



**The contemporary pains of imprisonment:
A study of HMP Grendon**

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Abstract

The pains of imprisonment are a central organising principle of prison research. Crewe's (2011) contemporary pains of imprisonment are indeterminacy and uncertainty, psychological assessment and self-government. Drawing on data from six interviews, this thesis examines how the contemporary pains of imprisonment are experienced at HMP Grendon, a unique therapeutic community prison. Experiences of these contemporary pains were complex, multi-dimensional and often counter-intuitive. The experience of uncertainty was simultaneously exaggerated and ameliorated. The threat of expulsion from the Grendon community is an exaggeration of uncertainty; it is mobilised as an explicit mode of governance. On the other hand, Grendon provides residents with ways of taking control that reduces the anxiety induced by uncertainty. Psychological practices produced two broad types of pain. Therapeutic pain was intense but perceived as constructive. Pain arising from psychological power was frustrating and stressful. Self-government was not experienced as painful but rather as a positive aspect of imprisonment, a source of pride and self-determination. This multi-dimensionality raises questions about the relationship between penal power and pain; despite Grendon's more encompassing power structure, pain was not exaggerated in each of the areas examined. The residents I interviewed perceived Grendon as legitimate; they found the prison fair, transparent and most importantly it enabled them to do the therapy they required. This legitimacy assists in understanding the warmth residents had for Grendon, despite the feelings of pain it engendered. Pain remains a prominent feature of prison life at Grendon, but is accompanied by optimism and hope.

Introduction

Sykes (1958) famously argued that the core pains of imprisonment are the deprivation of liberty, goods and services, security, autonomy and heterosexual relationships. In the 60 years since Sykes's (1958) piece, scholars have researched the experience of these deprivations in different contexts and have expanded his framework to account for modern penal trends. In 2011, Crewe pointed out that prisons have changed substantially since Sykes's work and argued that three additional pains of imprisonment have emerged; the pains of indeterminacy and uncertainty, psychological assessment and self-government. He developed this typology from studies of a conventional, medium-security male prison. Drawing on data from six interviews, this thesis examines how the contemporary pains of imprisonment are experienced at HMP Grendon, a unique therapeutic community (TC) prison. Studying these contemporary pains in such 'exceptional contexts' will allow our understanding to become more nuanced, normally occluded phenomena to be examined and counterintuitive findings considered (see Shammass, 2014).

HMP Grendon

Described as the 'jewel in the crown' of the penal estate in England and Wales (Genders and Player, 1995; 202), Grendon is the only prison in the UK to operate entirely as a TC (Stevens, 2010). TCs have four central features: 'an informal atmosphere, regular meetings, resident participation in the running of the community and residents as auxiliary therapists' (Miller et al., 2006:116). Although each of Grendon's five wings operate autonomously, they share these core TC features (Wilson and McCabe, 2002). On Monday and Friday mornings all the residents on each wing attend community meetings to discuss the running of the wing. A resident (TC term for prisoner) presides over the meeting, directing discussion on matters ranging from administration to resolving conflict between residents. On remaining weekday mornings residents attend small therapy groups. These groups have eight men in each and are run by prison officers. In therapy residents work with each other and the staff to understand their pasts, the roots of their offending behaviour and how they might prevent offending in the future (Brookes, 2010). Small therapy group meetings are supplemented by psychodrama (Jefferies, 2010) and art-therapy (Wylie, 2010).

In addition to this designated time for therapy, the wider culture at Grendon is designed to facilitate therapeutic progress. People have to apply to transfer to Grendon from the mainstream system and are accepted only if they show commitment to therapy, among other criteria (Morris, 2002). New residents spend their first three to six months on the induction wing where they are assessed for their suitability for therapy. During this time, they can be returned to mainstream prison at any time if they break a rule or are judged as unsuitable for therapy (Stevens, 2012). If successful on induction, the resident is assigned to a wing in the main prison. Here, the men are expected to start contributing to how the community runs and commit to their therapeutic work. Residents police their own communities. They can 'challenge' their peers if they feel that a person has broken a rule or behaved in a way that has negatively affected others. What is reviled in other prisons as 'grassing' becomes part of how men safeguard themselves and their community. If someone

has broken community rules or lacks commitment to therapy a 'commitment vote' will be held whereby the staff and all the men on the wing can vote on whether or not to expel them (Stevens, 2012). The residents spend all day out of their cells. There is no segregation unit. Staff greet residents on first name basis, provide emotional support and generally treat them with humanity (Bennett and Shuker, 2010). Thus the entire prison is designed to provide an environment for openness and rehabilitation.

