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Living Life

Young Men's Experiences of Long-term Imprisonment

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Rachel Tynan, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed ███████████_____

Date _____ 18th November 2018 _____

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This research is concerned with the long term imprisonment of young men aged 15-18 and is based on fieldwork conducted at a single site in England. Using empirical, qualitative data obtained through ethnographic methods of observation, participation and interviewing, the thesis investigates how young men cope with long-term imprisonment and how they imagine their futures. Young people's experiences of imprisonment are understood from the perspective of their own biographies, and the thesis argues that studies of youth imprisonment should incorporate this perspective.

The research also identifies the pains of imprisonment that young men describe and the function of violence within the institution and as a tool for constructing and maintaining identity prior to and during imprisonment. Young prisoners experience - and resist - the imposition of racial, class and legal status in specific ways and their resistance is what creates a unique 'prison culture' that is not held exclusively in the institution but travels with young people. Resistance is often realised through violence but young people's recognition of violence is mediated through the same imposed characteristics.

The thesis advances the idea that young prisoners draw on their biographies and that this forms the basis of a carceral habitus, a set of inter-related dispositions that enable young people to navigate their sentence. This habitus is shaped by the geographical and social attributes of the institution but, more significantly, by their relationships with others inside and outside the prison. The thesis highlights that the relationship between biography and habitus is mediated through trauma and argues that the interaction between the two should not be overlooked.

Finally, the thesis sets out the need for studies of youth imprisonment to consider the wider sociological and historical factors that contribute to how imprisonment is constructed and how it is experienced by young people.

Contents

'*Be easy, see whagwan': Introduction*

This thesis is about how young people experience long-term imprisonment and how they draw on their biographies to manage their imprisonment and to imagine and shape their futures. It is also about how the responsibilisation of individuals and communities combine to create the conditions in which the response to acts of violence by young people is long-terms of imprisonment. It is about the ways in which some harms are elided and others prioritised and how a criminal justice state can absorb all evidence that contradicts its efficacy and press on regardless.

Young people sentenced to long prison terms make up a small but significant part of the juvenile prison population. Their actions have caused harm to others and the management of these young people through their sentences will have an impact on them at a significant time in their development. Those on indeterminate sentences must prove they are no longer 'dangerous', before they can be released. The justice system has a statutory (and since 2008, legal)[1] duty to provide the resources young people need to prove themselves 'safe' to be released and the approach to young people serving long sentences speaks to wider issues in criminal and social justice, including the idealisation of (some) childhoods, the treatment of marginalised groups, the prison industrial complex, processes of nominalisation and racialisation, the philosophy of punishment and the sociology of the body.

A broad sociological approach to the understanding of prisons requires attention to the context in which prisons exist as well as the personhood of those who reside in them. Criminological theories have been criticised for their dependence on politically, rather than scientifically, defined objects and practices (Carrabine 2000; Rhodes 2001). This is

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[1] In 2008 the High Court ruled hat the Secretary of State for Justice (SSJ) had a public law duty to provide systems and resources to enable indeterminately sentenced prisoners to demonstrate suitability for release. The decision was upheld on appeal and subsequently accepted by the then SSJ. ([2008] EWCA Civ 30; [2007] EWHC 1835)

especially pertinent in the case of prisons and prisoners where a focus on the specificities of prison life can obscure the fact that prisons do not exist in isolation, nor are they a corollary of crime. Decisions are made about how to manage those who break rules and that choice is, frequently and increasingly in England and Wales, prison - but it does not have to be. Nor is the current state of child imprisonment an inevitable one; it is based not in evidence but history. This thesis will explore, among other things, the role and impact of harm in the lives of young people serving long sentences. All young people in this study have been subjected to harm, all have caused harm to others and, I will argue, all are harmed by their imprisonment.

The fieldwork on which this thesis is based took place in 2010/11, during which time youth led protest movements and riots took place in England, Senegal, Mozambique, Egypt, Portugal, Tunisia and Chile. Though each of these protests took different forms and had differing motives and effects, at their heart all were disenfranchisement and futures restricted by poverty and exclusion (Honwana 2014), all of which featured heavily in the lives of respondents. Honwana uses the term 'waithood' to describe young people on the precipice of adulthood but unable to reach it because of economic, social or political exclusion. In the UK, the riots were attributed to 'gangs' and youth violence, a move that enabled the 'problem' to be 'solved' by the allocation of £10m for gang intervention projects (Williams 2015). The characterisation of riots as gang related decontextualised these actions from the systemic obstacles facing young people in early 21st century English cities. The focus on criminality locates responsibility with the 'criminal' individual rather than the circumstances in which s/he exists. Decades of failing to examine those circumstances has led to England and Wales as the nation with the highest rate of child incarceration in Western Europe, one of only three states that continues to sentence young people indeterminately (CRIN 2010), sentences to be spent in institutions that state inspectors repeatedly report as unsanitary and unsafe (HMIP/YJB 2017).

I suggest that this small group of young prisoners merit sociological attention beyond the narrow road of crime and punishment and that to understand their circumstances requires, as a minimum, attention to discourses of risk and governance and interrogation of the term 'criminal'. 'Crime' is not central to young prisoners' experience; they talk about actions, about harm and about fears - not crimes. In foregrounding a phenomenological approach to understanding young people's experiences of long-term imprisonment I aim to discard some of the baggage of prison sociology and focus instead on the lived experience of individuals, privileging their voices and the nuanced ways in which they choose to use them. The chapters that follow will focus on the stories participants tell to and about themselves and others. Like their counterparts in West Africa, young prisoners in England develop their own spaces in which to 'subvert authority, bypass the encumbrances created by the state, and fashion new ways of functioning on their own' (Honwana 2013). Chapter 2 sets out the context for this research, including the limitations of relying on any single discipline, the impositions of classed, racialised and criminalised identities and the urgent need for a phenomenological approach to young prisoners' experiences. This means shifting focus from 'the prison' to the people who live there - in this case the young people. Their stories matter. Chapter 3 focuses on the methodological challenges to hearing and representing young people's stories and the chapters follow illuminate how young prisoners adapt to confinement, their pains of imprisonment, the uses and meanings of violence and social relations between prisoners and their loved ones, and prisoners and their peers. The final chapter draws together the themes raised in the previous chapters and returns to the key contributions of the thesis.

The shape of the field

The criminal justice system is a mesh of law and policy and fraught with terminology and acronyms that render it opaque; terms that have colloquial meaning take on a different tone and are applied conditionally. The word person is used only rarely, and reliance on detached, arms-length terms is preferred. This study is concerned with how young people

experience long-term imprisonment. The terms 'young people' and 'long-term imprisonment' have particular meanings, defined below and contextualised in the wider debates around long-term imprisonment and the failure of the English prison system.

What is a young person?

The Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR) in England and Wales and Northern Ireland is 10 - the lowest MACR in Europe, since Scotland voted to increase it from 8 to 12 (Scottish Government 2016), and has consistently drawn criticism from the Children's Commissioner, the Law Commission and child development experts (McGuinness 2016; Church et al 2013; Goldson 2013). A rebuttable presumption - the doli incapax principle - that children under 14 were incapable of serious harm - created a permeable barrier to protect children whose actions may be criminal but whose culpability was reduced by virtue of their age, although children under 14 could still be prosecuted for serious crimes. This was abolished in 1998. Calls to restore doli incapax as a means of partially assuaging these concerns (Gerry 2017) have gone unanswered.

The criminal justice system recognises three age groups; *young people*, (occasionally referred to as juveniles), *young adults* and *adults*.

10- to 17-year-olds are defined as *young people*. Differences in court procedures, sentencing and custodial accommodation apply to this group, although they are often found less than satisfactory by advocates for children and young people (Willow 2015; Gibbs 2012). Under 12s can only be sentenced to custody if sentenced to more than two years. There are three types of secure accommodation for young people; Secure Children's Homes (SCHs), Secure Training Centres (STCs) and Young Offender Institutions (YOIs). The differences between the three are detailed in Chapter 3, but here it is sufficient to note that SCHs accommodate young people from 10 onwards, up to 17 if the young person is considered vulnerable, and on welfare as well as criminal justice grounds. STCs

are privately operated and accommodate young people aged between 14 and 16. In 2016/17 49%) of children in STCs were from a black or other minority ethnic background. 12% said they were Muslim and 10% were from a Gypsy, Romany or Traveller background (HMIP/YJB 2017).

YOIs take young people from age 15 and most closely resemble prisons in terms of architecture, layout, regime and disciplinary controls. Young people serving long sentences are most likely to be accommodated in a YOI, if they are old enough. In 2016/17 48% of boys in YOIs identified as being from a black or minority ethnic background. 22% were Muslim and 42% had experienced local authority care. 19% reported having a disability (HMIP/YJB 2017). This study took place with young people aged 15-17 on a wing reserved for long sentenced prisoners in a juvenile young offenders institution (YOI). For anonymity the YOI is named Wearside and the wing, Cypress.[2]

Young adults are those aged between 18 and 21 - subject to the same sentence types and lengths as an adult but their sentence expressed legally as detention in a young offenders institution (a 'DYOI sentence'). There are three designated establishments for young men aged 18-21, and a further 49 prisons who hold 18 year olds alongside older men (Justice Committee 2017). There are no YOIs for women aged 18-21 and these young women are held in adult women's prisons, alongside adult women.

Definitions of childhood and youth vary in different settings, even in legislation that applies to public life. For example, the Children and Families Act 2014 defines a child as someone under compulsory school age and a young person as someone over school leaving age but under 25. The legal frameworks governing children and young people in conflict with the law are rooted in numerous Acts over the last two centuries (see Bateman and Hazel 2014). Neither the age groupings nor the different types of establishment are

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[2] Wearside has since closed and re-opened as a prison for adult men, indicating how closely the architecture resembles a prison for adults.

underpinned by knowledge or best practice in neuroscience, social or psychological development or evidence on effective practice. A comprehensive review of evidence on health and wellbeing concluded that adolescence spanned the period from age 10 to 24 (Sawyer et al 2018).

Young people in conflict with the law have disproportionately experienced trauma and there is growing evidence that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) affect cognitive, physiological and emotional development (Lyons et al undated; De Bellis And Zisk 2014). Trauma is held in the body (Van der Kolk 2014). Growing evidence shows the brain is malleable and continues to develop into the mid 20s (Hughes and Strong 2016; Royal Society 2011) and there is consensus amongst psychiatrists and psychologists that the effects of trauma can be repaired with treatment (Van der Kolk 2014).

In 2017 the Government rejected the Justice Select Committee's (2016) recommendation for the development of a specific strategy for young adults in custody (MoJ 2017a). This is important in the case of young people serving long sentences as almost all of them will remain in prison past their 18th birthdays, and most past their 21st birthdays. Most have experienced ACEs and the effect of trauma on their behaviour is poorly understood by those tasked with their care and control; the secondary traumatisation of imprisonment is increasingly recognised, both among young people and those who work with them (Baldry et al 2017; Lyons et al undated; Sage et al 2017). In a High Court judgment in 2002, Mr. Justice Munby said: 'the State appears to be failing, and in some instances failing very badly, in its duties to vulnerable and damaged children in YOIs.' (EWHC 2497 [Admin]: para 185). In October 2017 he repeated these concerns, citing the Chief Inspector of Prisons' earlier conclusion that 'not a single establishment inspected [in 2017] was safe to hold young people' (Munby 2017).

What is a long-term sentence?

The Prison Service describes sentences of over four years as long-term (Prison Service Order 6650). Long sentences can be either determinate or indeterminate. Determinate sentences have an expiry date and a conditional release date, usually midway through the sentence, with the remainder spent under supervision in the community. An indeterminate sentence has no expiry date and no automatic release date. The sentencing court will set the minimum period - the tariff - that must be served before a person can apply for release by the Parole Board. Anyone released from an indeterminate sentence will remain on licence and under supervision in the community for the rest of their life. A person on licence can be recalled to prison, without the intervention of a court, for breaching the terms of their licence, a suspected breach of licence or a perceived increase in risk. Once recalled, a person has no automatic right to release and must reapply to the Parole Board.

A person convicted of murder in England and Wales is subject to a mandatory life sentence. This applies to all age categories, although nomenclature varies.[3] In addition, discretionary life sentences are available for those who meet set criteria, although these cannot be applied to under 18s. The Criminal Justice Act 2003 increased starting points for cases of murder involving a firearm or explosive - 30 years - or a knife or other weapon - 25 years, as well as whole life orders in particular cases. The starting point for under 18s convicted of murder remains 12 years. The 2003 Act also introduced Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPPs, or DPPs when applied to under 18s). This despite a general downward trend in recorded homicide: the 514 recorded homicides in the year ending March 2015 - the lowest number since 1983 (ONS 2018). This increased to 571 in the year to March 2016, although it is too early to tell if this represents an anomaly or a reversal of the trend. Most recent data suggests genuine increases in crimes involving the use of knives and/or guns, and that these crimes are disproportionately concentrated in London and other large cities (ibid.).

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[3] Under 18s are sentenced to 'her majesty's pleasure', 18-21s to 'custody for life' and over 21s to 'imprisonment for life'.

The Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 is the basis for sentencing across age groups and makes specific provision for those aged under 18 at the time of the of- fence. Section 100, Detention and Training Orders (DTOs) are determinate sentences of between four months and two years.

In the youth justice system, the following sentences are long-term:

• Section 90 is the mandatory sentence for a person under 18 convicted of murder. The tariff starting point is 12 years, with sentencing judges required to set out their reason- ing for increasing or decreasing this term. Very few cases see tariffs lower than 12 years; several recent cases have seen significantly higher ones.[4]

• Section 91 covers a young person convicted of a serious offence, other than murder, for which an adult would be sentenced to more than 14 years.

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 included new indeterminate and extended sentences.[5]

• Section 226, Indeterminate sentence for Public Protection (IPP) (Detention for Public Protection when applied to under 18s) was mandated where a person convicted of a specified offence[6] was judged to pose a high risk of harm. As with other indeterminate sentences, this meant a tariff was set which must be served before a person could be- come eligible for parole.[7]

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[4] In 2010 a 15 year old boy was sentenced to 23 years for the murder of two sisters; a 15 year ofd boy was sentenced to 20 years in 2015 of the murder of his teacher; in 2016 a boy and a girl, both aged 15, were sentenced to 20 years for the murder of a woman and her daughter. This was reduced to 17 and a half years on appeal.

[5] The IPP sentence was repealed by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012 and replaced by the Extended Determinate Sentence (EDS) known as s226a for over 18s and s226b for under 18s. Anyone already serving IPP/DPP sentences remains subject to the release provisions of the 2003 Act.

[6] There were 95 specified offences on the list, defined in section 224(1) and listed in Schedule 15 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003.

[7] Tariffs were often short - an average of 30 months, in one case 28 days (HMCIP 2008). The sentence came into effect in 2005; by 2007 13% of IPP prisoners were already beyond their tariff date (ibid.). As at September 2016, 87% of IPP prisoners are over tariff (HMIP 2016a).

• Section 228, Extended sentence for Public Protection (EPP) could also be applied where a person was convicted of a specified offence but did not require an indeterminate sentence.

Children under 12 cannot be sentenced to a DTO, but can be sentenced to all other custodial sentences if convicted of a crime that warrants such a sentence.

As of December 2017 33,472 determinate sentenced prisoners were serving over four years. This included 1,173 18-20 year olds and 126 15-17 year olds, an increase of 7% and 13% respectively since December 2016 (MoJ 2018). In addition, 10, 173 men, women and children were serving indeterminate sentences including 94 people aged 18- 20 and 12 aged 15-17 - a decrease of 8% overall, 10% in the case of 18-20 year olds and an increase of one person aged 15-17 since December 2016 (ibid.)

Despite this small decrease in indeterminate sentences, the number of prisoners in England and Wales without a release date is vastly higher than comparable European nations- there were 7,439 life-sentenced prisoners in England and Wales on 1 September 2015 compared with 1,883 in Germany, 1,611 in Italy and 1,804 in Russia (Aebi et al 2016).[8]

Characteristics of the long-term population

As indicated above, childhood trauma can have implications for physiological, cognitive and emotional development and it is therefore unsurprising that trauma is a significant factor in the lives of young people convicted of serious crimes. Surveying a third of the long-term sentenced population in the 1990s, Boswell found that 91% had experienced severe abuse and/or loss (1996; 1995). Of course not every traumatised child will commit acts of violence but, without support following a traumatic event or experience, many

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[8] This number excludes those serving IPP sentences, while the December 2017 figures includes them.

children become depressed, disturbed or violent with girls tending to internalise and boys to externalise their responses (Alisic et al., 2014). Boswell concluded that adverse childhood experiences are sufficiently prevalent to warrant the introduction of systematic assessment for violent young people – a message also echoed by Smith and McVie (2003) and Lösel and Bender (2006). The British Psychological Society has called for neuro-disability screening to take place earlier, pointing out that many young people are first assessed for ADHD, ASD and traumatic brain injury symptoms on entry to the criminal justice system (BPS 2015).

As yet, there is no systematic data collected on the backgrounds of young people serving long-term sentences. Studies usually focus on a population group, a characteristic or a timeframe. A study of all young people sentenced in 2014 found that 31% of 16 and 17 year olds sentenced to more than 12 months custody had been in local authority care in the preceding twelve months (MoJ and DfE 2016). 67% were recorded as having Special Educational Needs (SEN), more than 70% in the category of Behavioural, Emotional or Social Difficulties (ibid.). Around 30% of young people in prison - compared with 10% in the general population - have been clinically diagnosed with ADHD (Young et al 2014) and 30% of young prisoners have suffered a traumatic brain injury (Farrer et al 2013).

Case file analysis by HMIP found that 80% of young people identified as posing high or very high risk of serious harm had experienced significant trauma of all types (HMIP 2017e). Finlay and Jones (2000) found that 40% of young people in prison had experienced parental loss and that multiple and traumatic deaths - for example homicide - were more common than amongst the general population. 91% of young people in a 2014 study had been bereaved, more than half five or more times (Vaswani 2014).

Consistent findings that the vast majority of young people in custody have experienced significant trauma, alongside increased understanding of post-traumatic stress symptoms,

(Skuse and Matthew 2015; Ardino 2012) has led to calls for trauma informed care in secure settings - for young people (Wright et al 2016) and adults (Levenson et al 2014) in England and in other parts of the world (Oudshoorn 2016; 2015). Yet there are no therapeutic programmes or environments for children and young people in English YOIs and staff are not required to have any specialist training in child development or trauma. Furthermore, imprisonment can exacerbate the effects of traumatic childhood experiences and mental ill health. Miller and Najavits (2012) emphasise the destabilising effect of inherent aspects of the prison environment such as frequent and harsh discipline from authority figures and restricted movement (Owens et al 2008).

The behaviours that arise from trauma are difficult for prison staff to manage, partly because they are untrained in trauma and child development, partly because prisons are simply not designed to meet the needs of the young people they hold. Prison itself is traumatising, and re-traumatising and the resulting responses can precipitate restrictive physical intervention (RPI) or restraint. Between 2011 and 2016 children and young people sustained 3,699 injuries as a result of being physically restrained (Hansard 2017).

The current study did not include systematic collection of data on ACEs but it became clear that respondents had experienced many: murder of a parent, murder of siblings by a parent, sexual abuse by parents, neglect, adoption and subsequent breakdown of adoption, witnessing and experiencing violence in the home, parental suicide, parental drug addiction, murder of other relatives or friends, imprisonment of parent or siblings, parent with severe mental ill health, parent with severe learning disability, emotional abuse, early death of a caregiver, parental abandonment, parent involved in sex work, unexplained absence or concealed identity of a parent. Some of this was recorded in files, and some of these files were read by staff but there was no systematic consideration of childhood experiences and effects on behaviour, either in or out of prison.

Consideration of the trajectory from early victimisation to perpetration of violence is lacking in the literature on young prisoners (although see Ellis et al 2017 and Wojciechowski 2017). Young people convicted of serious crimes are managed as violent, not treated as victims, and are placed in institutions known by the state to be violent and dangerous (HMCIP 2017).[9] Those on indeterminate sentences are then required to demonstrate that they are no longer violent in order to achieve release.

What is a prison for?

The statutory role of the YOI is to 'help offenders to prepare for their return to the outside community' (YOI Rules 1988). These young people will return to the towns and cities from whence they came and the prison's role is to help them become ready for that return. The YOI Rules set out the ways this readiness will be achieved: '…education, training and work designed to assist offenders to acquire or develop personal responsibility, self-discipline, physical fitness, interests and skills and to obtain suitable employment on release.' This despite the apparent lack of restorative or rehabilitative approaches to serious violence, lack of support for young people with neuro-disabilities (Hughes et al 2012), the limited time spent on education or training, the scarcity of specialised interventions for drug or alcohol misuse or trained mental health professionals (HMCIP 2017).

The expectation implicit in the Rules is that the programme offered will be willingly taken up by 'offenders'. Yet, by the very fact that they have 'offended', these young people are resistant. On top of this, they are adolescents. Adolescence in the free world is prized, treasured and extended for as long as possible. For those in prison, the physical and emotional changes must be managed without any (or many) of the trappings of a contemporary Western juvenescence.

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[9] In mid 2017 the Chief Inspector of prisons wrote 'By February 2017, we concluded that there was not a single establishment that we inspected in England and Wales in which it was safe to hold children and young people.' (HMCIP 2017: 9).

Academic attention to the trajectory of youth incarceration over the last two decades has grown, yet there is a dearth of recent qualitative and, specifically, ethnographic data on young people in prison. This may be explained in part by the political climate of crime and corrections, and the fact that access to certain groups is more carefully guarded. Indeed this formed part of my decision to focus solely on young men in prison rather than all young prisoners. At the time my fieldwork was carried out, a national block on research in juvenile prisons was in place, ostensibly due to a number of policy and practice changes in process. At that time, a number of units were reserved for the accommodation of young men on long sentences, either self-contained blocks in the grounds of YOIs or, in the case of my field site, a dedicated wing. There were self-contained units in the grounds of three women prisons for young women over 17 serving sentences of any length. Since then young women under 18 are no longer held in prisons. The declining population has seen a decline in the level of interest in young prisoners. But the decline has meant a greater proportion of the total are serving long-term sentences. The changing needs of the population have not been met with in staff training or regime structure. Only one long- term unit for young men remains open. A recent inspection report highlighted the dearth of any work with this group, other than to keep them together, on one of the most dilapidated wings in the prison (HMIP 2017d).[10] Long-term sentenced young people are dispersed across the country and those charged with the care of young prisoners admit that they are failing to provide a system that is fit for purpose (Wood et al 2017). In April, the number of young people in prison rose by just under 6%, the first year on year increase since 2008 (YJB 2017). The importance of hearing young prisoners' voices is only increasing.

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[10] The smaller estate means that 'on average children are now accommodated further from home, increasing journey times to and from court and undermining efforts at resettlement. Similarly, managing disruption and problems associated with gang affiliations has become more difficult in a smaller estate. (Taylor, Charlie 2016: 36; HMIP 2016b).

Crime, risk and harm

Young people serving long sentences have been convicted of serious violence including grievous bodily harm, attempted murder, murder and rape. Accounts of young people sentenced to prison have often questioned whether prison is proportionate to the crimes committed, and the reduction in the juvenile prison population (Bateman 2012) is testament to this, but calls for community based sentences are far quieter, if heard at all in cases of serious violence.

Reductionist arguments are sometimes predicated on the fact that 80% of women and 70% of men are convicted of non-violent crimes (PRT 2016). Yet this ignores the concept of harm - is defrauding an elderly woman of her life savings less harmful than a robbery where threats are made but not carried out? We might take different views, but the law on that is clear cut - a person convicted of robbery will be classed as violent and a risk to the public. A person convicted of fraud will not, automatically, be classed as dangerous. The presumption against custody in cases of non-violent crime has significantly reduced the numbers of young prisoners - but it has done little, if anything, to improve conditions for those who remain. If reductionism means only imprisoning the violent, it still means imprisoning the poor, traumatised and the mentally ill - and since perceptions of violence are deeply racialised, it will (and has) resulted in over-representation of people of colour. Can that be considered progress?

Penal reductionism and abolition then requires exploration of the spatial, temporal and historical context of both crimes but also the genesis of 'the criminal' as a (risky) racialised, classed and gendered subject (Gilroy 2008 [1982]; Hall et al 1978) both identifiable and governable from adolescence (Muncie 2006). From the late 1990s onwards this became visible in the criminal justice system through strategies and technologies including responsibilisation, which see the state acting 'at a distance' by alerting individuals and organisations to their role in the identification and management

of the risk of crime (Garland 1996; 2001). In youth justice, this took the form of responsibilising young people, their families and working class communities (Muncie 2006). This can also be seen in calls for particular communities - almost always delineated by class and race - to identify and confront state defined problematic behaviour, in particular radicalisation (HM Government 2015) and gang and group crime (Centre for Social Justice 2009; Home Office 2011; Catch 22 2013). Christie (1998) emphasises that the development of ideas is influenced by the same forces that influence both crime and forms of crime control, so it becomes impossible to determine which came first. 'Some acts are seen as terrible…Terrible acts, however, can be met in various ways. In certain situations they are given the meaning of crime, and action seen as crime control is initiated.' (p.130).

Crime control - the very idea that crime is an artefact and can be controlled - informs and is reinforced by the shift towards a new modernity increasingly concerned with the future, and therefore risk of all kinds not solely crime (Giddens 1998). This is not the main focus of this thesis but it is essential that young people experience of prison is anchored to the wider social forces that have shaped both their individual circumstances and the collective response to them. In the case of young people serving long sentences, it is indisputable that harm has been caused to at least one person. A criminal justice response to this harm - specifically imprisonment - is both legally man- dated and socially accepted as an inevitability, with little interrogation of the effectiveness or purpose of incarcerating violent young people together in institutions that are filled with, and foment, high levels of violence. This is officially recorded (YJB/MoJ 2017; 2016; 2015), noted by the Inspectorate (HMIP 2013a) and widely reported in the mainstream press (Dorman 2016; Cooper 2015; Morgan 2009). The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture has reported that none of the prisons it visited in 2015-16, including those for juveniles, could be considered safe for prisoners or staff (CPT 2017). Reoffend- ing by young people leaving custody is the highest of all age groups - 67% in 2014/15 (HMCIP 2015). Yet even critical

accounts of the youth justice system can neglect to question the meaning of crime and the almost tautological response to it and this is nowhere more evident than in the case of violent young people. The chasm between my participants' own descriptions of violence as expressive, frustrated or in defence of themselves or others is at odds with official and legal narratives and there appears to be little will to reconcile the two, either for the benefit of young people themselves or potential future victims. Instead, '…the prison enacts on the bodies of "others" a violence camouflaged by its position as what Davis calls an "abstract site" in the public imagination' (Rhodes 2001: 68). Identification of particular young people as risky or dangerous, and their banishment, serves a broader purpose than punishment of those individuals - although as will be seen in later chapters, imprisonment is not always experienced as punishment. Banished young people themselves provide a site for the physical expression of moral outrage untempered by the irony of using violence to condemn violence. In late 2017 the Secretary of State for Justice said '…as far as I'm concerned, it is being sent to prison that constitutes the punishment… And prison conditions themselves should be decent and humane, and organised in such a way as to encourage and contribute towards successful rehabilitation' (Rt Hon David Lidington MP, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice 2017).[11] Yet this is enshrined in neither statute nor policy and frequently prison is the site for punishment (Freeman 2016; Willow 2015; Allison 2013; Philby 2013) with little or no recourse for young prisoners.

Nothing in the civilising process is an expression of nature or simple reason and the manners and mannerisms acquired through the process connote moral values (Elias 1978). The rules that govern manners and mannerisms serve a bifurcated function, creating individuals attuned to the rules and a society stratified along these lines (Connerton 1989). In the same way, there is nothing inherently criminal, or outlaw, in the behaviour of young men in prison. These young men have learned to hold postures and move limbs and

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[11]Lidington was replaced as Secretary of State during a Cabinet reshuffle three weeks later, making his successor the sixth Secretary of State for Justice since 2010.

address audiences through sound and gesture in exactly the same way a virtuoso violinist has learned to angle his head and vibrate his fingers. Importantly, these manners and mannerisms were not learned here. Trauma, like culture, is carried in and expressed via the body. As later chapters will show, young prisoners draw on their biographies to manage imprisonment and to imagine and shape their futures. I want to move away from the idea that prisons are somehow culturally specific and distinct, that the people in them are different from people outside. They are not. There are practical and linguistic idiosyncrasies here - an economy of goods and services, references to 'apps'[12] 'sosh'[13] and'block'[14]- but these must be demystified, deglorified and reattached to the pre- and post-prison landscapes whilst simultaneously detached from uncontested conceptions of 'crime'. A commitment to understanding prison as an entity greater than the deep end of crime control is fundamental to this thesis and essential to both reduction and abolition. Over-reliance on prisons is only possible in the absence of questioning their existence

Criminality is a moving feast and criminalisation a political as much as social endeavour, even in cases of the most serious violence. This is most starkly illustrated by reference to other nations. The UK is one of only three European Union countries that do not prohibit indeterminate - 'life' - sentences for children and young people (CRIN 2010).[15] The Netherlands and Spain permit a maximum of six years for those under 18. Of the two other countries that allow indeterminate sentencing - Cyprus and France - CRIN found very little evidence of use: none at all in Cyprus, and in France two children have been sentenced to life imprisonment in the last 25 years (ibid.). By contrast, 197 life sentences

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[12] Applications, usually made on paper, for anything from toothpaste to visit bookings.

[13] Association: unlocked free time during which an individual can use the telephone, put in apps, take a shower or associate with others.

[14] Segregation wings, often now known as Care and Separation Units or CSUs, where people are held for punishment or, increasingly, elect to go for their own safety (Shalev and Edgar 2015).

[15] CRIN could not confirm whether there the practice was prohibited in Malta, Luxembourg or Ireland.

were handed down to under 18s in England and Wales between 2006 and 2016.[16] A number of these have been on the basis of 'joint enterprise' a legal doctrine that enables the prosecution of multiple defendants for the same crime on the basis of shared culpability. All participants can be charged with the same crime and, if found guilty, are subject to the same sentence. In the case of murder, that is a mandatory life sentence. There are no official figures on the use of the doctrine but it has increasingly been applied to youth violence in urban contexts (Bureau of Investigative Journalism 2014) and has highlighted the overrepresentation of young people (Jacobson et al 2014) and BAME defendants in joint enterprise cases (Lammy Review 2017; Williams and Clarke 2016).

Green (2008) compares legal and social responses to the killings of 2-year-old James Bulger in England and 5-year-old Silje Riedergard in Norway. In England, the two 10-year-old perpetrators were convicted in adult court. In Norway, the two boys, aged 5- and 6-years old, who attacked her were never tried nor imprisoned (the age of criminal responsibility in Norway is 15). Instead they received psychiatric help. More recently, in May 2017, a medical student convicted of unlawful wounding with a knife was sentenced to 10 months imprisonment, suspended for two years - in part, due to the impact imprisonment would have on her intended career (Pasha-Robinson 2017). In the first quarter of 2017, 13% of young people and 39% of adults who came before the courts for possession of a knife were sentenced to immediate custody (MoJ 2017b). The ability of the judiciary to make decisions specific to each case and each individuals circumstances may well be considered a strength. However the provisions for mercy, leniency and understanding are unevenly applied: analysis of 2014-2015 data found BAME young people were more likely to be sentenced to immediate custody for knife possession than white young people (Puffett 2016). The impact of race, nationality and class is something I return to later.

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[16] Between 2001 and 2011 indeterminate sentences were handed down to 113 people under the age of 21 (the Scottish government does not publish separate figures on under 18s). No figures are available for Northern Ireland.

What is striking about the Norwegian approach is that it appears more inclusive of the bereaved family and, in being so, avoids the 'secondary victimisation' of a criminal justice process that treats victims as evidence. Restorative approaches are recognised by the criminal justice system as having positive effect on victim satisfaction and re-offending rates (HMIC et al 2012) yet are rarely seen in cases of serious violence. Given the increasingly long sentences handed down since 1998 (MoJ 2013) and the increasingly squalid conditions in prisons (HMIP 2017a; 2017b; 2015a; 2015b HMCIP 2015), it would appear that welfare consciousness is less, rather than more, evident. Anxiety over young people is a seemingly perennial concern (Pearson 1983) but the application of predominantly punitive sanctions to youths reached new heights with the Criminal Justice Act 2003. In- determinate sentences were introduced despite the lack of evidence on effectiveness and no theory of change or provision of the resources that would be needed to assist young people in the personal development that would be required to prove themselves 'safe' for release.[17] This seems to me a coalescence of myriad economic, sociological, psychological, political and cultural factors, yet has been left largely unexplored. There was, and remains, relatively little exploration of the characteristics or lived experience of long-term imprisonment, even as sentences rapidly increase in length. Prison sentences in 2015 averaged 16.2 months - three months longer than ten years ago. For indictable offences, the average was 56.8 months, 18 months longer than a decade ago (MoJ 2016). The average tariff on a life sentence in 2003 was 12.5 years - by 2013 it was 21 years (Hulley et al 2015).[18] This gap has been partially addressed by Crewe et al's study on long-term imprisonment, although that excluded young people at the start of long sentences, or any- one many years over a relatively short tariff on an indeterminate

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[17] The extensive debate about the IPP sentence has almost entirely excluded young people, either as subjects or participants. There is no central data collection on the number of young people sentenced to IPPs who remain in custody and over tariff. The Parole Board estimates it at roughly 100 (personal correspondence with Parole Board chair)

[18] In 2003/04, there were 15 homicides per 1,000,000 population. There were 10 homicides per 1,000,000 population recorded during the year to December 2013 (ONS 2014). There is no consistent correlation between prison numbers and recorded crime, either in the UK or internationally (Lappi-Seppälä 2015; National Audit Office 2012).

sentence.[19]

The concerns of long-term prisoners remain strikingly similar over time (Hulley et al 2015) and many of these concerns apply to young people as much as adults. Yet there remain unexplored questions about how young people come to serve long sentences and how they experience long-terms. Adolescence is a time of immense physiological change overlaid with evolving - and inconsistent - social expectations and responsibilities. In England and Wales in 2017 a 10-year-old can be held criminally liable for their actions and receive a sentence that will remain permanently on record but will be prohibited from watching a film that has 'an overall disturbing tone' (BBFC 2014).[20] A 16-year-old can join the armed forces, but not buy cigarettes. These barriers are in place ostensibly to protect young people - sometimes from themselves - based on a constructed and idealised version of childhood as a time of novelty and innocence (James and Jenks 1996). Acts of violence rupture this idealisation and leave young people in limbo, no longer able to claim their right to protection by virtue of their youth but not yet considered adult in their skills or experience. Young people in custody are stratified by age but other than that little attention is paid to their particular developmental stages. It has been suggested that those imprisoned during their teenage years exist in a state of 'perpetual adolescence' (Stern 2008), development halted at the point of incarceration (Smartt 2001), to be 'picked up' at some later point, as yet unknown (Jewkes 2002). For life sentenced prisoners it has been argued that this disruption may become permanent, a liminal state akin to being diagnosed with a terminal illness (Jewkes 2006). If imprisonment necessitates at least a reimagining of cultural capital, how then is its acquisition affected by the transition to adult identity?

Notions of disrupted, stalled adolescence are based on the reflections of older prisoners,

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[19] The study included those sentenced to a life sentence with a tariff of more than 15 years when over the age of 18.

[20] The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) provides guidance on what ay be permitted in a film rated 12A: Although some scenes may be disturbing, the overall tone should not be.' (2014: 19).

rather than contemporaneous research with with young people. Identity formation may be disrupted, but that relies on acceptance that identities are formed linearly and through particular, defined experiences unavailable to prisoners. While young prisoners are deprived of many adolescent experiences, they are also exposed to intense pains. Why would these have no impact on the adolescent psyche? I wanted to know 'how does it feel to be a young person serving a long sentence?' and I first sought answers in the literature focused specifically on youth justice, largely written by practitioner academics. These ranged from analysis of the development of the secure estate (Hagell and Hazel 2001) sentencing practices (Bateman 2011; 2001), the rights of children in custody (Hollingsworth 2008; Gray 2011). This literature tends not to focus on the specific conditions of those in custody - who make up only a small proportion of young people involved in the youth justice system - rather it is tightly focused on the structural composition and ideological underpinning of the system itself (Goldson 2014; Muncie 2006). This has had the effect of making young people's subjective experiences 'unknowable' (Phoenix and Kelly 2013) and necessitates a return to empirical work with young prisoners. Phoenix and Kelly suggest an unintended consequence of the responsibilisation framework - through the framework of accountability young people come to know that there is no-one to help them. Phoenix and Kelly's account goes some way to integrating the voices of young people into scholarship on the political nature of youth justice. My research follows the same path. The lack of anyone to help was revealed in my participants' descriptions of fractious relationships with social workers and educational welfare officers, their weary insistence that violence was not a choice but a necessity. This relates to O'Malley's (1992) contention that responsibilisation creates the conditions in which the burden of risk management is borne by individuals themselves, using their own resources. This is highly relevant for young people who find themselves in conflict with the law, having experienced multiple deprivations and exposure to violence. Having fallen through the cracks of risk matrices they are required to rely on their own limited resources to manage risk in the community. Failure to do so draws them into a

world in which they are now the risk and are now responsible for demonstrating how they have minimised the risk they themselves pose. Uncertainty, mobility and the negotiation of risk are features of embodied cultural capital that are accumulated over time (Bourdieu 1986) and participants were aware of this even if they did not always have the language with which to express it. They talked frequently of the failure of incarceration - 'prison don't do nothing' - yet were often bound by the terms of their sentence to account for the positive effects that prison had on them. I return to these ideas in later chapters.

The sociology of prisons is by now well populated yet there remains a gap in recent research with young prisoners in general, and long-term sentenced young people in particular. This thesis seeks to address that and to advance the idea that a young prisoner is best understood in his own words and in the context of his own biography, incorporating the many layers of his experience inside and outside of prison.

Before I set out the content of the proceeding chapters, I must set out some of the layers of my own experience. Jewkes, in discussing emotional aspects of fieldwork, wrote that subjective experience influences "every aspect of the research process from choice of project to presentation of 'findings' whether consciously or unconsciously so" (2012: 65). I left the field in 2011, moved with my then supervisor to a different university and began teaching while writing up. As respondents turned 18 they too moved on, to different prisons and in 2013 Wearside re-roled as a prison for adults. I maintained correspondence with several respondents but over time this tailed off. It became as if Cypress had never existed.

At the end of 2013 an earlier version of this thesis was examined but before I could complete the examiners' corrections I was sentenced to term of imprisonment. The thesis in its current form is significantly revised - updated with recent work, of course, but also in light of my own reflections over time. Seven years have passed since I first entered Wearside. I have seen respondents released and returned to prison on fresh charges. I have met mothers of young men who are nearly at the end of long sentences started when they were

teenagers and seen the life changing impact on them and their younger children. I have seen the brother of one respondent win a national award for his inspirational work with other young people. And I have lived in prison myself. This is not a 'confessional tale' (Van Maanen 1988: 73) but I cannot extract my own biography from the thesis that follows. Neither can any other writer. My experience as a former prisoner/academic is not unique (although the sequence of my experiences perhaps is). Others have used their subjective experience as fuel for their doctorates and later research (for example Aresti 2010; 2012; Davies 2015; Earle 2014; Warr 2007). It is notable that all of these writers are men and write about prisons for, predominantly, adult men.

Prisons for women differ greatly from those for young men, in terms of layout, regime, characteristics of the population and relationships between prisoners and staff. In any case, there is no single experience of imprisonment; the 'biographical particulars' of every person shape the ways they manage their time and emotions and the ways others react to them. In prison I met women who had been young lifers and I was struck by how different their trajectories had been, having spent the early part of their sentences in the (by now closed) units inside the grounds of women's prisons. It is difficult for a lone researcher to identify the ways in which their subjectivity influenced the research process, or to reflect on these in a meaningful way (Crewe 2014; Earle and Phillips 2010). My curiosity about young prisoners was not driven by my own experience of imprisonment but my commitment representing their own accounts of themselves is certainly strengthened by it. The tension between sympathetic and objective portrayals of research subjects is, I think, a false dichotomy. In this thesis I try to present young prisoners' insights into their own lives, the practices they use to shape their existence and identity, and the obstacles they experience in doing so. In doing so, I aim to be 'faithful to their understanding of themselves' (Anderson 2002: 1549). This may not be sufficiently detached for some and my own subjectivity may only undermine that detachment further. Notions of credibility that correlate with social position are perhaps especially fragile in the case of prisons and prisoners. If the hierarchy of credibility (Becker 1967) rests on access to information, it is

clear that there are multiple and interlinked hierarchies in prison: in some ways there are two systems of knowledge. I make no claim to represent both - this is an examination of how young people experience imprisonment, from their own perspective - no more and no less. The sociological imagination requires looking at things from an alternative perspective - thinking oneself 'away from the familiar routines of everyday life' (Mills 2000). That process is, by definition, subjective. Yet acknowledging oneself as a subjective researcher feels risky. As Becker wrote, accusations of bias often arise where a researcher gives serious weight to the perspective of the subordinate group. Young prisoners are vulnerable and vilified: the young men in the pages that follow have caused serious, often irreparable harm to others and are, in that sense morally, as well as structurally subordinate. In the research relationship I am superordinate yet, having been where they are - more or less - have I forfeited any claim to objectivity? Maybe. I will leave that for you, the reader, to determine.

Chapter outline

'My story's boring': Why young prisoners' stories matter

In this chapter, I discuss the literature that informs the research, identifying the key areas that this thesis develops. Firstly, I will examine the limitations of a purely criminological approach to understanding youth imprisonment. I will argue that stepping back from theories of crime and punishment allows a richer and more nuanced understanding of how young people experience prison, how they understand their lives before prison and how they imagine their futures.

Secondly, I discuss how the denial of seeing oneself in the eyes of others (Sykes 1958) affects young prisoners. This section will identify how racial, class and legal status are imposed on and internalised by young prisoners and set out why attention to them is necessary. I will draw on concepts from Bourdieu and Fanon to illuminate the ways in which power is distributed, experienced and resisted.

Finally, I draw these ideas together to suggest that what is needed is a move towards a phenomenology of youth imprisonment.

'Real talk': Methodology and reflections on fieldwork

This chapter has two functions: it sets the scene, walking the reader through the research site and the methods employed. It is a repository for some of the field stories and emotions that inform the analysis. These are key to understanding the field, yet I have not al- ways been brave enough to present them in analysis and so include them here by way of transparency.

The nature and extent of participation is limited by the prison setting (Bosworth *et al* 2005) but ethnographic research obliges immersion in the everyday. Rather than

participant observation, the term 'reserved participation' (Liebling 1999b: 160) has been suggested as a more accurate depiction of prison research: the ordinary practices of daily life – small talk, drinking tea and, especially, killing time. This demands engagement with all the emotional aspects of daily life too. Much of prison life is boring and mundane and findings ways to pass the time is a key aspect of imprisonment. For this reason embedded research can be rewarding: an outsider (especially a female one) is appealing, in novelty at least, and it is possible to engage participants with relative ease. This is not to denigrate the value of the research relationship: as Bosworth notes '[M]aking a connection with someone new outside helps a person feel a bit closer to home, a bit more like a human being and a bit less like a prisoner' (Bosworth *et al* 2005: 257). This is especially prescient with long-term prisoners and with those whose offence may have brought shame and ostracised them from their family or friends. I also felt isolated and lonely at times, working to a different objective than everyone else, and many times I wondered why I was there. There were also times when I felt incensed at injustices and found myself advocating for a particular young person, or open mouthed in horror at a comment made by a staff member. Prison itself is emotive and encompasses the range of human experience – good and bad, power and weakness, despair, violence, change, growth, hope and faith and humour. Prisons are '…raw, and sometimes desperate, special places' (Liebling 1999b: 152). The relationships I developed with participants were meaningful beyond the research question, for me and, I believe, for some of them too.

'Just gotta ride it': Adaptation, survival and change

This chapter sets out the practices young people relied on to adapt to prison life and highlights the ways in which young people use skills and knowledge gained outside to man- age their imprisonment. The greatest challenge is simply to cope, and be seen coping. This can involve managing emotions in new ways so as to 'be calm' but always bearing in mind the need to defend themselves. In some cases, the effort required to cope was so great that it left little or no mental capacity for remorse or rumination. That is not

to say there was a lack of remorse, simply that often it had not even been considered. Where prison is viewed as an opportunity at all, it is to learn more about people and make contacts. Some saw it as a useful learning experience, teaching them about themselves in ways they could not have learned outside. For others it was simply an inevitable consequence of the life they had lived up to now. Few considered the future, or the effects their conviction and imprisonment would have on that future, and I saw few institutional at- tempts to encourage this. Those with the longest terms often chose not to engage with staff unless absolutely necessary and, since many were appealing their conviction, they could not be required to submit to any form of therapeutic work. There was little available, in any case.

