of Hillside exposes the regulatory aims that the state intends for its children and makes the link between philanthropy and capitalism in shaping the lives of problem families and forming the minds of future generations.

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