A large volume of empirical work has been conducted to investigate this unique prison. Studies exploring outcomes paint a largely positive picture. Despite the psychological fragility of many residents admitted to Grendon, the adjudication rates (Newton, 2006) and suicide rates (Rivlin, 2010) are much lower than in the wider prison estate. Qualitative interviews have suggested that Grendon provides protective factors against suicide, including feelings of positivity about the future, empowerment and control (Rivlin, 2010). The existing evidence for reoffending is unclear but seems to suggest that it is equivalent to or lower than other prisons (Shuker, 2010a). In addition to outcome measures, Grendon residents consistently report higher quality of life than prisoners at other institutions (Shefer, 2010). Qualitative interviews reveal that residents think highly of Grendon as a place to develop understanding their offending behaviour and their own victimisation histories (Stevens, 2012; Sullivan, 2010). These results are particularly impressive given that Grendon works with serious offenders who have been described as 'damaged, disturbed and dangerous' (Shine and Newton, 2000: 23).

Thus, although Grendon remains part of the broader penal system, its ethos and performance sets it apart from the mainstream prisons in many respects. Grendon explicitly makes effort to maintain this distance from the wider penal system (Rhodes, 2010a). Indeed, given the TC philosophy and the results of empirical studies, Stevens' (2012: 369) conclusion that Grendon creates 'for its residents a less painful experience in prison' and produces 'a greater moral performance as a prison' seems natural.

The pains of imprisonment

Yet, Stevens' (2012) claim that Grendon's more humane regime produces a 'less painful experience' is contrary to an expanding body of literature that has problematised the notion that 'humane' prisons are less painful. Nordic countries supposedly have more humane and moderate penal regimes (Pratt, 2008). Yet the pains of imprisonment remain significant features of life in Nordic prisons (Barker, 2013; Basberg Neumann, 2012; Mathieson, 2012). Shammass (2014; 104), for example, found the regime in a Nordic open prison was experienced as 'bittersweet', characterised by 'pains of freedom'. Similarly, Hancock and Jewkes (2011) investigated prison architectures and found that modern prisons are cleaner and more humane, yet simultaneously represent a more subtle form of power that is accompanied by distinct pains. These accounts invite exploration into whether Grendon's humane regime really does ameliorate the pains of imprisonment.

Perhaps the most influential framework developed in this area is Crewe's (2011) contemporary pains of imprisonment. Crewe (2011) argues that despite declines in physical brutality and neglect in British prisons, prison pains have not disappeared. Rather, in addition to the core pains of imprisonment, new pains have emerged from

the reconfiguration and 'softening' of penal power. Psychological power has replaced overt coercion. Paperwork, psychological assessments and responsabilisation form an encompassing vector of psychological control. Crewe (2011: 522) uses the metaphor of tightness to describe how penal power 'does not so much weigh down on prisoners and suppress them as wrap them up, smother them and incite them to conduct themselves in particular ways'. Pain is no longer deliberately inflicted but instead emerges as a corollary of this reconfiguration of penal power. This contemporary penal power and practice has generated a new set of pain and frustrations.

The first of these frustrations is indeterminacy and uncertainty (Crewe, 2011). Indeterminate sentences have long been identified as a psychologically onerous aspect of imprisonment (Weiler, 1978). The inevitable uncertainty about the future leads to poor mental health outcomes, including feelings of despair and anxiety, and harm to the prisoner's personality (Mason, 1990). Crewe (2011) builds upon this literature to explicate indeterminacy as a pain of imprisonment alongside feelings of uncertainty about everyday life in the prison. A corollary of softening penal power has been inconsistency in the way that rules are implemented, making it difficult for prisoners to know what to expect at any given time. Release conditions are ambiguous. Increased bureaucratisation prevents transparency, making decisions about release unclear and unreachable. Prisoners are uncertain about their future, which consequences follow which actions, how to behave and how decisions are made. Penal power is exercised inconsistently and unreliably.

Secondly, Crewe (2011) identifies the 'pain of psychological assessment'. As psychology has become increasingly influential in prisons, the role of ensuring prisoners' wellbeing has been superseded by psychologists' role in risk assessments (Warr, 2012). This blurring of roles makes it difficult for prisoners to approach psychologists for help since revealing distress or troubling thoughts is then taken as an indicator of increased risk, which can delay release (Warr, 2012). Indeed, the participants in Crewe's (2011) study found it difficult to develop meaningful relationships with psychologists who were perceived as detached and impersonal. The risk assessments they conduct deny prisoners individuality, assigning them instead to aggregate categories. Psychiatric labels were experienced by prisoners as inconsistent with their sense of self, as 'master labels' that subsumed their individual identities. These assessments not only constitute a deprivation of the person's control of their identity, but also underpin psychological power. The prison can exercise power through pieces of paper; comments are permanently kept on record to be retrieved at a later date. As has been argued by Foucault (1979), psychological practices in prison constitute a mode of power, one that is far reaching and intrusive, 'soft' but nevertheless experienced as harmful.