'That's just their pen and ink': Surviving the pains of imprisonment

This chapter discusses the pains of imprisonment for this particular group of young men. The loss of liberty was most keenly felt by respondents who had been largely let loose in the free world. Despite their freedom they often had significant responsibilities – for themselves, for siblings and even parents – and considered themselves to be autonomous and self-sufficient. To be brought into the prison, forced to depend on others for financial support and no longer allowed to determine their own path was painful but most acute was the sense of being treated 'like kids'. For some the most painful aspect was being de- fined not by their own words or actions, but by the 'pen and ink' of assessments and re- ports that represented them as 'an offender' with a tick list of issues and risk factors. In contrast to labelling theories, few embraced their 'criminal' status instead rejecting a idea that an imposed morality had anything to do with their lives.

These pains are specific to the age of these young men and the era in which they find themselves imprisoned. Firstly, an older man entering prison is likely to experience the

same pains of losing his self-determination, but it is less likely he will be treated like a child and, if he is, will be well placed to challenge it. These young men enter a system that legally defines them by their age and, as much they benefit from this in terms of sentence and conditions, they feel affronted because of their youth. Many of these young men have already been failed by the care system – their 'child' status was inadequately protected there and yet here, after committing serious crimes, they are informed they have special status. Secondly, the move towards actuarial assessment and reliance on paperwork and computer systems to manage prisoners through their sentence is a marker of the 21st century justice system. This chapter provides examples of bureaucracy leading to errors that are compounded as an individual progresses through their sentence. The identification of this particular pain speaks to a move away from bodily discipline, towards psychological power, enacted in black and white; in pen and ink.

Finally, this chapter considers how young prisoners are affected by being denied the opportunity to see themselves 'in the eyes of others', particularly others of the opposite sex and others who were not tasked with keeping them detained. Respondents described the difficulties of trying to 'grow up' in a place where they were constantly told what to do. Loss of autonomy is a key component of imprisonment, yet these pains may have a unique impact on adolescents in the midst of an 'insecure transition' from boy to man. This transition is made even harder through the deprivation of the material goods and increasing mobility that accompanies the move into adulthood in the free world.

'You can't just back down': Violence and identity

In this chapter, I examine the role of violence in more detail and argue that codes of violence imported from the street take on a different meaning in jail. The chapter will focus on how violence is mediated through concepts of regionalisation, racialisation and respectability.

Respondents often argued that prison was less violent than the street, mainly due to the lack of weapons, but that enemies were in such close proximity that it was impossible to avoid them. Violence, and ways to manage violence, were influenced by the structure of the prison and the way the prison estate is structured. Closure of smaller prisons meant that the majority of prisoners would come into close contact with each other on more than one occasion and that conflicts established either outside or in previous prisons were difficult, or even impossible, to resolve. Violence though is not fully about causing harm: respondents' talk of violence often alluded to the protection of themselves, either physically or psychologically. Whether aware of it or not, these young men demonstrated the fragility of their place in the world, a place that depended heavily on reputation but even more so on the maintenance of an unspoken code between young men.

I analyse two examples of violence used to defend others. These examples were noteworthy because of their unusual nature but also because the young people involved were both frequently involved in more mindless violence, either for their own gain or expressively in frustration. These examples illuminate the ways in which violence can be used as a form of communication in an environment where it is difficult to be heard.

'Clothes, food and love': family, fatherhood and the limits of fratriarchy

Focusing on social relations between young men in the prison and their relationships with people on the outside, this chapter examines the ways in which relationships, inside and out, affect and are affected by the adaptive strategies and pains of imprisonment covered in previous chapters. I will examine the influence of intra-and extra-prison relationships on an individual's view of their imprisonment within the context of their life story and their imagined futures.

The loss of family and friendship is a significant pain of imprisonment but these young men often lacked family support to begin with and, on entering prison, found themselves in the company of familiar faces. As family and romantic attachments outside began to wane, or became too painful to continue, respondents often focused on new forms of social support. 'Hood celebrity' enabled some to have frequent visits from girls and young women, and others looked upon prison as a way to enhance their reputation or make criminal contacts for the future. Shared experiences and a reasonable commitment to the adaptations described by respondents in chapter 3 meant that social networks were relatively easy to enter. There are however risks to that – being part of a network demands some contribution, and this often led to violence.

Developing relationships with fellow prisoners has been shown to alleviate psychological distress (Biggam and Power 1997). Liebling's (2004) study of the moral performance of five prisons found that they are 'low trust environments' but that relationships are developed in spite of this. However, a significant barrier to creating social bonds in prison is the difficulty of knowing whether someone really is who they say they are and an attendant lack of trust (Crewe 2009; Mann 2012). 'Realness' is a display of sameness between peers that challenges institutional norms while signalling to similar-minded individuals that they can be trusted. Social and cultural capital can be provided through tales of past endeavours and misdemeanours and the capacity of others to vouch for them. However this only goes so far - authenticity must still be demonstrated and, ultimately, most long- term sentenced boys conclude that there is no-one to be relied on but themselves.

The chapter will consider how cultural capital needed to survive prison (and pre-prison) is hard won, yet undervalued by mainstream society. The ability to read a volatile situation and identify the approach safest for oneself, to use violence judiciously and to know when to exploit weakness and when to act honourably are not easily learned, yet when characterised in this way are of little use in 'straight' society. These skills could be

repurposed by a system with genuine focus on the 'rehabilitation' of long-term sentenced young people.

'Jail's not gonna do nothin'…at all' : Conclusion

This final chapter draws together the findings from previous chapters and considers the overall contribution of the thesis and its limitations.

'My story's boring': Why young prisoners' stories matter

While doing this research I was frequently asked why I cared about these young people and those I met, naturally, asked why I was there. I told them I was interested in their stories and the chapter title is the response from a participant, Rhys, upon hearing this: "I'll tell you about it, but the story's boring". We are all 'tellers of tales' (McAdams 1993); we arrange our experiences into a coherent story in order to make sense of them. This is not 'delusion or self-deception' but the way that each of us discovers what is true and what is meaningful in life (1993: 11). Rhys' story, and others like it, are far from boring. Instead these storytellers personify neoliberal modernity and its crime control policies and the interplay between personal and political responsibility in surviving incarceration. They illuminate the ways in which individuals create and recreate their identities through narratives played out internally and externally and how punishment, exclusion and the possibility of redemption are understood and enacted. Their stories matter and their voices deserve to be heard.

In this chapter, I discuss the key areas the thesis develops. Firstly, the limitations of a criminological understanding of youth imprisonment. I argue that stepping back from theories of crime and punishment allows a richer and more nuanced understanding of how young people experience prison, how they understand their lives before prison and how they imagine their futures.

Secondly, how the denial of seeing oneself in the eyes of others (Sykes 2007 [1958]) affects young prisoners, identifying how racial, class and legal status are imposed on and internalised by young prisoners and why attention to them is necessary. I draw on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and capital and Fanon's theorising of colonisation to explore the ways in which power is distributed, experienced and resisted.

Finally, I bring these ideas together to suggest that what is needed is a move towards a phenomenology of youth imprisonment.

The political economy of crime

By returning to the sociology of deviance we can refocus on the political economy of crime. Chambliss (1975) foregrounds the relationship to the mode of production and argues that the development of capitalism - increasingly conflictual, increasingly violent - calls for proscription of an increasing number of acts. More recently this has been described as reliance on the criminal law as a solution to myriad social ills (Crawford 2008). Two thirds of the 1,785 new crimes created between 2009 and 2014 were brand new, created in an era of 'frenzied law making' (Chalmers 2014). The trend slowed but has not been reversed by acceding governments. Of new crimes created in the 12 months to May 2014, 68% carried a custodial sentence (MoJ 2014).[1] In addition, the last two decades have seen an array of activities criminalised when committed by foreigners (Aliverti 2013).

The penalties, created in the same frenzied atmosphere, disproportionately affect particular communities with ongoing consequences. Most significantly, the Criminal Justice Act 2003 introduced Indeterminate sentences for Public Protection (IPP).[2] More than any other piece of legislation, this exemplifies the late modern obsession with risk. Avoidance of risk is enabled by knowledge, rather than simply wealth (Beck 1992) and is tied to mobility and access to various forms of capital. Bauman argues that '…capital can travel fast and travel light and its lightness and mobility have turned into the paramount source of uncertainty

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[1] In 2010 the coalition government stated its commitment to reducing 'the proliferation of unnecessary legislation and tasked the Criminal Offences Gateway with collecting data on new criminal offences to monitor this. The Criminal Offences Gateway was terminated in 2015 and data on new criminal offences is no longer collected.

[2] The indeterminate sentence, when applied to under 18s, is legally DPP (Detention for Public Protection). The conditions and requirements of the sentence are the same as IPP. While discussion of IPP sentencing has increased, specific reference to DPP is largely absent. For this reason, I use IPP in place of DPP when referring to sentencing of under 18s, in order to link it to the relevant debates.

for all the rest.' (2000: 121). Against this backdrop, imprisonment - the ultimate restriction to self-actualisation - takes on an even greater symbolic significance. The literal captivity of the body emphasises the dearth of capital in the possession of those imprisoned and creates deep uncertainty both in and about them. It demands new ways of being, a reimagining of the self, the acquisition of new forms of capital and the proving of that self to the gatekeepers of mobility. Yet without resources to develop a new self, prisoners rely on the same techniques of survival they developed in the community, but learn to conceal them, painfully aware of the need to demonstrate a change that they have no way of effecting. Indeterminate sentences that place responsibility on the prisoner to prove that he or she is no longer 'risky' especially nurture insecurity - both on the part of the prisoner who must consistently find ways to illustrate their transformation, and on those who order release, fearful always of being too lenient, of releasing the wrong person at the wrong time (Padfield 2012). This intense insecurity is compounded by the threat of deportation for prisoners identified as 'foreign nationals' who may be detained in prison or a detention centre after their sentence ends, awaiting the outcome of immigration proceedings (see Hasselberg 2016 on the particularities of immigration removal). In the case of foreign nationals, their crimes are seen - officially and unofficially - as further evidence of their foreign-ness. The political economy of crime is mediated by processes of nationalisation and racialisation.

Garland (1996) argues that official criminology operates on two levels - the criminology of the self, which characterises crime as rational choice. Assessment techniques, the distancing and categorisation of people and the language of crime management flow from the impetus to anticipate and control crime. Alongside that, a 'criminology of the other' demonises those who make the 'choice' to commit crime and must therefore be punished (1996: 461). Individual crimes come to be seen as 'evil' acts, the actors themselves 'evil'. Revocation of anonymity orders relating to young people is sought on the grounds of transparency and open justice - the applicants (usually media

organisations) argue that naming young people convicted of serious crimes is in the public interest (Fitz-Gibbon and O'Brien 2016). Yet the reporting of identifying details in the national press does not immediately reveal any public utility (see, for example, Fruen 2016). The symbolism of violent young people as 'monsters' or 'devils' follows them and marks them out as 'dangerous others' (Drake 2011) a label underscored, in this study, by location on a long-term unit.

A critical criminological perspective might suggest crime as an arena in which social realities and identities are tested; a way of making a living and simultaneously resisting bourgeois hegemony (Robson 2000). In the case of violence - so often perpetrated against others equally subjected to bourgeois hegemony - the element of resistance is perhaps harder to see. But that's all the more reason to look. Explanations of violence that rely solely on criminogenic factors and assessment of risk do not sufficiently explain how, for example, a participant could tell me that he always completed his homework before going out 'gangbanging', or how a young man convicted of murder could have an Olympic medal winning brother. The 'refusal of subordination' (Linebaugh 1993, cited in Robson 2000) is found in the coalescence of multiple factors and that which begins on the street continues into incarceration. A critical approach to the construction of crime enables a focus on subjectivity and individual experience. Christie rejected the term 'crime' as imprecise - 'Crime does not exist. Only acts exist, acts often given different meanings within various social frameworks.' (Christie 2004: 3). Or, as respondents put it, 'there's always a reason'.

While those under 18 are legally children (following the 2002 ruling in that the Children Act 1989 should apply to children in custody[3]) and some scholars insist on the political necessity of naming young prisoners as children (Willow 2015) as they legally are, I choose not to use the term. Respondents baulked at being described as children. In contrast

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[3] R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, ex parte Howard League for Penal Reform & Department of Health (Interested Party) QBD 29 November 2002

to Gooch's participants (2016) none lamented their lost childhood. Staff referred to young people officially as YPs or trainees, colloquially as lads. I do sometimes refer to respondents as boys which may seem contradictory. 'Boy' (or 'girl') was not a term used by the institution and was therefore less freighted with negative connotations.

Young prisoners lose the right to self determine in many ways and to invoke the law when they are otherwise damned by it seems (unintentionally) derisory. To use the term to evoke the privilege of childhood is to ignore that they have so often been denied that privilege for most of their lives before being 'conceptually evicted' (Jenks 1996) at the point of conviction. To insist on a term that is politically valid yet disavowed the young prisoners' conceptions of self would be a 'testimonial injustice' (Fricker 2007), denying young prisoners the right to name themselves. It obfuscates the contradictory ways in which social and power relations affect young people according to their legal and racial status. Though well intentioned, the use of the term 'children' had the same effect as 'offender' - young people I spoke to did not recognise themselves as either and, as a result, felt unrepresented.

Understanding prisons, or understanding prisoners?

Although prisons, and prisoners, share common features the culture of each prison - even each wing - is a blend of individual and collective biographies of its inhabitants and the aims and values of those tasked with governance and administration. Studies have often sought to investigate 'prison culture' (Morgan and Liebling 2007: 1126) and the ways this is created by and impacts upon prisoners. Sykes' Society of Captives (2007 [1958]) offers a view of the prison as more or less self-contained, a society in itself. His focus on the deprivations of prison life - the 'pains of imprisonment' - and the repressive form of institutional governance is echoed in Goffman's Asylums (1968), which describes the loss of identity brought about by institutionalisation. The particular pains of long-term imprisonment were explored by Cohen and Taylor (1972), prompted by their evenings spent

teaching sociology to men on the maximum security E- Wing at HMP Durham. Reuss (1999) describes the transformative power of education but cautions against simplistic ideas of educating prisoners as a means of correction - she distinguishes between the two via the terms prison education and prisoner education, the latter loaded with the implication that the prisoner is deficient. A more recent surge of interest in collaborations between prisons and universities has reignited some of these concerns (Armstrong and Ludlow 2016; Warr 2016). Young people have limited access to the resources that typify a high quality education (Taylor, Charlie 2016) and young people's experience of education in prisons is un- der-researched and provision is under-resourced even while its value is championed. Prisons are legally required to provide 30 hours education each week for under 16s. In practice, access and quality vary and no YOI provided young people with their weekly 30 hours in 2016-2017.[4] Providers often relied on teaching styles that had long since been abandoned in mainstream education (Taylor, Charlie 2016) and young people are often unable to complete GCSEs - because there is no-one to teach them - and are instead diverted towards unaccredited courses, with no real world value, run by the contracted education provider. This, combined with previous negative experiences of education, contributes to mistrust of programmes and reluctance to engage in the small number of interventions available (Taylor, Clare 2016).

Desistance research highlights the need for staff to help prisoners - of all ages -identify life goals that will form the basis of plans and interventions throughout their sentence. (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015). Desistance broadly comprises four stages: openness to change, exposure to 'hooks for change', an appealing alternative self and reassessing attitudes

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[4] 'Classroom based education attendance in public sector YOIs to the year ending 25 February 2017. The YJB does not hold the attendance data for Parc YOI.

Cookham Wood: 14.8 hours
Werrington: 17.1 hours
Wetherby: 12.3 hours
Feltham: 10.1 hours.'

Information obtained From Youth Justice Board via Freedom of Information request (unreferenced) May 2017.

(Giordano et al. 2002). People may be open to change, but are reminded of their failings by crime-focused work, blocking the adoption of a non-criminal persona (McNeill 2013). The focus is persistently on 'offending behaviour' yet respondents convicted of violence frequently described their actions as an offensive form of self defence. Of course this may be cast as neutralisation but what is important here is that participants felt that there was no attempt to engage them on their own level, to understand their precarious position on the outside. Boys would describe not knowing how it felt to be angry, even while acknowledging the serious or life threatening injuries they had caused someone. 'Offending Behaviour Programmes' were manualised, run by young, inexperienced and unqualified tutors with attendance incentivised by chocolate bars and cartons of juice. A young person convicted of rape was allocated to a car theft programme, because after the rape he had stolen the victim's car in an attempt to get away. The programme consisted of videos[5] of cars being stolen and crashed, killing the occupants or others. The footage was so old that some attendees laughed, saying they had never seen cars like that before.

What does prison do?

The purpose of prison is notoriously unclear and the prison service's mission statement - to hold those sentenced by the courts[6]- provides few clues. The aims of sentencing are to 'punish the offender', reduce crime, 'reform and rehabilitate offenders', protect the public and 'make the offender give something back' (Sentencing Council 2017). The main aim of youth custody is to 'help offenders to prepare for their return to the outside community' (YOI Rules 2000) although this is somewhat tautological - the purpose of being taken away from society is to prepare for return to it.

Efficacy is predominantly measured by the number who are reconvicted after completing their sentence. Reoffending by young people leaving custody is the highest of all age

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[5] Yes, videos.

[6] 'We keep those sentenced to prison in custody, helping them lead law-abiding and useful lives, both while they are in prison and after they are released' (HMPS 2017)

groups - 67% in 2014/15 (HMCIP 2015). Research with young prisoners is often shaped by the 'what works' agenda - how to prevent young people from committing further crime and returning to prison (Andrews and Bonta 2010; Hollin 1996). Interventions are based on the premise that cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) can correct 'maladaptive thinking' (Cann et al 2005: 165). This is of course based on the belief that crime is a maladaptation, a challenge to the norm. A review of international evidence identified three types of intervention effective with young prisoners convicted of serious crimes[7]: interpersonal skills training, individual counselling and behavioural programmes. Successful engagement with programmes related to commitment to the institution, therapeutic relationships with staff and a belief in one's own success (Adler et al 2016), which might suggest that maladaptive thinking is less influential than a supportive environment. There is little evidence that such an environment exists in the secure estate, nor are types of programmes are routinely available. The only remaining centre for indeterminate sentenced young people runs no specialised interventions (HMIP 2017d). The focus on cognitive behavioural change has endured (Porporino et al 1991), underpinned by a belief in the universality of 'crime', even as actions defined as crime have shifted. A list of current interventions in the secure estate shows almost all are focused on cognitive skills, emotion management and consequences of crime.[8]A review of evidence on young people's involvement in gangs and effective prevention of group violence found that the most effective interventions are education or family based and focus on skills, parent training or therapy (Waddell 2015).

These reviews illustrate that programmes focused on 'offending behaviour' are less successful than those that work therapeutically with young people and caregivers. In custody this is particularly difficult given that young people are separated from their carers and other familiar adults and often become enmeshed in negative relationships

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[7] The authors do not provide a definition of serious crime.

[8] Information obtained from Ministry of Justice via Freedom of Information request 111782, May 2017

with adult staff. 'What works' simply does not work in prisons as they are constructed now. A US study with a group of young prisoners described as 'the most intractable and aggressive individuals' found a reduction in violence and reoffending following 'decompression therapy', based on the theory that individuals are motivated to behave in ways oppositional to the institution because of antagonistic bonds between them and staff (Caldwell and Van Rybroek 2001). Prisons as they exist now are inherently antagonistic institutions that do not easily facilitate therapeutic relationships between staff and young people. Wearside provided no therapeutic interventions that brought together residential staff and young people. I joined two psychology staff in establishing a weekly group and staff who observed frequently asked us 'how do you have so much patience with them?' - it was clear that residential staff had no inclination to spend more time working with 'them' than necessary. From my observations, long sentenced young people rarely presented the greatest challenge to management of the institution as they were usually more settled and established and less likely - with some exceptions - to self harm. I found their relationship to the institution and its agents to be a mixture of antagonism, alienation and bemusement, ideas that are explored in chapters 4, on adaptation, 5 on the pains of imprisonment and 6 on the meanings of violence. While some female staff considered themselves maternal figures, no participant shared this view and some were agitated by it. As later chapters will show, antagonism between young prisoners and the institution, and particularly the staff who are agents of the institution, can be both a significant factor in young people's decision making and a reason for them to disregard imposed institutional norms.

The studies above all identify the importance of positive relationships with the adults who staff institutions and tutor programmes, but none explore the role of the institution itself in creating or maintaining relationships with young people, or relations between the young people. Polsky's (1962) study of the social organisation of the cottage homes of New York focused on exactly that. At the time of his research, there were 195 young people resident - 140 boys aged between 8 and 18, and 55 girls aged between 12 and 18 - and they were

grouped into 11 cottages, each run by a married couple. Most rule breaking was considered normal adolescent behaviour and punishment was discouraged. Children and young people were referred via courts, welfare organisations and other sources. The cottages were mainly open[9] facilities with children often attending local schools and older residents going to work in nearby areas. Polsky found that residents were more able than staff to integrate their psychological needs with the structure of the institution, whereas the latter operated within two distinct cultures. This hints at residents adaptability and ability to cope with uncertainty. Polsky described major regime changes as rare - instigators of change were simply removed. His observation that 'inner growth does not come in a social vacuum' (p.175) was at the time remarkable for its rejection of the idea that individual psychotherapy can be effective regardless of the setting in which it occurs.

In 1969, 200 miles from New York, Jerome Miller took over correctional services in Massachusetts and closed down almost all the reform schools in the state. Residents went to community programmes instead. He achieved this in just under two years in during which Massachusetts saw no increase in juvenile crime. Miller's radical overhaul remains the a cornerstone of Massachusetts juvenile corrections. Compare this with the state of youth justice in England - Sir James Munby raising the same concerns 15 years apart. In his 1991 book about those years, Miller wrote of the lengths to which corrections staff went to thwart his intention - even allowing residents to escape. Miller's tenure was controversial and short lived, but the institutions remained closed until a crime spike in the 1990s, and in the last decade efforts have been made to decarcerate Massachusetts' youth. Miller's radical methods were underpinned by his rejection of the myth of 'violent youth'. 'Those who run the juvenile justice system gain by defining young offenders as more violent than facts dictate. It's a kind of no-risk heroism for all concerned' (1991: 195).

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[9] 'Open' and 'closed' have different meanings across jurisdictions but essentially 'closed' incorporates structures and processes designed to prevent residents from leaving - locked doors, fences, walls, regular roll count - while an open unit may have some or none of these features.

An attempt at regime change, radical in its own way, was documented in was Bottoms and McClintock's before-and-after evaluation of Dover Borstal (1973) explored the effects of a regime change designed by the governor: a treatment plan for each resident, combining vocational training, personal development and group discussion. Bottoms and McClintock's evaluation of the regime change was funded by the Home Office. The regime change was not. Prior to the new regime, the reoffending rate was 58.4%. After, a tiny reduction, to 57.2%. When measured against this standard, the change could hardly be called a success and Bottoms and McClintock concluded that the immediate social environment had a greater impact on residents than risk factors or risk focused interventions. Effectively, that the institution neutralised the attempts to reduce recidivism.

Cawson and Martell (1979) further developed this premise in a study of closed units for children in England. Commissioned by the then Department for Health and Social Security (DHSS); their study was so critical of the system that the DHSS suppressed it. Finally published in 1979, Cawson and Martell rejected the idea that 'deficient individuals' could be reformed through the identification and management of risk - and distinguished this emerging model from the medical model that had previously held sway. A key finding, salient to my own research is that 'Troublesome behaviour in an institutional setting is produced by the institution rather than being an attribute of the individual' (p. 37). Institutions are not without character or influence, their existence imposes itself on those within it. Further, institutions do not exist in a vacuum, they are underpinned by the same factors as the society from which residents and staff are drawn.

Young prisoners or young people?

The studies above focused extensively on - and were critical of - the impact of institutions, but tell us little about how young people themselves describe or respond to it, beyond changes in isolated aspects of their behaviour. Dunlop and McCabe's mixed methods investigation of two detention centres in England aimed to 'concentrate on the personal

response of the young men to the treatment awarded to them' (1965: x), yet the authors were concerned that reliance on the young men's account would be tainted: '[any] direct or indirect answer is affected, if not by wilful deceit, at least by a conscious or unconscious desire to satisfy what are thought to be the needs of the interrogator' (ibid.) Instead the research relied upon 'methodically prepared interviews on the lines used in modern casework. After all, this is the sort of information that would be available…to sentencing courts' (ibid). This rigid format, mirroring the style of the courts would, by more recent standards, be considered an inhibition to understanding the 'personal response of the young men'. The presupposition that the young men would wish to 'satisfy…the needs of the interrogator' - indeed the use of the word interrogator - are entirely at odds with the innovative, participatory ethos that is now regarded as the standard when working with young people. Others have tried to present a view from the boys (and sometimes girls): Richardson (1969) and Tutt (1974) provide transcripts of interviews with girls and boys respectively in approved schools, and Gill's (1974) study at Whitegate, an approved school in Liverpool, was flawed somewhat by his decision to omit observational data. More recently, the experiences of young people in locked institutions are examined by Goldson (2006a and 2006b) and violent young people by Boswell (1996; 2000), though these have tended to focus less on the prison experience than the policies and biographies which have led them there. Several studies have focused on the prison experience of young adults: their assimilation into prison, using mixed methods (Harvey 2007) and how race and ethnicity mediate relationships between young adult prisoners (Phillips 2008).

The particular experiences of young people in prison in England have received little attention, although see Gooch (2016) on the pains of youth imprisonment. Goldson's 2002 study focused on the vulnerability of young people in secure settings, including YOIs and children's homes and the differences between the two. Young black people's coping techniques were explored by Wilson (2003), in perhaps the only study of how racial status effects young prisoners' experiences of imprisonment. Studies on both statistical

changes in reconviction and the social relations between young people and prison staff demonstrate that parts of the stated purpose of prison - to reduce crime, to rehabilitate - are not being achieved. This lack of success has been demonstrated over many years and at varied locations. Yet prison, in its current form, persists, indicating that the real purpose of prison is largely symbolic: punishment of the individual and the appearance of public protection. The inexplicable survival of this failing institution has baffled greater minds than mine - Mathiesen argued that ideology that protects prisons rests on three planks: non-recognition, pretence and disregard (1990). For *non-recognition*, witness that standards of care for young people in prison are far below those expected of any other institutional setting (Justice Committee 2009). CBT interventions continue the *pretence* of rehabilitation but are grounded in an unscientific model of mental health, and locate responsibility for transgression inside the minds of transgressors, *disregarding* external factors (Kinderman 2017). Young prisoners have experienced real distress, live in violent and unstable environments and face uncertain futures. But for their crimes, these young men's choices, actions and ethos would be considered as part of broad social and cultural changes. For example, rejection of traditional values, disinterest in conventional politics and a keen entrepreneurialism are offered as explanations for why young people tend not to vote in general elections (Kimberlee 2002) and their renewed willingness to engage in non-conventional political action (Henn and Foard 2014). In contrast, young people in conflict with the law - whose marginalisation is underpinned by the very same factors - are at the mercy of practitioners who are themselves compelled to commodify and categorise according to risk and protective factors (Turnbull 2016). Pathologising and responsibilising young prisoners allows criticism of, for example, high levels of violence, restraint and use of segregation to be shrugged off, blamed on the 'challenging and complex' (Wood et al 2017) nature of young prisoners themselves. Characterising criminality as a mental defect masks social injustice and economic and racial inequality and reflects the racial inequality of mental health services that sees people of colour subjected to more intrusive treatments and restrictive care (Fitzpatrick et al 2014). The

construction of prisoners as 'offenders' gives primacy to their crime and constrains their identities, disallowing the capacity for people to experience the world differently and limiting the possibility of change.

These factors highlight the need for research with young prisoners, even as they point to possible reasons for its absence. There are highly political reasons why some voices are heard less than others and the nature of imprisonment means it is relatively easy to silence prisoners' voices. Access to prisons has become increasingly problematic in the last decade for researchers and journalists alike (Gentleman 2015). In addition, research - even officially ordered research may be suppressed. Cohen and Taylor (1977) described their frustrating interaction with the Home Office and the rejection of their research, issues that may continue to play a role in the lack of research with long-term sentenced young people (Wilson 2003). Coping strategies employed by adult prisoners are well documented (Adams 1992; Clark 1989; Crewe 2009; Jewkes 2005; Sykes 2007 [1958])) including life sentenced prisoners - 'lifers' (Cohen and Taylor 1972; Flanagan 1981; Irwin 2009; Jewkes 2006; Parker 1990; Sapsford 1978) and young adult prisoners (Beck 1995; Finlay 1971; Harvey 2007; Jones 2007). Coping strategies adopted by under 18s have been less researched in England (although see Wilson 2003). Studies from North America provide some insight (Cesaroni and Peterson-Badali 2010 and 2005; Reich 2010) but differences in justice systems mean parallels can only be cautiously drawn.

The development of a risk-oriented approach to justice enables the incarceration of young people in violent and decrepit institutions and ensures that their welfare is secondary to the protection of 'the public' - a group to whom they, nor their families, can claim full belonging post-conviction. This is achieved through processes of interpellation and racialisation, and most fully realised for those young people subjected to deportation 'conducive to public good' (Immigration Act 1971, section 3[5][a]). Banishment is a consequence of policies and practices arising from late modernity that have created a

distinctive penality (Garland 2001) reinforcing other inequalities.

The Fact of Blackness and double consciousness

While classical prison sociology tells us little about the particular experience of young men, it illuminates the pains of segregation by sex, as prisons are. The deprivation of heterosexual relationships encompasses the deprivation of seeing oneself in the eyes of others, leaving 'self-image…in danger of becoming half-complete, fractured, a monochrome without the hues of reality' (Sykes 2007 [1958]: 72). Further segregation can be seen in the rising racial disproportionality in the juvenile population. As the total has declined, the proportion of BAME young people has increased to 45% (MoJ 2017).[10] At the time of fieldwork, about 35% of young men in Wearside identified as BAME. Of the 34 core respondents in this study, 18 identified as black, Asian or mixed heritage, one as an Irish Traveller.

Increasing levels of violence are explained away by the 'more challenging and complex' population who remain in prison (Wood et al 2017: 5). The Youth Custody Improvement Board (YCIB) found no evidence for this claim and it is worth questioning whether increasingly levels of disproportionality are allowing those charged with the care of young prisoners to blame (BAME) young people for the systemic failure of the secure estate when in fact staff lack 'effective tools to communicate, to build relationships and to provide effective support.' (Wood et al 2017: 4). This is not the fault of those staff but a systemic failure to provide for young people in custody.

Race was almost never directly addressed by respondents, yet as I have analysed their words and reconsidered them time and again, I cannot properly contextualise their experiences without regard to the processes of racialisation that have shaped them. This has

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[10] It appears that different bodies collect slightly different figures, as 49% of young people in STCs and 48% of boys in YOIs identified as BAME in 2016/17 (HMIP/YJB 2017).

a dual purpose: to highlight the specific experience of young black prisoners, who form an increasingly disproportionate section of the prison population yet whose voices are almost entirely absent from even the small literature on young prisoners. But also to re-examine how criminality and race become linked, how criminality comes to be seen as inherent and physically present, itself racialised, transmitted, contagious. It is helpful here to introduce Fanon's concept of inferiorization, which draws on Sartre: a person is a Jew because an anti-Semite has made him or her so. This applies to young people of all minority ethnicities but has particular importance for black young people because of their disproportionate representation in the prison population. Denied the chance to self-construct an image of themselves these young men are subject to images and ideas that are pre-destined as a result of their blackness (2004 [1952]). This is the fact of blackness.

Young prisoners are denied the opportunity to see themselves through the eyes of not only the opposite sex, but also the eyes of anyone other than agents of the state apparatus or those trapped by it. This 'deliberate moral rejection' (Sykes 2007 [1958]: 72) forces young prisoners into new groups made up of those who share their restricted space or with whom they find some commonality - often related to place or a shared experience. This may mitigate against some other pains of imprisonment - loss of liberty and autonomy are somewhat alleviated by friendship and decisions about who is included and excluded in the group. However, while Sykes argues that the realisation that one is no longer 'morally acceptable' is perhaps the greatest pain, repeated in the many daily reminders that he must be kept apart from "decent" men', my thesis argues that the process of inferiorization begins long before imprisonment. In contrast to adult men forced to 'recode their existence' on entry to prison, setting aside previous roles (Foucault 1979), young prisoners' identities are less securely established. While some have existing roles as fathers, or as carers, or as workers or students, these are less deeply embedded in the wider understanding of them as young people.

Literature on adult men entering prison emphasises the emasculating, infantilising nature of imprisonment - dependence on others for basic needs, inability to earn money and provide for self and others, deprivation of heterosexual relationships and modes of consumption. Criminalisation operates along the same lines as racialisation. A person convicted of a crime is made into a criminal because a particular set of rules makes him (or her) so but this legal status is realised through social practice: the removal or restriction of rights, isolation and stigmatisation and the gradual embodiment of the role. Like racialisation, criminalisation is hierarchical and intersectional: some are more able to resist the label and the processes than others. Like racialisation, the process of criminalisation - most clearly realised in imprisonment - creates a double consciousness (DuBois 1986 [1903]) individuals must not only maintain an internal identity but also learn to see themselves as others see them. In order to understand how a young man in prison observes himself it is necessary to consider what went before, and to understand how others ob- serve him it is necessary to take a wide view of the purpose - real and symbolic - of imprisonment.

The sociology of deviance offers a route to understanding the victim/violence nexus by recognising that the processes by which young prisoners come to view themselves as deviant begin much earlier than the criminal justice stage and that, far from causing a crisis of identity, the criminal justice process reinforces an identification of the self as deviant. 'Deviant' should not be read as 'criminal' here; rather it indicates 'otherness', a label that is wearily accepted. Marginalised young people learn to see the world and their place in it through the eyes of an outsider in a simulacrum of DuBois's learning about "the white world": 'I could not live, without taking into careful daily account the reaction of the white environing world. How I travelled and where, what work I did, what income I received, with whom I talked, where I sought recreation, where I studied, what I wrote...' (1986 [1903]: 653). For Fanon, this conditioning is underpinned by the organisation of space in the colonial world, itself intertwined with the economic order.

This is not so different for young people of colour, poor and excluded in English cities. As DuBois later notes, there is no 'real wall' (ibid.) but the wall is nonetheless realised and, once imprisoned, the wall becomes real. For those who already took it into daily account, the way is less of imposition.

In this thesis I refrain from using the word criminal as it implies something universal; rather, it is spatially, temporally and bodily specific. Some young people are more likely than others to have their behaviour labelled as criminal or almost criminal: groups of young people in urban areas are more likely to be identified as a gang than young people outside in a rural location. While gang membership is not in itself illegal, distinctions are between guilt and innocence are often thus - for example 'In fact, he was not a member of any gang. He was a wholly innocent man…' ([2010] EWCA Crim 148). This is compounded by the 'adultification' of young black children; boys and girls are perceived as older and less innocent than white peers (Epstein et al 2017; Goff et al 2014; Ferguson 2001). Adultification here relates to adults misperceiving children and young people as older than their biological age. It is also used to mean children and young people being exposed to adult knowledge and taking on adult roles, particularly in socio-economically deprived households (Burton 2007); this is explored in Chapter 6.

Young prisoners are disproportionately of colour. In May 2005, BAME children accounted for 25% of children remanded or sentenced to custody (Sabbagh 2017) but by July 2017 this had risen to almost 45% (MoJ 2017) and remains so (YJB 2018). In the 2011 Census, 18% of 15-17 year olds identified as BAME. Young people of minority white backgrounds - gypsy, Roma and traveller (GRT) and central and eastern Europeans - are likely overrepresented, although it is harder to unpick this from routinely collected data (Newland 2015). 12% of boys in secure training centres (STCs) and 7% of boys in YOIs identify as GRT, compared to 0.1% in the population (The Traveller Movement 2016). GRT young people are more likely to live in rural, mono-ethnic communities and may find it

harder to establish common ground with young people from urban locations. They also find it harder to maintain contact with family and friends due to lower rates of literacy, lack of fixed address and the absence of identity documents required to visit. The isolation of GRT prisoners points to a more complex intersection of race, space and class than simple assessments of diversity and equality can hope to capture. The idea of the colonised subject sheds light on how these factors are incorporated and managed by young prisoners.

When Sykes describes the greatest pain of imprisonment as the daily reminders of one's alienation from decent society, he is describing an internalising of imagined responses to the self that begin to impact on one's own view of oneself. For participants this began much earlier and is only reinforced in prison by the daily reminders that he is an 'offender'. The struggle for young prisoners is less about the alienation - something they have experienced before - but about decency. Young black prisoners were often strongly opposed to drinking alcohol, in contrast to young white prisoners. The latter often prided themselves on fighting 'one-to-one' while the former valued the loyalty of others who would fight on their behalf. Honour - or the staving off of shame - is gained by reference to the memory and continued association with society, through reputation and outside contacts, demonstrations of financial acuity, relationships with girls and women. These objects of symbolic capital are held inside the body, in the memories of those who possess them and those who witness them. They are not independent of the past where they were acquired (Connerton 1989). In Wearside the hierarchy was physically inscribed through the control of personal space, style of gait, modification of dress, footwear and hairstyle, physical size and agility - languid, but quick to react, seeing everything, never caught unawares. There were other ways to show difference from the mainstream, by being successful in sport or art or music, religious conversion or devotion. The latter can be seen as resistance to the label of moral unacceptability, as an attempt to make good. The former is closer to a rejection of mainstream morality altogether.

Cunneen (2012) argues that postcolonial perspectives offer new theoretical insights and extend criminological enquiry in ways that recognise cultural and historical difference. Colonised subjectivity directly affects young people who have conditional immigration status and are subject to immigration proceedings on completion of their sentence. But almost all young prisoners have inherited an historical subjectivity that is classed and/or racialised. Otherness is not a new feeling for these young men and feelings of oppression are managed by refusal to recognise the oppressor.

> 'The colonised subject is constantly on his guard…always presumed guilty. The colonised does not accept his guilt but rather considers it a kind of curse, a sort of Damocles. But deep down the colonised subject acknowledges no authority. He is dominated but not domesticated. He is made to feel inferior, but by no means convinced of his inferiority. (Fanon 2004: 16)

Violence is liberating not for the material changes it can achieve - although those are notable - but because it is a way of resisting the degradation of the self imposed by colonial culture. Young people serving long sentences are convicted almost exclusively of violence, the institutions that house them are rife with violence. A deeper understanding of the processes of violence is long overdue.

Shame and (symbolic) violence

Shame and its effects transcend the prison setting and speak to deeper questions of memory, history and the formation of culture. The pervasiveness of shame, hanging over all values and experiences (Fanon 1967) is useful in understanding the cloud that hangs over young prisoners and the forms of resistance that take root under it. While Fanon focused specifically on the experience of black people in anti-black regimes, his exposition of racialisation can advance our understanding of how deviance and criminality come to be viewed, individually and systemically, as inherent, inhabited and as ineluctable, and the effects of this view.

Most young people in custody originate from London and the South East (YJB and MoJ 2012) and respondents - from London and elsewhere - would agree that it is '…probable,

that particular structures of feeling and patterns of culture have been generated by London, its history and its people' (Robson 2000: 40). The view of 'London people' as different from others was reinforced by staff and young people alike. Mutual support between prisoners from the same location has been documented elsewhere (Phillips 2012) and calls to mind the compartmentalised colonial world in which one individual is held responsible for his body, his race, his ancestors (Fanon 1967: 112). Invariably prison authorities view this as gang-related, a perception reinforced by what can appear to outsiders to be self-imposed racial separation (Phillips 2008). Those within each group deny this is deliberate, instead explaining it as electing to spend time around people with common experiences and interests (ibid.) but the borders of locality, nationality, faith and ethnicity are blurred in prison (Bosworth 2008) and it seems at least possible that this self-imposed but coincidental separation arises from internalised perceptions of ethnicity. Negotiation of these borders is learned at a deeply local level in the 'postcolonial metropolis' where '[d]enizens , pseudo-citizens, illegals and sans papiers dwell…alongside the refugees, the disposable and the excluded' (Gilroy 2010: 20). Fanon suggests the only possible response to condemnation is shame and self contempt (1967: 116). Familiarity with the disposable and excluded, being designated as one of them, is advantageous to survival in prison.

The adjustment to being outcast may be more difficult for white prisoners who, before now, may have regarded themselves as dominant. That 45% of young prisoners identify as BAME signals a need to understand how racialised perceptions of risk contribute to the management of young people of all ethnicities. For male prisoners of all ages a common mentality, based on shared experience, can sometimes transcend race, with racism treated as indefensible, even to the extent that reporting racist incidents might not be viewed as 'snitching' (Phillips 2008). This type of multi-ethnic solidarity is not unique to prisons - Virdee (2014) writes of working class suppression of racism, via the 'racialised other' - whether Irish, Jewish, Asian or, more recently, Eastern European. In this atmosphere, proximity to blackness operates as social capital, insulating poor young white people from the new

forms of xeno-racism that now encompass them (Bhui 2016). Young white prisoners who associated with 'London' young people - London being a cypher for 'black' for white people from outside of London - were viewed by black young people (from London or elsewhere) as more credible, trustworthy and mature than white prisoners who associated only with other white people.

Bourdieu's analysis of social capital and the theory of practice are increasingly applied to studies of deviance (Shammas and Sandberg 2016; France 2015a; Fraser 2013) and, though less often, to the social processes of the prison (Schlosser 2012). Social capital is rooted in conflict and the ability to advance one's own interests through social relations. The concept of habitus has gained traction in seeking to explain decision making and the banality of crime (France 2015b) and the tension between structure and agency (Johnston 2016).

> 'There was a sense of routine, habit and normality about the way crime intersected and connected with their everyday lives. This was how it was. The forms of strategies that young people then developed as a way of managing themselves in their neighbourhoods were strongly influenced by idea of 'knowing the game' where their social life and forms of everyday social practice were not always consciously or totally planned but were shaped by unconscious and unknowing understanding of the 'game' as defined by their habitus.' (France 2015b)

This tension is almost perfectly realised in imprisonment and Bourdieu offers a framework to understand how these processes become lived and enacted, how individuals come to occupy specific structural positions and to embody that which they are named. As 'the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product' (Bourdieu 1990: 56) habitus necessitates an understanding of each individual's trajectory rather than simply how they live now. A social field is a site of struggle; all present are competing for control. The justice system portrays itself as independent of social, economic, psychological and linguistic realms, its systems of enforcement and punishment as natural and logical. Bourdieu argues that, on the contrary, it fact enmeshed with other systems. The portrayal, and the hierarchies that sustain it, are reproduced via the mechanism of symbolic violence. That is, the way in which individuals are active in their own subordination through the

internalisation and acceptance of the very ideas that subordinate them. It is violent because it is oppressive, and symbolic because it is achieved implicitly and with the collaboration of those it oppresses (Bourdieu 1990).

Bourdieu explains habitus as the process by which thoughts and actions become embedded and embodied over time so that they become a durable feature of the subconscious. This was evident in Wearside in hairstyles, modified prison clothing, footwear, physical size and control of personal space, gait and agility. Through these markers the natural body is transformed into a distinctive body, a 'body for others' - a projection of how the person wants to be seen and thus a thing separate from the self (Benson 1997). The creation of a distinctive body is fundamental to the way young people experience imprisonment yet this has a dual effect.

Adaptation is hard won and young people are often acutely aware of the complex power relations that weigh upon them. They often recognise that their survival depends on violence but feel compelled by factors beyond their control to continue to participate. Habitus for them is the internalisation of facets of symbolic violence in order to subvert them. Physical size and willingness to fight - the distinctive body - mean some challenges are easily won by simple threats. Yet threatening presence might bring rewards today but problems tomorrow, as staff who are unwilling to openly challenge a young person may instead document incidences and perceptions in writing. A push, a 'borrowed' CD, a portion of food meant for someone else might all be overlooked at the time but written up as bullying, possession of an unauthorised item or stealing at a later date. The reluctance of staff to be open with young people was a cause of frustration to the latter, who saw this as an example of staff 'acting like kids themselves' and reinforced mistrust.