Finally, Crewe (2011) describes the 'pains of self-government'. Contemporary scholarship has observed that government and penal power largely operates in a Foucauldian manner, indirectly encouraging people to self-regulate (Fox, 1999; Rose, 2000). This is referred to as responsabilisation, a process whereby people are encouraged to exercise free will and choice, to take responsibility for their own futures (Rose, 2000). This is problematic when, as is the case for the large majority of the prison population, the ability to self-regulate is hindered by structural barriers, marginalisation and histories of abuse (Pollack, 2005). Prisoners are further

prevented from fulfilling the responsibilities expected of them by the prison system's 'incoherent inclination' of expecting responsibility yet simultaneously reducing prisoners to the status of dependent children (Stevens, 2012; 257). Crewe's (2011) framework builds on this wider literature to explicate self-government as a specific pain of imprisonment. He argues that self-government is experienced as painful because prisoners become agents in their own punishment. They are simultaneously made responsible for decisions and deprived of clear instruction of what is expected from them.

These three contemporary pains of imprisonment are indicative of, but also create and perpetuate, a mode of soft power. This power is psychological. It is no longer immediate, but its effects are delayed and elusive. Information is withheld, labels are imposed and the prisoners must navigate their own way to release. These impositions of power result in a set of frustrations that Crewe argues characterise modern imprisonment. Crewe's (2011) findings indicate that power and pain are intimately related. When soft power is exercised, pain seems to invariably follow.

The present study

In this paper I examine Crewe's (2011) contemporary pains of imprisonment at Grendon. Developing our understanding of the pains of imprisonment requires investigating them in different contexts (Shammas, 2014). Sykes's (1959) original framework has been augmented and developed through research conducted in different contexts and with different penal populations (Riley, 2002; Soffer and Ajzenstadt, 2010; Ugelvik, 2014). Studying Crewe's (2011) framework in different contexts could lead to a similar enrichment of understanding. With its divergent philosophies and practices, Grendon provides a unique context in which to develop further insight into Crewe's typology. I am certainly not the first to explore potentially painful aspects of Grendon. Scholars have recognised the challenging aspects of therapy such as revealing intimate details about oneself and of hearing about others' detailed accounts of offending (Smartt, 2001). Others have investigated why residents chose to leave Grendon (Sullivan, 2010). However, this study takes Grendon as its research site to more explicitly inform a theoretical framework of the pains of imprisonment.

Grendon is a particularly interesting context in which to explore Crewe's (2011) typology. Despite its unique status in the penal system, past literature also indicates that Grendon's system of control epitomises the form of 'soft power' described by Crewe in conventional prisons. Genders and Player's 1995 study noted that although the goals of the prison and TC conflict in many ways, they share the common goal of regulating deviant behaviour. The soft, psychological power of the TC was recognised as playing an instrumental role in maintaining order. Residents must consistently self-regulate or they face expulsion from their community (Stevens, 2012). The uncertainty of their place at Grendon therefore motivates compliance. The residents themselves become part of the system of surveillance and punishment, monitoring one another and deciding on sanctions. These added disciplinary techniques, as well as the principle of non-confidentiality, engender a total institution that is 'more encompassing than most' (Rhodes, 2010a; 206). Previous literature suggests that high levels of compliance in Grendon are achieved not by regular displays of hard power, but by exercising the softer and more

enveloping psychological power Crewe (2011) describes as increasingly prominent in conventional prisons.

To explore the experiences of residents at Grendon I conducted six semi-structured interviews. Since the aim of the research was to develop insight into participants' subjective understanding of their experiences in prison I used a qualitative methodology (Patenaude, 2004). Data were collected during May and June 2016. The interview schedule focused on participants' experiences of uncertainty, therapy and self-governance and was developed as the research progressed. I also asked the residents about their experience of the research itself, a commonly neglected aspect of criminological research (Bosworth, 2005). Participants came from across the different wings, excluding the induction wing. Their index offences were domestic homicide (1), armed robbery (3), conspiracy to rob and converting criminal property (1) and rape (1). Four of the participants were white, one was mixed race and one was Asian-Pakistani. Four of the participants told me they had suffered serious sexual and/or physical abuse during childhood. Interviews were conducted on the resident's wing, either in an office or therapy room, and ranged from 45 minutes to three and a half hours long. Where prisoner names are given pseudonyms have been used.

The paper dedicates a chapter to presenting the findings for each of the contemporary pains of imprisonment; 1) indeterminacy and uncertainty; 2) psychological assessment/practices; and, 3) self-governance. An additional section is included relating to fairness and perceived legitimacy. These topics were not discussed in Crewe's (2011) work, however, they emerged as prominent themes in the data I collected. Including these topics provides a fuller representation of the residents' experiences at Grendon and fills some gaps in understanding left by the previous three chapters. The final section is the discussion and conclusion.

1: Indeterminacy and uncertainty

Crewe's (2011) first contemporary pain of imprisonment is indeterminacy and uncertainty. In addition to the pains of indeterminate sentences, uncertainty for Crewe's participants also arose from the inconsistent application of rules, a lack of clarity regarding requirements for release and processes involved in decision-making. This chapter explores how the residents I interviewed experienced uncertainty in Grendon, which emerged from:

1. Grendon remaining part of the wider prison system
2. Grendon's unique TC features
3. Grendon's unusual, intersectional identity as both a TC and a prison.

Compared to Crewe's (2011) account of conventional prisons, I found that the experience of uncertainty at Grendon is simultaneously exaggerated and ameliorated. It is exaggerated because residents can be rejected from their community for deviant behaviour meaning that their place in Grendon is insecure. Thus, uncertainty is explicitly mobilised as a conscious mode of governance. However, it is ameliorated because Grendon's regime also provides residents with control over some aspects of their lives and future, as well as a sense of hope that was not evident in Crewe's (2011) findings.

The 'prison side' of Grendon

All of the participants were serving Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPP) or life sentences. After serving a minimum tariff, prisoners serving an IPP sentence have to demonstrate that they have adequately lowered their risk before they can be released (Jacobson and Hough, 2010). As such, the prisoner is not given a definite release date. The sentence has been widely criticised for its damaging effect on the psychological wellbeing of prisoners serving them (Rutherford et al., 2008). Grendon may be unique but the men who are imprisoned there remain subject to political cycles and alterations in sentencing patterns. Indeed, as a consequence of the growing government focus on managing risk, Grendon's resources have increasingly been allocated to dealing with those serving long and indeterminate sentences (Genders and Player, 2010). Consistent with previous literature (e.g. Waldram, 2012), the men I spoke to were left unable to plan for the future and in a state of 'judicial limbo' (Jefferson, 2011). David described not knowing his release date as a 'horrific' source of psychological 'burden' for both himself and his family. Michael also found the uncertainty of the IPP sentence psychologically damaging, angrily telling me that:

That's the problem the IPP serves, they're detrimental to peoples' wellbeing. You go to any jail and ask 'what period of prison is the worst?' It's the time when you're on remand, when you don't know when you're getting out, when you don't know what the future holds. And that's what the IPP is like; it's like one continuous period of remand.

The comparison Michael draws with remand is striking. The high suicide and self-harm rates during remand are often attributed to the inherent uncertainty of this

period (Owers, 2008; Trust, 2011). Lewis found the loss of control hardest to cope with. He was used to 'working rigidly' to his own plans which were kept in calendars and diaries. Losing this control meant his mind was constantly 'working overtime' to try and make sense of his situation. The residents' fixation with their release date is consistent with wide recognition in psychological literature that humans have a *fundamental* need to feel certain about the world around them and their future (Heine et al., 2006). Indeterminate sentences deprive residents of certitude, leaving them continually focused on matters of uncertainty, craving closure that is rarely offered.

Yet this deprivation of certainty is not accompanied by a deprivation of hope. Whereas the prisoners in Crewe's (2011) study were uncertain about the requirements for release, this was not the case at Grendon. Indeterminate sentences remove much of the control residents have over their future. By being transparent about the steps residents need to make to secure release, Grendon allows residents to better understand their path to release and therefore regain some control over it. Adam felt he had a 'head start' because unlike conventional prisons 'there's a lot of communication at Grendon, there's a lot of people sitting down and saying 'this is what's going to happen on your parole board and this is what's expected'. Yasir added that 'you are guided all the way through'. Although the actual decision of parole boards remained uncertain, the residents understood the processes involved.

Grendon does not just inform residents of what the parole board requires, but assists them in fulfilling these requirements and preparing for their hearing. Therapy provides the residents with skills to cope with imprisonment in ways that make release more likely. Henry told me that prior to coming to Grendon, he would 'fight with a screw' in response to his feelings of anxiety invoked by the uncertainty of the IPP sentence. This would further delay his release. His hard work in therapy at Grendon meant that, although uncertainty remained a 'horrific' experience, he now had the ability to 'deal with it in a positive way'. In psychodrama, residents hold mock parole boards for one another, providing the opportunity for the resident to present their case, practice answering questions and managing their emotions. Wing meetings provided a gradual introduction to public speaking and speaking under pressure (Adam). As such, despite the uncertainties that arise from IPP sentences and parole processes, an element of self-determination remained for the residents I spoke to. They had multiple opportunities to actively improve their chances of release in a supportive environment, in which they were provided with information and feedback. The experience of these Grendon residents was therefore more multi-dimensional than that described by Crewe (2011) in conventional prisons. The uncertainty regarding the outcome itself and the pain associated with it is not removed. However, in the context of this unrelenting uncertainty, which remained 'excruciating' (Adam), some opportunities to take positive action and adequately prepare imbued a sense of hope into proceedings.