This invisible power is the clearest manifestation of symbolic violence and forces consideration of the ways in which power operates in a prison that may appear calm on the surface. This is indicative of the different types of power that operate in a tight knit but

conflictual environment but also the possibility of hiding activities even in a restrictive environment with little privacy. The structural obstacles that young prisoners face in developing a narrative of the self are highly visible and receive attention via campaigners and media reports of inspections. Yet the ways in which they resist and overcome these obstacles are harder to see and are almost entirely absent from the literature. These become most clear at the times when a person is required to operate in unfamiliar circumstances. Jermain took up space with an extravagant walk, using all his limbs in a fluid manifestation of his power, a quick and easy fighter. Yet in interviews he covered his mouth with his hand, painfully shy. Young prisoners are not *either* violent *or* vulnerable; they are both, and they remain trapped in that paradox unless their stories are heard. Aristotle's *katharsis* is a useful idea here, suggesting a form of rebalancing, for the community as well as the individual (McCoy 2013). Young people in prison are often talked about, but rarely talked to. Their experiences can only be shown to those willing to see, heard only by those willing to listen. Though Rhys believed I'd find his story boring, he was willing to tell it. 'One can't say how life is, how chance or fate deals with people, except by telling the tale' (Arendt 1995: 295).

While habitus lends itself to explaining the subtle imposition of symbolic violence and the role it plays in shaping practices and cultures (Bourdieu 1984), it does not, on its own, bring us closer to a phenomenological understanding of identity. Bourdieu doesn't address the ways in which symbolic violence can vary according to racialised status, nor the effect of the more explicit violence of colonisation and its reproduction in postcolonial settings.

For Fanon, the legacy of anti-black racism lies in its production of shame as a mist that hovers over every word and action and through which all affects, values, and aspirations are staged and framed. In that sense, shame is therefore a constitutive component of most, if not all, affects in black subjectivity. The struggle against shame takes place in hostile (white)

environments. This is evident in the prison, in which prisoners are disproportionately of colour, in contrast to staff. By this logic, there is a double shaming of black prisoners, both racially othered and outcast as morally unacceptable for their crime. However, this is countered by the findings of Phillips (2008), who shows that black prisoners can find themselves in a position of relative strength due to the disproportionate impact of criminal justice processes. This creates a setting in which the dominant ideology of racism can be 'appropriated by the racialised' (Virdee 2017).

In addition, the experiences of prisoners formally identified as foreign nationals or as children of immigrants cannot be understood without addressing the historical processes, including criminalisation, and systemic racism, embedded in marginalisation (Bhui 2016). Young prisoners identified as foreign nationals in particular are held accountable for their bodies, their race, their ancestors (Fanon 1967: 112), but questions about belonging perfuse the organs of the state, contained in nationality identification strategies. These recent developments give weight to emerging critiques of 'the prison' as an object of study (Crewe 2009). Attempts to define 'the prison experience' are thus futile - experiences are historically and socially informed, unique personal geographies oven from emotional relations and social interactions (Davidson and Milligan 2004). Recognition of this calls for a new approach.

Towards a phenomenology of long-term imprisonment

Early studies of prison culture, including Sykes (2007 [1958]), favoured the idea of an indigenous prison culture but later work portrayed a far more complex mixture of people who brought their beliefs and cultural practices into the prison (Irwin and Cressey 1962). Irwin highlighted the permeability of the prison walls, the importance of pre-prison identities and the (now obvious) association between an 'inmate code' and a criminal code that existed outside of prisons. People arrive in prison carrying the baggage of all their previous experiences their beliefs and practices shaped by race, gender and class.

Studies of women in prison have given attention to the gendered aspects of punishment and imprisonment (Carlen 1983; 1998; 2002; Gelsthorpe 2013; Rowe 2016, 2011) and there is growing interest in the role of working class masculinity (Maguire 2016). But young prisoners' gendered, racialised and classed experiences remain neglected.

Cohen and Taylor's work with men at Durham is notable for its rejection of research orthodoxies of the time and the use of what we now recognise as participatory methods (Dupont 2008; Fine and Torre 2006). These included unstructured group interviews, the men's own writing, 'literary identification' - using novels and plays read during classes to stimulate discussion - and incorporating the men's corrections of drafts. Cohen and Taylor identified five key concerns of the men: the passage of time, deterioration, friendship, the role of self-consciousness and loss of identity.

> 'Gradually we realised that we were not just trying to understand another group of prisoners. Instead, we were looking at the ways in which **men in general might react to an extreme situation**, a situation which disrupted their normal lives so as to make problematic such everyday matters as time, friendship, privacy, identity, self-consciousness, again and physical deterioration. **Once we realised this we were able to turn to a range of other studies which looked at the more general questions of how men dealt with the stress produced by any massive disruption in their normal lives**.'
>
> (Cohen and Taylor 1972: 41, my emphasis)

These words resonated with my interest in young people serving long sentences. Less interested in the political or philosophical theories of punishment or the 'what works' agenda, my interest lay in how young people managed, physically and mentally, sentences that were measured in more years than they had been alive. How did a person motivate themselves through a sentence like that - was it survivable, psychologically or physically and, if so, how?

Several men in Cohen and Taylor's group went on to write autobiographical accounts of their time in prison and their lives before - and after (Probyn 1977, McVicar 2002 [1974]). Autobiography is an extensive feature of prison literature, written by prisoners (for example Heckstall-Smith 1954, Hassler 1955, Boyle 1977, Wyner 2003), or their families; Arditti (2003) has written of her experiences as a 'prison widow'. These provide some of the most powerful accounts of 'psychological survival' for long-term prisoners, providing first hand narratives and reflections developed over many years. The developing field of 'convict criminology' (Aresti 2012; Richards and Ross 2002, 2001) incorporates accounts from former prisoners who have gone on to study and work in the social sciences.

Neither the autobiographical nor convict criminology literature describes the experience of young people serving long sentences, but the absence of young voices is more apparent when considering the richness and vitality of some of these works. Recognising this, the thesis moves towards a phenomenology of long-term imprisonment, representing multiple experiences and highlighting the spaces between political intentions and practical realities. Crewe and Bennett have highlighted how little knowledge about prisons comes from prisoners themselves, and have made a start at redressing this with their collection of essays (2012). Innovative methods are increasingly used in work with young people in order to capture the and plurality of their experiences - in research on health (Stones 2017; Liamputtong 2016) and homelessness (Jackson 2015) and an ongoing study of legal consciousness in relation to joint enterprise.[11]Yet these methods are lacking in existing research with young prisoners in England and Wales. The culture of juvenile prisons, along with the nature of relationships between young prisoners, has been largely overlooked. 50 years after Society of Captives, Sykes noted that (white) sociologists of the 1950s, himself included, had failed to account for differences in the way that black and white prisoners experienced social and power relations in the prison. I suggest that the same is true of young prisoners. Research with young prisoners and prison leavers in other jurisdictions

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[11] Violence, Friendship and Legal Consciousness in the Context of Joint Enterprise, ESRC ref: ES/P001378/1).

highlights the rich and insightful data that can be generated by long-term, qualitative field work - see Halsey and Deegan (2015) in Australia, Reich (2010) in the US and Barron (2000) in British Columbia, Canada.

Conclusion

To understand the purpose of the youth justice system it is necessary to step back from the assumption that it is somehow natural and normal to lock young people (or children) in prisons. Stepping outside the conventions and theories of deviance and viewing the experience of imprisonment through an existentialist, Fanonian lens, provides the opportunity to view imprisonment differently. Fanon's account of the double consciousness that arises in racialised others (1967, see also DuBois 1986 [1903]) can be applied to young prisoners, who must recognise and negotiate their 'otherness' whilst maintaining an individual and culturally rooted identity. It is not sufficient to see how the system oppresses, it is vital also also to look for the ways in which young prisoners shape their own identities within the tight and heavy constraints of the various systems they are subjected to. Crucially, these efforts are not undertaken collectively but individually. At the core of Fanon's decolonisation theory is the idea that each of us is entitled to moral consideration, that no individual is dispensable. If Bourdieu offers a means of understanding how prison becomes embedded in the body - separate from the self - then Fanon offers a way for the self to recuperate a sense of identity and a cultural affiliation that is independent of the processes that brought him here. In urging us to '…strive unremittingly for a concrete and ever new understanding of man' (1967:22) Fanon inspires us to rethink the way we understand young prisoners' experiences by excavating the ways the self encounters the trauma of being categorised by others as inferior due to an imposed racial identity. Similarly - and frequently simultaneously - criminalisation is imposed on imprisoned bodies, in the ways individuals walk, dress and move, in stance, demeanour and patterns of speech such that it becomes visible but essentialised, akin to racialisation in itself.

'Real talk': Methodology and reflections on fieldwork

'Real talk' is a term intended to reassure the listener that what they have heard, or are about to hear, is raw, possibly profound and certainly heartfelt. This chapter aims to provide a truthful, authentic and heartfelt account of the fieldwork that forms the basis of this research. 'Doing' ethnography is a process of yielding, of finding ways to cover the joins between oneself and the landscape. Young people sometimes told me 'I don't know why, but I can talk to you'; someone asked me for a pen so he could work out a debt he was owed, some reflected on a memory and told me 'no-one ever asked me that before'. In those moments I felt I was really 'doing' ethnography, and it gave me a physical sensation, a giddy feeling like walking on a high wall or riding a bike. In this chapter I will try to explain how I 'did' the fieldwork that underpins this thesis, the journey from there to here and how my entanglement with the project has shaped the presentation of this thesis - real talk.

My interest in young people serving long sentences began with the story of an 18 year old sentenced, in 2007, to 30 years for two murders, committed when he was 16. I was captured not by the legal rarity of his case, nor by wanting to understand his crimes, but by his - and the women's - stories: full of unfulfilled hopes and sheer, unfathomable tragedy. News reports described the young man as evil but his defence counsel described his client's childhood as one of 'Dickensian horror'. That horror never made the news until he took the lives of two others - his story unworthy until it intertwined with theirs.

Stories are the raw data from which sociological theories flow, yet research stories are often separated into categories with distinct value. There are stories about knowledge and stories about experience, the former taking precedence and bolstered by claims to objective universality. We use the collective pronoun to underline the unimpeachable

truth - that anyone in the field would have reached the same conclusions; *we* know our findings to be true because *we* can see them yet the 'lingering worry' described by Becker (1967) remains: am I objective enough? The methodology chapter is the place for stories about experience, a repository for the encounters and emotions that shaped the process but that we - I - lack the bravery to include in the 'real' chapters that follow. We - I - know these things to be true because I was there but it feels dangerous and foolish to set down in words what is attributable to only my singular experience and fallible judgement. Conscious of the hierarchy of credibility and my shaky footing on it, it is perhaps easier to place these thoughts on record in one place, in a chapter that can later be ignored in favour of the 'substantive' chapters - the words of others - that follow.

There is growing interest in the role of emotion in fieldwork, and recognition that emotion itself tells something about the field or subject, as well as the research process (Drake and Sloan 2013). Yet like Jewkes (2012) and Sparks (2002) I have found it difficult to position myself in the research, to name my emotions and identify the effect that I had in shaping the research encounters and the theorising that follows. It struck me as '…ethically dubious and of peripheral relevance' (Sparks 2002: 578), to write about myself in the field. Erasing myself from the work felt modest and respectful to those who were of real interest. I can see that it may be read as detached and uncritical but 'confessional tales' (Van Maanen 1988) come more easily to some writers than others (Crewe 2014). Excavating the emotional aspects of fieldwork is painful and difficult, perhaps more so than the analysis of others' experiences.

Getting in

Prisons are closed off from public gaze and the lack of even short term access is of concern to academics, journalists and campaigners alike (Gentleman 2015; BBC 2012; Howard League 2015). Cassell (1998) distinguishes between physical and social access and this distinction has particular significance when working with young young people.

Gaining physical access is time consuming but linear and structured - requiring formal contact with gatekeepers, a lengthy application form and consideration by committees who sit infrequently. Obstacles can arise unexpectedly - Wilson (2003) documents difficulties arising as a result of his research topic despite his previous employment in the prison service. Conversely, Harvey (2007) carried out fieldwork at the same site at a similar time was granted access with relative ease. Even once formally approved, unexpected events can require renegotiation (Gariglio 2014, writing about an Italian prison). In contrast, social access is expected to be ongoing and iterative, negotiated in person individually and varied in nature and complexity. I was prepared for both forms of access to be fraught, but getting into the prison was surprisingly straightforward. I will first describe how I gained physical access to the setting and go on to discuss the challenges of social access.

I approached the Youth Justice Board to find out where young people serving long sentences were held and they provided a list of YOIs (including the long-term units that existed then), STCs and SCHs. At that time I was prepared to accept whatever access I could get, including travelling between sites, so I wrote to each establishment that held more than two relevant young people, in locations from Hampshire to Northumberland. All SCHs ignored my letter. One STC and two YOIs replied, referring me to the standard prison service application procedure - PSO 7035. I followed up their responses by telephone and had a useful conversation with a senior psychologist at the largest of the long-term units. She seemed keen for me to complete the application and said she would support it when it arrived on her desk. Given the size of the population there, this was my preferred site and this felt like progress. The psychologist then very helpfully contacted me again a few days later to tell me that there was now 'a national block' on research with young prisoners for the next 12 months. I confirmed this with others and then felt rather deflated.

In the meantime I received an email from the assistant director of a private YOI. At the

time they only had three young people on long sentences so it was not my first preference but at this stage it was my only hope. In discussion with the assistant director I learned that the prison - Wearside as I now call it - was due to open a dedicated long-term wing later that year. He agreed to access, subject to security checks and training. Fieldwork took place between November 2010 and July 2011.

My attempt to gain access was relatively unhindered by requests for methodological or epistemological justification. Though the aims of my proposed research were not especially controversial, the population could be seen as such; their crimes are serious and therefore high profile. A qualitative study may have been more acceptable in an environment where important information is measured by numerical means – number of prisoners, number of hours spent on purposeful activities, rates of reoffending. Further, sociology is seen as meaningless in an environment increasingly governed by psychologists (Crewe 2009; Maruna 2011). Findings could be easily dismissed as irrelevant, the more so given my lowly standing as a PhD student. King and Liebling (2008) suggest doctoral research may be met with greater leniency since it will take longer to complete and unwelcome conclusions may be easily dismissed, unlike findings by established researchers with a voice in the academic or political community. Viewed that way, it is easy to see why the usual methodological standards were of little interest.

The nature and extent of participation is limited by the prison setting (Bosworth *et al* 2005) but ethnographic research obliges immersion in the everyday. Liebling's 'reserved participation' (1999a: 160) feels a more accurate depiction of prison research: the ordinary practices of daily life – small talk, drinking tea and, especially, killing time. This demands engagement with all the emotional aspects of daily life too. Much of prison life is boring and mundane and finding ways to pass the time is a key aspect of imprisonment - and prisons research. Many times I simply sat on the wing and watched and listened, sometimes when no-one else was out - boys locked up, staff in the office, me sat by

myself in the middle of the wing, hearing five different stereos, mixed with radio chatter, the odd alarm bell and the clang of distant gates. I spent 10 to 12 hours a day in the prison, four or five days a week. I was there during the evenings, Christmas, weekends, and the family day. As well as building rapport, the time spent doing apparently nothing allows a researcher to see the really hidden world of the prison, when there are no visitors, no activities. A continued presence suggests to the true insiders that you will 'understand what they say on the basis of what you "must already have seen"' (King and Liebling 2008: 299). Spending Christmas Day in the jail had a huge effect on my confidence, I felt freer to walk around, as if I had earned my place. It was the first Christmas I ever spent away from my own family and perhaps that gave me a renewed sense of purpose as I had experienced, in a small way, some of the 'pains of imprisonment' - albeit marginal by comparison to the young people.

I began attending education with young at people from Cypress. Classes were delayed as transition from the house blocks stopped and started in time with fights. Motivation, from staff as well as attendees, was low and concentration easily lost. The level of discipline varied and the expectations were low. One teacher introduced me as a sociologist and told the class that sociology was 'all about opinions really, it doesn't matter what you know'. Another took me aside to tell me how dangerous some of the boys were - 'Do you know what he did?.' Classes were interrupted for hairstyling; one after another would leave the room, returning with his shaved or braided. I learned that it was possible to guess the age of black young people and the length of time he had spent in prison age by his hair.[1]

Being in parts of the prison other than the wing Cypress meant I got to know young people who were resident in other parts of the jail, and gained a greater sense of the prison as a whole. I also joined the wing yoga class, at the request of the teacher. Staff

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[1]Long hair was indicative of having been in prison for some time; black young people usually shaved their head before transferring at 18 as they associated long hair with youth. White young people most often shaved their head on arrival at prison and maintained that style throughout.

were not entirely impressed by this enthusiastic involvement, with one sarcastically remarking on the class's growth in number since I joined. I found this sarcasm aggravating - I still do - I only went twice. Some (unnamed) prison ethnographies have consisted of a few weeks interviewing in an office and a walk around the prison. I am not overly critical of this - sometimes limited access is all that is possible and it is necessary to do a lot with a little. I do wonder though how much could be learned in such a short time and what legitimate claims can be made. I found the first few weeks bewildering. I struggled to follow conversations between young people or decipher the meaning of particular actions ('Why did Louie watch Jamie like that? Why do they call Rupert Omen?'). The significance of some events eluded me until much later (although I could remember them in detail) and I was unaware of my own failings until confronted with them. Once I left the prison I was writing about it, reading news reports about cases and making connections between events inside and out. I learned who were co-defendants and why there was excitement about a ship in from Feltham when I saw a group of young people had been convicted in a London court. I could never have asked - or been told that in the prison. Interviews and observations did not focus specifically on race and for that reason I make no claim to represent the experience of young black people in prison, but the imposition of racialising and racist practices that were invisible to me in the field became clearer in the analysis.

In negotiating access it was agreed that I would help facilitate a new group on Cypress, working on attitudes, problem solving, emotion management and sexual knowledge. I was given the job of assessing young people, using a questionnaire. After each assessment, I explained who I was and how my work differed from the group. I was surprised by the willingness to talk to a stranger - some young people even asked to 'just sit here for a bit' when the conversation ended. Later, I often went to see young people on a free lesson, knowing they would otherwise be locked up. Staff would unlock them so we could talk, sometimes about very little. Sometimes we played games or took the

bearded dragon[2] - and later the snake[3]- out of the tank. Once a group activity was cancelled at the last minute and the wing manager asked me to 'do something with the boys'. We played a highly animated game of Uno.[4] It is perhaps easy to see why teenage boys would rather sit with a woman who let them speak freely and play games than be alone behind their doors, but at the time it was a surprise to me. These were young men who had seen and done sometimes unimaginable things. Yet they were also interesting, sharp witted and funny, even affectionate with each other.

Research as 'passing'

Research with young prisoners presents a challenge in terms of establishing field relations and credibility. It is impossible to 'design out' the differences between 'the researcher and the researched' (Van Maanen 1991: 37) but being in the field requires shrinking of the social space between the two. As an apparently middle class white woman in my 30s it would be easy to be seen as just another worker[5]. I needed to blend in but also stand out - to bridge the gap between myself and young people that the workers (and young people) actively maintained between themselves.

I use the term 'passing' (Renfrow 2004) here as a way of conveying the everyday work of blending into an environment in which I clearly stood out, though this can also be understood as a form of impressinmanagement (Goffman 1991). Whereas the latter is part of all social interaction, I prefer passing here as it speaks to the particular practice of elision of one's difference - either through misrecognition or deliberate concealment - but never really belonging (Jacobs 1974). I had no obvious value or purpose in the prison beyond being someone to talk to. I had no role in report writing or granting privileges, and I

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[2] Izzy

[3] Trevor

[4]A card game, usually specially printed cards, where players have to shed cards by matching colours and shapes.

never locked anyone in - I was neither worker nor 'gov' (though I was 'Miss' for a while).[5]

Prison life is routinised and learning the regime is essential to fitting in and getting on (Martin 2000). Movements from place to place happen en masse and at set times and are the highlight - and flashpoint - of each day; a moment when, almost free in the open air, interaction with friends or enemies takes place. At first this rolling tide of tracksuits seemed impenetrable, terrifying. Eventually I learned where to stand, I learned faces and names – and they learned mine. I learned that the tide would part if I approached it confidently enough and addressed it by name, and I tried hard not to flinch at the variety of ways my walk or body or outfit could be commented on.

Carrying keys is perhaps emblematic of the tensions inherent in prison research, a physical symbol of the power differential between researcher and researched. Wilson (2003) argued that drawing keys would have privileged him over his interviewees. On the other hand, Liebling (1999a) found no detriment to her research, Jewkes found prisoners 'completely unbothered' by it - in fact *not* having them reduced her legitimacy in the eyes of prisoners and staff alike (2002: 87). Crewe writes 'If anything, I felt that my autonomy and mobility were seen as indications that I was trusted and self- sufficient...' (2009: 467). Keys allowed me to 'pass' by easing my way around, rather than highlighting my status as an outsider in need of an escort. Without keys it is impossible to know what is being hidden from you, or spruced up in some way before you arrive. Furthermore, prison managers are reluctant to authorise staff time on escorting researchers around the site - a condition of entry was that I carried keys. Refusal to do so would have been fatal to the project. While keys imbue the carrier with a certain freedom, setting them apart from the prisoners, that freedom is demonstrated in a number of more subtle ways – choice, decision making, access to people and information and, most profoundly, the ability to leave. These are

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[5] 'Worker' was the term used by staff and young people to describe any member of non-uniformed staff without an obvious title - youth offending team, education staff apart from teachers, social work or psychology trainees. Uniformed staff were govs, both descriptively and as a form of address, although female staff in uniform were also addressed as Miss.

forms of what Crewe (2011) has termed 'soft power', and are more difficult to mitigate against than simply refusal to carry keys. What set apart Wilson and the others from their participants was not the keys, but the ability to choose whether or not to have them at all. In any case, as a visitor I did not have cell keys which meant I could never be asked to lock a young person in a cell. This may have made a difference to how I was seen.

Clothing and demeanour are more powerful ways of distinguishing oneself from 'the establishment' (Crewe 2009; Jewkes 2002) and this is the greatest advantage of immersion in the field; time spent 'hanging around' (Martin 2000) is in fact time spent establishing oneself as an object in the field and what felt like days spent doing nothing actually proved crucial to establishing credibility. While I explained why I was there to anyone who asked, it is fair to say that this was not often comprehended or remembered later - the decision to interact with me was based on an 'evaluation of [me] personally' (Whyte 1955: 30) rather than what I was there to do. I had expected to find myself ignored by young people and was, at that time, more concerned with looking credible to staff to enable me to move around the prison without difficulty. I compiled a 'prison wardrobe' before I began fieldwork – more formal than my usual attire, though I edged back to myself by the end, in black jeans and trainers. My clothing drew some comments, especially during the exceptionally cold winter when I resorted to snow boots and a variety of coats and furs (if this sounds extravagant, scarves and hats were not allowed into the jail so I improvised). One day in the spring, outside during movement, I noticed a young man wearing the same trainers as me; his companions also noticed and made derogatory comments about him wearing 'girl's shoes'. Undiminished, he dismissed them as 'haters' and moved closer, placing his foot against mine to compare foot sizes (mine were smaller) and bumping my fist in acknowledgment of our shared good taste, while one of his friends admired my jacket and announced 'Miss got swag'.[67] I felt pleased, accepted even; I had managed to

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[6] 'Hater': someone who is unnecessarily negative about another

[7]7 Swag:': style

simultaneously blend in and stand out.

Role uncertainty

Finding and maintaining a role is amongst the more difficult aspects in prisons research, but is fundamental to the daily negotiation of access (Jacobs 1974; King and Liebling 2008). To my knowledge, no information on my research was provided to anyone in the prison other than the psychologist who facilitated access. This meant a role was fashioned each time I met new people - sometimes by myself and sometimes by the circumstances (Giallombardo 1966). Most non-custodial staff at Wearside wore uniform[8]; only psychology, advocacy and chaplaincy staff wore civilian clothes, and while this increased my visibility – simply by making me more noticeable – it made me less of an outsider by affiliating me with these groups. Both psychology and advocacy were carried out almost exclusively by white, middle-class women and I was most often assumed to be from one or the other. Jacobs (1974) argues against 'excessive role clarity' when undertaking prisons research, allowing for multiple impressions to co-exist. Like all staff and visitors at Wearside I was expected to wear a name badge with a job title. I suggested 'Psychology Researcher': since the psychology department had facilitated access it seemed logical, and a departmental link would provide legitimacy in the eyes of staff. I anticipated that few young people would read my name badge. I was wrong: I often found myself vigorously denying I was a psychologist and eventually asked for a new badge with the vague title 'Researcher'.

While young people were wary of anyone associated with psychology, the title - combined with my appearance and demeanour, civilian clothes and keys - seemed to provide credibility with staff, even if they had not seen me before. I could walk onto a wing and ask to speak to any young person, and staff would unlock him without question

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[8]Custodial staff refers to officers who are permitted to restrain young people and trained to do so. Non-custodial staff includes caseworkers, teachers and education staff, psychology and programme staff.

and allow me to talk to him unaccompanied. On one occasion a young person had drawn symbols all over his cell door - staff (bizarrely) presumed them to be Satanic - and reportedly he had been collecting his urine in plastic bottles (he disputed this). The psychiatrist had been consulted and said there was no need for treatment. Wing staff vehemently disagreed with this and seemed convinced the young person ought to be sectioned. When I arrived on the wing, the staff member in the office relayed this to me and asked me 'what do you think, do you think he should be here?' I was afraid of saying the wrong thing - of getting the young person in some kind of trouble, of looking a fool, or just holding contrary views to the officers who governed daily access on the wing. I fudged an answer, saying that the psychiatrist must know best. I did not appreciate at the time how much my appearance as a white, midlde-class woman must have smoothed these interactions, giving me a credibility I did not claim to possess or intentionally aim to embody. A former colleague - a young, mixed race woman - at a Youth Offending Team, reminded me of the times she had attended a police station for meetings, only to be asked at the front desk if she was 'signing in on bail'. Mirza writes of being mistaken for 'the coffee lady', in a collection of essays by women of colour in British academia (2017). Assumptions about knowledge and credibility were as much read on my body as they were on the bodies of young prisoners.

On other occasions I attempted to correct inaccurate or incomplete information. For example, a staff member criticised a young person for walking off without answering her - I knew he was partially deaf and suggested that might be the reason. At those times I perhaps moved from 'researcher' to 'advocate' (Bosworth *et al* 2005). There were also times when I challenged young people's view of staff practices. In some ways these are attempts to remain neutral as much as they are to advocate - to stick to clear facts. It was much harder to remain neutral where opinions were in dispute.

Contact with senior staff was minimal. I was never certain that they knew who I was, or

why I was there. I made no effort to increase my visibility to them, making contact only when necessary – for example asking permission to bring in a recorder for interviews. I

had anticipated difficult situations where senior staff sought access to the information gained through interviews or other interactions but this never occurred. There was no attempt to influence, or even learn, my findings; I was irrelevant to them. This seemed to accord with the easy acceptance of my proposal - there had been no interrogation of my aims or methods at the outset. Having referred my request to the psychology department, perhaps the senior management felt no need to be involved. Yet at the same time, it strikes me as rather careless - literally, lacking care about the interaction I, an unmanaged outsider, was having with young people in their custody.

Becoming participant

Drake and Harvey (2014) describe the experience of research as one of mastery, accompanied by a sense of meaninglessness and identity fragmentation. They identify several emotional dimensions, including feelings of endurance and satisfaction, having exercised emotional and bodily control, a sense of elation as rapport with informants develops. This can give a sense of belonging, but Drake and Harvey counsel that the experience of mastery is often short lived.

Through previous employment I had visited prisons holding men, women and young people and was familiar with the processes and jargon of youth justice; I thought I knew a lot. Being in the field was intense and, at times, almost overwhelming. I moved to live close to the prison, and consequently, participants and staff members were the only people I had contact with on a daily basis - if I wasn't at the prison I was thinking or writing about it. I wanted to feel cloistered so as to, in some way, replicate the experience of being in prison (Drake and Harvey 2014). On reflection, the idea that self imposed separation in any way replicates the experience of imprisonment seems hopelessly naive and I am embarrassed by it. However 'the sense of mastery' I felt on 'doing' research

replicates the experience of 'doing time' explored in the following chapter. Arnold (2005) writes that becoming a prison officer is linked to the management of emotion; the gauging, establishment and maintenance of the correct social distance, and the ability to calibrate this as required. In some ways prison ethnography mimics the experience of becoming a prison officer – 'becoming participant' requires the same attention to social distance. Striking the balance between building a relationship and maintaining an appropriate social distance is difficult, at times impossible. It seemed to me that staff focused more on maintaining a distance; my own focus was on building rapport. At times I thought I was successful in doing this but had nearly failed to find the right tenor. After I left the field I kept in written correspondence with several respondents, including Jermain. He wrote infrequently but was always polite. One day I received an oddly out of character letter addressing me as 'baby' and full of oddly childish sexual compliments. I remembered Jermain as the young man so shy he covered his mouth when he talked to me, his palpable sadness when he spoke of his mother. It was alarming and repellent to receive a letter so at odds with my experience of him and made me question what I had done wrong - had I somehow given I'm the impression that this was ok? If I had, how could I now correct that - in writing, since I would never see him again? I felt that I had failed at the last hurdle having so carefully negotiated the tricky field relations. It also made me question his earlier demeanour, his interview - which side of him was true? I was paralysed by it; I never replied. That in itself felt like an ethical failure and it took time to even reflect on it. Of course all those versions of himself are 'true' - he was a shy, sad young man who missed his mother and - like the others who told me so - yearned for female attention. He refused visits, barely maintained contact with anyone outside. My temporary and outsider role in Wearside meant I was a convenient and probably safe adult woman to write a letter to and anticipate a possible response. I should have replied.

Temporariness creates a dichotomy - imbuing researchers with a capacity for critique that is not available to those who live there permanently (Van Maanen 1991). It gave me a sense

of heightened responsibility, of needing to leave a positive impression because

there was no time to correct it. Jermain's letter disrupted that. The temporary, not quite

resident nature of fieldwork mimics the position of young prisoners. They live here but

none regard it as home and consider themselves different from those around them. It is

also prone to disruption. Many participants were also able to view the social world of the

prison as 'conjured', as 'a distinct social world' (Van Maanen 1991: 41) that they

themselves moved 'in and out of'. In retaining a sense of distance from 'the system' they

were able to resist being swallowed up by it and to maintain some semblance of their own

identity. This is taken up in Chapter 4.

Interviewing

Seventeen respondents were each interviewed twice, interviews were recorded with the

written consent of interviewees. The first interview focused on biography, using the

McAdams (1993) protocol. The second covered prison experiences, in three sections,

reflecting the past – including a summary of life before prison and the offence; the present

– response to jail, coping strategies; and the future they imagined for themselves. The life

story interview and the 'past' section of the jail interview were designed to get to know

each person on their own terms – to hear their stories, rather than that written about

them, offering a sense of ownership as well as providing context for their experiences in

prison. It was important to see each person and each story as unique. The complex

realities of these young lives, their actions and the ways in which they understood them

were inadequately represented in case files and yet these files became who they were in

the eyes of those who made decisions about their everyday lives and futures. This is

further explored in Chapter 5.

I interviewed those serving more than five years, or any indeterminate sentence; this

group covered most of Cypress and some from other wings. I excluded those who were

identified as 'lone staff awareness', as that would have required a staff member to be

present.[9] It had been harder to get to know those on other wings, although where possible I had insinuated myself into their education or activity timetable in order to do so. I met with them to explain the purpose of the interview; I asked them not to answer immediately to avoid any pressure to say agree, nor to instinctively say no; I returned several days later to ask if they wanted to take part and all but one agreed.

Interviews took place in one of two rooms on the second landing, close to the staff office but out of sight and earshot. All rooms were equipped with general alarms and I usually remembered to sit closest to the door. Staff suggested locking myself and the interviewee into the room but I rarely did - it seemed odd to lock myself in, let alone with someone else and I wanted to avoid the perception that the interview was compulsory. To minimise my impact on the regime I aimed to see young people during free lessons, when they would have otherwise been in their cells, watching television or sleeping. I never planned dates in advance. This was both a reflection of my own desire to do things when the time 'felt right' and resignation that dates and times would not be remembered anyway. Early on I observed that, when young people were unlocked for a lesson, they would frequently ask 'what am I doing now?' despite having copies of their timetables inside the folders they were obliged to carry with them. When I asked Seamus why he didn't just look for himself, he said that the frequency with which things changed – a class cancelled, an appointment with a caseworker, or some other unexplained reason– meant there was no point memorising the timetable. Disruption was frequent but there was also an element of relinquishing control, either as sacrifice or resistance, in this refusal to remember one's own schedule.

I aimed for naturalism and tried to find ways to spend time with each participant in advance of interviewing him: attending his classes, hanging around on the wing when I

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[9] Lone female awareness' (in fact lone staff awareness) was a term applied to a small group of young people who were considered high risk and who staff could not work with one-to-one, regardless of other staff being on the wing. This was based on recent behaviour, rather than conviction.

knew he was there. Sometimes I was trumped by a social visit or a medical appointment, sometimes the situation felt wrong – the young person was having a bad time, or there was some maintenance work on the wing. This resulted in some frustrating days but it forced me to find something else to do, or find someone else to talk to, and it felt important to allow interviewees some element of control. McAdams posits adolescence as 'the beginning of mythmaking proper in the human life cycle, as teenagers begin to see their lives in storied, historical terms' (1993: 13). This is followed by the '…fashioning and refinement of their characters in personal myth in early adulthood' (ibid.). For some it was the first time they had reflected on their lives and this produced a mixture of emotions. In early discussions with some of the young people I asked them to describe their earliest memory, or what they had wanted to be when they grew up. The responses were sometimes powerful - in Louie's case it was as if he had gone back in time and was actually viewing the scene in his memory. He began to smile at the thought of it, he seemed younger and more relaxed in that moment. I felt privileged to be near him while he enjoyed that memory, knowing that he trusted me enough to remember it for me.

Before starting fieldwork I had been mocked by two senior academics for believing 'kids' would have anything to say at all; but they had plenty to say, I felt vindicated, of course, but also awed by their resilience and resourcefulness. Conversation usually continued after the recorder was switched off; for the young people this was a way of maximising their time out of their cell. Interviews took place during times when others where off the wing and would therefore end when they returned as someone would knock or put his head round the door and join in the conversation, or ask 'when is it my turn'. Since the break between sessions usually meant being locked in, young people used these few minutes as association time, and were able to do this in my presence more legitimately than had they been alone.

Naturally, some interviews were more successful than others. The life stories in particular

produced either very rich or very sparse material. Nobody refused to answer any questions, but some participants were unable, or unwilling, to recall the past, or describe their emotions. The issue of wrongful rape convictions came up more than once – 'girls can lie' – and occasionally racist or sexist comments were made. Sometimes factually incorrect beliefs were revealed, either about the legal process – 'IPPs are banned in some areas'[10]– or the regime – 'the staff lied to us about that'. I challenged these types of comments as I would have in any other setting. There were also occasions where I was challenged – statements corrected by respondents either because they did not share my beliefs or because I had made a factual error. In all of these aspects - not locking the door, allowing others to enter, and letting respondents guide the conversation, in revealing my own beliefs by challenging theirs, I am reminded of the nuances of power: it is not simply asymmetric between prisoners and staff (Crewe 2011a), nor between myself as an adult and participants as young people.

On two occasions I stopped interviews. Seamus had received a distressing letter from his adoptive mother, who was in a psychiatric hospital. It read like a suicide note although by then staff had confirmed that she was unharmed. Usually loquacious, Seamus could barely talk. I stopped recording but I knew that if I left he would be returned to his cell. It was Easter weekend, the following day was his 18th birthday and he was contemplating a long, lonely weekend.[11] Instead we talked about what had been happening and how he felt about his upcoming move.

In another interview, Abdi giggled uncontrollably and gave nonsensical answers to every question. It was disconcerting and I stopped recording. It transpired that he was high – having been drug tested earlier during the week (and knowing he would test positive), he had decided to use up the rest of his stash, safe in the knowledge that he would not be

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[10] IPP – Indeterminate sentence for Public Protection

[11] Bank Holidays run to a weekend regime, meaning no education and limited activities so more time spent on the wing. There are no prison visits on bank holidays, Easter Sunday or Christmas Day.

tested again until the results were back.[12]

Good quality interviews require a process of mutual self-disclosure and trust, facilitated through time in the field, learning the terrain and simply being a committed and non-judgemental presence (Medlicott 2000). I treated interviews as conversations which usually encouraged interviewees to do the same. Some would ask for my answer of the questions I asked them - 'what's your earliest memory? 'What's yours?'. There were few questions that I declined to answer, and all of these related to convictions and sentences of other young people. Boundaries are personal and what I found acceptable may be offensive to others; in fact they may have been offensive to me in other settings. On re-reading field notes and when transcribing interviews I was sometimes surprised, not just by what was said, but how frank I was: the strength of an opinion offered, how loud I laughed or how often I swore. Yet I believe that being myself - neither a careful version, nor a parody of the people I was trying to know (Liebow 2003 [1967]) - enabled respondents to be themselves too. This sometimes led to revelations, to emotional outpourings and to a feeling in the room that was not there in other contexts. This is well described by Medlicott's concept of 'disciplined empathy': a partly imaginative task that involves 'putting oneself in the place and predicament of the other' while also 'screening out the judgements which would compromise the empathy' (2001: 39). When a high level of disciplined empathy is achieved, '…it provides… the 'A-ha' moment' (ibid.). Ethnography enables researchers to draw on 'their personal, artistic, emotional human resources' (Liebling 2001: 474) and '[t]he more affective the research, in terms of shared feelings and experiences, the better the fieldwork gets done on the whole' (2001:475).

Paper files and straw men

In addition to observation and interviews, I used case files as a secondary resource. The content and quality of written documents varied but most included copies of the

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[12]Mandatory Drug Testing (MDTs) takes place in every prison, prisoners are picked at random or can be targeted if they are suspected of drug use.

Asset[13] and standardised risk assessment information. Files for this on indeterminate sentences included sentence planning documents and extensive detail about the offence[14] including photographs, witness statements, sentencing remarks, pre-sentence reports and psychological and psychiatric reports if they exist. Recording of personal information is subject to human error, either in interpretation or recording. Offence information is sometimes taken from newspaper reports, court records provided may be sparse, social services records incomplete. They are not available to the young person and errors not only remain but are sometimes built on – assumptions based on a piece of inaccurate information, which are then used to inform interpretations of later actions. This can produce patchy, misleading or downright false paper portraits of their subject and, mindful of these hazards from earlier forays into the field, I was distrustful of them. Moreover, my purpose was to give voice to the people themselves, not to conduct a quality review of documents. However, familiarity with written documentation was a useful guide to the language and concepts that were used to describe each case and the types of information deemed 'fileworthy'. On the first day of fieldwork I attended a meeting on Cypress and the wing manager suggested I look up the files of all the residents; when I asked if I should gain consent from them I was told 'they know everyone in here knows pretty much everything about them anyway'. Yet when I asked a respondent a question about a previous institution he'd been held in, he asked how I knew he'd been there. While young people may 'know' how their information is kept, it's not with the everyday knowledge that they are credited with. Weeks later, looking through a file that included scene of crime photographs[15]; I was interrupted by the same staff member who said 'you're not supposed to be looking at those'. Mortified, I said that I had asked the wing manager beforehand, and she then admitted she was joking, it was fine for

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[13] Asset is an assessment tool, used across the youth justice system in England and Wales and has been in use since 2000. The tool is used to analyse the index offence and identify contributory factors. The assessment produces a score which indicates likelihood of reoffending.

[14] Gathered from an initial sentence planning meeting involving investigating police officers and external YOT workers as well as internal YOT staff and representatives from psychology, education and the young person's personal officer.

[15] This was the only time I came across these in any file.

me to look at them, but that 'it pisses me off when people who don't work with the lads come and have a look through their files'.[16]

For example, Nicky was regularly receiving negative comments for 'always being last to finish dinner'. This was perceived as a deliberate attempt to 'manipulate' staff and to gain some control. I asked about his tardy eating habits as it seemed out of character, and was told that, without fail, he is the last one to finish. Yet, a similar comment was written in another file – 'Louie is always last to finish his dinner'. Clearly they can't both always be last to finish, so there is an element here of staff being heightened to attempts to manipulate, without really giving care to *why* it might be – or even whether it truly *is* - the case. A review of the files would have made this clear. Similarly Rhys was described by several staff as 'vile' when he was not on medication. His behaviour could be unpredictable, from docile to angry and he frequently refused his medication, before finally deciding to withdraw permanently. Whether he had taken it or not was not regularly documented by wing staff, so it was impossible to tell whether his 'vile' behaviour was linked to his medication or not. I recorded my own impression of Rhys' changing behaviour:

He has been consistently refusing [medication] for the past few weeks, and I have found him to be far grumpier but still polite, and cogent; a huge contrast to his previous spaced out state, where he sometimes heard the bell to come in from the yard but was on the cusp of being persuaded by some of the other young people that the sound was only in his head. He complains regularly, and often correctly, about being let out late. Staff say he is unable to retain information about why he's let out late, and that it has been explained to him before, but I was (mis)informed by one staff member that all young people on the unit are considered 'lone female awareness' meaning they can't be unlocked when there

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[16] I found this flattering – perhaps more so because of my previous mortification - that she put me in (what I perceive to be) the privileged group of 'people who work with the lads'. I felt included, validated." Fieldnote December 2010

are only female staff on. This is why Rhys has not been let out on time… In fact only one person on the unit is now officially lone staff awareness….

Discrepancies in official documentation reveal the extent to which truth is constructed and reconstructed to serve those in control. These accounts can be the difference between two visits a month and four. They can affect the amount of money a person can use to telephone home. They contribute to decisions on when someone can be released. The pains caused by this lack of identifiable truth – or even identifiable *un*truth - were identified by several young people in interviews and their mistrust of official stories was evident; attempts to engage them in behavioural work were thwarted by this duplicity as programmes and ideals were seen to be founded on false perceptions. Those in authority could not be trusted to know the truth therefore their offerings were of no value. Young people were adept at providing the right answer while privately acknowledging that the attempted reforms had made no difference to their ways of thinking. This is not to say that 'nothing works' (Martinson 1974) simply that change is a process unique to the individual rather than one neatly brought about by instruction. There is a symbolic violence in denying young people the chance to read or respond to the words written about them, even more so when those words carry such weight. I attempted to avoid this by providing transcripts of interviews, allowing interviewees to comment or request parts be redacted, although I received comments back from only one respondent.

Ethics and safety

The decision to engage with young people sentenced to long sentences poses an ethical dilemma in itself, by providing grist to the mill of those who say prison is 'too easy' or simply a prurient look at those who have inspired much public angst and ire. Young people in prison are subject to scrutiny from a wide audience of practitioners, researchers and the public and tend to be described in terms that emphasise either their violence or their vulnerability. This positions them as a kind of cultural conundrum, strange and

unknowable. To claim a desire to 'humanise' young people would be self-aggrandising – prisoners remain fully human while incarcerated and the young people I encountered did not feel they were in need of saving. Nor, honestly, was my purpose so altruistic: I wanted to know what it was like to be young and in prison, and that was what I tried to find out.

I told all young people I spoke to why I was there. That I was a PhD student in a sociology department was often incomprehensible and I often resorted to explaining that I was 'writing a book about being a young person on a long sentence'. This was clear enough for most and even resulted in some participants telling others 'she's writing a book, I'm gonna be in it' or graciously telling me they were 'happy to help you with your book, cos it might help others'. Interviewees were given an information sheet explaining the purpose of the interview, what would happen to the information and who would be able to see it. We read through it together and I checked their understanding before asking them to take part.