The therapeutic community

Residents can be expelled from their community and returned to a mainstream prison at any time throughout their stay. This in itself is not unique. Prisons can move prisoners whenever they need to, to balance the needs of the prisoner and security (Bennett, 2008b). What is unique about Grendon is that this decision is more explicitly linked to residents' behaviour and that a commitment vote held by fellow residents and wing staff will make this decision (Stevens, 2012). If the resident loses

this vote they will be sent back to the mainstream system. The residents I spoke to found this uncertainty painful during the early stages of imprisonment but it became less so as time went on. However, making residents' places uncertain and linking that insecurity to behaviour remains a key mode of governance at all stages of a stay at Grendon.

During the induction stage, staff can determine a prisoner as 'unsuitable' if they have not engaged appropriately with therapy or if they have broken a rule (Stevens, 2010). Participants recalled the threat of removal during induction as very stressful and daunting. Yasir stated that a 'constant fear' on the induction wing was being 'RTUd – returned to unit'. While Lewis commented that 'You wake up every day asking 'is this my last day at Grendon?'' Michael claimed the issue was more complex than the question of whether they were staying or going. The uncertainty was imbued with a fear of further rejection. Having been 'alienated' from society, the prospect of being rejected from the program and told that they were 'not good enough' was intimidating (Michael). Arriving at Grendon had made Michael's past victimisation of sexual assault 'relevant again'. The threat of return to the mainstream prison system, without the necessary support to handle the accompanying emotions, prompted him to return to taking drugs to 'bury' the anxiety this induced.

Having earned a place on one of the wings, residents begin group therapy and become accountable to their communities. The men I spoke to valued their place at Grendon and did not want to risk their opportunity of rehabilitation. Lewis used the threat of being put on a commitment vote to guide his behaviour:

It's always a factor in everything you do everyday. So everyday you've got to think of saying the right thing or if you're going to say the wrong thing, say it the right way. 'Cause otherwise you could lose your place in Grendon.

This quote suggests, by making residents' places uncertain, and by linking that insecurity to behaviour, uncertainty becomes a powerful way of ensuring that residents' behaviour is compliant with Grendon's principles. Grendon exercises this power in a manner that parallels the interplay of soft and hard power Crewe (2011) describes. The control gained by making residents' place uncertain is 'soft' for much of the time, encouraging residents to self-regulate. If uncertainty about a resident's place gives way to the certainty of expulsion, the might of the penal regime is felt in a display of 'hard power' whereby residents are removed from Grendon. Uncertainty has been described as a fundamental aspect of governmentality in other institutions such as immigration detention centres, but has not necessarily taken the form of a 'consciously designed aspect of the system' (Griffiths, 2013; 280). In contrast, uncertainty at Grendon is an explicit form of governance, a conscious vector of control rather than a corollary of institutional practices as described by Crewe (2011) in mainstream institutions. The consistent imposition of soft power, reinforced with the threat of hard power should residents deviate, accumulates to form an efficient and encompassing control mechanism.

Using uncertainty as a mode of governance only works if residents actually want to stay. Grendon therefore derives its power from the combination of uncertainty and residents' motivation to retain their place. Grendon's 'privileged' status in the prison system is achieved by distancing itself from mainstream institutions (Rhodes,

2010a). Most important in this regard is that Grendon offers rehabilitation which is unavailable anywhere else. These differences become a source of 'strategic leverage' (Rhodes, 2010a; 206), underpinning the control Grendon has over its residents. Lewis demonstrated astute awareness of this mechanism of power:

I think the control Grendon's got is they've got the power to help you change...And Grendon doesn't just show you all the good things you can have, it shows you the bad things as well. I've seen lads be RTU'd from here and they've tried to get back and they can't get back 'cause Grendon turns round and says 'you're not suitable'.

This quote demonstrates, the insecurity of residents' position in Grendon is reinforced when those who deviate are removed from the therapeutic environment. Deviance may initially unsettle the community but following the expulsion of the 'deviant', the principles of the TC are strengthened as the reminder of insecure nature of one's place re-establishes the need for compliance. The expulsion of a resident is a stark reminder that the soft psychological power predominantly used to control behaviour at Grendon will be swiftly replaced by coercive hard power if rules are broken. The combination of the unique opportunities Grendon has to offer, alongside the uncertainty of residents' places, creates a powerful control mechanism by which the men become motivated to be compliant.

Yet, the uncertain experience of retaining one's place at Grendon differs in tenor to the experiences described by Crewe (2011) in mainstream prisons. Although their places remain uncertain, having been at Grendon for a number of years the residents I spoke to no longer found the threat of being expelled painful. They recalled the induction stage and the first 'three months' (Lewis) or 'six months' (Yasir) on the wing as an anxious period of insecurity. However, they now knew how to keep their place and felt in control of doing so. Henry told me that he had become aware of his own behaviour and knew how far he could 'push things without having the commitment vote' against him. He still used the potential of being asked to leave as a guide for his behaviour, saying that he chose to behave because he knew the long term 'consequence' of misbehaving would be to lose his opportunity of rehabilitation. Similarly, Lewis used the threat of being asked to leave as a way to guide his behaviour. However, he was confident that 'if you're here for the right reasons you'll get through it'. Although their places were technically uncertain, residents had relative certainty that they had the ability to prevent their expulsion. Once they had been on the wing long enough to grasp what was required of them, the uncertainty of their place still guided their behaviour but ceased to be painful.

The evidence in this section highlights the relationship between power and pain. In Crewe's (2011) analysis, the imposition of soft power is accompanied by pain. At Grendon, uncertainty is mobilised as an explicit mode of control. During the induction period and early months on the wing this was indeed a painful source of anxiety. However, once the residents had become well informed about what might elicit an expulsion and have control over maintaining their place, it was no longer experienced as painful. Two key reasons appeared to underpin this. Firstly, as residents spend time on the wing they begin working on how to manage their emotions better, how to resolve conflict constructively and how to communicate with others. After these early months the residents became confident in their abilities to

comply with the community's rules. Second, the fact that the residents believe that they are in control of whether they leave suggests that the power to expel residents is used fairly. Unlike Crewe's (2011) description conventional prisons, actions and consequences in Grendon were seen as fairly and consistently connected; this enabled residents to take control of their position.

Grendon's intersectional identity

The previous two sections have shown that uncertainty is derived from Grendon's place in the wider penal system and from unique aspects of the therapeutic regime. Grendon's dual identity as a prison and a TC makes violence harder to predict, which participants found very stressful. David described being unable to anticipate instances of violence as 'the hardest part' of living in Grendon. Violence in conventional prisons may be more frequent (Newton, 2010), but the men told me that attacks were carried out according to known criminal values, making them easier to predict and therefore avoid. Participants described themselves and their peers as mostly committed to Grendon but suffering lapses when their 'old criminal values come through' (Lewis) which were difficult to predict. Soon after his arrival, Michael publicly challenged others for using drugs at a wing meeting, consistent with the therapeutic regime. The following day he was knocked out on the exercise yard for 'being a grass'. Such events quickly become known to other community members, reinforcing their respective uncertainties about the extent to which they should embrace Grendon's principles. This dual value system not only made it hard to predict violent incidents, but created uncertainty for residents as to how to behave in this ambiguous environment. The residents I spoke to wanted to engage fully in the therapeutic regime but also had to strike 'a balance and stay safe' (Yasir). Grappling with Grendon's demand of displaying commitment to the therapeutic regime, yet being required to do so in an environment with violent and dangerous criminals, engendered feelings of insecurity.

Chapter conclusion

Consistent with Crewe's (2011) description of conventional prisons, uncertainty was a central feature of prison life for the Grendon residents I interviewed. Each source of uncertainty – the 'prison side' of Grendon, unique TC features and the intersection of these identities – caused pain. Fixation with release dates, anxiety about being expelled during their early months and uneasiness about violence were some of the hardest parts of their time at Grendon. However, the residents' experiences of uncertainty were nuanced. Unlike Crewe's (2011) research participants, the Grendon residents were hopeful about their release and parole processes. Although the experience of uncertainty is somewhat exaggerated at Grendon through its use as an explicit form of governance, the experience of this power is not painful throughout the resident's stay. The insecurity of their place at Grendon invoked anxiety for the residents during their early months but became less painful as they settled into TC life. Although this sample is too small to draw any definitive conclusions, this finding prompts questions about the often implicit assumption that pain always follows the imposition of penal power.

2: The pains of psychological practices

Crewe (2011) discusses 'psychological assessment' as a pain of imprisonment. He describes how prisoners find that aggregate risk categories and psychiatric labels dismiss their self-constructed identity and sense of individuality. Crewe's (2011; 516) primary focus is on assessment, although he does briefly discuss the tendency of courses such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to 'bulldoze alternative meanings of selfhood'. This paper includes a more in depth exploration of the experiences of therapy because, unlike Crewe's study prisons, therapy is the core of Grendon's ethos and an examination of the men's feelings about it seemed integral to understanding their Grendon experience as a whole. Indeed, the interviewees spoke at length about therapy providing a large volume of rich data.