These processes seem straightforward but in practice, consent is iterative: a reflexive analysis of the consent agreement highlights 'the complex and shifting social and cultural power relations inside and outside the research process' (Renold *et al* 2008: 430). Informed consent is a necessary principle, but the extent to which young people can be truly said to be informed varies between contexts, and perhaps even day to day. In the first interview conducted I described the nature of my research, and how the interviewee's words would be used. I told him that these would be anonymised and that I would provide him with a copy of the transcript; he waved his hand to indicate that it was unnecessary - perhaps out of trust, more likely disinterest. Still, I brought him the transcript, all 40 pages of it, faithfully typed the day after our interview and noting every cough, mumble or laugh. He looked at it and said 'you've written every single thing we said?' I explained yes, that's what a transcript is. He asked if I'd written it just so he could read it, and I said no, that I had to do it anyway. He said he didn't want to read it – 'I know what I said' – but that he

would have done if I had written it up just for him. A polite response, and perhaps wise: without reading it he could never cringe at his words the way I had at mine as I wrote it up. Despite that, as I transcribed I found myself reflecting – on the differing rhythm of our voices, the words chosen and the times we found wordless agreement. His responses were succinct and funny, and there was a surprising amount of laughter recorded. I was also discomfited by my occasional inability to explain myself and my tendency to veer wildly off topic. Was this really the best way to conduct an interview? For me the desire to be 'informed', to be fully present and mindful of the effect of my words and actions was evident in every part of the process. My informants though were motivated by different and varied desires. My lack of uniform, gender and relative youth and willingness to listen indulgently and without judgement made talking to me at least a reasonable way to pass the time. Talking to me meant time out of cell, was sometimes more interesting than other activities on offer, and might educe tangible benefits, such as a good wing file comment which helped them achieve a higher regime and better privileges. Following contact with a young person, staff from any part of the prison were informally expected to make a note on their wing fee - partly this was a record of who they had been in contact with, but also served as material for the weekly reviews. I was uncomfortable with this requirement to participate in the regime, I didn't want to be responsibilised and absorbed into the system. I relied on the same, anodyne comment for each interaction. 'I saw X on the wing today, he was polite and helpful.' Lloyd enjoyed the chance to show off to others about 'being in a book'. Beyond the immediate benefits, respondents were largely uninterested in the results.

Physical safety

Physical safety is clearly a concern for a researcher entering a prison. It is rare for anyone in a prison on a 'voluntary' basis – not a member of staff – to be assaulted, but anyone carrying keys is a potential target. I was required to complete a one day training course giving an overview of prison life, relevant prison rules and the dangers of conditioning. To be

able to draw keys, I also attended a two day workshop, consisting of sessions on the law regarding physical restraint and self defence, involving dummies, body armour and rubber knives. I was on the course with a number of middle-aged volunteers due to join the chaplaincy and having to kick the (protected) shins of a white haired man of the cloth was a part of the preparation I had not envisaged. It was hard to see how I could translate that training into defending myself against violence, if I ever had to. My physical safety really depended on others who would come to my aid if it became necessary. My own safety strategy consisted of always knowing where the alarm was and being nearer to it to than any young person. In interviews this meant sitting closest to the door. I also had a personal alarm attached to my belt, although I never used it.

Security rules state that no young person should be unlocked (out of cell) unless a minimum of two staff are on the wing. This was not always adhered to. I went onto the wing once to find six young people doing yoga with a volunteer and no wing staff. I twice exited an interview room with a young person to find no staff at all - it appeared they had forgotten we were in the interview room and gone off the wing. I had no cell keys and no radio so sat and waited for someone to return. At that time I felt mild annoyance - I was stuck there. Neither of the young people were concerned, using the time instead to talk at doors (forbidden to reduce bullying). I never felt physically at risk - not then and not at any other time. It may be that others would have seen risk where I did not. Following an art class one day the officer detailed to the corridor admonished me. Corridor officers were responsible for managing each class leaving, and unlocked doors at intervals to prevent all young people being in the corridor at once. The class had finished and we were all standing waiting for the for to be unlocked. Three or four boys were standing near me and were joking about my height and pointing out that my ID photograph made me look 'like Stacey from Eastenders'. It was good natured and - although I am apparently 'mad small' - I did not feel intimidated. In any case, the (male) art teacher was also in the room. After the boys ha left the corridor officer leaned towards me and said, 'they were a bit close to

you, I thought I was gonna have to come in'. I felt a little embarrassed at being mildly told off, but also affronted - did he think I *needed* help? What did he think was going to happen? And why was he telling me off because he perceived me as at risk? I realised how difficult it was for these young men to interact in what I saw as a fairly innocuous way, that their status as male, as well as prisoners, made them risky by default. Curtis describes this as the assumption that prisoners are '"bogey-men", a heartbeat away from sexual assault' (2014: 139), and I can only infer this was the officer's concern. but his assumption about their dangerous masculinity (in contrast to his own, protective interest) was also a way to police my femininity.

Emotional safety

Fieldwork was emotionally exhausting; hearing others' pain with an open mind and heart - becoming 'a repository of confidences' (Sampson and Thomas 2003: 177) - and being unable to respond adequately is painful and tiring. Funny things happened and gallows humour pervades even the darkest times, but Wearside was frosted with sadness. Asking young people to remember their lives means asking them to recount difficult and traumatic stories when they have little opportunity for comfort. It requires a large amount of generosity on their part, generosity that is almost impossible to reciprocate. Initially I was surprised by the ease with which these stories were told, but I came to see that as an inherent part of their experience and identity. Having survived difficult experiences, they had been required to tell their stories over and over again to strangers and they had learned how to do so. Only rarely did a participant become genuinely emotional when telling stories of this nature. Their emotional safety was not threatened by my asking them to tell me difficult stories – in fact those stories were safe ground for them. What seemed to challenge them more was the idea that I was there by choice, that I was interested in them. Sometimes kindness hurts. I was unable to offer any financial 'reward' to participants but, as I was allowed to bring food into the prison I did bring cakes and sweets and shared these with staff and young people.

I also used food as a reward for myself: several times a week I went from the prison to a large supermarket where I bought every new item that caught my eye. I bought multi-packs of yoghurts so I could try all the flavours, whole cakes, meats and cheeses from the deli counter and exotic fruits and vegetables. Unwittingly, I often chose foods I had never tried before - herbal teas, plant milks - or combined them in ways I had never done - peaches and cheese, sliced ham and honey. The cool, quiet supermarket with its spacious aisles and brightly coloured produce, the ability to choose whatever I wanted, to not have to worry about how I appeared to others…The supermarket was a sanctuary. At the time it felt indulgent and luxurious, a delicious feeling of choice. I think now I was in need of physical sensation to counter the emotional frizziness.

Prisons are emotional places, encompassing the range of human experience – good and evil, power and weakness, despair, violence, change, growth, hope and faith and humour. Prisons are 'raw, and sometimes desperate, special places' (Liebling 1999a: 152). Young people carried with them the weight of past experience as well as dealing with fresh difficulties. During fieldwork Seamus's adoptive mother disowned him and was sectioned. Rhys' grandfather became seriously ill and could no longer visit; he died shortly after Rhys turned 18. Emmanuel found out he would be deported due to his conviction, forcing him to leave behind his beloved younger brother and return to the country where he was found homeless and begging in the street.

Events like these underline the ongoing trauma faced by young people in prison, and the lack of power they have to address their situation. They also illustrated to me, how limited my research could ever be in making a difference to their lives. This created a sense of futility and at times I wondered what I was doing there at all. Young people asked me why I was there and I was sometimes unable to answer. My sense of uselessness was not shared by anyone else in the prison - they all had clearly defined roles, they knew why they were there. By the time I realised I felt that way my emotions were too suppressed to express them

to anyone outside of the building anyway. It created - for me anyway - a bond between myself and respondents, whose experience seemed closest to mine - although of course still a long way off. '[M]aking a connection with someone new outside helps a person feel a bit closer to home, a bit more like a human being and a bit less like a prisoner' (Bosworth *et al* 2005: 257). Making connections with people *inside* made *me* feel more like a human being, made me more aware of how fragile ontological security is and how quickly life can change. I felt grateful for my own good fortune, even while I felt detached from it.

Carroll (1974) his 'status attributes' as being of differential significance to various groups - of primary interest to white prisoners, he was 'free and interested in prisons' (p.11), to black prisoners, his whiteness was of primary importance. Carroll's focus was race relations in a maximum security prison, his awareness of race underpinning the entire study. My own awareness of the mediating effect of race came much later and I did not, during fieldwork, find it the 'formidable barrier to interaction' that Carroll describes (p. 12).

I spent a long time pondering how to develop insider status, but ultimately my differences served me better than any attempts to blend in. Ethnographic wisdom emphasises the need to build trust through augmenting similarity, but that was an impossible task here. I was defined most easily by what I was *not* - especially, 'not a gov' and 'not from around here'. My status as an outsider, female and not part of the establishment made talking to me novel, even appealing and it was possible to engage participants with relative ease. Bucerius (2013) argues that a status as trusted outsider can facilitate greater knowledge than being an insider. For London young people our shared regional origin implied a level of knowledge about 'how it is' that staff, drawn from the local area, did not possess. I myself did not claim any special knowledge - my age, class, gender and ethnicity made my experience of walking even the same streets in south and east London entirely different. Yet that regional connection was a bridge that made it possible to overcome the many differences between us.

The relationships I developed with participants were meaningful beyond the research question, for me and, I believe, for some of them too. The emotional aspects of research are often concealed in the analysis but I have tried to present relevant examples throughout and will consider some specific aspects in this chapter, revealing some of the 'hidden ethnography' (Blackman 2007) that inevitably takes place in fieldwork but is often glossed over. Blackman argues that decisions about what to exclude involve a willingness (or not) to cross emotional borders. He suggests that younger academics are more likely to remain cautious about crossing these borders, for fear of losing legitimacy. I hope I have been brave enough to cross some of these borders and that the risk has paid off in transparent, truthful and meaningful findings.

'*Just gotta ride it*': *Adaptation, survival and change*

'Riding' – coping, managing - was an important concept to young people in Wearside. 'Riding the sentence' and, especially, 'riding the bang up'[1] were illustrative of maturity and self sufficiency. Although coping could be learned over time, some took pride in having in being able to 'adapt quick'. This chapter is about resilience and toughness, malleability, pliability, the plasticity of youth, of not knowing any better, of bundles full of want but no ambition, of young men angry about everything and yet simultaneously apathetic. It is about how emotions come to be felt, recognised and managed. In this place, chocolate bars and PlayStations function like bread and circuses while real needs are downplayed or overlooked. In time, young people realise this and find ways to meet their own needs. It is also about how I learned to see the depth of emotional work that went into 'riding' a sentence.

Before I went to Wearside I had been in several prisons, for men and women, adults and young people. In most, I had been approached or shouted at -'who are you', 'what are you doing here?', sometimes ruder than that. I had been to another long-term unit for young people, a small building in the grounds of a YOI. When I went in there I was struck by how little interest any of those young people took in me, a stranger. I had the same feeling on the first day in Cypress. There is a watchfulness amongst long sentenced young people that is different from other young people in prison.

This chapter will situate respondents' adaptive strategies in the intersection of biography and the carceral habitus, demonstrating how they draw on tools from earlier life experience to adapt to their present condition and shape their futures. Young people valued their ability to adapt and spoke about it as something precious they possessed

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[1] Being able to cope behind the locked door.

almost like an heirloom, passed down the generations - 'it's how I grew up'. Yet the application of learning to new situations can be understood as the 'analogical transfer of schemata acquired in prior practice' (Bourdieu 1972: 261). It is 'how they grew up', but is the ability to adapt a precious jewel or a cross to bear? The contours of these young men's early lives suggests that trauma becomes embodied, becomes habitual, becomes habitus. The ability to suppress emotion - to 'ride it' - is in itself an emotion, it is a display of pride.

Although some studies have shown resistance to be a preferred strategy for long-term prisoners (Cohen and Taylor 1972), in general prisoners tend to adapt, rather than resist but this can have consequences particularly for those serving longer sentences (Haney 2006). A perceived risk of adaptation is institutionalisation, and this risk is potentially greater for young people at a transitional life stage (Catan 2004). However, institutionalisation - understood as over-reliance on the institution - was rejected by most respondents who saw themselves as far removed from both the institution and the system that kept them there. Adapting to their circumstances was conceived as a way to resist both institutionalisation - as Louie said *'if I didn't get used to it then it would have an even worse effect on me'* - and the institution itself. Having already experienced significant and traumatic life events these young people are adaptable and resilient. Others found ways to be a new person, someone who did not exist outside - who perhaps never could exist outside. For these respondents institutionalisation may be a risk.

The chapter first considers how long sentenced young people transition into prison and analyse three respondents' accounts of their arrival in prison. Then, drawing on interviews and observations, I will identify five interrelated elements of the carceral habitus that contribute to adaptation. Crucially, respondents described themselves as already familiar with or in possession of most of these qualities, which they refined in prison.

Literature on prisoners of all ages describes 'entry shock' and the fraught nature of the

early days of imprisonment. New entrants are more likely to commit suicide, to self-harm or to become involved in fights with staff and other prisoners (Gibbs 1982; Liebling 1999b; Toch and Adams 2002; Zamble and Porporino 1988). For some it is the first time away from home (Biggam and Power 1997). Those who have been through local authority care may find it easier to adapt to the weight of imprisonment (Crewe 2011b) to institutional life and its contingent loss of control: the path from care to custody is well worn (Blades 2011; PRT 2016).

Those charged with serious crimes are usually remanded and spend months awaiting trial. Young people in this predicament must adapt to prison life as well as manage the psychological weight of an uncertain future. Some respondents were convinced they would 'buss case', or were surprised by an indeterminate sentence.[2] Those charged in groups under 'joint enterprise' described uncertainty as to how they had been convicted. For some sentencing was the moment the experience became 'real'. Length of time, rather than prison itself, was the primary concern and indeterminacy weighed heavily even on those sentenced to relatively short minimum terms.[3]

Responses to imprisonment and the practices of maintaining order in the prison frequently compound behaviours that brought respondents to prison in the first place. Young people draw on their biography, assessment of their own vulnerabilities, and observation of parents, carers or peers. The ostensible aim of prison is to reform negative behaviour and decision making, yet role models are limited to staff - with whom there is an asymmetry and whose efforts focus on maintaining rather than bridging social distance (Arnold 2005) - and similarly disadvantaged peers. The highly structured environment reduces opportunities for problem oriented or avoidant techniques (Ireland et al. 2005). A

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[2] 'Buss case': acquitted

[3] Between 2005 and 2012, a total of 8,711 IPP sentences were passed. As of September 2016, 3,859 of those prisoners sentenced to an IPP were still in custody, and 87% or 3,200 of these prisoners were beyond their tariff expiry date. Over a third were five or more years over tariff. (HMIP 2016b). Official figures do not distinguish between those sentenced under/over 18.

purely psychological understanding of coping suggests that individuals are responsible for their coping style. The structural processes that influence coping become embodied and the concept of habitus as a mediating construct between the individual and the society in which they move offers a deeper understanding of the confluence of structure and agency. The vulnerabilities created by close proximity to conflict and limited contact with friends and family outside are artificial and at least some of the styles adopted to cope with these are likely to be problematic. Wacquant argues that habitus always has a built-in inertia (2016: 67), since practices are generated by social structures that are themselves resistant to change. This has a particular significance for young prisoners, compelled to demonstrate change by a system that refuses to recognise change whilst itself remaining static.

Life before Cypress

No young person moved onto Cypress straight from court; new entrants transferred from either another location in Wearside or from another prison and had therefore gone through an initial transition, although adjustments to the new environment were necessary. Placement on Cypress was managed centrally, by the Youth Justice Board; referrals were made to the Unit Manager who would then decide on suitability. Potential residents must be sentenced and no older than 17 years and three months, so they could spend a minimum of nine months on Cypress before transfer to the young adult estate. This ensured a relatively stable population, in contrast to the high churn elsewhere in Wearside. Most participants had transferred from 'secure' or from London remand prison Feltham shortly after sentencing.

Secure

The secure estate for young people is made up of three types of accommodation; young people are allocated on the basis of age and perceived need. Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) like Wearside are reserved for 15-18 year olds, so respondents who had entered custody before 15 were initially held in 'secure' – Secure Children's Homes (SCHs) or

Secure Training Centres (STCs). These differ from YOIs in ethos and regime and respondents and staff distinguished between them and the harsher prison environment.

SCHs are small[4], local authority run homes for boys and girls aged 10-14 subject to either criminal justice or welfare proceedings and run on a high ratio of staff to residents, who wear their own clothes and are only locked in at night. STCs are privately operated units for between 50 and 80 young people aged between 14 and 16 years old. As in SCHs, young people wear their own clothes and are locked in their rooms only at night. Young people can make and receive telephone calls from the staff office. Education is compulsory in both as all residents are under school leaving age.

There are similarities between the SCHs and STCs, but also vast differences, not least that STCs are contracted out to large corporations, while SCHs are all run by local authorities and staffed by qualified practitioners. Young people referred to both SCHs and STCs as 'secure' though most had not been in an SCH. Those I spoke to described secure as a more relaxed environment, but STC inspections describe maltreatment and deteriorating conditions (HMIP/Ofsted 2017; 2016a and b; 2015), some of which resulted in criminal proceedings (BBC 2016).

In contrast to secure, YOIs house up to 400 young men with a staff: young person ratio of 1: 10. Young prisoners wear uniform – tracksuits – although they could have their own underwear, socks and trainers sent in, if they had anyone to send it. Every young person should be unlocked for at least eight hours per day but this can be reduced due to staff training or shortages, incidents requiring staff attendance somewhere else, or activity cancellations.[5] Unlock time may also be reduced as punishment, or to keep a young person safe from others. This can involve periods in the segregation unit where a young

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[4] Between 8 and 40 beds

[5] On at least two occasions in 2016 staff refused to unlock young prisoners, in protest at assaults on them (Massey 2016; Inside Time 2016).

person will only be allowed out of their cell for 30-60 minutes. In 2015 the UK Supreme Court ruled that there are "well known" risks of solitary confinement and that *prolonged* solitary confinement – defined as longer than 15 days – is particularly harmful ([2015] UKSC 54).[6] The Prison Service argues that it does not use solitary confinement, preferring the term segregation. An inspection report found that quarter of boys at Feltham were locked in for so long each day that it amounted to solitary confinement (HMIP 2015c). The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture reported that children were "regularly held in conditions akin to solitary confinement for periods of 30 days and some for as long as 60 days or even, on occasion, up to 80 days for reasons of discipline and good order" (CPT 2017). In July 2017 the High Court ruled that prolonged isolation of a 16-year-old at Feltham breached both the YOI rules and the boy's Article 8 rights ([2017] EWHC 1694 (Admin)).

Only Seth had spent time in an SCH but Thomas, Jerome and Aaron had all transferred from the same STC. Those who had recently arrived described the transition from 'secure' as jarring, particularly in regard to the time spent locked up and the facilities available particularly receiving phone calls and being able to make toast or snacks for themselves during the day. Some SCHs also have showers in rooms, whereas at Wearside there were four showers on the wing and many young people complained that the water was never hot. These simple, everyday things - receiving a call, making some toast, taking a hot shower in private - are absent in all prisons, regardless of the age of the residents. But the fact that these are available in some parts of the secure estate and not others underlines the arbitrary way that decisions about regime and facilities are made. This was not lost on young people who learned quickly that many of the decisions made *about* them had nothing to do *with* them.

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[6] The UN defines solitary confinement as 'confinement of prisoners for 22 hours or more a day without meaningful human contact'. The Prison Service appears to rely on staff answering cell bells and prisoners shouting to each other through doors, windows or pipework as 'meaningful human contact'.

Despite the loss of some comforts, young people were glad to escape what they described as the immaturity of their counterparts in secure.

> *Jerome: If you could put the people that's here in secure I would not move because obviously, I'm mature for my age…Like, I can't be around childish people all the time, annoys me.*

The transition relieves the annoyance of being around childish people but also reinforces young people's perceptions of themselves as mature, no longer children. Exposure to multiple institutions dulls the fear of them, and older peers who transition into YOIs become contacts to seek out (or avoid) on arrival.

Feltham

Wearside is some way from London but, in keeping with the prison estate at large (Flynn, 2010; YJB 2012), housed a disproportionate number of young people from London, alongside those from the local area and from Wales. Young people from other English cities were usually remanded close to home and respondents from those cities had been at other prisons before being transferred to Cypress. Feltham's catchment area covers most London courts (MoJ 2011) and, as Dion remarked, '*99% of people that's done a crime from London has gone to Feltham so therefore you're guaranteed to meet everyone there*'. All London respondents had been through Feltham.[7] With a large and volatile remand population, many of whom had established enmity or feuds with each other, Feltham was regarded as chaotic and violent.[8]Those who had been there talked of daily violence and a harsh regime, exacerbated by churn.[9] Wearside in general, and Cypress in particular, was viewed as 'easy' in comparison to Feltham, even by those who had not been there. There were fewer fights and a more settled population. The relative calm was even described as boring - the same faces, fewer fights - meaning time passed slowly. Some respondents linked the relative cleanliness and better facilities of Wearside with privatisation.

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[7] See Harvey (2007) for a detailed description of Feltham and its history.

[8] Not without justification (HMIP 2017c; 2015a; 2015c; 2013b; 2011a; 2011b).

[9]Churn describes the changing prison population, with discharges and receptions every day. This is more pronounced in prisons that hold people on remand, before or during trial, or for short sentences, as Feltham does.

Experience of Feltham was in itself social capital. London young people carried the reputation of Feltham - and, by association, London - into Wearside and this allowed them to benefit from the notoriety - a sort of veil of 'badness'. However this was double edged - the veil could be protective, making challenge by others unattractive, yet it also invited challenge from young people who want to show that they were just as violent, just as 'bad' as any London young person. This contributed to a 'geography of risk' (Shabazz 2015) in which 'London' itself became a byword for violent and, since almost every young person from London was black, the terms became conjoined. London young people are violent, London young people are black, ergo black young people are violent. What was overlooked is that London young people were almost exclusively violent towards *other* London young people. And so, it could be equally argued: London young people are victims, London young people are black, ergo black young people are victims. It never was. Only one interpretation of these young people persisted and this narrow vision of violence left young people alienated from staff, feeling that they had no understanding of why violence occurred or how to resolve it. It underlined for some young people that they were not victims, and that victimhood was a an essential quality (that they did not possess): a weakness, rather than the result of another's actions. This made it difficult for them to view their victims as such.[10] These ideas are explored further in Chapter 6.

From the first day to everyday

On arrival at Wearside, young people spent two weeks on 'induction', confined to the wing so that staff could observe them; more quarantine than induction. Everyday emotion has often been disregarded as means for understanding prison life (Jewkes 2011; Crawley 2004). Difficulty expressing emotion is sometimes read as lack of emotion, or a deliberate

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[10] Victim was a contested term: young people did not always accept that a violent person could be considered a victim when a revenge attack was carried out against him. Though some staff shared this view the law identifies the person who has been assaulted as the victim, and the person/s who have assaulted him as the perpetrators. A distinction is drawn between a fight - an exchange of blows - and an assault, where only one person is struck. It is that construction that is referred to here.

withholding of it as a means of survival in prison (De Viggiani, 2012).

In this section, I offer some correction to this, drawing on extracts from interviews with three respondents; Jamie, Kieron and Joe. I asked all respondents to describe their emotions on arrival and how they had changed since - each had spent between four years and two months in prison before I met them. Some were unable, or perhaps unwilling, to remember, but those who did described a range of emotional responses. Retrospective descriptions should be treated cautiously (Hollway and Jefferson 2000). However, as my aim was to understand the prison experience in the context of each respondent's life story, the ways in which they construct their stories provide insight beyond purely factual recollection – to seek meaning, not truth. Stories are used to make sense of experiences, perhaps especially unusual experiences (Crewe and Maruna 2006). Self-narratives tend to be presented linearly – from 'there' to 'here'. Yet, for many respondents, life had not been continuous but contiguous and involved a bumpy ride over obstacles, one after the other. I have selected these three respondents for their particular insights; their views echoed what was said by others, although their particular experiences differed. There were however striking similarities in the way each experienced the transition, drawing together the principles of sociation and individuation captured by Bourdieusian habitus: structured and structuring.

Jamie

> R: Can you remember how you felt on your first day in prison? Jamie: Fine…
> didn't bother me
> R: Ok… and now?
>
> Jamie: It just don't bother me really. Obviously I've been in for a while so you just
> get used to it don't you – everyday life innit. But, just don't wanna come back.

Jamie struggled to recall his emotional responses, demonstrating a flatter affect than any other respondent: unable to explain what he did not enjoy, what he missed about life outside or what he looked forward to on release. Despite this he had a ready and natural smile and a relaxed demeanour. He spent time on his own or with his co-defendant and

in the time I knew him was never in trouble. Jamie's ennui could be read as boredom, resignation or lack of emotion but difficulty remembering earlier experiences and naming emotions is a feature of post-traumatic stress disorders (Nöthling et al 2016) and this may also explain Jamie's lack of memory. Without attention to the neurological, it is easy to read Jamie's responses as purely social. The nexus of habitus and trauma is most pronounced in these contradictions - Jamie's calmness contrasted with the more spectacular responses of other young people, yet the drivers for those responses may well be the same.

Kieron

Kieron described a strong emotional response to prison, although it was one of relief, rather than fear or stress; he found prison less intimidating than he had imagined:

> *R: Can you describe prison?*
>
> *Kieron: …overrated*
>
> *R: Overrated? What do you mean?*
>
> *Kieron: Like, when people talk about jail yeah, you think about some crazy place where people get killed and that like… I dunno, people get rushed[11] every day… Even though it does happen but… people exaggerate about it… it's not like that.*

Having imagined 'some crazy place', the reality was underwhelming – prison was 'loud… and boring. That's it.' The adjective 'overrated' implies dismissal of both the place and the people who described it so. In some ways his description is disingenuous; Kieron was regularly involved in violence despite numerous prison punishments and recriminations from other young people. He describes the level of violence as 'exaggerated' yet made a significant contribution to its existence. Like others, he (wearily) described violence as an everyday necessity rather than a choice. His perception is that prison is not violent is because it is not 'a place where people get killed'.[12]Kieron came from a place where people did get killed: his father, cousin and several friends had been murdered in the

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[11] 'Rushed': assaulted by a group of others

[12] Although, the number of homicides in prison reached the highest level for 25 years in 2015/16 (Travis 2016).

previous seven years. Prison, he said, had not been the worst thing that could have happened – he too might have been killed. He said this without much concern and, when I asked why he explained:

> *I dunno. I'm not really bothered. I don't know why I just don't really think about, I just take every day as it comes, I don't think about… What's gonna happen in the future, I just think about now.*

Kieron's tolerance for violence and his ability to suspend concerns for the future are the key. He accepts the present, and hopes for nothing.

Joe

Joe had grown up in a middle-class home in a large town, excelled academically and socialised with others from the family's church. He recalled his first impressions of prison in detail:

> *Joe: I moved into cell 31 on the induction wing. I remember when I came in to reception… That was a bit off-putting, and put me a bit off balance because they put me in that grey chair[13], and they started searching me, and the signs on the walls were like "you can be strip-searched at any time"… I thought it was gonna be that kind of thing where they make you all line up and then they pick people randomly… you know, that sort of thing? And some big angry guys when I first came in, and I thought all the govs[14] were gonna be like that but… As I got on the wing - cos I came in on the same night as the guy called Jay, he's been in every prison and everything like, he was really experienced - he came in the same day as I did, so obviously, I was in the cell next to him, and then I sat with him for meals… So, even though I didn't really chat to him much, it was kind of an acquaintance, you know, the first person you saw when you came in… And I was happy I had my own cell, cos I wouldn't like to be the first day in prison thrown in with someone else. Yeah, I was a bit panicky and off-balance but even by the end of the day, I was already getting more comfortable.*
>
> *R: And what made you feel more comfortable, as the day went on?*
>
> *Joe: Well, like, the fact that they would go through every bit of process, if I didn't know something, you know… And they had a booklet to just explain everything… it wasn't like they tell you once and then you were supposed to know it, they give you time to get to know it and I remember, what made me really comfortable was, I walked in and there was some guy and they were eating at this table and this one guy got pissed off, they were having an argument yeah, and in my head I had this idea of a bunch of people, you know, prison gangs, shanks… And a lot of fighting. Obviously, they were arguing and this guy threw his banana skin at the other guy yeah… And then he stood up, and I thought something was going to happen, and he just threw the banana skin back and sat down. I was like "wow, this is gonna be easy" [laughs]*

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[13] The Body Orifice Security Scanner (BOSS) chair, scans for metal objects concealed inside the body.

[14] 'Govs': staff

Joe was initially apprehensive but the procedure itself and a chance meeting gave him reassurance. He was the only respondent who mentioned the written information and perhaps found comfort in the certainty provided by officially produced rules and procedures in a way that others did not. Fighting was neither viable nor necessary for Joe: small in stature and lacking experience, he presented - unintentionally as humble. In observing, he saw that violence is sometimes trifling and momentary rather than a constant threat and this reassured him.

These analyses show that initial impressions of prison are influenced by personal characteristics and previous experiences. Though Jamie, Kieron and Joe had very different backgrounds, all had lived through traumatic childhoods and witnessed and perpetrated violence. Neither Jamie nor Kieron described prison as frightening or difficult - perhaps they were reluctant to tell me something that might make them seem weak. Perhaps they simply did not find it difficult having experienced far greater difficulties. Joe oriented himself quickly through a combination of luck, observation and psychological resilience and later explained that he felt more relaxed in prison than he had at home. He had no social contact with anyone outside the prison and his loquacity may also reflect his desire for conversation and company.

These three were not alone in their apparent disregard for the strains of their environment - boredom and a sense of futility were more frequently described than fear or anxiety, in common with other studies (Summerfield 2011). Abdi was 'happy' to arrive in prison, having spent three days in police custody without a shower or television. More commonly, negative feelings included missing family and anger at what their actions had resulted in. Management of emotion in prison has produced only a partial picture, focusing on the expression of typical masculine emotions and their containment (Crewe et al 2014). Respondents rarely named emotions, sometimes even claiming not to feel any at all. But the things they described and the interactions observed revealed a more varied

and nuanced understanding of themselves and their situations. Limited verbal expression is a function of a lack of vocabulary, not a lack of feeling. Those who described a 'prison face' readily admitted that it was not who they really were. Those who used violence to manage relations with others were rarely boastful of it. For most, association with known peers and the process of being tested by other prisoners resulted in an identity that had to be maintained, exhaustingly, in the face of constant challenges. For others, prison identity is not so far removed from life outside (Irwin and Cressey 1962; Jewkes 2012) and the way to manage it is not to change, but to stay the same. If familiar modes of coping are sufficient there is no impetus to adapt (Toch 1992). This has significant implications for the possibility of reform or 'rehabilitation', both for the individuals and the setting.

The carceral habitus

Respondents commonly identified their response to imprisonment as a changing of the self, in the face of an unchanging (and uncaring) institution. This was seen as an achievement: a feat of the individual's mental strength (McDermott and King 1988) rather than institutional enforcement of corporeal docility (Foucault 1977). Respondents attributed this to 'growing up' or, as Aaron put it, 'I thought I was the man back then, but I was just a little shit'.

Adaptation in any setting is an individual and sociative process. Sociological accounts of prison use adaptation to describe the techniques individuals employ to manage their transition into prison. This orients the individual in relation to the prison and can mean the sociative aspects of adaptation - how an individual orients themselves in relation to others, in prison and outside, can sometimes be overlooked, although there are exceptions (Carroll 1974; Crewe 2009; Irwin 1987; Sykes 2007 [1958]). Respondents here downplayed the role of the prison itself in their adaptation to imprisonment: techniques of adjustment focused on the presentation of self to other prisoners, or on managing one's own emotions and identity.

While the studies above identified categories of prisoners and the forms of interaction between them, respondents here described a more fluid social network, based less on fixed categories and more on an individual's qualities and willingness to prove themselves.

1. Authenticity (Be yourself)

Jermain: Be yourself, that's it. When you try to put on a show, when you try and be something you're not, it just always backfires.

The need to 'be yourself' was emphasised by almost all respondents. It was offered both as advice on how to be and evidence of their own authenticity. The need for authenticity was palpable in an environment suffused with doubt about who was not authentic, trustworthy or 'real'. I shared some of these concerns at first, wondering whether anyone would want to talk honestly to a stranger. Respondents were usually decisive about who they were and the limits of what they could, or would want, to be - and at times I was required to prove my own authenticity. Young people often asked 'where are you from?' and my answer - London - gave me credibility with some. I had lived in different parts of London and, at the time, lived close to Kieron's home. I had often passed the flats where his crime had taken place, knowing the case but not yet having met him. I recalled the day I travelled by the taped off entrance to a nearby park on the summer's day where a boy was stabbed to death and Kieron told me it was his cousin who had been killed. I talked with him about how our lives could be so different yet happen in the same places, perhaps expecting him to be resentful at the unfairness of it. He wasn't; like others, he appreciated that I knew 'what London was like'. Seth, on the other hand, thought that would mean I 'only cared about the London ones'. This underlines the multiplicity of habitus - the interaction between region, gender, age, racialisation and criminalisation and socio-economic status. In the free world Kieron and I would almost certainly have never spoken, despite living in the same area. It also belies the assumption about 'London young people'

being innately different.

Respondents' self-assurance in the face of such catastrophic life events was striking, yet also pointed to the constraints of their imaginations and situations. Only a few described being shocked to have ended up in prison. Rose and Clear suggest 'something happens to a person who becomes acquainted with incarceration' (2004: 242), finding those with experience of prison – either directly or indirectly – tended to have lower opinions of social control. Many respondents had witnessed the incarceration of family, friends or acquaintances and more still the victimisation of loved ones. Jerome had been injured as a child during a police raid at his home. This may have impacted on their willingness to adhere to codes around deviance of all kinds. Conversely, they may have simply conformed to the dominant codes of their experience: to 'be yourself' here meant nothing different than it meant in the context of their family, their streets or amongst their friends. It is advice given to anyone entering a testing situation - a new school, a job interview, a first date. The ability to function in prison is derived from skills gained before and symptomatic of limited expectations for one's life. Those whose selves have been devalued, have become akin to the colonised subject.

> 'The colonised subject is constantly on his guard…always presumed guilty. The colonised does not accept his guilt but rather considers it a kind of curse, a sword of Damocles. But deep down the colonised subject acknowledges no authority. He is dominated but not domesticated. He is made to feel inferior, but by no means convinced of his inferiority. (Fanon 2004: 16)

Young people were often acutely aware of the labels now applied to them but rejected the authority of those labelling. Authenticity is a component of the looking-glass self, comprised of imagining (both how we appear to others and their judgement of that appearance) and emotion - either pride or mortification. Pride here comes from the presentation of an authentic - 'real' self and the positive responses to that. This is an 'imputed sentiment'; the imagining of others responses (Cooley 1902) to our selves. For those comfortable with who they were, authenticity was straightforward. Those who did not like what they saw had to find ways to modify the reflection.

For those convicted of sexual crimes, adaptation was more difficult, an affront to who they thought they were - the realisation that they were no longer morally acceptable (Sykes 2007 [1958]). Some sought refuge in constructing a new identity – Will spent time building his physique, Dion began to fight, Thomas pretended not to care. All were, to varying extents, preoccupied with the way they appeared to others, more so than any young person convicted of violence. Maintaining innocence was a way of maintaining the self.

2. Humility ('don't act bad')

'Badness' was a well-recognised characteristic, and referred to a person's projected self-image: those who 'acted bad' were arrogant, thought they were better than others and deserved to be challenged.

> *Dion: Like if you go to jail and think you're like the baddest there, you're not gonna get nowhere.*

Rather than an inherent quality, badness is an act, a way of being in a hostile, street environment (Gunter 2008). Given this, the idea that those 'acting bad' must be deposed makes more sense: personal justice is paramount 'on road'[15]and any perceived weakness carries the risk of exploitation (Topalli et al. 2002). Even the smallest degree of disrespect must be challenged: 'acting bad' implies that the actor thinks they can get away with it – and this cannot be.

> *Jerome: [by acting bad]…you're more likely to get yourself knocked out, still… It will be true on road [too] but when you're on road, who cares? I don't care if you're acting like a bad boy, you got money in your pocket, you know, cool…But you can't act like a bad boy in jail, you'll get yourself hurt cos there's nowhere for you to run, there's nowhere for you to hide.*

As Jerome describes it, in prison a person is judged solely by their actions as they have nothing else. Identity is founded in the here and now, from limited materials. Deprived of physical status symbols – money, clothing, girls and material possessions - personal

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[15] 'On road' has a variety of meanings (see Young 2016) but is used here to mean 'outside of prison'.

qualities take on a greater significance. Humility is the most prized, and is necessary to achieve both respect and release.

> *Jerome: I'm tryin' for my first parole. I'm not gonna say that I won't have fights and that, it's bound to happen. But I just gotta be easy and show them, you get me, it's not always about banging people and that… you can be humble and do your thing nice.16*

Humility is perhaps easier for those serving long sentences to demonstrate. Their reputation usually precedes them – they already have associations with other prisoners, residing on Cypress marks them out as having committed serious crimes: 'acting bad' is unnecessary, their 'badness' is implicit. This is not to say that demonstrations of 'badness' will never be required - as Jerome says, 'it's bound to happen' - but, away from the relentless hustle of outside life, it is possible to create an identity that demonstrates human qualities looked for by both prisoners and (exit) gatekeepers. It is a fine line and one that depends on consistency and the ability to engender trust. Respondents commonly described themselves as 'humble', as Jerome does, although he and others shrugged off accusations of having softened in the face of the system (Cox 2011). Although humility might appear conformist, it was portrayed as closer to pragmatic – humble makes for easier time, and easier time increases the chances of release at the first opportunity. Further, the ability to 'act humble' was presented as a positive quality that not everyone could lay claim to. Humility was really a show of strength in the face of adversity. Claims to humility were really claims of pride at showing humility.

3. Presentation of the self ('be calm')

Respondents described their early days in prison as a mixture of fighting, breaking rules and testing boundaries. Some articulated this as 'acting bad'; presenting a fearless version of themselves. Settling in and abiding by the rules was the way staff measured adjustment and those who were unable to do so were viewed - and treated - as problematic. In most cases,

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[16] Young people sentenced to mandatory life terms are eligible for a review of their sentence at the halfway point. A judge considers whether the applicant has made 'exceptional progress' and can reduce the minimum term. Jerome's application for tariff review was successful and his tariff was reduced by 12 months.

respondents were more able to settle than those on shorter sentences.

For those on indeterminate sentences behaviour could count against them at a later stage, and most were keen to achieve release at their first parole opportunity. [17]Jerome describes his adjustment in terms of making his life easier:

> *Jerome: I was on road, gassed up.[18]I come jail calm, be easy, just see whagwan in here... The calmer you are is how easy you get it. I changed a lot from when I was on road to coming in jail... I just calmed down. Obviously if someone tries it with me, gonna get it cracking but... I haven't got time to be starting arguments, tryna get in fights with people and that... [yawns] Just long...[19]*

Jerome refused to engage in the politics of arguments and fights, activities that ultimately brought sanction from the system as well as fellow prisoners. His relaxed state while telling this and, especially, the yawn, gave his statement an odd weight - he was not trying to convince me of his words, he had no need to impress me. He seemed so self-possessed. This struck me about many - but by no means all - young men, respondents and others. Their composure and the way they carried themselves, their calmness. My understanding of calm is relaxed, untroubled, soothed and soothing. Calm is an adjective. These young men looked calm and it was striking that, in the chaos of this place and the midst of what had and was happening in their lives, could they appear relaxed, untroubled or soothed. For Jerome, and others, calm is a verb, an action: a pragmatic solution to an intractable problem, 'the more calmer you are is how easy you get it'. 'Being calm' is a way of demonstrating humility, but also of showing oneself to be grown up, above those who kick their doors and shout for attention. It is, perhaps, a way of soothing oneself. Jerome made a decision to follow rules and speak politely to staff, he never failed a cell inspection and kept largely to himself on the wing, usually behind his door before the end of association, smiling when I saw him but rarely stopping to talk. He had learned how to get what he needed, to play the game.

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[17] Indeterminate sentenced prisoners serve all of their tariff, but are eligible for transfer to an open prison to years before tariff expiry, subject to Parole Board approval. This 'first parole' should take place two years before the tariff expires. In Jerome's case he would be eligible to transfer to an open prison after seven years.

[18] 'Gassed up': overexcited

[19] 'Long': tedious, boring

Following a change to his regime level Jerome was mistakenly not awarded privileges he should have had. He was annoyed and I suggested he put in a complaint. He said he would not, it was not worth it. He is not alone in thinking this; young people in prison tend not to make formal complaints due to distrust in the process (PPO 2015). Jerome's refusal to get annoyed *enough* to react is a function of his decision to 'play nice'. But, if pushed far enough - 'if someone tries it with me' - he would react - 'gonna get it cracking'. Leo concurred:

> *Leo: I've calmed down really… It's just the odd thing… the odd thing that just…*
> *when people try and make me look like a dickhead I don't like it…*

This two-pronged approach to resistance echoes earlier work with young black men in prison, who described either 'keeping calm' or 'going nuts' (Wilson 2003). Leo and Jerome suggest calmness is preferable but hint at their preparedness to challenge others if necessary. In fact I never saw either of them do so - their calm but watchful demeanour seemed to repel the need. Calmness could be strategic, deployed to maximise advantage; Leo was hoping to achieve parole in the next twelve months.[20] He had earlier described himself as 'not a gangster type' despite his admitted involvement in gangs. He described his style of dress as 'sweet boy' and his demeanour was gentle. Calmness is a is a way of protecting oneself from negative consequences but also of avoiding conflict with other young people and of containing emotions. Being calm may appear strategic it results from a confluence of biography and circumstances, and is rooted in the earlier life and personality of the actor. It is 'orchestrated without being the product of the organising activity of a conductor' (Bourdieu 1990: 53).

Calmness is learned through conflict and strife and becomes, for some, a way of being. For others it can be aspirational. Louie described how he and others learned to carry

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[20] Leo was serving an Extended Sentence for Public Protection (EPP) which meant that he had a fixed custodial period, but could be considered for parole, after serving half of that. If unsuccessful he would serve the remainder of the custodial period and then spend a fixed period on licence in the community.

themselves in a way that indicated their ability to fight while downplaying their desire to do so, how this was advice passed down from older men and advice he went on to give others: able, but not willing. The transmission of 'able…but not willing' is itself a communication of status, of having proved oneself and outgrown one's childish reactivity. Calmness is not weakness and markers of the difference were conveyed physically, in micro-adjustments of gait, positioning of head and hands (concealed inside trousers) and duration of eye contact. Any of these could communicate a willingness to fight. The carceral habitus brings young men together in their shared experience of imprisonment, the ontological resemblance underscored by the physical proximity. This is taken up in relation to violence in Chapter 6.

Calm was also used as an adjective and to mean more than one thing - the conventional meaning but also enjoyable or desirable, and could be applied to mood, object, area or person. The stretching of adjectives to mean something beyond their dictionary definition is a form of bonding. Respondents were able to communicate ideas and meaning to each other using a limited vocabulary and one that was frequently misunderstood by outsiders. In interviews, I asked respondents about their 'peak experience' (McAdams 1993: 258), meaning a positive experience, oblivious to the slang meaning of 'peak' as highly negative, challenging or rude. Few answered this question, until I realised my error. Lack of vocabulary should not be confused with lack of thought, emotion or meaning.

4. Displacement ('keep busy')

Arriving at Wearside, Anwar was preoccupied by concern for his pregnant girlfriend, his co-defendant who was now also in prison.

> Anwar: I spoke to my mum and dad and they was alright they knew that I'm here but cos I had no contact and my girlfriend was pregnant I was a bit worried and then the family liaison officer sorted that out for me and then I started talking to my girlfriend and I spoke to her and told her just be strong and that… be easy… just that I'm okay and everything. And from then I was just settling down, finding it easier cos I knew where my girlfriend is, I had contact with her, I had contact with my mum and dad. I started getting on alright. So I jumped on that motor vehicles course and started doing that.

Anwar did not live on Cypress. I met him on the wing and interviewed him twice and he spoke openly about his love for his girlfriend and daughter, the pain he had caused his family and how fortunate he was to have their support. He told me that no-one ever asked him how he felt and he even thanked me for listening to him. I left those interviews with an impression of Anwar as a thoughtful and engaging young man. When I mentioned that to a member of staff on his wing she was taken aback and asked if we were talking about the same person. I next saw him a few weeks later, when I was stood next to staff by the house block door during movement. Anwar nodded at me but didn't smile. He seemed a different person from the one who had talked so openly about his family and I was reminded of the many faces needed to survive.

Being focused on who and how to be at any given moment, knowing which face to compose, which stance to adopt are all aspects of hyper vigilance, a state of constant alertness common in people who have experienced trauma (Van der Kolk 2014). A way of displacing the feelings created by these concerns was to strategically build relationships with others, plotting revenge against enemies or devising plans for gaining privileges or exploiting advantages. Francis was found with a notebook filled with plans for his enemies, drawn mostly from Hollywood films. The notebook also contained registration and details of vehicles that had entered the prison.

5. Expectation management ('don't think about the future')

The strategy of expecting nothing so as never to be disappointed, documented among long serving adult prisoners (Unkovic and Albini 1969), was also described by young people at Wearside. With the exception of Joe and Dion, who were attempting to study for exams, respondents avoided planning too far into the future in case obstacles arose.

> *Thomas: I don't think about the future anyway, it's just a waste of energy. I don't care at the moment what happens in life. My life already fucked as it is, I don't see how you can make it any worse...that's the way you need to be innit, fuck it.*

'Everything happens for a reason' and 'take each day at a time' were common refrains. There is a nihilism to this but also parallels with popular thinking on mindfulness and wellbeing that advise living in the moment and not worrying excessively about the future (NHS 2016). Of course this is not to suggest that young people's refusal to plan for the future does not have drawbacks, but that their decision to do so may actively contribute to their successful transition.

Lack of expectation meant that it was equally possible to find ways to make the most of the experience - the clearest expression of accumulating cultural and social capital. This included looking for the upside in every situation:

> *Jerome: [on transferring into Cypress] I was stressed [strong emphasis]… Stressed is not even the word… I swear down, I was upset, I thought "what have I done?" cos I put in a transfer to come innit… And I thought "what have I done man, I shoulda stayed in secure"… But I was happy at the same time cos it was a different environment, different faces and that but…*

Even while describing intense stress, Jerome quickly adds that he was 'happy at the same time'. Jerome had perhaps grown up the fastest, taking on responsibility for himself and other members of the family at a young age. Jerome later described meeting a number of known associates from 'the hood' whilst at Cypress, but choosing not to associate with them. Despite his age he seemed tired of his old life; prison was a respite (Earle 2011), despite its obvious drawbacks.

Ricky saw the possibility of gaining qualifications as an advantage:

> *Ricky: While in prison, I'm gonna get everything I can get out of it, I'm gonna get my level 3, level 4and in some jails it goes up to level 5… get my GCSEs… Get this, do this, do that…after you're in jail just make the best out of it.*[21]

Gaining knowledge, contacts and experience were also perceived benefits:

> *Lloyd: It's educational innit? You learn stuff in prison… Like… it's an experience innit?*
> *R: What have you learned from prison?*
> *Lloyd: I've learned how to be more wiser obviously, with people.*

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[21] In 2013 the Ministry of Justice cut funding for courses above level 2. All courses at level 3 or above, including GCSEs, must be paid for either by the learner or by another organisation, for example Prisoners EducationTrust.

For Lloyd in particular, prison was a positive social experience and one that he felt he could exploit to his own benefit. By always looking for these positives, the experience was easier to bear, with less need for regret. Symptomatic of the traumatised mind, it was psychologically more comfortable for Lloyd - and others - to view prison, and other difficulties overcome, as positive learning experiences (Ellis et al 2017). Though the wasting of time was often mentioned, it was usually countered with examples of learning that could only have been achieved in jail, thus making the sentence purposeful (Cope 2003).

> *Louie: Like, I'm more grown… in jail yeah, you get more grown up the way you're talking, the way you talk to people, like approach people and that.*

Later though, Louie acknowledged that there were things he would never learn in prison, parts of growing up that he would miss out on.

Finally, making the most of it can simply be trying to gain privileges, formal or informal: speaking openly or joking with staff, extra food at mealtimes, being allowed out of cell during free lessons. In pushing these boundaries young prisoners are able to exercise some autonomy and to pass their time quicker.

A note about religion

The qualities above where described, to varying extents, by all respondents. A smaller number talked of religion as a way of coping. The role of religion and religious guidance in prisons for young people has come under scrutiny in recent years (Christmann 2012) primarily due to concerns over 'radicalisation'. I saw no evidence of this, although respondents who moved into the young adult estate reported a marked difference.

Although newfound religiosity in prison has elsewhere been shown to as a commitment to a 'new self' (Kerley and Copes 2009; Maruna et al 2006), few respondents linked religion to identity. Only Thomas described having 'found God' in prison.

> *R: A lot of people become religious in prison don't they? Why do you think that is?*

> *Thomas: I think because you haven't got no hope when you're in prison really and you… What the Bible says, have hope, have faith… I think everyone looks up to that to be honest. I think everyone wants to worship something you know?*

Thomas describes reluctance to believe in 'God's plan' for him, but cannot resist the hope that it provides. Maintaining innocence led him to construct a cover story and his religious identity, wearing rosary beads and attending chapel, affiliated him with righteousness and played into his idea of himself as the wronged party.

Raised as Catholic, Rhys was baptised in prison. His prescription medication - 'for my anger' - made him drowsy and forgetful. He eventually refused it and tried other ways of managing his emotions.

> *Rhys: I think my religion has helped me to control my anger a lot.It's helped me as well, with drugs. I got offered a bit of cannabis about three weeks ago now. I turned it down… I was happy with myself and like, I kept praying. Any time I'm angry now I just pray.*

Rhys was obsessive about chapel attendance yet he remained prone to angry outbursts, once throwing his television at a member of staff.

Anwar described himself as 'Muslim, but not religious' and said he did not pray, though he described prayer as both a coping mechanism and a form of self-improvement – 'it makes you have trust'.

> *Anwar: Even praying as well, cos praying makes you… calm down a bit. It's like you can open up to someone.If you're praying to God yeah, you can open up whatever you have in your heart, and you can pray… so, praying makes you calm. It makes you have trust innit?*
>
> *R: Why don't you pray?*
> *Anwar: I don't know why I don't pray, I just never have*
>
> *R: Just cos you explained… why it was really good, and you sounded very positive about it*
>
> *Anwar: Yeah… I pray, I don't do proper praying.. You see in Islam yeah you have to pray 5 times a day… I don't pray 5 times a day but I pray normally… Just ask for help or… Look after my mum and dad…*
>
> *Jermain: Yeah, in a way, it's a good support…it keeps you going innit. In a way, not really… Like, basically, praying takes your mind off certain things innit? If you pray five times a day for 10 to 15 minutes each time… It takes your mind off*

stuff.

Jermain was uncertain of the value of praying yet continued it because it kept other thoughts at bay. Faith brought Jermain no obvious piety – he fought almost every day – but he described it as as a conduit for his emotions. Praying took his mind both away from and back to the difficulties he faced.

> *R: What do you think about when you're praying?*
>
> *Jermain: I can't really say, I just pray… I don't really think about anything else…I sometimes think about my mum and that… But that's sometimes after I finish praying*
>
> *R: Does it help - do you think about her in a good way, in a positive way?*
> *Jermain: Yeah, yeah yeah*

It was painful to hear Jermain repeat those last three words, his voice fading. He had not seen his mother for ten years. In talking about praying Jermain was able to touch on his emotions in a way he would not had I asked him directly. It was easy at times to forget the pain that these young men had endured, to simply be awed by their ability to manage their circumstances. Like many other young people, Jermain appeared self-possessed and calm in 'public'. In the relative privacy of the interview room he - unintentionally I think - revealed the deep insecurity he felt. This, to varying extents, is at the heart of all of these qualities.

Both Anwar and Jermain viewed religion as supportive, but neither fully embraced it. Jermain and Rhys both lacked social support, receiving few if any visits. Anwar and Thomas were well supported by family and friends outside - perhaps this was the real reason Anwar found that praying made him 'have trust'. These findings accord with studies that demonstrate the effect of social support on reducing stress and rule infractions (Jiang and Winfree 2006). Perhaps more significantly, Anwar and Thomas had fixed release dates, while Rhys and Jermain were serving indeterminate sentences. Of the four, only Anwar fully accepted guilt. The role of social support here is likely to be mediated through these factors.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how young people become 'endowed with the habitus' (Bourdieu 1993: 72) of incarceration. By drawing on earlier life experiences to adapt to their circumstances and shape their futures, young prisoners develop an embodied sensibility the enables them to navigate the carceral field. The varied responses highlight the extent to which adaptation is influenced by prior experience and existing physical and personality characteristics, yet commonalities exist. This underlines the nature of habitus as an 'open system of dispositions' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 2002:133) that structures rather than determines social action. The carceral habitus is experienced individually, as well as collectively, and part of that individual experience is in identifying cohesion - or lack of it - between oneself and others. Habitus intersects with trauma and it is sometimes impossible to separate the two. Survival depends on adaptation; young people drew on resilience and resourcefulness gathered during previous challenging events. It was clear that some found adaptation harder than others and some were could not explain how they had coped, instead shrugging it off as 'that's just life'. Past experiences, however negative had not been problematised and were therefore taken for granted. None were prepared to say they found it unbearable.

The qualities of the carceral habitus – authenticity, humility, presentation of self, displacement and expectation management – are not discrete methods but a set of practices learned from within the individual and by observing others, inside and out. These practices are broadly effective but at what cost? In adapting to their circumstances, young people are prone to being viewed as more dangerous than vulnerable. Much of these techniques of adjustment rely on the management of emotions – both negative and positive – and exploiting loopholes in the system. These rational responses ultimately can be damning for those in indeterminate sentences: the difference between a move to open conditions or another year in closed, a decision to release, or not. This is unjust when very often these young men are not lacking in insight or emotion - in fact, so often the

opposite, they are brimming with emotion but lack opportunities to show it. The lack of audience compounds lack of linguistic skill which is not addressed by any of the activities or programmes made available. A limited vocabulary means words must work hard and a rich vernacular, a mixture of street and prison slang, regional English and Welsh and Arabic, Caribbean and African terms come to constitute a language of its own. But often this is misconstrued as 'gang talk'. It becomes easier not to speak to those who write things down.

As short tariff IPP prisoners, Seth and Rhys were both approaching their first parole date.[22] Both were acutely aware of the difficulties they faced in convincing the Parole Board that they had changed enough for release. Both were aware that the ways they had come to adapt to prison were documented and sometimes used against them; Rhys in particular talked of how painful and insurmountable this felt. The following chapter considers this, and other pains of imprisonment.

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[22] Preparation for a parole hearing begins 12 months before the hearing is due, i.e. three years before tariff expiry. Seth and Rhys were both sentenced to two year tariffs, hence eligible for their first parole as soon as they were sentenced. This could never have been achieved.

'That's just their pen and ink': Resisting the pains of imprisonment

The pains of imprisonment are intangible but at their heart is loss of control, of freedom - not only to make decisions but to be oneself, to express an identity through clothing and material possessions but also through words and actions, and to grow and change. Respondents' capacity to learn and to develop was prevented by rules intended to protect them and the frustration this caused often resulted in behaviours which, paradoxically, were used as exemplars of that individual's lack of maturity or even dangerousness. This is a deeply felt pain, articulated directly and obtusely, verbally and in actions, and one that has far reaching consequences for respondents. This went unrecognised by staff who were (understandably) occupied by the rise in assaults on them, the cause perceived as lack of discipline and young people being 'given everything'. In contrast, respondents often felt they did not have 'everything', despite acknowledging the wide range of material goods compared with previous institutions. The loss of liberty – which is, after all, the real purpose of imprisonment – was considered insufficient by those enforcing that loss, but it was that deprivation that weighed most heavily. The inability to make choices, at least without incurring additional punishment, was keenly felt. Concerted indiscipline and failure to obey a lawful order incurred formal disciplinary procedures. But the 'atmosphere' was created and reinforced informally, mediated through interaction with gatekeepers of varying legitimacy – wing staff, psychologists and other young people.

Wearside was relatively newly built and the physical environment generally clean, open and well-kept. Cypress had been recently refurbished before being allocated as a long- term wing. Cells were double sized, carpeted and fitted with two beds, a desk, shelves and a noticeboard. In common with private prisons in general (Hulley

et al. 2012; Shefer and Liebling 2008) it was better equipped than most public prisons:

> *Leo: This is like home… well it's not like home but it's homely. You've got like PS3, TV, DVD, mini fridge, kettle, toaster… It's a lot of things that you can't get in other prisons… a lot of things that you'd have at home…*

These additions create an image of relative comfort but the devil is in the detail. The two beds in each cell indicated readiness to quickly return cells to double occupancy. Boys serving long sentences were not considered safe to share cells and would therefore be moved onto a different wing. On the surface, Cypress was designed as a space in which long sentenced young people could settle, but these markers were read, like graffiti on street corners, as signs of intent.

Provision of material goods can benefit the individual but also acts as a lever for managing dissent, locating power with those who provide access to the goods and providing the potential for new punishments, through the loss of goods. Legitimate access to goods and services mitigates against a black market for pleasurable items (Crewe 2009), reduces unoccupied time and the potential for trouble (McDermott and King 1988).

Access to 'privileges'1 was managed via the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) system.2 New entrants started on silver and could be promoted to gold or demoted to bronze depending on weekly reviews. Wing furniture included sofas, a large television and two smaller screens for games consoles. A bearded dragon was kept as a pet. Board games and balls for the yard were kept in a store room. Those on gold and silver had in cell televisions. Those on gold could wear their own clothes on association and use a separate association room beanbags, a television and

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1 For example, more time out of cell, additional visits, or increased spending allowance.

2 See Liebling (2008) for a history of the IEP scheme and HMCIP (2018) for a review of its use in prisons for young people and young adults.

PlayStation.3 They could also spend more of their own money4 on items from the canteen list.

Regimes were decided through monitoring 'attitude and behaviour' ('A+B') based on comments written in files by staff. Those who displayed insufficiently good 'A+B' were 'dropped' a level. Serious infractions meant immediate demotion to bronze but promotion was gained incrementally over a number of weeks. Serious transgressions resulted in formal adjudication and punishments included a fixed period of loss of association, removal of personal items, a gym ban or, for those with a release date, extra days added to their sentence.5

Entering prison life necessitates the stripping of material possessions and privileges (Goffman 1991) but their loss is not felt at the outset; the institution can withdraw privileges as punishment or policy change and the pain is all the greater once a dependency has been created.

> *Dion: It feels good of them to give us certain things to feel like we're at home, if you know what I mean, cos… Without that… Like if I didn't have a TV, I'd be stressed. Like there's not like, I don't mean if I'm on basic or anything, on bronze... That's alright, that's just a couple weeks but… If I never had a TV through my whole jail life, I'd have been stressed… I would not know nothing about the outside world, apart from what people tell me.*

Dion's nod to the benevolence of the system is underlined by his imagining the impact that denial of those comforts would have had on his ability to cope. He is describing his dependency. Others also described television as a distraction, a way to not think.

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3 Interviews took place in this association room.

4 Money sent into prisoners by family and friends is kept in a 'private cash' account and transferred to a 'spends account' at weekly intervals. The amount transferred over is governed by the IEP system and varies according to the IEP level attained by the prisoner. At present, bronze is £4, silver £15.50 and gold £25.50.

5 Between January 2010 and April 2012 2,784 extra days were added to young people's sentences. More than two thirds of these were at Wearside. (Puffett 2012)

> *Abdi: That's what I thought, I would be thinking but I'm watching TV, and when I get tired I go to sleep. Just... obviously, if there's a TV there I'm not gonna sit down and think.*

Loss of television was one of the most common, and most keenly felt, punishments. Dion indicates that television provides a sense of autonomy, a way to see 'the outside world' for himself, rather than having to rely on what others tell him. With a television he can be self-reliant, he can 'ride the bang-up' - an important aspect of coping, as discussed in chapter 4. As in other studies (Crawley and Sparks 2005; Jewkes 2002), respondents had varied tastes: sports, soaps, documentaries or dramas about crime or prison. A storyline from Eastenders brought an early end to association one Tuesday evening.[6]

Dion's recognition of television as a privilege may be viewed as a successful internalisation of the IEP system; having made the association between behaviour and reward he is more likely to conform. Others too viewed their regime level as an achievement:

> *Seth: I've been on here for over a year now. I've been on gold for over a year. I haven't been dropped. It's probably the best achievement. Apart from my qualifications.*

Staff largely considered the privileges too generous and sometimes referred to the 'shock' awaiting on transfer to the young adult estate. Few staff had worked at or visited other prisons but nonetheless exaggerated the conditions to young people approaching 18; 'three to a cell' and 'one television per wing'. Those are not the prevailing conditions but nonetheless the change can be stark. Of the transition, Shem wrote 'it's like moving from a penthouse to a council flat'. The 'incentive' element of the IEP scheme is all but lost in young adult prisons, where far

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[6] The storyline involved the character Ronnie Mitchell abducting a baby. That night she was due to confess and return the baby to his parents. Someone - I think Seth - said 'Ronnie gives the baby back tonight', a comment that was met with a chorus of 'really? I might bang up early and see that'. I was surprised that such a mawkish storyline was so popular with young men and, when I told them this, by their strong moral outrage: 'she took someone's baby!'

greater use of basic, segregation and extra days are more common (HMIP 2018).

Atmosphere, accessories and alienation
Despite the 'homeliness' of Cypress, respondents described an omnipresent

frustration at   the regime.

> *Jermain: Just the atmosphere innit... It's stressful... [like any prison] the ground structure's all the same but [here there are] Better things innit, better accessories - they're still moaning, they're still giving warnings...still got a certain atmosphere, but just better things.*

For Jermain, the wider context rendered material gains insignificant. Staff 'moaning

and giving warnings' was the real nature of prison life, albeit masked by the 'better

accessories'. Decisions about regime levels depended on discretion; definitions of

'good' behaviour were subjective and varied over time and between staff (Liebling

2008). Black young people described this as 'Anton or Winston won't get away with

it, but Jack or Harry might' - meaning white young people were treated more

leniently. Certainly some white young people seemed to elicit a more sympathetic

response from staff: boys identified as 'vulnerable' were always white (although not

all white boys were identified as vulnerable). Vulnerable young people tended to be

treated with more understanding and willingness to overlook minor incidents in the

context of overall improvements.

Decisions were perceived as personal judgements of individuals rather than 'A+B'

and respondents who struggled to achieve gold found the system frustrating.

> *Louie: Govs are spiteful though, things like gold and that... they love to take advantage of that cos since I've been in jail I've never been on gold...It's always they turn around a day, or two days before...Something always happens... Like when I was in Feltham, every two days before I was meant to get gold I had a fight. And then when I came here It was maybe two days before...I got a warning.*

Louie acknowledges that it was a fight that prevented him from attaining gold, the

perceived spitefulness of staff is that they chose to ignore the good behaviour up

until 'two days before' a review, focusing only on the misdemeanour. Staff alluded

to an unofficial limit on young people on gold at any one time and expectations about the type of person who 'shouldn't be on gold'. This sense of inconsistency features regularly in inspection reports and contributes to young people's unwillingness to conform (HMIP 2018).

Young people could not read the comments written in their files; purportedly to protect the authors from reprisals. This reinforced a power imbalance which was alienating and counterproductive, resulting in young people rejecting or combatting the system to assert agency, which in turn could have negative consequences for them (Bosworth and Carrabine 2001). The lack of transparency also meant those writing in files were rarely held accountable for ambiguous or poorly evidenced comments. Young people were generally open about the complexities and contradictions in their own and others' actions, sneakiness or 'snakiness' regarded as immature. In contrast, official decision making processes were concealed which ran counter to young people's desire for transparency - their expectation of authenticity extended to staff as well as themselves and each other. This created a sense that the *real* rules were unknowable and therefore impossible to follow.

Those who felt they would never achieve a higher regime level because of conflicts with their personal officer or tacit rules used against them, sought instead to subvert the system. This could mean bullying others for canteen, or diminishing their desire (as far as possible) for the privileges they were unable to earn; visits and television were essential to some, but others managed without and prided themselves on doing so. Reliance on material incentives meant that not all could be coaxed into 'good' behaviour and resisting this compulsion became a way to demonstrate agency. Regime level carried weight with psychologists and report writers, and potentially the Parole Board. In expressing their frustrations at an unfair system young people

were limiting their capacity to be seen as safe for release.[7]

The opacity of the rules and uncertainty of how they might be applied combined to reinforce the carceral habitus: authenticity (or lack of it), humility (I accept my fate), presentation of self (appearing to be someone who should 'be on gold'), displacement (of the desire for accessories), and expectation management (planning ahead is pointless). The need to be always alert to change speaks also to the hyper vigilance aroused by earlier trauma.

'It's just not a nice place to be'

Young people spoke about prison as a manageable environment - in some ways not so different to life outside - yet alluded to a pervasive sense of sadness, and shame.

> *Jermain: Basically, you're out, you do what you wanna do, when you wanna do it and why you wanna do it… But here, you do everything that they tell you to do, when to do it, how to do it, and where to do it… You just got no, you've got nothing to say for yourself… And if you do try and say something for yourself you get in trouble. Like you're a kid.*

As the literature review shows, young people rarely respond positively to coercive environments. Most respondents described prison as difficult and damaging, although they could identify positives too. Only Ricky saw things markedly differently:

> *Ricky: Prison ain't really a punishment - your family will come to see you. If you turned around and said 'while you're in prison you have no contact with your family, no contact with anyone on the outside' that would be a harsh punishment but family can come up basically whenever they want9, speak to you every day, get phones in your cell… You get TVs, which you see the news on, and watch programmes and all that, even Freeview TVs, PS2, Xbox.You get fresh air, you get decent jobs, go to the gym, do this do that… This ain't a punishment bruv.*

Ricky later told a group of staff and young people that the death penalty should be brought back for people (like himself) convicted of murder. Occasionally others argued for minimum sentences, or a boot camp regime. These suggestions indicate a desire for certainty rather than the ambiguous regime than the one currently in place, a prison where pain is physical and hard, in contrast to the 'softer' power of modern penal systems (Cox 2011:

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[7] Alan Lord, one of two men charged with mutiny following the Strangeways Riot of 1990, described how his decision not to have a television in his cell was considered a barrier to release, as it indicated he may have become detached from the outside world (Lord 2015).

Crewe 2011a). Some of the accepted practices seemed - to me - to be detrimental and degrading, even if not deliberately so, something that has been shown to be a corollary of the diffuse disciplinary power in modern prisons referred to above. Unlike the malice observed elsewhere (Scraton et al. 1991), these practices seemed unintentionally harmful; not designed to cause pain but not considered enough to prevent it. The effect of this 'institutional thoughtlessness' (Crawley 2005) was apparent in respondents' descriptions of relationships with staff, the aspects of imprisonment they found difficult and their hopes for the future. Prisoners were sometimes reprimanded for 'being argumentative' or 'asking too many questions', for being too slow to get to their door or too loud: requests that seemed in contradiction to their very youthfulness and therefore impossible to achieve. The insistence on consequences for these acts - verbal reprimands or negative comments - stunted relationships (Harvey 2007; Hobbs and Dear 2000). This is the tension between care and control, or 'repressive welfarism' (Phoenix 2009: 130). On the one hand these young people have often complex needs, while on the other they are viewed as a risk to security, to staff and to the public. Staff sometimes saw child-centred approaches as too liberal – 'they're kids, but they've done adult crimes' – young people expressed indifference; indeed labels implying youth or vulnerability were viewed with disdain. Some (female) staff thought of themselves as surrogate mothers, but respondents fervently rejected this idea - even stating particular dislike for a staff member who spoke to them 'as if she's my mum'. These young men considered themselves as 'grown', having taken responsibility for their practical, financial and emotional wellbeing. This was especially acute in households in which there was no father – when he, or any subsequent man left the home, respondents became 'the man of the house'. This is discussed further in Chapter 6, but explains young people's disdain for being treated 'like kids'. In their minds, they were not kids, yet the institution infantilised them. This is not unique to a juvenile prison; prison practices are often infantilising yet these young men perhaps felt it more acutely, given that they were so protective of their newly found – and hard won – identity *as* men.

Conflicting conceptions of young people as dangerous and yet in need of protection

extended to physical space. Cell doors are opened individually to let occupants out for activities, and locked behind them, meaning the occupant was required to ask for the door to be unlocked if he wanted to go back in to collect something or use the toilet. This was ostensibly a safety measure - no-one else could enter the cell, no property could be removed from it and there were fewer places out of sight where nefarious activities could take place. Privacy in prison is complex and negotiated (Cohen and Taylor 1972; Crewe 2009) and a cell is a refuge as well as a cage. The parcelling up of space - cells, association areas, offices - and the policing of it echoes Fanon's description of the colonial world as '…divided into compartments, this world cut in two is inhabited by two different species' (1967: 30).

Socialising in cell was a form of intimacy young people were denied. Moreover the policy was contravened at times. If I was nearby when staff made tea they would include me in the round (and sometimes I would make it). On one occasion I was in the office on the upstairs landing and Steve, making tea for everyone in the little kitchen next door, realised there was no sugar. He went downstairs to Gary's cell and took some - Gary was at education at the time. I was shocked, but none of the staff were. This seemed normal to them. I could never bring myself to tell Gary what had happened - I worried about his reaction but also about damaging my relationship with staff. I felt dishonest knowing it and one day I asked him whether staff took things from cells when no-one was in. He said he knew they did it to him sometimes because 'things weren't in the same place'. I cannot be certain that he knew I was talking about the sugar, because Gary had also experienced infringement of his psychological privacy (Toch 1992).

On the advice of a therapist, Gary kept a journal. During a routine cell search staff read the journal and Gary was prevented from working with the therapist due to the things he had written about her, including sexual and violent fantasies. The prison - though not the therapist - decided that the therapy should stop. The troubling thing here is that security, rather than treatment concerns, received primacy; the relationship between fantasy and risk of further

offending is not clear cut (Brown 2005) and the line between vulnerability and dangerousness is blurred. The relationship between therapist and client regarded as crucial to the effectiveness of treatment (O'Halloran et al 2014). After that incident, Gary had been designated 'lone staff awareness' which made it difficult for him to engage in any therapeutic work at all.

Bodily integrity could also be compromised: staff did not believe him Stephen was lactose intolerant and surreptitiously gave him food containing milk. When he suffered no ill-effects staff were vindicated in their belief that he had pretended to be allergic.[8] It is notable that each of these infringements involved Gary or Stephen. Both were regarded with suspicion by staff, as well as young people as a result of their crimes. Stephen was particularly unpopular. After he had left a staff member told Aaron that Stephen 'should really have been killed for what he did'. Despite the 'lone staff awareness' label, neither Gary nor Stephen had physically assaulted either staff or young people. Staff perhaps felt they could mistreat Gary and Stephen with impunity, knowing that no-one, neither staff nor boys, would defend him. Gary's mother was learning disabled and Stephen's mother visited infrequently. Staff joked that 'even she doesn't want him'.

Deprivation of corporeal experience

The painful aspects of imprisonment centred around corporeal experience and effects on identity. The deprivation of experience compressed three areas of loss – of material goods, experiences and physical relationships.

Loss of material goods

If 'material possessions are so large a part of the individual's conception of himself that to be

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[8] This story was recounted during a staff meeting on my first day in the field; everyone laughed (myself included) but the storyteller then warned the others 'not in front of the auditor' – meaning me. This seemed to be a way of telling others to be careful what they said in front of me while appearing to be completely transparent (she knew I was not an auditor and that I was concerned about people thinking that I was one.

stripped of them is to be attacked at the deepest layers of personality' (Sykes 2007 [1958]: 69) this has surely deepened as identity has become increasingly defined by modes of consumption. Respondents sometimes referred to this loss in unexpected ways:

> *R: What things do you miss?*
> *Dion: [pause] A lot. Everything. The smallest of things like… Cos you know you're restricted to get certain things when you're in jail. On the out you could get anything. I dunno, cheese… I can't get cheese, if you know what I mean! [laughs] The only thing you can really get is that cheese and onion on a baguette… I don't like onions, therefore it's spoilt it already. Little things like food, drinks... Family, definitely family… Like, my bed, everything. Friends, going out… Just doing anything… Like just little things, I miss.*

Dion starts by describing the relatively trivial pain of losing his favourite foods, but goes on to describe more profound sadnesses; missing his family and friends, his bed, the 'little things' that made his life his own. The loss of choice over food was somewhat mitigated by the ability to buy alternatives from the prison canteen, but even there choice was governed by availability of items and capacity or to pay for it.

> *Dion: Even though they do Haribo here yeah, there's certain Haribo that I just crave for… They've only got the Tangfastic ones or whatever… You know the Starmix ones? They don't have those… I love those! That's what I always used to buy and that. I can't get stuff like that. Now I'm stressed… I just wanna get out now.*

The loss of a favourite sweet seems frivolous but it is the constancy of these reminders becomes oppressive. As Dion talked the weight of his sadness seemed to grow heavier; I felt that I was asking a lot of him. Most often respondents described missing 'the little things', the freedoms taken for granted in everyday life.

> *Aaron: yeah [pause] I don't know, I just miss simple shit, just waking up when you want and… Not having these people fucking telling you what to do and that… I wanna eat what I wanna eat… Not what you lot give me….Just going out your house when you wanna, coming in when you wanna… Going down the pub to watch football…*

The material restrictions of prison life were visibly resisted. The tracksuit uniform at first appeared to make everyone look the same but over time subtle variations became apparent – in different shades and textures, as clothes had faded through washing, become marked by

cleaning fluids[9] or frayed or pilled – and also in the ways it was shaped by the bodies encased within it. The range of heights and builds meant the universally sized and badly made clothes fitted everyone slightly differently. In addition, the uniform was modified in a number of ways: trousers worn low, exposing various brands and colours of underwear, a single trouser leg pushed up. Leo had tugged the elastic out of his trouser cuffs to create a straight hem; Ben wore his sweatshirt around his shoulders like a middle-aged golfer. Novel items were worn with pride: gym gear on the wing – green shorts and red vests – to better show off their trainers, physiques or originality. Diversity representatives earned turquoise t-shirts and wore these in preference to standard issue t-shirts. Most kept a pair of trainers for best, wearing them only during association and on visits. Gloves were issued during that bitterly cold winter of 2010; some wore them with just a t-shirt, for style and also practical reasons - with limited clothes and one weekly wash, clean items needed to be preserved for important occasions. A particular deodorant, available on canteen, was favoured for its lasting scent. Young men would keep the finished bottle wrapped in their unworn clothes. Plastic rosary beads were a mark of religious identity and a style statement; some would collect them and wear several at a time, though this was against the rules and they could be confiscated. Watches were rarely worn, but those worn were eye catching, usually gold coloured and flashy. Rupert wore a large (presumably fake) diamond stud in his ear.

Loss of experiences

Flanagan (1982) found that loss of social life – including intimate relationships – was one of the worst pains of imprisonment. This loss can be particularly detrimental to those transitioning to adulthood and whose social status had been a key component of their identity (see Earle's [2011] discussion of on road kinship). Respondents often described a social life with few restrictions, and the comparative dullness of prison life was acutely painful. Bourdieu (2000) suggests that, where there is a good fit between habitus and the world as it

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[9] Laundry workers use bleach to clean the machines between washes and sometimes clothes are put in before the bleach is rinsed away. It is common to see prison clothing marked in this way and for this reason prisoners often hand wash their own clothes in their cell.

is, time is not consciously experienced. When there is a mismatch between the two, time imposes itself as a sensation or constraint. The mismatch between habitus and the world is perhaps nowhere more pronounced than in a prison filled with young men. The sensation of the imposition of time was mostly often expressed as boredom, an everyday concept that has gained some sociological traction as a means of understanding subjective anxieties and wider socio-cultural changes, particularly in relation to modernity (Gardiner 2012).

Boredom is a particular and pervasive characteristic of English prison life, hours, months, years wasted doing nothing; both painful and numbing. At times it can seem that boredom is itself the punishment. Boredom was a central feature of life on Cypress, cited by almost all respondents. While on the outside boredom is understood as an experience void of meaning, sensationless (Barbalet 1999), inside, boredom, resulting from deprivation of experience, is punitive: it is integral to the prison experience (Bengtsson 2012).

> *Jerome: I don't wanna stay here for two years… That's long you know… seeing the same old faces on this wing for two years… I can never move wing…10*

'Long' here means boring and undesirable. For Jerome, two years in the company of 'the same old faces' seemed unmanageable, although at first he welcomed the novelty of older and different peers. The stultification contrasted starkly with Jerome's life outside.

> *Jerome: I'm gonna write a book, Girls, Guns and Drugs… cos like, me personally, when I was....not young but like 13… I loved guns and that, I loved Glocks and... I'd be like stuntin' on girls, like showing off and that.. So I'd have bare girls, guns and drugs... like, money basically innit?*

Aaron described a similar life:

> *Aaron: I've got lots of stories in my short and eventful life… I was living a fun life, like no 14- year-old can say they've done what I've done… I've done stuff that fully grown men haven't done…I dunno, I've had a fun life, like it sounds fucked yeah but I've done everything… There's nothing I haven't done - except for get married and have kids, I've done everything else you can think of.*

Jerome and Aaron were both convicted of murder and serving indeterminate terms with

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[10] Moves even within Wearside were decided by the YJB.

long tariffs. Both described a decision to (at least outwardly) conform to the regime in the aim of attaining release at their first parole. Time and expectations were mismatched as a result.

Barbalet argues that boredom acts as 'an imperative toward meaning' (1999: 633); for Jerome and Aaron, boredom created meaning from earlier actions and demanded a response. Although he did not fully accept his conviction, Aaron saw his imprisonment as an inevitable consequence of his lifestyle:

> *Aaron: There's regrets and there's… In anything, there's sort of benefits… If you're a good kid yeah, you've got your benefit of so you get your qualifications, you're gonna, what have a good job and that… But you can miss out on the girls and parties and stuff like that. And if you sort of went how I went, you're gonna get girls, you're gonna go parties but… You're gonna be fucked when you grow up most likely [laughs]!*

In reflecting on the past, Aaron reveals how his former expectations matched the opportunities available to him. That is no longer the case but he has found a way to reconcile himself to the new reality.

Joe described prison days as regulated, rather than necessarily slow.

> *Joe: A day is more structured, but the speed of time doesn't vary as much… cos there's less- there's not as exciting things are gonna happen but there's still things to look forward to so… Even though it's smaller than some things might be on the out… Because everything else is more simple as well it's, you know, still a milestone to get to, so it doesn't really matter… Time just - it goes quite quickly… And it doesn't really vary, it's just day after day so…*

Though small, the small highlights of a letter, a visit, canteen day exemplify the ways human practice makes time, giving meaning and direction (Bourdieu 2000: 206). Several respondents explained that they went to sleep early, 'to make tomorrow come quicker'. The imposition of time varied between respondents and across settings - Louie and Shem described time as having 'speeded up' once they transferred out and were sharing a cell.

Turning 18 was a milestone and signalled imminent transfer. Most displayed ambivalence about the move and were vocal about wanting to 'move up'. For London boys in particular this presented the tantalising possibility of a return 'home', to a YOI in London or the Home

Counties. In reality those with a release date went to the London resettlement prison; inexplicably located off the Dorset coast. It was the first time Shem saw seagulls, and Louie fed them crisps - Space Raiders - through the cracked cell window.

Loss of physical relationships

The loss of physical relationships encompasses three areas: sexual contact, physical affection and a sense of self in relation to potential partners. Flanagan (1982, 1981) and latterly Hulley et al (2015) found that missing somebody was the most common pain of life imprisonment.

Sexual contact

The loss of sexual relationships has particular significance for adolescents who are in the midst of their sexual development. Anwar, Jerome and Ben were fathers, Louie had lived with his girlfriend. No respondent identified as homosexual; a young person briefly remanded at Wearside was highlighted as 'vulnerable' due to his openly admitting to being gay (James 2012). Wearside staff were vigilant to any signs of sexual contact between young people due to the possibility of coercion and the age of the young people in their care. Stephen had been charged with a sexual assault on a younger boy in a previous prison.

Many respondents were open about the deprivation of sexual relationships, some even described that as the only real pain of imprisonment.

> *Aaron: I do mind prison yeah but if there was girls I would be all right…the only thing that hurts me, is girls… Of course I miss my family and that yeah but I see them on visits yeah… Girls, if I could have a girl once a weekend or something like that… I'd sail through, I'd be happy mate*
>
> *Louie: You need ladies man. Women, they're a must.*

Young men often shared photographs of young women they knew and telephone numbers were passed around; boys sometimes talked to a girl together on the telephone. Occasionally this had repercussions - Seamus and another young person fought after Seamus made hundreds of calls to a female friend of the other boy. It was never clear how he had managed

to get her number on his PIN. Staff confiscated photographs if they appeared to be of girls under 18. Some respondents described a last minute dash before evening bang up to exchange pornographic magazines and DVDs. The station BabeStation was also available to boys on gold (with Freeview televisions).11 These activities were relatively open but seemed not to cause concern - just 'boys being boys'.

Physical Affection

The need for physical affection was never explicitly referred to, but I witnessed it several times. The following fieldnote was written after a group on the wing.

> As we started the group and the boys were taking seats Louie and Shem sat on the same beanbag, and were trying to push each other off. Louie was climbing over Shem, messing around, and they were gently play fighting, seemingly taking turns to let each other win and push the other one off, and laughing…I found it quite fascinating to watch them like this – it was quite affectionate and they reminded me of toddlers, or tiger cubs. It made me feel affection towards them too, that they feel comfortable around us to be like that.

I observed physical interaction between prisoners that was not aggressive or taunting at other times too. This field note is from a library session with a popular author:

> The boy with the crutches was there - I still don't know his name. He was leaning back with his bad leg out, but relaxed. All anyone really wanted to do was ask [the author} about the guys in the book and the session was really a chance for boys to show off where they were from and who they knew. I didn't know anyone in there and they didn't seem concerned by me. The boy next to Crutches was leaning over and pulling the back of his hair, at the neck, just pulling the ends of his braids. They're obviously friends but I expected it to kick off, I thought he was winding him up, but it didn't.

At other times I saw young people greet each others with hugs especially if some time had passed since they last met - perhaps one lived on the other houseblock, or had recently

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11 Babestation is a British TV sex line which has aired since 2002. Viewers can communicate live with female presenters via a premium-rate telephone number or text messaging.

arrived. This type of affection was almost exclusive to black young people. This speaks to Crewe et al's (2014) idea of 'emotion zones' in prison; spaces in which emotional interaction is safely expressed, in contrast to conventional depictions of prison life as unrelentingly austere.

Loss of self in the eyes of others

> '…since a significant half of his audience is denied him, the inmate's self-image is in danger of becoming half complete, fractured, a monochrome without the hues of reality' (Sykes 2007 [1958]: 72).

Development of a heterosexual, adult, masculine identity depends not only on the modelling of behaviour by older males but also the reflected gaze of women and girls. Teenage prisoners lack the opportunity to form relationships and therefore the chance to see themselves in the eyes of potential partners. This allows the perpetuation of childish sexism and reinforces perceived attitudes about what women and girls are, and what they are for. Louie and Anwar maintained their romantic relationships, more or less, and others had on/off relationships with either the mothers of their children or other young women. Respondents often drew a distinction between 'girls' and 'girlfriends'.

> *Shem: This is gonna sound fucked up but outside yeah, girlfriends are more sort of, something I dunno like, not long-term but sort of someone you respect, but in here girls is just…… for pictures and phone sex, like they're not… I don't know cos they're not really girlfriends they're just girls you're sort of…Using… Girls just like having a name attached with them like… 'Oh yeah, I spoke to Shem the other day, I went to visit Shem the other day' . I get what I want, she gets what she wants innit. …As long as everyone's happy.*

It is unnecessary for these girls to be respected, nor for them to be respectful. The relationship is transactional and therefore only possible for young people who retained status in the community. Further, while these transactions could fulfil sexual needs they were unable to answer questions about what kind of person the young man was, or could become.

Jerome and Aaron in particular spoke at length about their relationships with girls outside. Their lack of respect for the girls who wanted nothing more than their name is evident, yet

they appear to have plenty of female attention.

> *Jerome: I got bare girls on my nuts right now, even on Facebook I've got girls arguing over me and that… dumb twats!.Swear down, cos I'm in jail for murder! Most girls I know yeah, they say they're gonna be certified innit, they say they're gonna be real.*
>
> *R: What does that mean?*
>
> *Jerome: Like, they're not gonna start linking other yutes.12 This one girl, Zara, she's been there, she sent me money, clothes…everything I needed when I was in secure… she just been there for me man, 100%, no matter what it is – I could phone this girl now yeah, all pissed off and that, about my BMs13 or something… By the time I get off to her I'll be smiling, I'll feel happy. [Zara]'s certified, and when I get out I'll show her some mad love, I'll be with her and that… All the rest of the girls, they can go away… Cos most of them are just snakes innit, when I was on road none of them really wanted to talk to me, but as soon as you go jail you're like some hood celeb innit?*

This could of course all be fictional, but 'hood fame' and the associated attention was not an unusual topic amongst respondents. Goffman (2014) describes progress through the criminal justice system as a series of public stages in which relationships are played out - 'penal events as romantic showdowns' (p.119). Whether true or not, Jerome illustrates the process by which a person becomes trustworthy and 'real'. Zara has proven herself 'certified' by providing consistent financial and emotional support and Jerome's description of complex multiple relationships suggests he both needs and enjoys the attention. Although he tacitly acknowledges that both sides have instrumental motivations – he for finances, they for his 'hood celebrity' – there is obvious satisfaction in having the attention of several girls. Aaron seemed more detached, describing relationships as a game:

> *Aaron: Nah man, you keep, you keep your skills sharp, even over the phone like… Say you're friends with a girl you don't know, you start chatting to it-*
>
> *R: Chatting to it?*
>
> *Aaron: [laughs] Chatting to her…And you just gotta break it down, tryna get her pictures and that, in her knickers and that, and she's like 'no, I don't, I don't do that type of stuff', nah, you just gotta… you just gotta try and work your ways, 'nah I don't like that stuff'…*
>
> *R: Ok, so it's a question of persuading them to do it?*
>
> *Aaron: Yeah you gotta convert them…Yeah, so some girls try playing hard to get*

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12 'linking other yutes' - having sex/relationships with other young men

13 'BM' - babymother

> *but…   they'll get there in the end…at first...even some of them don't wanna chat,*
> *like. But you still gotta work it…sometimes they're   like 'I don't wanna talk', but I*
> *just try and chat to them, and you just play all that 'yeah, I need a friend, someone*
> *to talk to, all that bullshit… Start working your way in… Then the code's broke… If*
> *you've got it, you've got it, you feel me? Only some people can do it.*

Aaron sees non-responsiveness as a game. His reflected image is one of a successful player, but he is able to play only with girls he does not respect.

Identity

So far this chapter has presented respondents' descriptions of their tangible losses. This section will consider the ways in which these pains manifest themselves in problems of identity. For adolescent males, long-term imprisonment poses a particular challenge to the construction of a viable adult identity. Expected to 'grow up' without the usual stimulus or associated rewards, while demonstrating change in an environment that regularly presents threats to the possibility of release is fraught. The problems of identity in prison crystallised in three ways. Firstly the loss of autonomy created obstacles to authenticity. Secondly, bridging the gap between the old self and the new, either in the present or the future, can leave some confused about who they are. Individuals may experience loss of contact with the outside world, and develop an identity out of synch with their peers. Finally, there is the burden of a bestowed identity that is constructed through prison files and reports, written and read out of sight but able to exercise a powerful effect on decisions about the individual's future (Attrill and Liell 2011) which can wreak fear and antipathy towards assessment in general, and psychology in particular (Maruna 2011).

Loss of autonomy

Though the curtailment of mobility presented some unease, this manifested itself most clearly in the loss of autonomy, in being 'subjected to a vast body of rules and commands' (Sykes 2007 [1958]: 73). Autonomy, financial independence and the ability   to provide for others were features of masculine habitus, yet it was not possible to demonstrate this in prison. To be treated like a child made young people feel emasculated.

> *Jermain: I think I'm mature anyway… In jail, you can't really show that you're mature because you've got to do what these guys tell you innit? Like when you rebel, it makes you look like you're the one that ain't being reasonable, it makes you look like you are the one that's quick to get angry, and act like a child but when you've been in jail for a long time, and you get people telling you what to do, it happens innit, just outbursts, fed up… but on the out, it's a total different story…I can guarantee you, take someone from in here, and see them outside like… Just go and see them outside, see what they get up to outside… And you'd see a total different side, you'd be like "you're not the person that I thought, like, you was in jail" cos in jail, everyone acts… You're told to act in a way innit…*

As time passes it becomes harder to manage the distress and humiliation. Jermain's decision to fight often, despite frequent adjudications and losses, could be interpreted as an exercise some freedom (Crewe 2009; Toch and Adams 2002).

Others described feeling trapped, or caged by the prison, not in terms of physical space but in the ways in which actions were controlled and contained.