Two broad categories of pain emerged from the data. The first is 'therapeutic pain'. Although acute, this is the emotional pain that might be expected to accompany therapy and was perceived by residents as constructive pain. The therapy and the pain it engendered were accompanied by hope for the future, making therapy at Grendon painful, but not universally negative. The second is pain more closely related to the use of psychological power. This division is simplistic. These are not the only sources of pain and the categories may overlap. Nevertheless, making this distinction helps to strike a balance between recognising positive contributions of what is often valuable rehabilitative work for a vulnerable population and explicating the pains of imprisonment.

Therapeutic pain

The nature of the psychological therapy at Grendon is markedly different to the courses offered in conventional prisons. Mainstream institutions offer courses such as CBT that tend to focus on the offence itself, with less emphasis on broader demographic factors (Pollack, 2005). Grendon does focus at length on offending behaviour (Brookes, 2010). However this is accompanied by consideration of residents' upbringing and any instances of victimisation, as well as their current behaviours in prison (Morris, 2004). The depth and intensity of Grendon's therapy is simultaneously recognised by the residents as why it 'works' and why it is painful.

One of the most painful aspects of therapy, for the men I spoke with, was developing insight into the harm they had caused themselves and others. Self-disclosure is a 'building block' of psychological therapy (Calhoun and Tedeschi, 2013) and is an active process of becoming the subject of one's own analysis (Rose, 1990). Adam aptly uses the image of 'having a mirror in front of you' to describe this process of self-reflection. He explained that therapy helps you 'realise what kind of person you were. No-one can like seeing that if you've done the things we've done'. Lewis also found that 'the hardest part of being at Grendon' was confronting the pain he had caused his rape victims, of 'accepting who you are, what you've done'. These insights mean that residents must confront the discrepancies between their 'ideal self' and 'actual self'. A person's ideal self is a representation of the attributes and behaviours they would ideally like for themselves. Their actual self is a representation of the attributes that they believe they actually possess (Higgins, 1989). Higgins' (1989) self-discrepancy theory states that discrepancies between

one's 'ideal self' and 'actual self' are associated with negative emotions of disappointment, sadness and regret. These emotions were clear in the men's accounts as therapy 'opened their eyes to how much more' they could have done (David) and the 'things that we've done to our victims' (Henry). As Yasir lamented, 'that understanding hurts, if I had known all this then I wouldn't be in prison'. The argument that these insights and accompanying negative emotions are constructive is a valid one that was accepted by the residents I interviewed. However, this does not detract from the lived experience of such realisations as psychologically painful.

In addition to recognising the role they played in harming victims, it was extremely painful for the men to revisit their own victimisation during therapy. An analysis between 1995 and 2000 indicated that 40% of the men at Grendon had been victims of sexual abuse and 63% victims of physical abuse (Shine and Newton, 2000). Adam's voice broke as he told me he was 'held against [his] will as a child and sexually abused'. Henry's stepfather was physically abusive towards him and had sexually abused his younger sister. He recalled his helplessness and terror. Michael was beaten by his stepmother and sexually abused by his headmaster at boarding school. Lewis had been physically abused by his grandmother. After he saw his older brother sexually assaulting his sister, his brother threatened him and forced him to commit a number of crimes. Discussing their victimisation in therapy was described as 'unbearable' (Adam), as 'hard, embarrassing and awkward as well' (Michael). As Carlton and Segrave (2011) pointed out in a very different context, the pains of imprisonment cannot be isolated from the pains in prisoners' pasts. This is particularly relevant here. Prison pains, and more specifically therapeutic processes, are situated within the resident's broader trajectory and life history. It is unsurprising that therapy is emotionally painful when the men are bringing such emotive topics to work on.

Nevertheless, the emotional pain that arises from opening up in therapy was accompanied by feelings of relief and accomplishment. The 'paradox of distress expression' is that expressing negative feelings is both a sign of distress and a means of coping with that distress' (Kennedy-Moore and Watson, 2001; 187). Lewis had not spoken of his childhood abuses to anyone for forty years. After doing so for the first time he felt a 'pressure from [his] chest go away'. For Michael, disclosing his experiences to supportive group members allowed him to make sense of his emotions and adopt healthier coping mechanisms:

I realise now that the shame that I've grown up with, that's not my shame. He needs to be ashamed of that. [I used to] absolutely burn with shame and need to do something. Whether it's fight, get high, do whatever. And I don't need that no more.

Self-disclosure, as illustrated above, was helpful because it led to moments of insight and understanding. Talking things through and hearing the opinions of group members allowed them to better understand their emotional reactions to their victimisation. Such increased understanding of emotions generally enables people to better cope with those emotions (Kennedy-Moore and Watson, 2001). The process of emotional expression and understanding is painful, but is also perceived by residents as constructive and liberating, as a form of relief and catharsis.