> *Thomas: It's a massive cage, your moves are all controlled you know what I mean... Get up in the morning, breakfast, education, dinner, association… Everything is planned out for you, nothing changes… Every day you do the same thing. You get up, you shake the person's hand that you like, you talk about the same stuff… It just gets boring… you watch the same TV programmes every fucking day… It's a cage.*

The confining features of the physical environment are compounded by the rigid daily routine that ensures 'everything is planned out for you'. Yet Thomas suggests that we are all victims of fate:

> *Thomas: No, no-one has control of their own lives. it's weird… Everyone has something set out for them… Everyone walks the path like… For me, if I was to walk out the door right now, that's already set out for me.*

This may be a way of minimising his pain – he has no control over his life, but then neither does anybody. This has implications for the ways in which these young men saw their 'rehabilitation' and 'reintegration' into society.[14]

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[14] These terms are not unproblematic and hold different meanings within and without the youth justice system and between different respondents.

Old to new identity

> 'Like most men, the inmate must search for his identity not simply within himself but also in the picture of himself he finds reflected in the eyes of others...' (Sykes 2007 [1958]: 72)

Adolescence is a time of 'putting away childish things' yet, in prison, there are few adult things to take up instead. For some, the gap between who they had been and who they would be was too far to bridge, a state that has been observed amongst elderly male prisoners (Crawley 2005). Others have described this as a liminal state, akin to being diagnosed with a terminal illness (Jewkes 2006). Young prisoners in particular are denied the opportunity to gain social recognition (Barry 2006) as they have yet to fully establish their identity prior to custody. This was particularly problematic for those who had plans for a law abiding life, a legitimate job and mainstream achievements.

In contrast to most of his prison peers, Dion was uninterested in creating or enhancing a criminal identity: he valued education and wanted to get a good job, ideally as an 'accountant or engineer'. Though concerned with status, he was more interested in normative status than other respondents, valuing friends by what they offered him in terms of their behaviours, rather than what they could provide in the way of material goods. His identity was spoiled (Goffman 1986) by being both 'prisoner' and 'sex offender' (Crawley and Sparks 2005) and he felt this pain deeply. His conviction was doubly damaging, ostracising him from mainstream society and making him vulnerable in the prison population. He deduced but could not fully accept that both were likely to have a significant impact on his future prospects. In telling his story, the day of the arrest was positioned as a catastrophe (Crawley and Sparks 2005) – not only did his world come to an end, but his elder sister was involved in a car accident and her unborn child ('my little niece or nephew') died. Like Crawley's elderly prisoners (2005: 359), Dion found comfort in reminiscence and familiar memories, yet hearing about friends moving on, going to college and celebrating birthdays were painful reminders.

> *Dion: When I come out, everyone's gonna be out of college. I'm gonna miss three*

crucial years of my life. Like even my 18th birthday... when they're telling me what they're gonna do for their 18th, I'm just like... aaarggh... 'this is what I did for my 16th', 'this is what I'm doing for my 18th', 'this is what I'm doing on Saturday'... I dunno... It hurts. It hurts. Like, the other day, it was one of my friend's birthdays...and I called her on the day it was happening... around the time the party started. It was annoying... So I was talking to a lot of them...but I thought no, I have to go now... They're like 'yeah, when you get out we can do this again'. It's not the same though. It's not the same.

Dion recognises that he is missing out on the conventional experiences of youth that he would have otherwise had and that he cannot get that time back. Unlike Aaron, Dion had not fitted in a whole life's worth of fun before he came to prison. Others missed being outside but did not mark time by particular events.

Louie: I just miss chillin' with my bredrens, listening to some music, going out… Like, there's nothing really that's happening that I'm missing, but the fact that people are telling me when to bang up, when to eat, know what I'm saying… And the girls, obviously…

As his sentence progressed, Dion became more focused on building a prison status, becoming more argumentative with staff and involving himself in fights and acts of disobedience, perhaps as a result of shrinking friendship groups as imprisonment wore on:

I think I've realised that certain people aren't your friends they're more... associates. Really and truly, I don't think it's good to have more than 10 good friends... Cos there's always something bound to go wrong. I haven't cut them off but in myself I know like, rah… We can still talk or whatever… It's just how it goes, you have to fend for yourself cos you can't rely on people.

The gradual loss of contact with people can be accompanied by a sense of losing touch with events outside, as well as the individuals in it.

Aaron: You're in touch with some stuff like, not some other stuff, just like what's happening sort of locally. Like, my old house has got knocked down innit, but this happened a year and a half ago, and I only found out about it last week…Stuff happens and you just miss it.

For those who identify strongly with their area, either casually or in a relatively formalised capacity as gang member (as Aaron was), the pain of losing touch with daily events is severe. Having been an important member of the family, protecting his younger sister and financially supporting his mother, he now acknowledged that their lives might move on without him.

Aaron: I saw my sister growing up and that, starting to grow tits…fuck that shit, she's not allowed tits bruv…fuck that shit, I will punch them back in… fuck that, it makes me angry   when I see her

> *R: it makes you angry? Why does it make you angry? Aaron: fuck that bruv, it means she's getting older.*[15]

Later, his mother mentioned taking his sister to live in America. Aaron acknowledged that she probably would not leave him, but he was sanguine about it, saying there was no point in them all wasting their lives – it was his punishment, not theirs.

Thomas felt detached from his family and described the distance between him and his niece.

> *Thomas: I'm in my cell every day, I don't get to mix with my family.I've lost my family in that way. I've lost my connection…my little niece doesn't know who I am, my little little one. I speak to her on the phone, and she's like "who you?" "Uncle Thomas" "you're not my uncle"… And that touches my heart, right there, to know that I'm not that important in her life.*

Others described detachment in more abstract ways; not knowing what was happening in the world.

> *Shem: erm, some people order it but I just get [newspapers] from the library. Yeah, so… Things like that, if it wasn't allowed… I'd feel like I'd been cut out from the whole world. Especially if we didn't have phones and that I'd feel restricted. Even, like I can't remember the last time I heard my phone ring… I don't remember that man. I don't even remember the last time I heard a phone ring….*

Newspapers and television are a bridge back to the world but not hearing the phone ring is a reminder of the lack of connection – contact has to be initiated by the prisoner, he is unavailable to those outside. The construction of identity takes place both internally and in relation to others and the sense of self is suffused with the need to find one's place in the social world. This is further complicated in prison by the condemnation of those values that are seen to be anti-social, and with them the relationships in which those values were cultivated. The 'multiple worlds' (Phelan et al. 1993) a young person would conventionally traverse are limited to the prison and its residents.

Bestowed identity

Loss of identity is accompanied by the creation of a new identity, out of the hands of the individual. Wing files provide prison staff with regular updates on young person's mood and behaviour and are used to write reporting make decisions about regime level. Information

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[15] Although the point is serious and seems aggressive, it was said in a jovial, humorous way.

was recorded manually and kept on the wing. Central files included information about the young person's case and history, along with pre-sentence reports, warrants and transport records were kept in an administration building. These were paper files that contained a mix of electronic and handwritten notes. Inconsistencies between paper and electronic files were common; illegible handwriting, poor typing or misinterpreted comments could lead to inaccuracies that often passed into 'fact' (Attrill and Liell 2011). Sometimes these inaccuracies had little impact– Louie's file included a note that another young person was his cousin. When I asked him about his cousin he looked at me blankly: no cousin of his had been in prison. Other discrepancies caused real difficulties. Seth shared his surname and first initial with another prisoner and sometimes found his spends account wrongly debited as money was taken out for his (almost) namesake.

The iterative and ongoing nature of wing files meant they could provide a distorted picture. Ostensibly, files are audited to ensure that sufficient comments have been recorded (at least one each day), there did not appear to be any cross referencing – either between files or with other sources of information – so sometimes conflicting information was recorded and only uncovered by chance.

These files are used for sentence progression meetings and parole hearings and inaccurate comments are difficult to challenge in those settings. Before meetings the prisoner, or his solicitor, should have the chance to read all files and make representations where inaccuracies were found. This affected all indeterminately sentenced prisoners, but those on shorter tariffs appeared most unsettled by it given the short time they had to prepare. The more services a young person engaged with - psychology, chapel, education, substance misuse, family worker - the greater the potential for inaccurate files. Aaron refused to participate in psychology for this reason, resisting the efforts of those who cited 'parole' as a reason to comply. He said he would 'do it when the time came'. Those whose tariff was almost up were more inclined to participate, although no less critical of the process. Staff

spoke informally of 'no-one getting out at first parole', and that perception seemed to seep into young people. It was hard to quantify the truth - during fieldwork one young person was granted release at his first hearing, two were granted open conditions and one refused.

Crewe has written of the power of psychological assessment as a form of 'normative imperialism' (2011b: 516), unable to incorporate traits that contradict the characteristics set out by its own tools and tests. The contradiction between documented personality and behaviour and the self as an individual was keenly felt by many respondents, some of whom were unable to reconcile the notion of themselves as 'an offender' with their own sense of who they were.

Willingness to see young people as individuals seemed in short supply; instead tests and systems that could collate their characteristics in measurable, manageable ways were preferred (Lacombe 2008). Not only did this neglect the needs of respondents, it actively caused them pain. Rhys was particularly affected by the 'official' version of himself.

> *Rhys: 'It's crazy that a bit of ink can build up a portrait of that person…It makes me crazy. I'm not who they say I am. That's why it does my head in, these reports… it ain't who I am, it's who they **think** I am. It's not who I am exactly. Like them files in there, their wing files, their comments or whatever…That's their opinion yeah, that's just their pen and ink.*

This was the only time a respondent shed tears during an interview. Not only could Rhys not reconcile these two versions of himself, he found it difficult to comprehend how such a situation could have arisen and could not envisage a way to rectify it. He saw the prison as interested in him only as a set of notes, not a whole person. He vacillated between disproving the image and living up to it.

The conception of offending as something all-consuming is almost Manichean: offenders are evil and can therefore not embody any good qualities. This is especially true of those convicted of sex offences, often the most tarnished no matter the extent or consequences

(Lacombe 2008). Respondents seemed aware of this bifurcation between what they were said to be and who they felt they were. Will frequently denounced the label 'sexual predator' that he felt had been applied to him. Thomas said his family knew 'I'm not like that'. Both Thomas and Will had surrendered to the notion that sexual violence is committed by certain kinds of people. For respondents this sometimes stemmed from ignorance – they were unaware that oral rape was an offence, or that an intoxicated person was unable to consent.

Conclusion

The pains of imprisonment in Wearside were masked by the 'accessories' – up to a point. Trying to 'say something for yourself' resulted in punishment and, for respondents, prison was exemplified by the loss of autonomy: once incarcerated 'you do everything they tell you to do'. The language of criminalisation, in which young people are defined as manipulative or vulnerable, in need of care or control - is unevenly applied and mediated through age, ethnicity, region and crime type. As with racialisation, symbols of criminalisation are communicated via the body and become self-perpetuating. The pains of imprisonment are managed through the development of a carceral habitus, but this in itself becomes read as evidence of the intractable, essential nature of criminality.

The pain brought by the deprivation of autonomy is not in itself revelatory, having been documented by Sykes (2007 [1958]) and others since. Nor is it unique to young prisoners (Crewe 2009). Yet these pains may be felt more powerfully by adolescents in the midst of an 'insecure transition' (MacDonald 1999: 171) to adulthood. This transition is made even harder through the deprivation of the mobility that increasingly accompanies movement into adulthood in the free world (Thomson and Taylor 2005). Resistance to the pains of imprisonment outlined here represented challenges to the system, yet these challenges were unheard and often resulted in greater pains to the challenger. The longest sentenced respondents were at the beginning of long-terms and yet already describe frustration at the limits to their development; the potential for growth and reform seemed outweighed by heavy

burdens of boredom and incapacitation, both physical and emotional.

The mismatch between expectations and opportunities creates a consciousness of time, one that may never have been felt before. Clinging to aspects of identity that remain unchanged and that are easily recognised by others may be a coping strategy in itself - carceral habitus as an alternative to alienation.

'Obviously, you can't just back down…': Violence and identity

Prison sociology is increasingly focused on the role of violence in performing masculinity; this chapter will consider the varied ways in which masculinity is mediated by age, race and respectability. All respondents had been convicted of serious violent crimes. Most had experienced or witnessed serious violence against themselves or others they cared about. Respondents rarely described violence as a choice, rather it was trap they found themselves in and one from they which they could not 'back down'. Backing down was dangerous, marking one out as an easy target for victimisation and bullying and indicating unreliability. One way out was to use violence preemptively - including the aura generated by violence - to protect oneself and prove oneself as a reliable ally.

The chapter will draw on three key themes. Firstly, the ways in which physiological and neurological symptoms of trauma become understood as habitus. Secondly, how identity - collective and individual - is created and maintained through forms of violence. Finally, how the grammar of violence can be understood as the virtuoso performance (Bourdieu 1990) of carceral habitus. The chapter focuses on physical violence between young people, reflecting respondents' descriptions of violence in prison, but use of force by staff cannot be ignored. Between 2011 and 2016 children and young people sustained 3,699 injuries as a result of being physically restrained (Hansard 2017). Use of force remains high at all YOIs (HMCIP 2017: 63) and includes the deliberate infliction of pain to educe compliance (see Howard League 2011 for a description of these 'techniques'). If '[T]he sociology of punishment is… about bodies - their treatment in space and their confinement' (Bosworth and Kaufman 2012: 194). Nowhere is this made clearer to young prisoners than when

their bodies are deliberately hurt and constrained. Staff and young people seemed resigned to this, along with other forms of violence, as part of prison life and obliquely acknowledged that embodied social control was imperfect and incomplete. Respondents rarely referred to being restrained, although most had experienced it at some point. Staff referred to it occasionally, describing how physically difficult it could be. In conversation, Ange joked with Louie about the last time she had to 'get hold of' him and how he 'threw her across the wing'. Both of them laughed, there was no animosity. Louie said he didn't like to fight with a woman but 'I gave her the chance, but if she's in my way, she's no different [than a man]'.

During fieldwork, use of force at Wearside increased by 80%. The prison attributed the increase to improved recording practices, claiming any physical contact between staff and a young person was now recorded. Violence between young people and assaults by young people on staff also increased (ibid.) It was not possible to analyse the reasons for these increases because data did not allow differentiation between what staff called 'laying on hands' (putting a hand on a young person to direct them away from an altercation) and more intrusive forms of restraint. The lack of transparency obscured the type of restraint but also provided a convenient cover - while 'laying on hands' sounds mild, some young people described being overwhelmed by unwanted touching - a common symptom of post traumatic stress disorders (Van der Kolk 2014) - and could ignite rather than defuse tension.[1] Instead, the reasons for the increase in violence were attributed to the young people themselves - more gangs, more 'London' people - but there was no accompanying increase in interventions, despite growing concerns about gangs in the prison.

It is possible that respondents chose not to discuss scenarios in which they felt their rights had been violated because they felt it showed them in a poor light, either as

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[1] Stephen's file noted that he found physical contact sexually arousing; this had not been shared with the yoga teacher who frequently placed her hands on him during the class.

having done something that required intervention or as weak for having been subjected to it. In contrast, portraying the times they had chosen to engage in violence against others situated these young men as active agents in their own life story (Sparks et al 1996), albeit with ultimately detrimental consequences. In a sense these narratives are 'redemption scripts', though with a different purpose and outcome than those described by Maruna (2001). These scripts are about resistance, rather than desistance. Although it is undeniable that these young men are vulnerable, this chapter will argue that engagement in violent action is a physical demonstration of agency. Young men used their bodies as sites of resistance, working out in the gym to 'get big' and taking up physical and social space with their limbs as they walked and voices as they talked. The application of violence is grammatical, both expressive and instrumental (Edgar et al. 2003) as well as culturally rooted. This can have negative effects on regime status and, for some, release; decision makers focus on the 'lack of consequential thinking' of those who engage in violence. Yet in interviews young people revealed themselves as acutely aware of the effects of their actions, even if they were unable to change them. The psychological consequences of allowing themselves to be 'violated' were less bearable. The profits of violence outweigh the costs, at least for now (Moran 2015).

The chapter will link this demonstration of agency to the embodiment of classed, racialised and criminalised identities to show how incarcerated young men, far from being deviant, are part of a wider social system that serves a purpose beyond their own social world (Anderson 2012, 1999; Black 1983; Jacobs and Wright 2006). These codes relate to broader social psychological themes of shame and humiliation (Winlow and Hall 2009) and the internal conflicts of an emerging adult identity (Bengtsson 2013). The chapter will show how the use of violence is a means to feel pride in oneself and one's status, and can be used to demonstrate loyalty and even morality.

'Gangs', groups and good old fashioned fighting

Prior to and during fieldwork concern about 'gang' culture in prisons (HMIP 2010) increased. This mirrored growing fears about young gangs in the community and was similarly rooted in racialised conceptions of group association (Young *et al* 2014; Smithson et al 2013; Hallsworth and Young 2008). These concerns broadly coincided with efforts to reduce the number of young people in prison. As the population reduced, a greater disproportionality of BAME young prisoners became apparent, and has persisted (YJB 2018).

The definition and application of the gang label was uneven, within Wearside and across the estate. For example, a 2010 report from the IMB at HMP Hindley states 'This establishment does not officially recognise gangs. The reason for this is that the prison does not wish to glamorise [sic] this type of lifestyle, it does however seek to minimise its negative effect within the prison.' (2010: 8). This small example illustrates the confusion about the 'gang problem' that was nonetheless accompanied by a determination to somehow solve it. At Wearside, failure to engage with young people on this issue was evident and counterproductive: young people were alienated from what they viewed as ignorant staff and foolish policies. During fieldwork, a staff memo reported that prisoners from one house block were deliberately wearing trainers with red coloured soles, and the other with white soles. This was laughed off by respondents, and visibly inaccurate.

Generalised concerns about gangs were reinforced by increasing levels of violence, often resulting in injuries or even hospitalisation. During fieldwork, the population of Wearside was around 349. In that year there were 487 assaults, more than double the previous year. A report from the IMB noted an increase in assaults involving groups of young people, rather than one-on-one fights.[2] This was echoed by an Inspectorate report

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[2] Details of he IMB and Inspectorate reports have been redacted to preserve anonymity.

that year and respondents themselves, who described an increase in 'rushing' (group assaults often on one victim). The IMB attributed this to 'gang culture' despite a survey in the prison in which only 5% of those assaulted gave 'gang related' as the motive for the assault. There was a sense that young people's own experience could not be trusted. 'Gang' is a contested term and respondents usually rejected the label; even where they accepted it applied to their lifestyle outside, they dismissed its relevance to their prison life. Although self-identified gang allies encountered each other in jail, their association was not always assured (even where they were convicted together). Likewise, enmity between outside rivals did not always travel over the wall; unless there was existing 'beef'[3] between the individuals or close associates, conventional rivalries wereoverlooked.

Like the juvenile prison population in general (YJB 2012), most young people on Cypress were from London and there was a perception, amongst staff and some young people, that this itself brought an increased level of conflict. Leo, a black young person from the West Midlands, identified itthus:

> *Obviously there's more London people, London people's… well got a lot of conflict with each other. Other jails I've been to with Nottingham kids, Coventry and all that are just cool really.*[4]

This perception was not shared by London young people, who generally saw themselves as having a lot in common with each other. Respondents felt a strong identification with their area and its residents - stronger than racial or ethnic affiliations (Phillips 2008). In fact, this multiculturalism seemed to reinforce London young people's identification with each other, as Londoners, (see also chapters 4 and 5). Conflicts between individuals from the same area arose out of specific incidents –

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[3] 'Beef': grudge, conflict; 'have beef with': have a problem with.

[4] Leo, from Birmingham, described a life more marked by gang culture than any of the London respondents. A half-brother who had grown up in a different household in a different part of his home city could not visit him when he was at home as it would mean crossing territory.

'he raped his sister' or 'he stabbed his friend'; incidents that made it understandably difficult for the two parties to be reconciled.

An HMCIP study found regional differences in characteristics described in case files. London young people were more likely to be involved in the supply of drugs than their use, and gangs and knife possession were more frequently referred to (HMCIP 2017). These differences may well reflect priorities and practices rather than reality as analysis on stop and search data shows black and mixed race boys and girls (aged 10-17) are disproportionately arrested, and that the disproportionality is particularly marked in arrests for robbery and weapons offences (Hales 2017). These experiences may contribute to a sense of shared history, memory and understanding for London respondents, regardless of their own ethnic identification.

Alliances and antagonisms were both imported, but styles of fighting and codes of morality around these also varied along lines of place. These practices were sometimes racialised by staff and by (white) young people from rural areas. It was the case that black young people most often fought together in groups or on behalf of each other, while white prisoners fought one to one. Respondents who fought in this way portrayed the difference as a result of a collaborative self-defence, a way of resisting the shame of being caught unawares - 'slipping'. While this reflects Fanon's suggestion of shame as pervasive, group aggression was more pronounced amongst London young people, suggesting a regionalised as well as racialised psychic effect.

Most respondents who fought in groups were black and often explained their thinking as 'how I was brought up' and it suggests a black habitus (Lofton and Davis 2015) that precedes prison; a way of negotiating systems and inequalities whilst black. White young people did not explain their fighting style in this way, but there is an unspoken whiteness to the masculinity conveyed in, for example, Seth's description of fighting

one-on-one and shaking hands afterwards. This was a masculinity recognised by the white, rural staff - both male and female - and though not characterised in terms of whiteness, it was integral in its positioning, in contrast to London/black young people. Habitus is shared among groups which in turn 'provide individuals with frameworks within which their memories are localised…no collective memory can exist without reference to a socially specific spatial framework…our memories are located within the mental and material spaces of the group' (Connerton 1989: 37). Those in the group understood the limits of who was an acceptable target, when to start and when to stop - but externally their actions - their collective memories - were constructed differently. The geography of risk (Shabazz 2015) was called into play and the coding of London = black = violence was evoked to demonise group fighters. White masculinity was the benchmark against which 'these London boys' were judged and what might be called black habitus inside the group became racialised and othered from outside.

The tendency to fight together and on behalf of each other meant black young people were perceived by staff as aggressive even when they were victims. Some white young people saw group aggression as weak - 'hiding behind others' - but some aspired to the protection of a group. Lacking the racialised and regionalised social capital, this was not an option open to them - white young people could not expect to rely on each other to fight in that way and support could only be guaranteed from those with a strong existing bond; a blood relative or long-time friend. In contrast, black young people formed functional alliances quickly, partly because there was usually someone - from their local area or from another prison - to vouch for them. This operated like a subverted old boys network, an appropriation of racism (Virdee 2014) in which black young people enjoyed racial privilege, always finding others who helped protect their interests. For staff and many rural young white people, London was code for black; black young people from other cities did not conflate the terms. Seth was from a small town in the South West and had been on Cypress for longer than most. He saw only

negative changes accompanying the influx of 'these London boys'. Like a number of staff, he attributed the increase in assaults - particularly those involving a number of assailants against one target - with the increase in London young people.

> *Seth: Like, back in 2009 you didn't have all these London kids and that it was all, like, everyone pretty much got on like… See, and if you had a fight, if you had a problem with someone, you'd go in the shower, have a fight, come back out and be mates again, you   know what I mean? It's not like that now…[5]*

Seth's description clearly attributes the change to an influx of 'London kids' (which, for Seth, like others, tended to mean 'black') and implies that the old style of fighting one-on- one was more of a problem solving technique – 'come back out and be mates again'. Seth's self conception as a more noble fighter is in contrast to his disdain for 'these London kids' and is a narration of his white working class identity. That identity is complicated by the nature of his conviction - a violent assault on an elderly woman. Respondents most frequently involved in violence - Louie, Jermain, Rupert and others - distinguished between 'civilians' and others and regarded those convicted of violence against 'civilians' as weak and inferior. That this group was largely white contributed to the complexity of racial and regional identity markers.

As Seth observes, group fights brought retaliation rather than resolution. Group violence then was racialised by outsiders, but was facilitated by regionality - knowing someone from your home area, or having attended the same school was a significant connection, regardless of ethnicity. It just happened that most black (London) young people knew other black (London) young people.

Many young people were known by nicknames 'road names', which added to the staff perception of gang affiliation. For young people this might or might not be true - a name alone was not sufficient to tell. The security department maintained a list of names and links, although often incomplete and out of date. More accurate

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[5] The shower being a place without cameras, where a fight could take place undetected by staff

information on conflicts between young people could be found in the Asset document, written by the youth offending team but this could change over time and was not updated. A 'Keep Apart' document was was based on current information about who had recently assaulted or threatened who. Ultimately the most accurate information on animosity between individuals - and the reasons why - came from young people themselves. Following an assault participants were asked to take part in mediation but this was rarely successful. Mediators lacked the time or skill to draw out information and young people lacked trust in or respect for the process. Respondents sometimes claimed that keeping people apart only exacerbated the conflict and argued they should be allowed to fight it out.

Bullying

Studies suggest that bullying and violence is entrenched as normal prison behaviour in youth prisons (HMIP 2018). Staff viewed any intimidating behaviour as bullying but their perceptions were mediated by physical size and demeanour and, to an extent, ethnicity. White young people were more readily perceived as victims. This perception was somewhat shared by respondents; black respondents would often describe white prisoners as childish. Respondents distinguished between bullying and violence; bullying was ignoble, to be avoided and not worthy of 'ratings'[5], since bullies dominate those obviously weaker than themselves. Even the most entrenched fighters did not consider themselves bullies, believing their actions more honourable, their targets not blameless victims but willing opponents. In general, crimes against weaker people were an eternal barrier to credibility and bullying was seen as weak and wrong, while interpersonal violence was characterised as a necessity for survival. Group formation was key to this survival and the creation of a collective identity (Connerton 1989). This may be seen as neutralisation but I suggest it shows a more nuanced reading of a complex social system that is largely opaque to outsiders, including other prisoners who are not part of the same social group. Similar complexity

was found by Liebling (2011) who identified how complex social relations can destabilise a prison.

Just as the act of bullying was rarely acknowledged, victimisation was also skimmed over. The normative conception of victims as easily identifiable was exemplified during fieldwork when a staff member read through the whiteboard listing prisoners on Cypress, giving his view on whether they were likely to fall prey to bullying. Though some displayed traits that could lead to them being victimised – small stature, high profile offence, poor hygiene, unusual social behaviour - this was never explicitly discussed by any of them, and only rarely alluded to by others. More commonly, respondents described how they, or others, should behave to *avoid* bullying. This tended to involve immediate and severe retaliation for any perceived slight. Being bullied was seen as a result of being weak, rather than purely the fault of the bully. Violence between contemporaries was awash with rules and codes akin to a language – certain gestures provoked specific actions, rather like a cheery 'hello' usually prompts a response, whatever the situation or existing relationship between the speakers. Those who were at risk of bullying – usually because of their offence – were protected by structural means, moving around the prison before anyone else so they could not be targeted on the route, allocated only to classes where others would not assault them. Although this physically protected these respondents, the special measures in place identified them as different from others and did nothing to integrate them. Although they weren't physically harmed by other prisoners – at least not during fieldwork – they were victimised by isolation, arguably a form of violence in itself.

Is prison experienced as violent?

Although all respondents acknowledged that violence was a regular occurrence and something that could not be avoided, their engagement in violence varied.

Respondents described physical challenge as inevitable in the early days and a combination of physical and mental strength was needed to survive.

> *Louie: When you go to a new jail you're gonna fight cos people wanna know what you're about, and gonna try and test you innit? And obviously, you can't just back down… the rest of the jail'll think you're a dickhead innit?*

This could sometimes be circumvented, or exacerbated by reputation; a popular individual can rely on others to fight on his behalf, while someone who has created a lot of enemies *en route*, especially if he is a strong and willing fighter, can expect an eager line of challengers. Although the entry process was described by some respondents as significantly violent, it was not ritualised or formalised in any way and assertions of strength may result as much from the new entrant's desire not to appear weak as from the community's desire to test him. A hyper-vigilant young man can retaliate overzealously which can create problems later.

Most respondents described their own violence as necessary rather than enjoyable, and distinguished between real violence and horseplay as a way to have fun and burn up energy. Violence was rarely described in terms that were either expressive or truly instrumental (see Wievorka 2009 for a discussion of this distinction) – there was a resignation to it, a weary acceptance that this was part of prison life, rather than a useful tool to gain advantages. While in the prison I witnessed or heard about fights somewhere in the prison every day and serious injuries were sometimes sustained – a broken jaw, a flattened nose, fractured cheekbone and a boy taken to hospital unconscious after his head was jumped on repeatedly. Despite this, respondents tended to characterise prison as 'less violent than outside', the high rate of assaults explained by respondents as a function of the enclosed environment:

> *Dion: To me I don't think it is [violent] cos outside's violent. It's not more violent…The only reason people might think it's more violent is cos you're always together, so you're bound to see someone you've just had a fight with. When you're on the out, get in a fight with someone, you might not see them for months cos they have so many things, ways to go you'll never see them but here you're bound to see them again. So people may think that there's more fights in here but there's not really. I think that the*

> *fights outside are more   vicious than they are in jail, people have more access to weapons and that…*

For Dion, violence in which no-one is killed or seriously injured is not violence.[6]

Given the high number of young people who died violent deaths in the years preceding the conversation, this is not unreasonable.[6]Weapons were rarely discussed by respondents and, in contrast to adult prisons, they were not common in Wearside. Respondents were familiar with weapons - used by them or other people and their proliferation viewed as inevitable and unstoppable:

> *Shem: Everything's getting worse. Everyone's grown up. They're like 12-year-olds having guns and that. No, you can't stop it. Cos it's just… the olders, they have their guns… they need protection, they have drugs, they need to make money. The   young ones, they think   'yeah, I wanna be like that, I wanna look good like that', so they're getting guns as well, they're getting drugs as well. And they will use it as well! (laughs) I don't know man, it's just… time's just moving on innit, everything's just changing and that…*

This resignation speaks to some respondents' prevailing sense of no-one really being in control of their own destiny, that 'everything happens for a reason', though the reason may be indiscernible, and that there is little point planning for an unpredictable future.

In contrast, Jamie describes the level of violence experienced as an active choice:

> *Jamie: Obviously, different jails it's different in every other way. Cos obviously if you get hot watered or something you think it's violent but… I got told Feltham's way worse than this, so I dunno…It depends what you do in the jail though, obviously I'm keeping my head down, I ain't tryna go around acting all bad - obviously if you're tryna do that then it's gonna be violent, gonna be in and out of fights like Jermain and that… cos they just think they're bad. But obviously I ain't like them innit?*

Jamie describes a combination of real and perceived factors influencing the level of violence – jails vary by population and regime and observing violence affects perceptions of danger. Willingness and ability to be involved also played a part. An angry young man with no fighting skills was unlikely to be taken seriously as an

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[6] Between 2005 (when Dion was 10 years old) and the start of 2011 (when this interview took place) 120 teenagers in London alone were stabbed, shot or beaten to death (Citizens Report 2015).

opponent, but someone who 'didn't want it' could walk away from a fight with little shame, so long as he was not the initiator. Those most highly thought of were those who appeared not to invite confrontation but to face it head on when it arrived. Those who looked for it were accused of 'acting bad'. Jamie draws a clear distinction between his 'keeping his head down' and others 'acting bad'. Jermain was regularly involved or implicated in fights off the wing – in his own words 'more than the average person' – though he stressed that this was not his own fault:

> *Jermain: To be honest, some of the fights that I have yeah… It's never my, I never start it but cos your friends start, your friends have a fight and you just get involved…if you see your friend fighting, you're not gonna just stand there, you're gonna get involved.*

This goes some way to explaining the origins of group fighting – it has a moral component, the protection of a friend, and is fixed, immutable - often described as 'how I was brought up' or 'who I am'. The decision to be violent or not was linked to identity and could be used to 'be someone'.

> *It is a violent place but if you want to make it extra violent then… It's just how you operate, how you talk to people… What type of person you **want to be**. (my emphasis)*

Jermain was popular with staff and young people alike, he had 'ratings'; yet others described him as someone who could not quite get a handle on his own behaviour. This was common from staff but from other young people the critique was more subtle - 'he'll never change unless something really bad happens', said Aaron.

Almost all respondents found their role defined by violence at various points in their sentence: as perpetrators or suspects, victims or targets. This could result from the arrival of a friend or foe, a transfer to another wing or houseblock - simply being new in a jail can trigger violence. Louie fought almost every day on arrival at Cypress, until he no longer 'needed' to fight because people 'knew what he was about'. He explained this as the need to prove himself in a new place and predicted that, when he turned 18 and moved onto the next jail, the process would start again; true enough his first few

months there were marked by numerous violent incidents, resulting in a number of extra days added to his sentence. The experience of violence is distorted by the proximity of enemies and competitors, but accepted as a necessity and never questioned. The decision to engage in violence is based on the same factors as outside, and decision-making was not disrupted by external factors such as punishment. There were no interventions that sought to understand or address the roots of violence and staff were resigned to these young people continuing to be violent.

Place, space and keeping face

Violence was used as a way of enacting identity in space and in relation to others. Violence, or the threat of it, operates as a form of conflict management, akin to 'crime as social control' (Black 1983). Though this tends towards punishing transgressions against powerful individuals (Jacobs and Wright 2006), violence here was frequently described in more defensive terms – in terms not of punishing the transgressor, but of protecting the harmed party. This commonly took the form of protecting one's body, reputation or ego against verbal or physical assault. 'Violations' could take the form of a look, an insult, a lie about someone's family, girlfriend or offence, an unfairly small portion of dinner, standing too close or not moving out of the way, a threat or a physical assault. The cultural expectation that certain acts provoke aggressive responses is not new (see Wolfgang 1958) but it is notable that, even here, expectation did not fall evenly on all. The seriousness with which these affronts were taken attested to a field shared only by those who participated because not all residents were held to the same standard. Some were not expected to know the rules, they were not part of the game, and could therefore be ignored. A 'sweet boy' who pushed in a queue could be shouted back into line, a nobody could be stared into submission, but those who were part of the game had to follow the rules and asserted their status through the creation of a distinctive body (Benson 1997). Participation was embodied in gait, mode, volume and pattern of speech, physical presentation

including size, trainers, hairstyle and the way they wore their clothing. Elements of this were racialised - black young people grew out their hair or wore it in cane rows, maintained either by mothers on a visit or sometimes other young people. At 18 they shaved their heads ready to go to 'big man jail'. This in itself was indicative of a long sentence since 18 year old with only a short time left would remain in the youth estate. White young people tended to shave their hair early on in their sentence and the meaning and significance of hairstyle as a marker of time or age was therefore less pronounced.

These elements were used to articulate identity as a possessor and purveyor of prison capital and part of an oppositional masculinity that has its roots in street culture (Sandberg 2008; Wacquant 2000). Though this aspect of the carceral habitus could be aped by outsiders, it was those who could demonstrate authenticity – 'realness' - who were most successful in asserting themselves. Two aspects commonly associated with this form of masculine identity – exploitation of weakness and denial of emotion – were things respondents fought against.

Jermain

On occasion, Jermain lent his support to Dion, though they were not friends; this association brought Dion the protection of others. Due to his conviction[7] Dion was targeted after he arrived at Wearside but Jermain stepped in to prevent him being beaten up and after that, Dion was left alone. Jermain explained it like this:

> Jermain: I can say my opinion that he's not my cup of tea or whatever but it doesn't mean I hate him. Like that time I saved his arse, I didn't ask for nothing in return, I just couldn't watch him get beat up, cos I know what would have happened, he would have probably come out on a stretcher or something.

Jermain is alluding to Dion's conviction - 'not my cup of tea' - but that's not enough to make him 'hate him'; he defended him from others who were attacking him *because* of his conviction. Despite feeling uneasy about him, he did not want to see

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[7] Rape of a male under 16.

him seriously injured.[8] It's not as if Jermain was averse to causing serious injury when

he thought it necessary; in a previous assault he had broken another boy's jaw.

> *Yeah but they brought that on themselves basically, it happens… You don't mean to… Like basically, if you punch someone and you break their jaw, you don't mean to break their jaw, you're just punching them (…) they've just got a fragile jaw…*

Jermain was physically capable of (and psychologically comfortable with) causing

harm to those he thought deserved it. But the key point here is precisely whether or

not *he* thought they deserved it; to Jermain, Dion was weak and therefore not a legitimate

target. His decision to help Dion was based on factors specific to that situation and

his relationship with Dion, rather than any aversion to violence. This is in contrast to

other accounts of the treatment of both those convicted for sexual offences and those

who identify as homosexual – both deemed legitimate targets for violence (DiMaggio

1997). Jermain was able to switch between conventional and subcultural codes

(Anderson 1999), if indeed a prison code could be said to exist at all. He used

violence to solve problems but the way he applied violence was influenced by his

own interpretation. He demonstrates both adherence and resistance to cultural codes

and the fluency with which he did this, the ease with which he described doing it to

me, an outsider – *that* is the code.

Lloyd

Lloyd too protected someone in need of help.

> *Lloyd: The other day one of the officers was getting assaulted on the wing, and obviously I like him, he's cool innit… And I went and smacked the two people up while they was assaulting him cos they was proper fucking him up innit? I made them write a letter of apology…Someone just come to the servery and said 'these two are gonna set pace[9]on a gov innit' So I come out, popped my head round, I see them swing for Jim I was like 'fuck that', started runnin' and two of my bredrens come behind me…I was chasing one of them round the wing smacking him, he was just running…He started off down by the servery, he went all the way up here and that, all the way up [to the upper landing].*

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[8] Later, after Jermain had transferred out, Dion himself became more embroiled in violence and formed an alliance with a new entrant, a boy with a very long sentence and, consequently, a big reputation. It appeared that he was preparing for his move to the next jail.

[9] 'Set pace': assault, start a fight

He explains that he wanted to help the officer because 'he's cool' but this spontaneous incident served Lloyd well, improving his status with other staff who previously considered him troublesome and consolidating his influence on the wing. Slight of frame, with a boyish face and a wide grin, Lloyd was popular with many staff despite his violence and his strong influence on other young people. I believe he would have intervened whether his 'bredrens' had assisted or not, but their presence certainly made it more spectacular. Further, the show of strength enabled him to force the two attackers to write the letter. In telling the story he described the situation as 'a problem' that he turned to his advantage, and he was quite proud of himself. It is rare for prisoners to intervene in assaults on staff so he had done something admirable, yet his ability to immediately see how it could be turned to his advantage – and his willingness to admit that – was noteworthy.

The grammar of violence

These two incidents show that uses of violence are complex and the meanings attached to violent acts are manifold and often opaque. These uses of violence arise from the respondents' familiarity with the cultural codes of their peers (Renold and Barter 2003) on road and in jail, and show both conformity to, and manipulation of, these codes that demonstrates a morality of its own.

> Nothing is more simultaneously freer and more constrained than the action of the good player. He quite naturally materialises at the right time... The habitus, as society written into the body...enables the infinite number of acts of the game - written into the game as possibilities and objective demands - to be produced; the constraints and demands of the game, although they are not restricted to a code of rules, impose themselves on those people - and on those people alone - who, because they have a feel for the game, a feel, that is, for the immanent necessity of the game, are prepared to perceive them and carry them out. (Bourdieu 1990: 63)

In manipulating the rules Lloyd and Jermain show themselves as *virtuosos (*Bourdieu 1992), using their bodies as tools in a performance that functions in much the same

way as a violinist or a footballer performs in a recital or a match. Having accumulating significant capital Jermain and Lloyd had gained 'social energy' (Bourdieu 1986: 241) that enabled social mobility within the prison. The capital amassed through these performances is depends on a shared code between performer and audience and in that way prison capital could be either a burden or a boon.

Bartollas (1982) found that long-term prisoners were more likely to support an inmate code, perhaps because of lack of certainty about their future and the need to maintain a clear identity. This is not universal, as can be seen from the examples above. Jermain and Lloyd stepped outside expected norms to protect those usually deemed unworthy - itself a display of masculinity. Although Lloyd acted because he liked the officer, he also enhanced his status by doing so. Jermain gained nothing tangible from helping Dion; his motives appear entirely altruistic. To an extent both he and Lloyd were allowed their non- conformity because of their existing status - powerful players are always freer to break the rules. However this freedom remains problematic as it ties the performers into association with a code that has fewer alternative applications than being a successful musician or sportsman.

The notion of a prison code is itself problematic; attractive to those who envision prisoners as homogenous in their moral corruption, a way of drawing a line between 'them' and 'us'. Jewkes (2005) suggests that those who commit crime frequently adhere to a criminal code that effectively prepares them for life inside - the implication being that a 'criminal code' differs substantially from mainstream culture. Earlier chapters have shown that while respondents often made references to 'the rules of road' or stated 'that's just how things are', these were not exclusively in relation to crime and frequently evoked traditional values in relation to family and community.

All environments are governed by codes and practices specific to the time and

location. Respondents had differing notions of which crime types were more or less acceptable - which achieved ratings and which did not, which fighting styles were respectable and which were bullying. A blanket acceptance of a 'criminal code' masks the complexity of who goes to prison and how they get there and creating an unsustainable distinction between inside and out, in both practical and moral terms.

To see only the code is to miss this. The idea that a pre-existing 'criminal' code exists to prepares prisoners for their life post-conviction is simplistic and ignores the overlaps between normative and subcultural values, as demonstrated by the examples above. Both incidents have something valuable at their core. Both were protecting others who could have been seriously harmed but for their intervention. These were positive decisions, albeit enacted in a violent way.

Though most respondents demonstrated at least some awareness of the self-perpetuating nature of prison violence, none articulated this as clearly as Joe. Joe had adapted quickly to prison life and was able to remain almost invisible throughout his remand, relatively sheltered on a wing for under 16s. From his place of objective obscurity he observed the mechanisms used to build and maintain status.

> Joe: I think a lot of it is because their life outside is different. You know, people from certain areas, and it's a certain way of doing things… And I guess, there's a certain type of sentence where it's serious enough, but not too serious. They've got enough time to get restless, but not too much time to kind of be hopeless. And once they've started it, I guess they're not gonna back out in future and keep what status they have - they know people from other prisons and stuff so… Their friends are in and out, and they've been here a while and you know, once you've been here, had a certain amount of nickings[10] it's not really anything. I mean, I wouldn't get in loads of fights anyway, even if I was on a small sentence[11] I still wouldn't bother… I mean, I wouldn't be as careful to keep my head down as I am now but I guess it is partly in their nature, partly in their culture – partly because they're big and confident and they **can** fight. A lot of people are in for violent offences, there's gonna be clashes of ego cos a lot of people are angry with people, especially in prison. I mean I had this in school, so it's gonna be worse in prison, and someone's gonna come out on top of it so…

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[10] 'Nickings': adjudications, official sanctions for persistent or serious rule breaking

[11] A small sentence was used to describe a sentence of less than two years, with a release date. Joe was serving an IPP sentence.

Joe describes the accumulation of social capital - size, confidence, ability - as crucial to the decision to engage in violence. This observation is based on his assumption that size brings confidence and that this is always a good thing. Those who appeared to be 'big and confident' sometimes described it as a hindrance; Louie always had problems with 'older mans', something he attributed to his appearance as older. Perceptions of vulnerability and dangerousness can contribute to exposure to serious harm, inside and outside of prison. 'These perceptions are mediated by race and physical size (Okonofua and Eberhardt 2015; Cushion et al 2011; Casella 2003). On road and in prison, young people who appeared to be able to take care of themselves were sometimes afforded a symbolic capital they did not necessarily possess (or did not want to possess, in the case of Louie and his problems with 'older mans').

Violence and collective identity

Violence then is a choice, but one made from a limited range of options and mediated through three components of identity: regionalisation, racialisation and respectability. The latter derives from a culture that demands a physical demonstration of loyalty, whatever the location:

> *Louie: I don't need to fight. Unless someone new comes in the jail and my friend's fighting... I'm gonna back him innit? It's the way I was brought up. I was brought up... friend's fighting... punch [the person he's fighting]. Can't stand there...*

For Louie, joining in his friend's fight is ingrained in him - he was 'brought up' that way. This was a common phrase, particularly among black and mixed race respondents. Most of them were brought up almost exclusively by their mothers, some with intermittent 'stepfathers'.

Helping others in conflict demonstrates character and is an insurance policy: they are then obligated to repay the favour when the time arises. It is also a way of mitigating against victimisation. 'Reflexive retaliation' (Jacobs 2004: 303) is a feature of an on road culture that emphasises the domination of space and the need to be seen as a

victimiser, rather than a victim (Gunter 2008; Jacobs and Wright 2006). Groups can draw on more power than an individual. This was most common amongst respondents who were part of, or aspired to, an on road culture and included groups 'rushing' an individual, or fights between individuals who had no personal animosity toward one another yet were acting on behalf of others.

> *Lloyd: Not a lot but a few... not really fights, assaults and that... Probably rushed more people innit, with people.*
>
> *R: And what sort of reasons do you do that for?*
>
> *Lloyd: People's road beef[12]and that innit? Just backing other people. Or if someone gets cheeky.*
>
> *R: Do you find you get involved in a lot of stuff that is not your beef? Lloyd: Yeah probably, more than what I do for my own.*

Lloyd distinguishes between his own conflicts and those of others and, like Seth, between fights and assaults – a fight being a two person event where both parties inflict and sustain blows. Assaults are quick – the assailant/s attack and depart the scene or are stopped when staff arrive. Often, the single victim has no chance of retaliation. The need for backing from others is therefore greater for those at risk. This form of violence, carried out impersonally, for reasons that are 'not your beef' can be seen as a way of policing the physical space of the prison, much like street robbery and assault might function on road (Flynn 2010; Gunter 2008; Renold and Barter 2003). Policing of prison space therefore provides a continuation; while in-prison conflicts may ebb and flow, conflicts brought from outside persist. Or, as one young man put it, 'road beef don't get squashed'. Policing the space for oneself and for others is a way of demonstrating independence, itself an indication of moral worth (Duneier 1992).

Limited opportunities to display dominance meant such displays must be quick and, preferably, spectacular – the involvement of large numbers of people helps achieve this aim. It also means that violence is spontaneous, occurring whenever the assailants see the

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[12] 'Road beef' – conflicts imported from outside – tended to be particularly insoluble and there was general acceptance that this could never be fixed.

target, yet occurs in predictable locations. Occasional fights would break out in the education building or on the wing, but the most hazardous time was movement, a process that, at times, took up to half an hour because of the need to keep breaking up fights and move each wing separately, without any contact between them and others. A fight on one part of the route could trigger one somewhere else as staff run to the first callout, creating an opportunity to act with impunity. Mobility, although limited, is a crucial aspect of life in this environment (Ross et al. 2009) and a site for identity construction, particularly during this transition to adulthood (Thomson and Taylor 2005). Released wing by wing, one houseblock at a time, a stream of prisoners quickly becomes a sea. On a good day, it flows. On a bad day, each wing must be ensconced in their new location before the next one is released. Almost free in the open air, walking in groups, observed rather than escorted, place and placement are signifiers to authority and to peers of one's intent, personality and power. Some rush from place to place, head down, sticking tightly to the defined route, others are casual, slow, stretching their legs and allowing those behind to catch up. Others wander off in directions other than those sanctioned and have to be shouted back on track. Those with friends in 'the block'[13] shout up at the windows, some stop to talk to staff. If a fight breaks out some run to it, others watch from the sidelines. Nearby staff run to assist. The move stops. Everything is delayed and everyone knows what has happened, whether they see it or not. Security reports are circulated to staff each day, detailing the previous day's incidents. The prison grapevine ensures all prisoners know what has happened.[14] Retaliation was inevitable, though it can take various forms and that retaliation demands further response; as new entrants arrive and older ones leave, alliances are formed and reformed and these relationships are mediated through conflict. Some leave behind conflicts that continue to be enacted in their name and prison-territorial conflict - for example, between

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[13] 'the block': segregation unit

[14] These communications were often conflicting. The events were probably clearer in the staff briefings, the reasons more so on the grapevine.

houseblocks - was revived periodically and without discernible reason. The desire to attach oneself to a place or an area was strong and, once attached, that place must be represented visibly (Kintrea et al 2011). This type of hostility was particularly difficult for staff to manage, requiring changes to the timetable to ensure education classes and groups were made up only of prisoners from the same houseblock. Relatively high turnover, prisoners all in the same uniform and a shift pattern that could see a member of staff out of the jail for more than a week could make it difficult to tell who was from which houseblock or which wing. The search for meaningful predictors of violence was often misguided. A member of staff remarked she knew when Rupert was 'on the rampage' because he usually wore shorts and when he reverted to trousers he was preparing to fight, but a therapist who worked regularly with Rupert dismissed this, since he always wore trousers when he met with her – as a sign of politeness and respect when meeting with a woman. Some signs may be more reliable than others – Louie described a foe 'doing up his straps' (on his trainers) before a fight: 'that's how you know'.

It is not that violence is desirable but that it is the language of this world, the only way to assert a strong identity.

> *Jermain: Being out there, you can choose the type of person you want to be… In here, you can't really choose… You can either be like, starting from the bottom, you can either be just a normal guy that no one even remembers is in jail except for the govs, or you can be like that nerdy guy that gets picked on, like bullied and that… You can be a bully… Erm, you can be part of a gang… Or you can just be a kingpin. It's just how it goes.*

While on road displays of masculinity may include ostentatious wealth and boasts of sexual prowess as well as fighting, in an environment deprived of material goods and women, strength is demonstrated by the domination of others and small victories over the system (McDermott and King 1988). Definitions of weakness are fluid and relate to perceived appetite and capacity for violence and manipulation, rather than offence or sentence (though in some cases this coalesced); strength is used not to intimidate, but to protect – oneself, one's friends or others – although this protection may be achieved through intimidation; the greatest weakness is being perceived as a victim

(Gunter, 2008).

The immediacy of retaliation demonstrates power (Jacobs and Wright 2006), across all settings: 'justice delayed is justice denied'. The shift from individual to collective power is a form of resistance – as area loyalties recede and shared pains emerge, insubordination, in the form of violence, is a way to counter the stress of imprisonment with a self- actualising display of ego and energy (Toch 2002). By operating as a collective, young people extend their reach – it may not be possible to retaliate directly, but if someone else can carry out the act then no loss of face occurs and the risk of sanction is minimised. Lloyd's ability to incite others also enabled him to give the impression of having calmed down since his arrival which made his relationships with staff easier. Learning to manage relationships, becoming 'wiser' had been a key part of Lloyd's - and others' - adaptation to prison life. If caught out this would be described as manipulation and yet in other competitive settings it would be perceived as skilled negotiation. This relates to the features of the carceral habitus described in chapter 4 - in particular, calmness and the presentation of self. In particular, learning to convey 'able but not willing' to engage in violence as a way to actively manage violence.

Although a collective could operate at a distance, for most violence was something done together and spontaneously - 'rushing' an individual on sight, 'jumping in' if a friend was fighting. This created a sense of strength in numbers, almost invincibility for some:

> *Lloyd: I get along with bare[15] people on the wing innit… so obviously if I've got a problem it's not just me, I've got everyone to back me. Obviously the other day in the gym there was a problem with someone on a different wing and then everyone was just there for each other innit? Obviously I've had problems in jail but nothing for me to worry about cos I've always come out on top innit?*

Others accepted fighting as an inevitable part of having friends:

> *Jermain: You can have different friends, less fights yeah… But you're still gonna probably have to fight so what's the point?*

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[15] 'Bare': a lot

In contrast, Dion described others who failed him when needed:

> *Like certain people, one minute they might be like to you 'Yeah, if you get into anything I'll back you' and when it happens, they're standing there and even if you've won the fight or whatever they'll be like... 'I didn't see the need for me to jump in or whatever', if you know what I mean. Even if it was 2 against 1, and then you've one and they're like 'I didn't see the need, I thought you was handling it yourself'... I thought you were meant to be my friend.*

Few admitted to being disappointed in this way, either never acknowledging that it happened or denying feeling anything at all. Lloyd's ability to inspire loyalty and incite others to violence stemmed, by his account, from his early days when, 'on a mad one' he showed people what he 'would do'. Dion's entry to the jail was rather different, he was not regarded as a fighter and when others did protect him it was through fear that harm would come to him rather than genuine allegiance. Though Jermain maintained a distance from Dion he saw violence as necessary to protect him; his actions were motivated by pity and never questioned. Jermain's actions (on this occasion) demonstrate a complex moral position: he utilised violence in defence of someone weaker under attack, while remaining ambivalent about the person he was protecting – any personal gain was not realised publicly.

Collectivism vs individualism

Despite fighting collectively, few respondents saw themselves as part of a group or their associations with others as anything other than utilitarian, useful for the moment. Most considered themselves alone, self sufficient, able to ride their sentence without assistance. In interviews, most respondents emphasised their difference from the others, that their association was not a personal one and that others could not be trusted.

> *Dion: I just think everyone tries to keep themselves to themselves but... everyone's calculated in a way. That's what I think anyway. They try to see like... what they can trust about people and... all the things that they know about them... So everyone's like that.*

Friendship is measured in time and utility.

> *Aaron: No, I don't think I really create friends in jail... To me these ain't friends,*

> *these are just people I chat to because, if they were to get out tomorrow, they wouldn't come visit me…*

The lack of trust means the situation is never entirely congenial, but a shared desire to get by and get out means that it cannot be exclusively conflictual either. Others saw commonalities in their criminal histories:

> *Lloyd: Obviously they've done stuff that I've done… practically the same stuff and that… We know where each other's coming from so…*

Prison was the first time Lloyd encountered so many people like himself. He was unusual in his admission that he and others shared things in common. Joe too could see similarities between himself and others.

> *Joe: I have got a lot in common with Harry. We've got the same solicitors, we did have the same judge, we've got the same YOT workers… He's from round my area, he's been on remand for ages… And you know, because he's been on remand for ages people are saying he must be in for… Like, 'you must be in for rape or something' - just joking around, but like, he gets some shit. But mainly in prison… On the out I would definitely have nothing in common with most of them, but in here you automatically have something in common with them because you both face the same problems, and the same things day-to-day.*

Although Joe acknowledged his association with others as situational, he seemed comfortable with it. The size of the youth prison estate and the length of sentences these young men are serving meant associations made now could be useful in the future.

> *Aaron: I don't know, say I was to go to another prison and then, I don't they say, Nicky, came there… It's like, he would be all right because he'll be friends with my friends cos, he's my friend and you lot can't take the piss.*

However there are limits, even for the well-connected.

> *Lloyd: Yeah yeah… Not just who you know, what you can do as well. But obviously even if… you can't just come in jail… like the other day there was a situation when someone came in, obviously tryna chat shit to someone, obviously got theirself smacked innit? Cos you can't…doesn't matter who you are, it's if you know someone innit, but it's not just that (…) Depends who you know innit?*

Having an established network, people to vouch for you, can protect a new entrant (Maitland and Sluder 1998) but there are still boundaries; 'Chatting shit' is an unacceptable transgression and liable to punishment by someone better connected – it still 'depends who you know'.

Conclusion

Imprisonment can benefit some young people in the short-term, so, either by removing them from on road hostility which may have resulted in injury or death or committing an even more serious crime than the one for which they were convicted, or by enhancing their standing in the criminal community. The ways in which it does this are highly related to a spectacular and fatalistic form of masculinity that takes place in the home, on road and in the prison. Survival of all three environments depends on the negotiation of complex social relations and fluid conceptions of power and an acceptance of violence as a way of life. The culmination of proving oneself, 'settling in' and others learning 'what you're about' results in a kind of uneasy peace. The need to survive meant that what appeared to be friendships were in fact associations - functional and pragmatic rather than personal (Corley, 2001), possibly due to their age, although literature on adult prisoners' social relationships suggest that this is unlikely to improve in time (Crewe 2009; Jewkes 2012). This not-quite-congeniality has been described as *modus vivandi* (Crewe 2009) and can be likened to Gilroy's idea of conviviality (Gilroy 2004), a bristling socialscape that replicates life in the inner cities that most originate from. Emotional attachments are reserved for families and friends outside, even though these too are sometimes pushed aside as a way to avoid the pain they can bring (see Chapter 7). In prison friendships are ambivalent and mediated through a language of violence that is rooted in the jostling for power. However, this violence is often defensive protecting emerging adult identities and the fragile egos that accompany that transition. Prison is a community of individuals who have to find ways to communicate and coexist without ever becoming close enough to cause themselves harm. It is rarely described as violence because violence is so integral to the experience, not only of prison but of life in general; loss and pain are everyday occurrences, denial of bodily sensation and emotional satisfaction are forms of symbolic violence that these young men have frequently become accustomed to witnessing and experiencing. The tragedy of their

existence is so often that they accept their place in this order, they accept the violence that is done to them and that they do themselves as inevitable, as part of life. In gaining prison capital from their ruthless individualism they cut off opportunities for collective happiness; in protecting themselves they also seal their fate.

'Clothes, food and love…': family, fatherhood and the limits of fratriarchy

'Clothes, food and love' are the things Louie told me a child needed a father to provide. That and someone to defend them. Some respondents traced their involvement in robbery or drug markets back to the need - or desire - to supply the clothes and food that their families could not provide. For some, notoriety - 'hood fame' - also brought them something like love, at least for a little while. Love was often alluded to: in the pride Thomas took in how many of his relatives came to court, in Rhys' insistence that his friends would all 'still be there'. Desistance from beating up Dion was done 'out of love' for Jermain. Emerging arguments were quashed with the words 'it's all love'. There was a hunger in these words, a yearning for meaning. This chapter will examine how social relations outside and inside the prison affect and are affected by the carceral habitus and the development of carceral capital and identity.

Young prisoners often have complex and fractured family relationships that are put under further strain by the separation and stress of imprisonment, in addition to the stigma of criminalisation and potential retaliation from aggrieved parties. For families this could mean seeing their relative in the media, having to move home or leave their employment and finding ways to shield younger siblings or elderly relatives from the impact (Condry 2007). Familial relationships - in the past and present - were a significant concern for all respondents. Held far from home and with limited means to maintain contact with those outside, respondents sometimes described deliberately reducing contact with outside and focusing on negotiating new social circles inside. Lindsay et al (2015) found some evidence that prisoners held far from home more frequently engaged in misconduct, and lacked the social support that might have mitigated that.

Political interest in families - and especially children - affected by imprisonment is

growing. A small number of studies have examined the effect of relationships on regime conformity (for example Jiang et al. 2005) but research has primarily focused on desistance (Rocque et al 2011; Mills and Codd 2008). Since family contact is associated with reduced reoffending it is supported by the government and individual prisons (Farmer 2017; Dixey and Woodall 2011; PSI 16/2011). Research and policy tends to focus on female partners of adult men in prison and dependent children of adult women in prison, over- looking the contributions of, and effect on, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings and others. This gap in understanding is particularly significant for young people who are more likely to be supported by older blood relatives than by partners and are less likely to have dependent children (although it is estimated that between 25% and 50% are fathers (Ladlow and Neale 2016).

All respondents experienced difficulties in their family relationships while on Cypress - some very serious. Louie's mother was twice detained under the Mental Health Act, Liam's grandfather became seriously ill, Ricky suspected his sister was being physically abused by his mother's boyfriend, Gary disclosed sexual abuse by his father. Ricky's concerns and Gary's disclosure were reported to the respective local authorities for investigation. Family relationships were, to some extent, supported by Wearside: a full time family liaison worker facilitated occasional private family meetings, in the chapel rather than the visits hall. Seamus was the only respondent to receive this help, after his adoptive mother was admitted to a secure hospital. It was Seamus's family who requested help, not Seamus. Respondents preferred not to talk to staff about their family problems, and staff appeared reluctant to intervene. Jardine (2017) and Comfort (2008) illuminate the difficulties of imprisonment from the family perspective and Jardine, in particular, points to the need for academic research to attend to the meaning and nature of family and how it connects to the lived experience of individuals.

The nature of relationships with those outside is by turns intensified and nullified by the

fact of imprisonment (Liebling 1999b). Imprisonment is inherently, and intentionally, socially limiting and punishment is as much relational as material. Long-term prisoners consistently describe missing someone as their greatest pain (Hulley et al 2015; Richards 1978) yet the textural nature of maintaining family contact is largely absent from the literature, with the recent exception of imprisoned mothers (Baldwin 2017; 2015). This chapter addresses the gap in understanding social relations between young prisoners well as the effects of separation from those outside. Fratriarchy, the 'rule of brotherhoods' (Starck 2007) describes the competitive bonding of an all male group. Young prisoners are forced into a single sex world in which there are multiple and over-lapping hierarchies. The carceral habitus is structured around these hierarchies. The capacity to negotiate social relations with staff and other prisoners is essential to managing the relational aspects of imprisonment but little research exists on the effect of intra-prison relationships on young people's prison experience.

The chapter will set out the structural obstacles to maintaining contact with outside. This is followed by discussion of the effects of separation - both real and imaginary - and respondents' efforts to mitigate the strain of separation. Finally, a discussion of the ways alliances and antagonisms between prisoners are built to resist some of the pains described in chapter 5, and how these contribute to the texture and effects of long-term imprisonment.

Something in the way

Prisons are required to ensure that all prisoners are able to maintain family ties (PSI 16/2011). This means provision of visits (a minimum of one hour every fortnight); access to telephone calls (at the prisoner's expense); and writing materials (a postage paid envelope and a sheet of writing paper every week).

Wearside is in a rural location around twelve miles from the nearest train station. Public

transport was unreliable at weekends and train and taxi fares were expensive; visitors in receipt of state benefits were eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses but respondents' complained their visitors 'never got the money anyway'. Some experienced racist abuse by other passengers on public transport. Few families owned a car; some depended on friends or other family members to drive them. Journey time and having to allow time for security checks meant a two hour visit took the entire day (see also Dixey and Woodall 2011). Many respondents had younger siblings and some had immediate family members with health conditions that made travel difficult. Visits could take place on weekends or on one day during the week. In 2010/11, only 38% of all young prisoners received a visit each week (Summerfield 2011: 13). Visits must be booked 24 hours in advance and visitors, must provide photographic ID at every visit. For visitors, 'secondary prisonization' (Comfort 2003: 101) meant much of the same bodily discipline prisoners are subjected to. This is indicative of the breadth of imprisonment (Crewe 2015), and the ways it extends beyond the prison gate. All visitors, including babies and children, were subjected to physical and X-ray searches of their clothes and shoes, rub-down searches and sniffer dogs in order to gain access to the prison and then forced to conduct a family meeting in a crowded, public space in sight and earshot of other prisoners, their visitors and staff (Condry 2007; Dixey and Woodall 2011). Some young people were uncomfortable with the lengths their visitors had to go to to see them and preferred to avoid in person contact.

Prison was the first time away from home for some and anxiety at the separation, though rarely discussed openly, sometimes revealed itself in extreme behaviour. Connor had climbed onto the library roof after his mother did not arrive at a visit. The car she was travelling in had broken down but the humiliation of waiting for her in the visits hall, not knowing what was happening, was too much for Connor. Rhys also found his way on the roof following news of his grandfather's worsening health.[1]

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[1] The library was a single storey building between the two house blocks and was a favoured site because was easy to climb and highly visible. Rooftop protests arouse particular concern due to the potential for physical harm to either the climber or those charged with bringing him down.

The PIN payphone system allowed calls to approved numbers only and calls are recorded.[2] Call time is limited by cost – at that time five times the public payphone rate (Allison 2006; 2007). Each wing had two telephones that young people could use during association time. This created the potential for arguments over background noise and the time spent on a call as well as concerns over privacy and bullying. Keck (2001) vividly describes a harried telephone call on a noisy wing. Cypress had in-cell phones for those on gold[3] which reduced arguments over access, but created concerns of 'a bad phone call' late at night when a young person was alone. A 'bad' phone call might involve an argument, receipt of bad news, loss of connection or credit mid-call. Out on the wing a member of staff might spot the problem and be able to intervene but on a night shift this might prove impossible. Phone credit could be purchased regularly using the ATM. This contributed to the accessibility of the telephone and may have explained why mobile phones were not prevalent at Wearside.[4]

Access to the Internet, email and other electronic media communication are prohibited in all prisons, a restriction that has been described as 'a distinctive modern pain of imprisonment' (Jewkes and Johnston 2009: 134). Some respondents did make use of the Internet via friends and family, to collect information on other prisoners, or post messages and even photographs to social networking sites; this points to the increasing permeability of the prison wall (Crewe 2009; Moran 2013), a problem which has caused consternation among the tabloid press (for example Doyle 2012).

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[2] Telephone numbers were submitted on an application and dialled by security to confirm the receiver's name and address and that they were willing to receive calls from the young person. Young people could have a maximum of 15 numbers on their PIN at any one time.

[3] Wearside was one of the first prisons to have this facility. Private and, increasingly, public prisons now have in-cell telephony. The same security protocols apply - only approved numbers can be dialled and calls are recorded.

[4] It was not illegal to possess a mobile phone in prison until March 2012, when the Crime and Security Act 2010 came into force. Despite the legislation the number of mobile phones in prison has grown significantly since then, with 13,000 phones discovered in 2016 (MoJ 2017d).

'It is what it is': maintaining family ties

The main source of financial, emotional and practical support for respondents was predominantly female family members: mothers, grandmothers, sisters, girlfriends, occasionally fathers or grandfathers and sometimes other relatives. The concept of family invokes a sense of separateness from society, enveloping members and excluding others; Bourdieu thematises family life in the terms *sanctum*, *privacy* and *residence* (1996). Each of these themes is disrupted by imprisonment. The sanctum of the family unit is warped by separation, privacy undermined by prisonisation of young people and their supporters, and residence stretched in time and space, such that the prisoner and his family become subject to the layered geographies of absent-presence (Moran and Disney 2017). Family therefore takes on an imaginary meaning. That is not to say it is artificial or without deep and practical significance, but that maintaining family ties is a process actively constructed through embodied displays of care and commitment (Jardine 2017) rather than the regular, taken for granted practices of family discourse. In the absence of the everyday, the emotional connections that make family life are conjured and examined more carefully than they perhaps were before. For families this might include planning the long and expensive journey to the prison, budgeting for the money they needed to send in for the young person to pay for telephone calls, or keeping his room as it was. For respondents, it meant long times reflecting on the events at which they were not present, lamenting the pain they had caused loved ones by their actions or absence, and wondering about what the future held.

For some, prison would have been unbearable without the love and comfort provided by family:

> *Anwar: If you don't have the support of your family you can't make it in a place like jail. My mum and dad, I reckon if they was to give up on me I reckon I would… just… I'd be just like… I'd have nothing to lose then, I'd have nothing to live for…*

Anwar was clear that the pain and stress he had brought to his family was shaming and it

motivated him to do better, his relationship to his family underpinning his redemption script.

> *They are quite supportive. They were angry, they was obviously… If you had a son and this happened to him you'd be upset. I made a mistake, I've gotta pay for it now so when I first come prison yeah, my mum and dad were unhappy but slowly they're settling down with it so… I speak to them every day.*

Key to Anwar's relationship with his family is his admission that 'I made a mistake, I gotta pay for it now…'. Having left a job working with his uncle following an argument, he wanted to prove his independence. He had pleaded guilty at the first opportunity and made no excuses for himself, saying only that he wanted to make money, quickly and that it became difficult to stop. His willingness to admit to his 'mistake' enables the family to come together again, to function as a unit supporting him as he proves he is worthy of their forgiveness, or re-entering the sanctum of the family.

For those who maintained their innocence family support was equally important, with the added dimension that 'they know me for who I *really* am'. Will and Thomas both describe unequivocal support from their families. In Will's case, this included his mother's suggestion that they sue the victim. Thomas described his family members attending court, en masse:

> *Family are the ones that gather round you, they went to court with me, every single one of my family members went to court with me - half of them couldn't even fit in the fucking courtroom because there was so many of them, my cousins were there, brothers was there, my mum and my dad…Everyone was there. Loads of them, come to court, just to support me you know what I mean?*

This show of solidarity gave Thomas strength but must have looked intimidating to others in the court - the victim, the jury, the gallery. Thomas, so focused on the wrong done to him, was unable to see that. He described his family as feeling 'wounded…because I'm in here and I shouldn't be. They're all sticking by me. They love me to bits and I love them to bits for it'.

Will, on the other hand, said he felt no bitterness towards the 'victim'; saying maybe she

lied 'because she is from a good family'. He reinforced his claim of innocence by reference to a narrative broadly accepted by young people - 'girls lie' because they are afraid of being punished by parents, or stigmatised by others. This narrative of female sexuality is never open to challenge - there are no young women there to speak for themselves and the women surrounding these young men - in Will and Thomas's case their mothers - support their view.

In accepting the claim of innocence, the family are able to rebuild the sanctum but also create an imaginary privacy, in which the family can see what is invisible to outsiders - that the young person is innocent. A sexual offence may have been particularly unpalatable to admit to families with whom they had a close and loving relationship. Would Will's mother and Thomas's brothers, cousins and other family have been so supportive had Will or Thomas admitted they were guilty? Could they have maintained a semblance of family had they believed their sons guilty? Thomas says he would not be able to cope without his family, which may be a factor in maintaining his innocence.[5] Both were serving determinate sentences so release was not contingent on them engaging in offence-related work or 'taking responsibility'.[6]

Brown (2017) describes the particular stigmatisation experienced by families of people convicted of sexual offences, with the points of conviction and release especially traumatic and made worse by lack of information or formal support. There is a lack of formal support for families of those convicted of any serious crimes, since the collapse of Aftermath in 2005.[7]

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[5] I do not rule out the possibility that Thomas, Will or any others were in fact innocent.

[6] Maintaining innocence is not a legal barrier to release by the Parole Board, although not engaging in programmes can make it difficult to evidence risk reduction to a level that will enable progression or release.

[7] Aftermath was a national support group for the families of those convicted of serious crimes. It closed in 2005 due to lack of funding. See Howarth and Rock (2000) for a detailed analysis of the work of Aftermath and the difficulties faced by families as well as the challenges in providing support.

Aaron was convicted, on a joint enterprise basis, of a murder he said was committed by another person during a fight that he admitted to being part of. The sentencing judge said he could not be sure who wielded the knife. Aaron accepted responsibility for his part but had not yet told his younger sister why he was in prison.

> *Aaron: My sister don't really know what I'm in jail for, she don't know how long I've got. When she grows up she'll have to know and, she'll find out one day. I don't know what age is the right age to tell her…she asks my mum "when is Aaron gonna be home". My mum says "oh, we're not sure at the moment." when she's old enough to know, yeah. But when is that age, when would you say that age is?*

Aaron's question - 'when you would *you* say that age is?' was a rare show of explicit uncertainty. The question also references his sense of responsibility for telling her - here and elsewhere Aaron gave the impression that his sister's welfare a shared responsibility between himself and his (their) mother. Later, his sister took part in a television talent show and was offered a recording contract. He wrote *'my only fear is that she starts getting big and they bring me and my past up'*. The naming of young people convicted of serious crimes, justified by appeals to 'open justice' and 'public interest' appears to be increasingly common (Fitz-Gibbon and O'Brien 2016). Protection of family members - including children - from the potential harm caused by reporting restrictions is a matter of discretion rather than case law and definitions of harm are vague (Hart 2014). Aron also points to the ease with which his name and photograph can be found online. Gibbs (2012) suggests that the durability of social media turns the naming and shaming of young people into a life sentence. In England and Wales courts have taken a largely punitive approach to convicted children and young people (Stone 2015) extended to family members, and indefinitely.

Fathers and fatherhood

While respondents usually maintained some relationship with their mothers, very few had

ongoing relationships with their fathers.[8] A number of participants had grown up with siblings born to their mothers but of different (absent) fathers. Respondents described left with a residual impression of paternity as a fleeting experience rather than a commitment. The absence of fathers was rarely remarked upon by respondents - most claimed not to need or want paternal involvement – yet several talked of their own role as fathers, or potential fathers.

Anwar, Jerome and Ben had children of their own and Gary claimed to have a child that he was not allowed contact with. Only Anwar described himself as in a relationship with the mother of his child; Jerome had contact with his son but a fractious relationship with the mother, whom he referred to as his 'BMs'.[9] This was further complicated by the fact that her sister was Jerome's co-defendant.[10] Ben's former girlfriend periodically claimed the child was not his, something he found hurtful but untrue. All three stated their desire to do well in prison and get out as soon as possible so they could be present fathers to their children.

> Anwar: I'm looking to change, I have to think of my daughter. I don't want people saying 'her dad's been in prison'. Right now, I can't do what I feel like doing… I have to think of two more people.

> Jerome: I sit down in my cell and just think 'what am I doing' I've got a baby now… I need to get out, get a job and that, make sure I can provide for my baby, and the mum and that, my family.

Being able to provide for loved ones was a key part of some respondents' identity. Louie, like many others, had not been taken care of by his own father but seemed confident that he could do better when he had his own child.

> Louie: I can look after someone…I can defend them. I know you're thinking… When I was on road, it's highly likely that I'd defend someone violently. I've come jail and now I've thought, nah, it's not everything. I can defend someone not reaching for violence first. Yeah, I can look after them. They need clothes,

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[8] Seth's father was his main visitor. Once sentenced, Joe had some contact with his father, albeit restricted to 'rehabilitation' and concern that he maintained his Christian faith.

[9] BMs - babymother.

[10] This must have made her life very difficult - the two people she was closest to separately in prisons a long way from home and from each other and her with a new baby, who was later diagnosed with Asperger's.

> *they need food, they need love. I can do all that. Especially, if I know it's my*
> *baby. I'd do anything for my baby. I'm definitely having one when I come out.*

The simplicity with which he describes a child's needs underlines the tragedy of his own past. Having come to prison from foster care, his relationship with his mother strained by her mental illness, and with no knowledge of his father, Louie insisted 'I can do things on my own.' He would 'do anything for my baby', despite little experience of what it meant to have someone 'do anything' for him. Louie received money from his social worker and he regularly sent money to his mother and older sister and her child. Similarly, Jerome (who, in the previous chapter, described providing financial and emotional support to his younger brother) had seen little demonstration of paternal responsibility.

> *Jerome: My dad lives in Manchester… he was a waste man, when my mum needed help*
> *and that… Took him about six months to get it man… what was the point? I never saw eye*
> *to eye with him from young. I just didn't really like him to be honest. He said he was a*
> *father, he said he was this but… where was he when I needed help?*

An older brother had fulfilled the role of father figure and Jerome then took this role for his younger brother:

> *Jerome: It's only cos I don't want my little brother doing what I do innit?*
> *Instead of asking mum, if you need something just ask me and I'll grab it for*
> *you, even if it cost dough.. just ask and you can get it innit? If I can't get it then*
> *I'll ask one of the bigger brothers. Instead of putting stress on my mum cos*
> *she's got bills…I started from young. Cos obviously, my brothers went jail.*
> *Then, I see like my mum stressed and that... crying… 'And I'm like she needs*
> *pees and that'.[11]*

The desire to create a close and loving family is rarely discussed in relation to young men, particularly young men in prison. Conventional accounts of prison masculinity privilege violence and suppressed emotions, suggesting a toxic masculinity that is highly damaging. Anderson (1993) describes young parenthood as a result of the sexual prowess that replaces economic success as a mark of manhood for poor - usually black - young men. In Anderson's account, young women who become pregnant are left abandoned, but able to access welfare and set up homes on their own. Yet Anwar, Jerome and Louie were concerned here with presenting themselves as able to take care of others – parents,

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[11] 'pees' - money

siblings and real or desired offspring, reflecting both traditional masculine traits and a certain kind of modern manhood, distinguishing between sexual prowess and familial responsibility. Several years after these interviews, Jerome's tariff was reduced on the basis of 'exceptional progress'. He had participated in parenting programmes and maintained a relationship with his son despite the difficulties in doing so (see Moran et al 2016). Parenthood, for him, created a possible future self (Meek 2007) and in a real and imaginary sense provided a bridge to a new life.

To what extent were Anwar, Louie and Jerome's accounts influenced by their perceptions of me, an older white woman? It is possible that all were keen to portray themselves positively, as grown men. But for most of these young men being a man, being a father did not mean being around for their child. Of all the respondents, only Seth and Dion remained in regular contact with their fathers. Johnson and Young (2016) argue for a reclaiming of black fatherhood, in light of changing structural conditions and cultural expectations of fathers and perhaps Jerome and Louie's motivations reflect this. Each had siblings by multiple fathers, none of whom had stayed around.

Perhaps my social distance, as an older, 'posh' white woman made it easy for them to show the gentler sides of themselves, but young men were not afraid to be all the parts of who they were. Like anyone else they just selected who to show themselves to, and when. The fact that I was temporary and had no power over them made me safer to talk to than other adults.

Things fall apart

Not all respondents enjoyed close relationships with their family, and even those who had been close at the outset could find contact dwindling over time and as they moved further from home. Respondents tended to accept the absence or infrequency of visits and even discouraged them at times, in recognition of the time and cost of travel – Shem had

told his mother to visit only when a friend could drive her as it was too long a journey for her to make alone. Rhys' grandfather had health problems that made travel uncomfortable. Jamie even avoided phone contact with his mother, saying that weekly visits was enough.

Even those who enjoyed contact sometimes found it too painful a reminder of their separation and the things they were missing out on.

> *Dion: Like, when I'm on the phone, sometimes when people are like "call me tomorrow sometime" I say I can't... I could call them but I don't want to cos they're doing certain things I would have always done, like going college, parties and that stuff that I'm missing, and that I'm gonna miss.*

Initially Dion he kept in written contact with as many friends as possible - a comforting reminder of who he really was. Receiving post is an important event, a marker of time and a reminder of one's own existence and a signal to others that you are someone worth writing to. Social support is an obvious coping strategy (Reed et al. 2009) and can reduce the acute stresses of imprisonment (Jiang and Winfree 2006).

However, Dion and others described separation from friends outside as a useful test, a process by which they came to know who their true friends were:

> *Dion: Certain people have gone to my house and seen how my mum is and that. I respect that, so I call them. Other people that know where I live and that ain't gone to speak to my mum or nothing like that, I just don't talk to them.*

> *Louie: When I come out… I know who my friends are, people that write me and come visit me, they're my friends. know a lot of people yeah… and now, I know people...that I can count on my fingers, on my hands. That's mad innit?*

Both Dion and Louie quantify the value of friendship in how much friends do for them. There is a bleak irony in this, given that friends and acquaintances and the consuming, disinhibiting nature of group interaction and the legal minefield of 'joint enterprise' is so often a feature of the crimes that led these young people to jail. For example:

> *Aaron: I just got dragged into some of the wrong stuff. No one forced me to do anything but it was this sort of… Not peer pressure, but sort of just following, being a sheep.*

> *Jermain: Basically, someone got stabbed - they know I didn't stab the person but they say   just because I know the people, I was involved…but I was nowhere near the scene. Basically, there's people that's got blood on them, people that was at the actual thing what happened, they had blood on them, and I got arrested with them three hours after…*

Jermain's description may minimise his involvement, but it is legally feasible - and not uncommon - for a person not present to be convicted of the same crime as the person who carried out the act). Like several others, prosecuted in the same way, the attenuated nature of their involvement created its own challenge to the legitimacy of their imprisonment. Of relevance here is the way in which particular associations are criminalised and particular actors identified as gang-involved. Williams highlights the unreliability of gang-identification, citing a police officer's definition of an active gang member as someone who '…might not have done anything wrong but…he's putting himself forward as a target' (2015: 29). This highlights the ways in which some individuals are interpellated as dangerous and simultaneously denied access to any assessment of vulnerability. Though explicitly denied by those managing data in either police forces of Wearside, interpellation is underpinned by presumptions about young black men's inherent criminality. These presumptions are legitimised via resource intensive gang-fighting activity that yields convictions and the cycle thus continues.

Association and race as evidence of inherent criminality is not new but was in renaissance at the time of fieldwork, with a a spike in young people killed violently and rise in the number of multi-handed murder prosecutions.[12] Heightened concerns about gangs meant all young people were scrutinised for signs of involvement - from nicknames to trainer colours, graffiti to language. Some of this seemed farcical, but I did misread terms of address. 'Bredrens', 'blood/blud', and 'fam' suggested a highly bonded conception of friendship. For those convicted as a result of their proximity to legal or physical danger with friends, at the time of the crime and whilst in prison, this seemed to

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[12] Including a case where 21 defendants were prosecuted for murder in five separate trials. They were not an identifiable 'gang', but school friends and the murder was triggered by an argument at school.

hold water, yet over time it became clear that these words were used to convey peaceable intentions or refer to people without using their name, more frequently than to indicate deep attachments. No-one would refer to an enemy as bredren, but a true friend would most likely be called a friend. Changed circumstances and the passing of time prompted reflection on the nature and meaning of friendship. Aaron was the only respondent who admitted to being part of a gang, and he emphasised the difference between friendship or social groups and gangs. He was convicted alongside several others, one of whom was also in Wearside, He described how their friendship had waned over time:

> *Aaron: Yeah we was friends, more closer friends then than we are now…I don't know, just… I don't really like him as much! [laughs]. He just… still kind of got that young mentality and I can't be bothered with his bullshit.*

He also consciously avoided contact with other friends, both outside and in:

> *Aaron: I just try to keep myself to myself you know, at the moment. Like, some people I just can't see a point in speaking to them. Back then I just wanted to… I don't know, I was just wild bruv.[13]But now, I'm just more humble, more laid-back.*

Aaron seems to suggest that, as he has grown wiser – become 'humble, more laid-back' – he no longer needs the validation of others. This could be seen as a natural progression; as Aaron grows up his priorities change. Louie recalled telephone calls to friends who were doing the same thing at the start of his sentence as they were midway through - 'just jammin''[14]. This frustrated him. They had opportunities and were wasting them, but also he felt he had grown up and they had not. Rhys also limited contact with friends outside but for slightly different reasons.

> *I might write a letter to one of them soon though.. I know where they live, they'll still be living there when I get out, so I'll go and see 'em when I get out… I still hear from my friends, my cousins… cos obviously, they're from my area, my friends still ask about me, some friends know where I am… And 'yeah, tell everyone who's asking I'm coming home soon yeah' Obviously, I always say soon, soon…*

Rhys believes his friends will 'still be living there' when he is released, there is no sense

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[13] Aaron referring to me as bruv indicates how arbitrarily these words are used.

[14] 'Jammin' – relaxing

of needing to maintain a friendship with them. They may well still be there but his reticence suggests an unwillingness to confront the reality – that he was serving an indeterminate sentence with no release date. Jermain was similarly sentenced and with no family in the UK he maintained telephone contact with his mother in Jamaica. He was in contact with foster carers and described friends who he relied upon for financial and some emotional support, but refused visits.

> *Jermain: they wanna, but I don't want no visits. When I start getting all these visits I know this IPP's kicking in… But if I don't have any visits then I just think "rah, I'm gonna appeal it, I'm gonna be out in a little while so there's no point coming to visit me". It's that mentality, I've gotta stay with that mentality though… When I start having all these visits and all these goodbyes and that, that's when I know "It's kicking in".*

Jermain's decision was strategic, visits - and especially goodbyes - would bring the reality of his situation into being. He was protecting himself. Avoidance is a common symptom of post-traumatic stress (Bisson et al 2015) and was particularly evident in the way young people managed relationships with family and friends. For some then, deliberate withdrawal from relationships outside is a form of resistance or self-protection (Cohen and Taylor 1972; Dixey and Woodall 2011; Flynn 2010).

Allies, associates and alliances

In the absence of satisfying relationships with family or friends outside many young people focused on forming alliances in jail, either through necessity or habit (Corley 2001). Most respondents came from areas variegated by crime, knew people who had gone to prison and many encountered acquaintances, school mates, neighbours or cousins on arrival in jail (Crewe 2009; Earle 2011; Flynn 2010). These connections made adaptation easier as they offered security and ready-made networks of who could vouch for them and, perhaps, circumvent challenges necessary to establish an identity.

> *Dion: One of my cousins was there [Feltham] yeah, he was there…then he*
> *buss case[15] and he went. From that I knew a couple boys he used to chill*
> *with there.... then a lot of people, from my area that were older than me*

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[15] 'Buss case': be acquitted, or charges dropped

> *were there as well.... So, everything was calm for   me.*[16]

Building relationships with new people required a cautious approach:

> *Jermain: When you try to become friends with people too quickly, that's when people just think you're tryna beg friends or shit like that… Obviously if you're new to the jail you're gonna be on your own for a little while, if you don't know anyone, and after a little while   you get to know a few people, that's how it goes. But you get them kind of people that try   and get to know someone the same day they come… It just doesn't work. In the youth club, that would work - first day come, try to get to know people, yeah that would work, but   prison it's a total different atmosphere..*

Jermain was highly conscious of the atmosphere that pervaded prison life, although others alluded to it. Efforts to create a 'community' on Cypress, including weekly meetings at which residents were encouraged to raise issues and solve them as a group, were largely unsuccessful. The meetings took place weekly during morning association, when most residents preferred to stay in bed. Young people mixed predominantly with others from their home area or nearby, and this created the impression of a racial split, with black young people rarely mixing with white young people.

> *Louie: It's not like we say 'I'm not gonna hang around with the white ones' - it's not that, it just happens. We've   got more in common with each other than them. Them other people, they act stupid… they're childish. Like, laughing when they're having food fights yeah, the govs   don't say anything, don't say stop playing around. You know, we're not childish, we just sit there, bust a couple jokes… Them they're LOUD! Argh, they just get on my nerves.*

Louie's perception of white young people as 'childish', reflects elements of the carceral habitus described in Chapter 4 - particularly humility and the presentation of self. His description of 'them other people' (by which he means white young people) as childish engages the complex intersection of age, place and race. As discussed in Chapter 2, black children are more likely to be misidentified as older (and therefore less innocent) than white children. (Epstein et al 2017; Goff et al 2014; Ferguson 2001). Though Louie is clearly proud of his maturity, it exposes him to more frequent sanctions than his 'childish' white peers. Other phrased this as 'Anton or Winston won't get away with it but Jack or Harry might'.

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[16] This is perhaps a little disingenuous as Dion was transferred to Cypress after his case papers were found by another prisoner and details about his offence disseminated. However it is possible that his associations protected him but that the prison felt it too risky for him to stay.

Reconnecting with familiar faces is both a help and a hindrance. It offers security fun and a connection to outside, with little need to modify the self. Yet it requires some commitment, primarily to committing acts of violence when required, as described in the previous chapter. Association with some will almost always place an individual in conflict with others and their loyalty will be tested. For many, having grown up in areas where violence is an everyday occurrence, these struggles are accepted as inexorable. By not problematising violence, young people never have to confront the difficulty of avoiding it, something that would require a degree of self segregation. Acts of danger or illegality are conceptualised as 'putting in work'; this is not solely about friends passing leisure time together but colleagues labouring together. For Jermain and Lloyd, both isolated from family outside, this labour created meaning out of a bare and fractured existence. Others similarly isolated lacked the social capital - or the will - to engage in fighting as a way to create meaning and relied instead on other techniques. Joe occupied himself by writing a book, Seamus honed a fantasy life in which he was in regular contact with his birth family. Although visibly different, these ways of managing social life were all rooted in the extension of habitus from outside to in. Over time, each developed a the practical logic needed to negotiate the field but prison did not fundamentally change the character of these young men. They came to embody the characteristics of carceral habitus in broadly similar ways but they each brought to it their own biographical particulars. Joe could not become a fighter, Jermain could not stop being one. Despite the differences in constructing relationships, the components of satisfying association remained constant, if elusive: trust, honesty and truth.

Trust

An individual's choice of associates reflects back on him, and so trust - that someone is who he says he is, will do what he says he will do - is imperative. Some respondents suggested that trust was more important inside than out, that proximity demanded trust.

> *Dion: On the outside you're more free to do what you want. If you don't trust someone,   you don't have to be with him. But in jail if you don't trust someone you have to be with them, so therefore if I'm with you, I have to be able to trust you...Sitting down with you, have to build trust so it's more important.*

This is especially important for those who fight together, because they need to be able to rely on others to protect them. Trust is built through other connections - once a person proves himself, his judgement of others can be relied upon, to an extent. For those with criminal associates and a reputation outside, social and cultural capital is provided through tales of past endeavours and misdemeanours and the capacity of others to vouch for them, in much the same way as extracurricular activities and shared cultural references would create bonds between new university students, away from home for the first time and seeking an independent identity and new social network.

> *Lloyd: Obviously, if my close friend can trust you then I can probably trust you as well. But there's certain people I don't trust. Just, what they've been like previous occasions and that...Obviously rumours and that.*

Lloyd indicates the need to remain vigilant - someone may be pre-approved by others, but he can still be untrustworthy, and it is possible for trust to be undone by rumours, in the absence of reliable information. This lack of information leads to the emphasis on the presentation of self and an emphasis on proving oneself 'real'. 'Realness', a term derived from American hip-hop culture, is used to denote authenticity and integrity. Hip-hop's preoccupation with realness has been explained as function of its origin as a cultural expression of a socially and economically marginalised African Americans (Dyson 2004) and a way of resisting assimilation (McLeod 1999). 'Realness' is a display of sameness between peers that challenges institutional norms while signalling to similar-minded individuals that they can be trusted - 'real recognise real'. Yet Lloyd's description underlines the fragility of these associations. exacerbated by the knowledge that some fellow prisoners have committed shocking crimes.

> *Dion: And then when you find out the extent of what they've done as well… It's not just like - I don't wanna say normal rape but if you know what I mean, they were proper like, attack the person… I didn't think of the extent …People attack grannies and that… But why would you want to do that? She ain't done nothing to you! [On Cypress] you meet people that are crazy…Done the craziest things.*

Honesty (at the appropriate times and to the the appropriate audience) becomes invaluable. But honesty often has consequences, a dilemma well illustrated by the

predicament of those convicted of sex offences.

Honesty

Young men convicted of sex offences were encouraged by staff to construct a cover story but the truth was frequently exposed - by others from the same area (as happened to Dion), holes in the concocted story or prisoners asking family or friends to search the internet for information on others. Honesty was assumed to place a young person at risk of reprisals, yet respondents often said that it was lack of honesty displayed by these prisoners that made them angry. It made it difficult to believe claims of innocence, justifications or remorse. Dion's presents an interesting example because few believed his proclaimed innocence following his initial lie.

> *Aaron: Just be honest the first time. The first time [Dion] came here he was like "GBH" but Jermain and him is from the same area so Jermain found out and we questioned him. That's what made me think he done it because, he was like "yeah, but it wasn't me". And then it was another two weeks later 'til we found out it was a boy innit… So then it even got worse. Why you didn't say in the beginning "Oh, my friend done this to a guy, I was in the area and then I got arrested"? Then I might have believed him but now, fuck that. The first time Nicky was like "yeah look, me and this girl used to do this" - I can't even remember what the story was but the first time, you feel me, he came out with it. But he could even be lying, I don't know man, I don't really care. It's not my shit to get involved with. It bothers me a little bit at the back of my head… But I don't really care no more.*

This further highlights the fragility of association, as well as the complexity of identifying who is credible. Aaron associated with Nicky every day, but here he says 'he could even be lying'. This is a breach of trust, something I am not sure he would have said to Nicky's face. Aaron suggests that telling the truth at the outset would have been likely to serve Dion better than lying about his offence, yet Dion himself did not acknowledge this, describing a level of trust between the Cypress residents (above). The nature of Dion's conviction confounded others. He had been transferred to Cypress when his case papers were found by another young person and he became a target – including by Kieron, himself convicted as part of a group rape – for a short time. Following Jermain's intervention Dion was largely left alone on Cypress, though mentions of his name in

interviews were met with a smirk.

Respondents vocalised their repulsion for sex offences, yet many argued that there are two sides to every story and that it was impossible for them to know the truth because they were unable to access enough information. Truth - the ability to access or ascertain it - was a commodity.

Truth

Trust requires a level of confidence that a person is telling the truth about who he is. This might mean the truth about where he is from, who he knows or his achievements - legal or otherwise. Both Seamus and Ricky recounted, in interview, detailed life stories that were entirely fabricated. Ricky changed his regularly but Seamus perfected his over time, adding details and developments. Rhys acted as if he wanted to fight Seth but, when the opportunity arose, he backed away. Everyday untruths, great or small, eroded trust between respondents and those who frequently told lies, or half truths, were taken less seriously by staff or young people. Being truthful - although not necessarily open - was generally viewed as a sign of maturity by staff and more evidence of 'realness' by respondents.

The difficulty in ascertaining the truth makes it difficult for prisoners convicted of serious offences to judge others for their crimes, particularly if they reject the their own conviction: 'I'm innocent, he could be innocent too'. This was further complicated by individual factors. The prevailing cultural attitudes towards sex offences as abhorrent and unforgivable but behaviour towards those convicted of sex offences did not always reflect those attitudes.

Though others claimed to dislike Dion because of his offence - the sex of the victim rendering the crime beyond neutralisation – others were exempted. Connor had broken

into a woman's home and raped her at knifepoint, rendering all neutralisations invalid, yet his offence did not affect his standing in the group. Louie and Aaron both suggested that this was because they had grown to like him before the offence was revealed, and that he had appeared remorseful when telling them. Gary and Stephen were both identified as vulnerable due their convictions and moved around the prison separately from the rest, for their own safety. Gary had beaten a woman unconscious before attempting to rape her. Stephen had sexually assaulted two children. Gary's unusual surname, published after he was convicted meant he was easily found online and was confronted and forced to admit his conviction (allegedly based on information provided by Aaron's mother). Gary was upset and staff anticipated serious repercussions, though none came. Truthfulness seemed to somehow minimise the antipathy towards Connor and Gary.

Despite this, not everyone was comfortable telling the truth about their conviction. Thomas had maintained a cover story since his arrival in secure and, despite numerous examples of others being outed, was adamant he could keep his going:

> *Thomas: [The truth] for me is just not an option… Why should I? Then I'd cause problems for myself wouldn't I? As soon as they tried to stick it on me like that, I'll stick it back on them - I'm different to Gary, that's the thing, me and Gary are two different people. I wouldn't be like Gary.*

Thomas is keen to emphasise here that he would not tolerate what Gary had. Implicit in his repetitive insistence that he is 'different to Gary', that they are 'two different people' and that he 'wouldn't be like Gary' is the notion that he - Thomas - would fight back. He is suggesting that lying about his conviction is not to protect him from stigma, but to prevent him having to fight.

Conviction alone was not sufficient to ostracise someone. Reasons for acceptability were not transparent - for example, there was no clear correlation between doubt about guilt and the circumstances of the case. Rupert had climbed through a window and raped the girl who lived there. Nicky and two others had shown a girl a knife and then filmed

themselves raping her in a stairwell. Kieron and eight others had taken a girl between blocks of flats, filming themselves raping her in different locations. None of these boys had obvious difficulties related to their conviction, despite the circumstances not easily lending themselves to the defence of 'girls tell lies'.

I was curious about how these decisions were made and asked all respondents, repeatedly, how it came to be. None could clearly explain, saying that 'if you already like him, then it's hard to change' or 'girls tell lies'. What follows then is my own interpretation of how these judgements were made. In all cases, the boys maintained that the girl had consented at the time but 'girls tell lies' seemed to carry a much greater weight for black young people convicted of rape. Rupert, Nicky and Kieron seemed to overcome the stigma of their conviction through conforming to acceptable codes of violence - fighting with and for others - which enabled them to be seen as more than simply 'a rapist'. It seemed that as black young people, and from London, they were more easily able to access group fighting as a form of identity restoration. The social capital accrued through their fighting, alongside their identity as black young people from London, connected to known others inside and outside the prison, imbued them with the 'social energy' (Bourdieu 1986: 241) to circumvent - if not quite overcome - the stigma of their conviction.

Connor was the only white young person on Cypress regularly in the company of black young people. Unlike most white young people on the wing he fought collectively for others and himself. Aaron one day said that if there was a war, he'd like Connor to be fighting alongside him because 'he's a madman but he won't let you down.' Connor had been convicted of breaking into a woman's home and raping her, before stealing her car. When I asked Louie why continued to associate with Connor he could only say 'I dunno, I just like him'. He seemed embarrassed by the question as if there was a discomfort there but he was unwilling to address it.

This technique of overcoming stigma was more difficult for white young people who lacked the social capital of a fighting group - but it was not impossible for those. Will was highly regarded by black young people for his strength and size, Connor known as fearless - 'a madman' - in a fight. Thomas and other white young people never quite managed it and were seen as tainted by young people with non-sexual convictions.

I return though to Dion who confounds any hard and fast rules. The usual caveats about 'girls' could not apply to him. Others knew of his conviction but this did not prevent them associating with him and, from what I saw publicly, nothing was said. In interviews, I asked Aaron, Louie and Jermain about this. Each articulated the tension around Dion's conviction but this was tempered by his association with Jermain. That association countered the revulsion felt towards Dion, it counted for more. The weighing of factors in the case of sexual violence - balancing ethnicity, regionality, sexuality and utility - illustrates the importance of authenticity and the ways in which it is judged. Stigma can be overcome but it is by no means guaranteed. But this can change. I visited Aaron a year after he had transferred to a young adult prison and he pointed out that those convicted of sex offenders - 'vulnerable prisoners' - were seated against the back wall of the visits hall. He said that before he had come to prison he thought a rapist was only a certain type of person, but now realised it was impossible to tell.

Conclusion

Maintaining ties with the outside world is of variable importance, dependent on individual circumstances – strength of the relationship, health or financial difficulties – structural constraints such as how far from home one is held and access to visits and telephone calls, and personal decisions about how to manage one's confinement, with some not wishing to face the inevitable goodbye at the end of a visit, and some not wanting even to acknowledge their imprisonment. It is possible that these decisions are influenced, for some, by how well they adapt to the prison environment and the

networks they are or become part of. It seems likely that this particular deprivation is of greater consequence for long-term young prisoners, partly due to the prior experiences and because they have to face it for a longer period of time. In addition, they are convicted of serious crimes that usually appear in the mainstream media, with ongoing - even indefinite - ramifications for the way they and their families are viewed by the wider community.

Understanding the relational aspects of imprisonment requires attention to the effects of proximity and distance. Proximity to other young people does not immediately create closeness - proximity can fuel violence as Dion described in the previous chapter, or intensify the sensation of boredom, described by Jerome in chapter 5. Distance from loved ones, from friends and familiar places can sometimes deepen emotional connections with outside. The proximity of others with similar experiences - being from the same area, having attended the same schools or youth clubs, having acquaintances or friends in common - can be ontologically reassuring: the world outside is not lost. The facets of the carceral habitus are, to varying extents, ways of distancing or suppressing the unpleasant material reality. Relations with others outside and inside, whether loved ones, staff or other prisoners requires an imagining of both the absent present and the future, and respondents illustrated this through their descriptions of the effect (or not) on their families even if they had never discussed it with them.

Davidson and Milligan describe emotions as the 'connective tissue' that links individual experience with physical space (2004: 254). That connective tissue is a part of the carceral habitus. Prison is experienced in myriad ways and one of the hardest to uncover is how it 'feels' to be in prison. Emotions are revealed through coping strategies and decision making but they are most exposed in the inter-relationships between prisoners and their loved ones, and between prisoners and their peers. The variety of ways young prisoners manage these relationships highlights how the carceral habitus is shaped by an emotional geography that extends beyond the prison wall. Young people draw on their biographies -

whether this means relying on a close and supportive network of family or friends, or shutting others out to avoid the pains of separation and loss. Most respondents had experienced the loss or absence of significant figures before entering prison but the separation created by imprisonment differs in that maintaining relationships requires a feat of imagination - imagining how the other person is feeling or thinking, what they are doing, what they may do in future. It is perhaps the most demanding aspect, requiring young people to reflect on the consequences of their situation, if not their actions. These reflections were the main area in which respondents described personal growth - 'prison don't change you, you change yourself'. Incarceration itself was oppressive and painful, but ineffective. Seeing how few friends remained loyal, watching mothers or younger siblings struggle, being absent for the early years of their child's life - these pressures stimulated a process that some described as change. It is impossible though to separate this process from the experience of imprisonment, an experience defined spatially, as well as via the intersection of race, age and gender. Davidson and Milligan argue that '…place must be *felt* to make sense. This leads to our feeling that meaningful senses of space emerge only via movements *between* people and places' (2004: 524). This has particular meaning for young prisoners separated from those to whom they are bonded and forcibly held in a hostile environment. The ability to form meaningful relationships with their peers is undermined by complex and ultimately unanswerable questions about trust, honesty and truth. The fratriarchy is built and maintained via shared experiences and an ongoing commitment to violence, whether defensive or offensive. 'Real' relationships are maintained through the management of emotion, learning when and how to express or suppress it and through the shared imagining of the future - Jerome's mother looking forward to him coming home, Louie planning a family with his girlfriend. Emotional closeness or physical affection - as described in chapter 5 - is discouraged or outlawed and the structure and regime of the visits hall makes emotional disclosure and physical contact difficult. Proximity alone does not equal presence: distance alone does not equal absence.

'Jail's not gonna do nothin'…at all' : Conclusion

This thesis is about how young people experience long-term imprisonment and how they draw on their biographies to manage their imprisonment and to imagine and shape their futures. In order to make sense of that it has been necessary to identify some of the socio-legal constructs and practices that locate responsibility with individuals and communities. For example, the practice of gathering intelligence on gangs, and indeed the definition of 'gang' itself. At the time of writing the response to youth violence has once again gained a sense of urgency, although many of the arguments are the same ones rehearsed when I began in 2009. These constructs and practices are themselves rooted in historical and political context in which the response to acts of - or even proximity to - violence by young people is long-terms of imprisonment followed sometimes by deportation. Even cursory examination of these factors highlights the inconsistencies in penal policymaking and the ways in which some harms are elided while others are targeted, how a criminal justice state continues to proliferate even whilst visibly failing on every reasonable measure. Recent analysis of the disconnect between youth justice and human rights discourses (Cunneen et al 2017) have begun to contextualise these issues and the preceding chapters have provided empirical evidence of these inconsistencies.

Though the number of young people serving long sentences is small, I have argued that their predicament speaks to wider issues in how we manage young people in conflict with the state, and indeed in other precarious positions. Despite efforts to reduce the population over the last seven years, the level of violence and self harm in prisons for young people is persistently high, and rising. This is not happening in isolation - in the first 100 days of 2018, 52 people have been violently killed in London alone (BBC 2018). The majority of these deaths were caused by stabbing, despite more and longer prison sentences for carrying knives (Gayle 2018). Hospital admissions for injuries caused by sharp objects have risen since 2015 (Slawson 2018) and many of these go unreported in crime statistics. Suicide is the leading cause of death for men aged 15-49 (NHS 2016). Around 10% of under 16s are diagnosed with a mental health condition, but waiting lists for support are long and most receive no treatment at all (ibid.). Permanent school exclusions have increased every year since 2012; 6,685

pupils were excluded in 2015/16 - almost half with Special Educational Needs. Pupils in receipt of free school meals and Black Caribbean pupils were, respectively, four and three times more likely than average to be excluded. The rate of permanent exclusion from pupil referral units also increased in 2015/16, meaning more children receiving no formal education at all (DfE 2017). One in five young people in London is 'sofa surfing' - that is, sleeping at a temporary address for which they have no tenancy or control - on any given night (London Assembly 2017).

This thesis has advanced a number of overlapping theoretical and empirical conclusions which I set out below.

1. Young people's experiences of imprisonment are understood from the perspective of their own biographies, and studies of youth imprisonment should incorporate this perspective.

2. A particular carceral habitus can be discerned and this practical logic informs the ways young people manage imprisonment and relate to each other.

3. The relationship between biography and habitus is mediated through trauma. Young prisoners exhibit characteristics that may be read as either neurological dysfunction or social adaptation. The interaction between the two should not be overlooked.

4. Young prisoners experience and resist the imposition of racial, class and legal status in specific ways and their resistance is what creates a unique 'prison culture' that is not held exclusively in the institution but travels with young people. Resistance is often realised through violence but young people's recognition of violence is mediated through the same imposed characteristics.

5. Socio-legal structures, including legacy systems of governance, inform youth justice policy and practice in ways that are incompatible with evidence on efficacy or age- appropriateness. Post-colonial perspectives can offer a new framework for understanding how young people respond to imprisonment.

6. Any understanding of youth imprisonment that is bounded by discipline is too narrow in focus; socio-economic, class and legal status, penological and post-colonial history, in particular the creation of a hostile environment for immigrants and their descendants are all fundamental to act

and experience of youth imprisonment.

7. Academics and practitioners interested in improving outcomes for young people in all areas of the criminal justice system should work practical towards a phenomenology of youth imprisonment. At a time when violence inside and outside of prison is in- creasing and intensifying, and reoffending rates are rising, research that engages with the ontology of youth imprisonment and beyond offers opportunities for practitioners to influence and implement desistance focused policies. Sidestepping criminogenic and risk-based analyses and instead positioning young people as experts of their own experience avoids some of disempowerment inherent in research in this setting.

This remainder of the chapter will expand on these inter-related conclusions, grouped in the following way.

1. Biography, habitus and trauma

2. The experience and resistance of imposed class, racial and legal status and prisonisation

3. Beyond the (purely) sociological imagination

4. Impelling the phenomenology of youth imprisonment.

Biography, habitus and trauma

I have argued that young people draw on their biographies to manage imprisonment and to imagine and shape their futures. Having navigated difficult pre-prison lives, these young men have developed strategies to manage difficult emotions, social interactions and problem solving. These may not always be positive or effective but they are shaped by outside experience rather than by the prison itself. Prison is yet another obstacle to overcome, achieved by relying on tools and techniques learned outside. The structure and regime of the prison provides little time or opportunity to be different. Programmes and activities have little relevance to individual's personal development or their reasons for committing crime. Connor was allocated to a car theft group because, after raping a woman in her own home, he had stolen her car to escape. His unpredictable behaviour saw him categorised as 'lone staff awareness', meaning he could not undertake one-to- one work with the specialist sexual

offences worker. There were no activities for young people convicted of violent crimes.

Despite these biographical particulars, these unique characteristics, each of these respondents - and others - went on to describe a set of recognisably similar practices. Authenticity, humility, presentation of self, displacement and expectation management – the practices I have grouped as the carceral habitus - all have their roots in individual approaches to problem solving but each are influenced by observing others and seeing what is effective. The Quaker ideal of prison time spent locked up and alone, in order to reflect, was barely evident. The willingness - or ability - to reflect is influenced by prior experience and biographical particulars. Growing evidence suggests that adverse childhood experiences have an impact on cognitive, physiological and emotional development (Lyons et al undated; De Bellis And Zisk 2014). Young prisoners have disproportionately experienced adversity in childhood.

Post-traumatic stress symptoms include loss of memory, intrusive thoughts, nightmares and insomnia (Van der Kolk 2014) - exposure to violence even as a perpetrator can produce similar symptoms (Welfare and Hollin 2012). Young people described time spent alone as difficult and they managed it in different ways - from praying to watching television to sleeping. Most became pre-occupied with events in Wearside as distraction. In contrast, Joe watched and reflected on his place in this alien world. Joe had no experience of state control, having never been in care, excluded from school or arrested. Ostracised from his family following his crime[1] Joe turned inwards, as he had always done, and wrote reams of pages of a fantasy novel, set partly in a prison. Will also lacked experience of institutional life, of professional caregivers or repressive welfarism (Phoenix 2009) but turned to the gym as a way to cope. Naturally strong and able to build his physique quickly - to the envy of many - he was able to carve out a space for himself. Going to the gym made him well known to black young people - who more often attended than white young people - and this made it easier for him to negotiate prison despite a conviction for rape.

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[1] The attempted murder of his sister.

Neither Will nor Joe knew anyone in the prison when they arrived, nor anyone who had been there before them. In this, they were unusual. Most respondents had family, friends or acquaintances who had been or were in prison and their impressions - though not always accurate - were formed from that second hand knowledge. Dion, successful at school and happy at home, nonetheless had relatively close experience of prison as he lived in an area riven by violence. On arrival at Feltham, and then Wearside, he found others to associate with and who later protected him from violence. Joe, Will and, to an extent Dion, are anomalies. Most young people in prison are drawn from particular areas (Flynn 2010) and share experience, to varied extents, of exclusion from school, the family home and the legitimate economy. The fact that young people rely on negative experiences from their pasts indicates the failure to identify or effectively intervene at an earlier stage. Young people in prison have, almost invariably, fallen through the cracks of broken welfare systems. Of course not all young people who experience difficult childhoods find themselves in conflict with the law, but the particular circumstances that young people find themselves in immediately prior to prison seems to make imprisonment less of a last resort and more of a hiding place for the failures to protect them before now. By the time respondents were convicted of serious violence they had usually been excluded from mainstream education, lived in multiple households and were often in the care of the state. They lacked the protective factors - a stable family, education or training placement - that might make imprisonment undesirable (in those cases where it is not in fact mandated by law). With nothing left to lose, the very biography that usually precedes an act of serious violence became a reason in itself for imprisonment.

In managing the difficult experiences that had gone before, respondents had learned to manage emotional and often physical pain. This influenced the deprivations that they identified as the pains of imprisonment, detailed in Chapter 5. The material deprivations of imprisonment are well known and I had expected these to play a significant role in young people's experience. The denial of material possessions, the accoutrements of capital that most of us take for granted - a mobile phone, money, clothes that tell others some- thing about us - was visibly resisted through the modification of clothing and hair. The physical management of space, whether by a languidly expansive walk or by a distinctive

shout that could only be described as *fortepiano*[2], indicated an energetic determination to overcome the material constraints of the space. Yet all respondents shared that the real punishment is to be found in the atmosphere, being told what to do and when. For Dion, missing his friends' - and his - landmark birthdays was punitive. For Jermain it was the inability to 'say anything for himself'. Most often, prison was simply boring and a waste of time. Jerome was angry because he should be 'out there taking care of my family'. Punishment was experienced relationally more than materially, although the material deprivations were constant reminders of the things that were lost.

The reading of some young people as essentially criminal, along with the consequences of that reading, was identified as a pain of imprisonment in itself. Rhys referred to his paper self - the one written down and kept in cardboard folders in a room he was prevented from going to - as a source of pain: 'that's not who I really am, that's just who they think I am', he said. For Rhys and others on indeterminate sentences, the pain of not being seen as 'who they think I am' had real, practical consequences, making it difficult or impossible to achieve progressive moves or release. The 'power of the pen' (Crewe 2011a) is a function of the diffuse and 'soft' forms of penal power that characterise late 20th and early 21st century prisons and is by no means unique to young prisoners. This is the first time it has been identified by young prisoners, as this study is the first to engage with long sentenced young people in England. It is significant that this pain is felt across the prison estate and underlines the way in which imprisonment for juveniles replicates the adult system, despite legal and practical differences designed to distinguish it. It is also indicative of how contracted out prisons - as Wearside was - enact the same forms of penal power despite the lack of embodied cultural craft seen in public sector prisons. Most staff in Wearside had not worked in other prisons. Young prisoners on shorter sentences may also have been insulated from this pain by regular contact with YOT or social workers who knew them before prison and may have been more attentive to them as individuals. Young men on Cypress were far from home and far from release. Despite YOTs and social workers retaining statutory responsibility for young people in custody, not a single one received a visit from them during his time at Wearside.

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[2] Loud and then immediately soft.

The stories contained in this thesis demonstrate that the cognitive, psychological and emotional effects of trauma underpin the ways young people adapt to imprisonment. Existing assessment tools in the secure estate do not sufficiently account for the neurological effects of trauma, and custodial staff are not required to undertake any specific training (although some is available). Interventions are based on cognitive skills rather than therapeutic interventions. A move towards 'trauma informed' prisons does little to address the trauma inherent in incarceration - separation, isolation and stigmatisation. The latter is particularly significant - the atmospheric shame of criminalisation settles on young people unevenly - some crimes attract more shame, some young people are more sensitive to the label and some found it harder to overcome. Young people who coped well on the surface - who subsumed their difficult emotions through memory loss, avoidance or distraction - were perceived by staff as 'coping well'. When they did act out - by fighting or re- fusing to follow an order - their actions were treated as purely instrumental, rational and intended.

The iterative and ongoing development of habitus underlines its nature as an 'open system of dispositions' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 2002:133), shaping rather than determining social action. The carceral habitus is experienced individually, as well as collectively, necessitating identification of cohesion - or lack of it - between oneself and others. The carceral habitus dissolves the barrier between an individual and the prison, between him and other young people, allowing fragments of individuals to become suspended between the two.

In the substantive chapters of this thesis I have thematically addressed the aspects of imprisonment raised by respondents, citing their own words extensively and grounding them in analysis informed predominantly by Bourdieu's theoretical framework. His notions of field, habitus and capital offer a kind of solvent to dissolve the conceptual divide between the body and the social world - '…'the body is in the social world, but the social world is also in the body' (Bourdieu 1990: 190). Young prisoners have each traversed numerous fields before arriving at the prison and their experiences along the way have given them - to varying extents - a practical logic with which to navigate the world before them. This practical logic is most clearly realised in the carceral habitus. Chapter 4 demonstrated how young prisoners become 'endowed with the habitus' (Bourdieu 1993: 72) of incarceration, developing an

embodied sensibility the enables them to navigate the carceral field. The varied responses of Jamie, Kieron and Joe illustrate the extent to which such embodied sensibility is influenced by each individual's entire social experiences. Joe found comfort in reading a pamphlet about the prison, the idea that there were clear protocols that were set down in black and white and could be pointed to suggested a semblance of order, a certainty he recognised from his earlier life. Kieron was relieved to find that prison was less dangerous than he had been told. It was not a place where 'people get killed'. At least, Wearside was not. Jamie was as numbed to prison as he was to other things in his life. Entry to prison did not change him into someone new.

Young people's experiences of imprisonment are understood from the perspective of their own biographies, and studies of youth imprisonment should incorporate this perspective. A particular carceral habitus can be discerned and this practical logic informs the ways young people manage imprisonment and relate to each other. The relationship between biography and habitus is mediated through trauma. Young prisoners exhibit characteristics that may be read as either neurological dysfunction or social adaptation. The interaction between the two should not be overlooked. Young prisoners have very often experienced adverse childhood experiences including abuse and bereavement. The pains of imprisonment were mitigated through the carceral habitus, by managing emotions and not expecting too much, being humble so as to make life as easy as possible. But adherence to this came to be read by staff as prisonisation, a commitment to a prison code or a criminal way of life. Young people's decisions to manage their sentence without asking for help was read as intractable, evidence of their essentially criminal nature. This had particular significance for black young people, especially those from London who were identified by both staff and some prisoners - black and white - as being more heavily involved in violence. Like habitus, trauma is held in the body (Van der Kolk 2014) and it may be that the techniques I attribute here to an embodied sensibility owe more to an embodied *insensibility:* what may appear to be a concern to manage imprisonment may in fact be an indifference to what happens. Regardless of whether these techniques grow from habitus or trauma, survival depends on adaptation; young people drew on past difficulties including the murder or suicide of a parent, sexual, physical and emotional abuse and abandonment and neglect by those tasked with caring for them.

The experience and resistance of imposed class, racial and legal status and prisonisation

This thesis has contextualised the experience of young prisoners by demonstrating the classed, racialised and regionalised ways in which individuals and communities are responsibilised. This results in particular types of social action being criminalised, and particular types of crime - or criminal actors - being targeted. This 'criminology of the other' (Garland 1996) finds expression too in the elision of economic and social injustice and the denial of the cyclical nature of criminal justice. Imposed features of masculinity - specifically, a working class and/or black masculinity that finds expression in violence, hypersexuality and the physical domination of space - preclude the reading of vulnerability and emotional intelligence. This context helps explain why young people find themselves serving long sentences of imprisonment rather than receiving the types of intensive therapeutic care they might in Spain, the Netherlands or Norway. British criminology has a role to play in changing this, by questioning the forces by which unwanted acts are given meaning and identifying the conditions which work against seeing unwanted acts as crime in need of punitive action (Christie 1998). This can be seen most notably amongst academics and activists working around violence and drug policy reform.

Attention to the ways in which young people rely on their own biography necessitates consideration of how staff and adults in the prison setting draw on their own biographies as well as larger cultural understandings of what constitutes deviance and normality in young people. While the majority of respondents were young men of minority ethnicity, from cities or large towns, prison officers and other staff were largely from the rural area surrounding the prison and were, with two exceptions, white. Young prisoners experience and resist the imposition of racial, class and legal status in specific ways and their resistance is what creates a unique 'prison culture' that is not held exclusively in the institution but travels with young people. Resistance is often realised through violence but young people's recognition of violence is mediated through the same imposed characteristics.

Social relations in prison depend on immediacy and realness - identity is limited to the here and now

and trust, honesty and truth were cornerstones. The difficulty of knowing whether a person was really who they purported to be was raised often. A counterpoint to the pen and ink of official accounts, young people were suspicious of each other until they saw something to convince them of another's worth. Often realness was proved by fighting and a new arrival was marked by a spike in violence. Respondents described their entry to a new prison as marked in the same way, things only settling down once they became known. This could sometimes be avoided by an already trusted party giving their approval of a new face. Presence can be an indicator of realness - and further capital is provided by association with known individuals inside and out. However this was double edged - it could be protective, making challenge by others unattractive, yet also invited challenge from young people who want to show that they were just as 'bad' as any London young person. This contributed to a 'geography of risk' (Shabazz 2015) in which 'London' itself became a byword for violent and, since almost every young person from London was black, the terms became conjoined. This narrow vision of violence left young people alienated from staff, feeling that they had no understanding of why violence occurred or how to resolve it, and that particular young people were treated as 'victims' even though they had been involved in violence at an earlier point. It underlined for some young people that they were not victims, and that victimhood was a weakness, an internal flaw, rather than the result of another's actions. This made it difficult for them to view their victims as such.

In examining the role of violence in Wearside, from the perspective of respondents, it became clear that what appeared to be friendships were in fact functional and pragmatic associations rather than deeply personal. The fragile connections between individuals thrown together can be likened to conviviality (Gilroy 2004), a bristling socialscape that replicates life in the inner cities. The confidence with which young people from cities managed this environment is perhaps reflective of that. Associations were ambivalent and mediated through a language of violence rooted in fear and the need to protect oneself from attack. Intervention from adult professionals was limited to breaking up fights and punishing hose involved - including extra days in prison. Despite the obvious painful aspects of imprisonment, some young people drew on their experience of expectation management to find positive aspects. Lloyd in particular viewed his time in prison as an opportunity to develop a

network and shore up carceral capital. Chapter 6 set out how violence could be used to build and maintain identity and social relations and how it could be protective and defensive as well as aggressive.

In drawing comparisons between life inside and out, young men found prison to be less violent than outside, certainly less violent than they had expected. Prison violence reflects the environments from which prisoners are drawn but the (relative) lack of weapons results in less serious injuries and fewer fatalities.[3] Respondents described violence as unremarkable, a fact of life rather than a choice. Those who were able to embody a disposition that indicated they were 'able but not willing' to fight did so, and others learned it from them. Those who could not credibly embody that found other ways to indicate their unwillingness to fight - Thomas by cleaving to a religious identity, Joe by remaining quiet and watchful, Gary by calmly confronting those who taunted him. Others still were willing - keen even - to fight although even they described it as necessary rather than desirable - a way of defending oneself from further attacks.

Violence - physical, symbolic and structural - was so integral to the prison experience that respondents often did not communicate it in all its forms. Few referred to being restrained as violence, although it became clear that all had experienced it at one time or another. For these young men, violence was not only integral to prison but of life in general. It is in experiences of violence that the nexus of trauma and habitus is strongest. As Louie says in Chapter 7, a child needs 'someone to defend them'. These are young men fighting to defend themselves, surrounding themselves with others who will fight for them for want of anyone to defend them in practical, and useful terms. In accepting the violence that has been done to them, in retaliating with violence and viewing that ongoing cycle as inevitable, young prisoners gain much in prison capital. Fearless and proud. Yet in doing so they block opportunities for change - to be seen as different. They make it hard for already unwilling viewers to see them as anything more than what was written down. This was frustrating to witness as it was evident that even within the

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[3] Although weapons use in prison is increasing and the number of serious assaults is increasing. At the time of writing seven men are awaiting trial for four separate murders committed in prisons in 2017/18.

confines of the carceral habitus there were opportunities for diversity. These are illustrated in Chapter 6 by the stories of Lloyd and Jermain, who illustrate that those who most embody violence are those most able to subvert it and use it in unpredictable - and positive - ways. This was also evident in other respondents' descriptions of what it meant to be a man. Prison masculinity is frequently evoked as toxic but these young men were comfortable describing a masculinity that encompassed more than fighting - for them being a man was about being (or wanting to be) a father, about affection and about protecting weaker members of the community.

The cycle of violence is an internal cycle - a means of communicating with each other, sharing collective and individual identity and growing up through that cycle. It was an unwanted aspect and one that those who considered themselves 'grown' were trying to get out of - 'able, but not willing' was the embodiment of this. The prison as an intervening entity failed to engage with this cycle at all, ultimately perpetuating it by focusing on the only mode of communication available to those trapped within, excluding all other possibilities and influences. The cycle of violence is here racialised and regionalised, as young prisoners cleave to identity markers and are oppressed by them. The burgeoning street habitus becomes embedded as carceral habitus, and because young people in the cycle of violence are highly visible, the carceral habitus becomes somewhat contagious. Identities are stored in practice (Hastrup 1995: 41) and repetitive actions sediment.

Not everyone is trapped in the cycle, not all prisoners are motivated by the same things. But the carceral habitus is informed by racialised and regionalised factors because of the dominant position of violent young people. Their dominance is in part due to the spectacular nature of the forms of violence they are engaged in - group fighting - but also a result of systematic reading of them as 'not victims', 'not vulnerable' and somehow different by virtue of their city of origin (conflated with race). This is important because it means that each prison potentially has a different character - Wearside had a large population of young people from London. Although more young prisoners come from London and the South East than any other region, their distribution across different prisons varies. It would be interesting to see whether young people from, say Manchester or Birmingham, similarly influence the

prisons in which they are dominant.

These young people know that all they need are simple things - clothes, food and love - yet these simple things are so often lacking from their lives. Chapter 7 considers the ways in which young prisoners manage social relations with loved ones outside and develop new relationships inside.

Visitors faced practical and emotional difficulties in getting to and into the prison. Respondents acknowledged this up to a point and sometimes described their shame and discomfort in what they were putting their loved ones through. Where practical, emotional and financial support existed it came mainly from mothers and other female relatives. Dion was close to both parents. Seth described strong relationship with his birth father, who visited fairly frequently. Dion initially kept in regular contact with friends but eventually reduced contact as he found it difficult to think of what he was missing out on. Like others he began to measure friendships in terms of what people could do for him and this led him to seek out associates inside the prison, culminating in a collective protest that ultimately led to the closure of the prison.

Stigma weighed heavily on Dion and was part of the reason he extricated himself from his outside friendships. Rhys felt it too and made no effort to contact friends, because 'they'll still be there when I get home'. Joe lost contact with his family and only friend as a result of his crime - against a family member. For these three, the label of 'criminal' was an uncomfortable burden. They recognised the things they had been convicted of as unpalatable, shameful and difficult to leave behind. In contrast, some young people were able to psychologically resist the label, either because they refused to recognise it - by maintaining innocence or simply regarding themselves as part of a separate system morality, better in some ways and less good in others. In addition, the crimes young people were convicted of often provided at least some capital - group violence against a similar aged male (though on closer inspection the capital could easily vanish - the similarly aged male was often 'a civilian', unarmed and so on). Nonetheless, there were sufficiently worse things that others had done that could ensure some remained at the higher end of the hierarchy. There was no capital to be gained from sex crimes, although some young people were able to overcome the stigma by appealing to a general distrust of girls and women and ideas about female sexuality. This was only effective for boys who had

some other characteristic to be admired - physical strength or size, fighting ability or if association with others with status. Sometimes others could support his account of the girl as a 'slag' or 'a liar'. For others, there was no way of overcoming the stigma of their conviction - in one case because the victims were children, in another because the crime had involved extreme violence against the victim. The ability to overcome was not clear cut and there were examples who confounded the rules. The notion of a hierarchy of crime, in which sex crimes are universally abhorred, was disrupted by several factors. Respondents' concerns about rape convictions then reflect those of many commentators now - chiefly, that it was too easy to be convicted of rape simply on the complainant's word. 'The current approach in English civil and criminal law is that the evidence of one competent witness is sufficient to support a determination for one party or the other' (Gerry 2012). This applies in all prosecutions but is more common in sexual offence cases because of the difficulty obtaining corroborating evidence on either side.

Beyond the (purely) sociological imagination

Critiques of criminology have pointed to its 'failure' since at least the 1980s. From Braithwaite's lamenting the absence of definitive causes of - or solutions to - crime (1989), to the discipline's failure to 'locate the processes of criminalisation within a critique of the advanced capitalist state and its institutions of regulation and control' (Sim et al 1987). More recently, criminological theorising has been accused of dependence on political, rather than scientific, definitions of 'crime' and 'crime control' objects and practices (Carrabine 2000; Rhodes 2001).

All of these critiques are relevant here; criminological perspectives sometimes fail to critique the wider circumstances in which prisons for young people continue to exist yet sociological ones overlook the potential of neuro-science to contextualise some behaviours, or indeed the legal and historical shaping of what we name as deviance. Interest in prisons and prisoners should stretch beyond the discipline and practice of social science - public health, architecture and human geography, education and even sports science are all recent points of departure for researchers looking at prisons and prisoners from different disciplinary perspectives. But few of these question the role and formation of prisons as an entity. A focus on the specificities of prison life can obscure the fact that

prisons do not exist in isolation, nor are they a corollary of crime. Decisions are made about what behaviours should be proscribed in law, what constitutes a breach of the law and how to manage those who breach it. Those decisions are not necessarily rooted in evidence of harm, or logical or scientific responses to it, and the variety of global responses to, for example, drug prohibition in the last decade are evidence of that.

Nor is the current state of child imprisonment an inevitable one; it is based not in evidence but history. This thesis has highlighted the harm in the pre-prison lives of young people serving long sentences and the lack of intervention. All young people in this study have been subjected to harm, all have caused harm to others and I argue all are harmed by their imprisonment. The harm caused to young people in prison is obliquely acknowledged by the drive to reduce the custodial population. Yet it seems that this harm is acceptable when applied to those who have committed acts that attract long-term sentences. I have suggested that the small group of young prisoners sentenced to long terms merit sociological attention beyond the narrow road of crime and punishment and that to understand their circumstances requires interrogation of the term 'criminal' as well as analysis of the legal structures that criminalise particular forms of behaviour. 'Crime' is not central to young prisoners' experience; they talk about actions, about harm and about fears - not crimes.

An holistic understanding of prisons requires attention to the historical, sociological, legal, geographical and psychological context in which prisons exist as well as the personhood of those who reside inside them. Engaging with each of these disciplines is to flex the sociological imagination in its entirety - Mills encourages us to be catholic in considering social problems, cautioning that the loss of the sociological imagination leads to apathy and the uncritical acceptance of moral horror (2000).

The sociological imagination then includes the analysis of the various conflicting pieces of legislation and policy. For example, the separate sentencing of under 18s, ostensibly in recognition of their lesser culpability. Yet sentence inflation means that there are currently a small number of under 18s - and a larger number of under 21s serving longer sentences for murder than adults convicted of the same

crime. Analysis of these sentencing also reveals that some of the longest sentenced individuals are those under 21 convicted as secondary parties in joint enterprise cases. This was revealed almost by accident, in Crewe et al's study of long-term imprisonment from a young age. Their findings - particularly via evidence provided to the Justice Committee (2014) - have significantly shifted the debate on joint enterprise and on the disproportionate number of young black men enmeshed in this complex legal doctrine. In a judgment before the House of Lords in 1998, Lord Hutton made clear that in secondary liability cases 'considerations of public policy...prevail over strict logic' ([1998] 1 AC 1, 14). The Supreme Court has since ruled that the law took 'a wrong turn' in 1982 ([2016] UKSC 8) meaning considerable numbers of people were convicted under a misinterpreted law. Yet the law itself has not changed and no government department has yet begun collecting data on the number of prosecutions or outcomes. Though claimed as a deterrent (Krebs 2010), increasing levels of violent crime (ONS 2018, 2017) might suggest otherwise.

Crewe et al describe how legitimacy is undermined in cases where individual responsibility is unclear (2015). This issue is pertinent given the numbers of young people who convicted of serious violence using a joint enterprise basis - including Aaron, Jermain, Abdi, Jamie, Ricky and the young woman present when Jerome fatally stabbed a man. The application of the law to young, working class men and women, predominantly of colour (Williams and Clarke 2016; Crewe et al 2014) amplifies he sense of injustice. Long sentences mean they will progress through the young adult estate and into adult prisons. Based on the evidence in this thesis it seems reasonable to suggest that the alienation many long sentenced young people feel is not quickly ameliorated on entry to the young adult/adult estate. The current parlous state of English prisons is underpinned by a muddy confluence of factors, but the questionable legitimacy of longest sentences being applied to those who, in law, need not have even been present, must surely be one of them. The legitimacy of state power is not only questioned by those directly subject to it - young prisoners have family members, younger siblings, friends and all come from communities who also question the role of the state in managing crime. The reasons for serious youth violence are myriad, but the discrepancies between state protection and state punitiveness cannot be ignored.

Impelling the phenomenology of youth imprisonment

As these chapters have shown, young people experience long-term imprisonment in complex and nuanced ways, their individual experiences and circumstances informing the ways in which they manage their sentence and how they imagine, and work towards the future. This ethnographic study with long sentenced young men is unique and unlikely to be replicated in the near future due to changes in the way long sentenced young people are accommodated throughout the secure estate. In situating prison within respondent's life stories rather than focusing on prison as the whole story I have sought to position respondents as active agents in their own lives, albeit that the are presently under immense structural constraints. People in prison are not merely disciplined bodies - or at least, no more than any other body. As the carceral habitus comes to be embodied, so does its resistance. In pushing towards a phenomenological understanding of youth imprisonment I encourage a broader discussion about what it means to be a young prisoner - and what it means to be a citizen in a society that condemns young people to long-term imprisonment with no clear purpose.

At the time of writing the government has opened applications for providers to run the first 'secure school', mooted as a 'custodial setting for children which is focused on education and health services' (MoJ 2018). Located on the site of the failed Medway STC, the secure school is hailed by the government as a new, effective and child-focused form of custody - as were STCs in their day. Young people will not be placed there on welfare grounds - meaning they are for punishment. The young people in the preceding pages would think little of secure schools. Thomas would describe it as a cage, Jermain would anticipate the same atmosphere as every other locked institution. Louie would adapt; they all would. What can the findings I've set out here offer to policy and practice? Firstly, focus on the past - build in an understanding of your people's biographies in a way that recognises their complexity, their strengths as well as faults. Acknowledge that being held away from home is traumatising, no matter how difficult home life was. A custodial environment can never replicate home: although young people will appreciate good accessories, recognition that prison is rupturing and temporary is essential. Secondly, focus on the present. The success of any setting depends on the quality of the relationships - between staff, between young people, and between the two. The guide for secure school providers acknowledges this, saying that relationships will be critical to success, Yet,

located in mid-Kent with only vague aspirations for staff training and experience, it is difficult to see how a further iteration of this well worn custodial model will achieve any different outcome. Finally, focus on the future. The most important relationships are between young people and their families, friends and communities outside. No matter what happens in the prison, or secure school, young people will eventually return home - or to some semblance thereof. Prison is part of their story but not the entirety of it, and the MoJ should look to enshrine *listening* to young people in policy and practice.

Their stories matter because they each present versions of resistance to the trap of ontologising imprisonment as an artefact on its own. The reification of 'the prison' and of prison culture effaces the individuals who are most affected by it. A critical phenomenology of young people's imprisonment would refocus on the material practices of intersubjectivity and the passage between the world and the self. In this sense the carceral habitus is a solvent, dissolving the boundary between an individual and the social world but getting to the heart of that habitus is more than observing material practices in the present. An ahistorical understanding of imprisonment misses the point and post-colonial theory and the integration of developing neuroscience offer pathways to change that a a purely social scientific approach cannot. Young prisoners' stories matter because, though imprisonment can seem futureless (Meisenhelder 1985) it is not. They have futures too - even if none of us yet know what they look like.

The experiences of young prisoners reflect the circumstances on the other side of the wall, and these are the circumstances to which young prisoners return on release. Foregrounding young people's lived experience of prison illustrates that the perceived distinction between 'inside' and out is fuzzy and operates differently for individuals, according to their own unique set of experiences. The use of ethnographic methods and months spent in the field provides rich data from which to extrapolate. Understanding imprisonment from an individual's viewpoint is an attempt to get inside and look out, rather than to view prison - or crime - as an artefact in itself. Wearside no longer exists - it is now a prison for adult men - but even if it did, the young men who populate this thesis have moved on, to new

prisons, to outside. Their Wearside - *our* Wearside - is gone. Prison is often conceived as monolithic and unchanging, totalising in its very existence and absorbed osmotically by residents. Through respondents accounts, I have shown that prison is absorbed and resisted in different ways and that the character of prison life is shaped at least as much by those who reside there as by the institutional praxis. Accounts that reify 'the prison' either as a uniquely totalising institution or in isolation from its place in the entirety of the criminal justice system occlude any vision of a different future. Prisons are part of a system of justice that is rooted in social and economic disparity, their residents' experiences, ideas and imagined futures are forged in the fullness of this disparity, not only in prison. Since 2010 when I first met these young men in Wearside, several have been released. Since then, at least six of them have returned to prison, all for serious violence. No doubt they are managing their new sentences in much the same way as they managed at Wearside, being authentic, humble and calm, fighting when they see it 'necessary' and managing their expectations for an uncertain future.

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