Yasir did not disclose any victimisation but he nevertheless benefitted from opening up in therapy. His experience further reinforced the idea that the pains of therapy should not be separated from the resident's broader narrative and shows how racial and cultural identities interact with therapy. Yasir identified as Asian-Pakistani and suggested that when he first arrived at Grendon his 'cultural and own beliefs' held him back. When asked to expand he stated that his culture dictated that 'everything stays within the family dynamic', so it was 'pretty hard for me to talk to the other group members'. However, once he 'got past that hurdle, [he] began expressing myself and understanding [his] emotions'. It was not, as other researchers have found (Newberry, 2010), that he felt that the therapists were insensitive to his culture or beliefs. He felt able to 'talk to the staff'. They helped him to 'trust the process' and begin striking a balance between opening up enough to benefit from therapy and staying faithful to his cultural beliefs. Yasir's experience reinforces the argument that the pains of therapy are not isolated from residents' histories or from the identities they bring to the therapeutic environment. It also demonstrates that, although Yasir felt he had overcome them, there may be some culturally specific pains associated with making disclosures in therapy.

Group therapy has some significant benefits for residents but the corollary of the group format is that residents must listen to one another's accounts of offending. The group format allows residents to challenge one another in a way that therapists may not; in essence it is harder to con a con (Brookes, 2010; Marshall et al., 2004). It also provides a support network for residents who share similar experiences (Petersen, 2003). Residents expressed the distress that hearing others' accounts caused them. They did so in a manner that was not critical of Grendon itself; they accepted that this was unavoidable. As David pointed out, when hearing about other people's crimes 'you can't blame him, that's what he's got to do'. Nevertheless, when placed in context of their own victimisation histories, hearing accounts of similar types of offences in explicit detail is incredibly painful. Adam, who was sexually assaulted as a child, told me:

I've had to sit in groups where I've heard people discuss in detail. They're a serial rapist for example, they've snatched women off the street. Because of the nature of their work they have to go into detail and when I say detail I mean every detail down to smells, down to the look on the woman's face, down to what she said when she was begging him to stop.

Henry's sister, mother and partner had all been victims of sexual assault. Hearing others speak about committing these sorts of crimes made him feel like he was 'betraying' his family. He described feeling as though he was going to have a panic attack, of having nightmares and of intense anger. David found the 'graphic' detail of hearing about child sex offending the most 'difficult' and 'horrific' thing he had ever endured. It was clear that being exposed to such details over long periods of time deeply affected the residents and was a source of great pain.

The culmination of these intensely emotional aspects of therapy made Grendon the most painful period of imprisonment the residents had experienced; but this pain also engendered hope. Adam told me that 'out of all those prisons and prison sentences, this is the hardest bit of prison I've ever done in my life'. Henry said that he would find it easier to return to a conventional prison and 'sit in solitary for two years' than

continue 'facing up to things'. Yet the men were simultaneously passionate about the virtues of therapy at Grendon and derived hope from the progress they had made. Adam told me that 'for what it's done for me it's like no words can explain it. I get really quite emotional when I think about it.' His relationship with his family had improved after he told them about his victimisation for the first time, something that he 'wouldn't have had the confidence or the skills to do without Grendon'. Henry told me proudly that his ex-partner's parents had written to the prison governor to express how thankful they were for the changes they could see in him. Having others validate his progress in this way was further evidence of his 'hard work'. Yasir felt that he had 'more confidence' and could speak more openly. Michael was drug-free for the first time since his teenage years, something he credited to the combination of his own hard work and the environment Grendon provided. These were just some of the developments that the residents could see and feel. Achieving these improvements engendered positivity for the future.

The residents attributed their improvements and the hope they inspired to the emotional pains they had endured in therapy. The pain of therapy was the very thing that provided evidence that they were progressing. The common feeling was 'in therapy if you don't go through the pain then you're not doing it properly' (Yasir) and 'good medicine never tastes nice' (Henry). As Adam emphasised, therapy at Grendon was 'not only one of the toughest things [he had] done in life, but one of the most rewarding'. This is not to say that the pain was accepted in this sanitised way and a linear path to progress experienced. Many of the men had handed in their papers to leave when therapy was tough but then changed their minds. Nevertheless, the pain of therapy meant something to participants; it symbolised growth, recovery and psychological transformation.

Psychological power

The men recognised therapy-related pain as constructive, rather than vindictive or neglectful on the part of the institution. The emotional distress caused by therapy was therefore legitimated. While this pain was felt strongly, it was justified by the results residents had already observed and still hoped to achieve. Nevertheless, the prison remains an institution of power; power is not eliminated but rather changes form. Here, the pains that emerge from the intersection of psychological practices and penal power are considered.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the residents' belief that Grendon is uniquely positioned to help them functions alongside uncertainty as a source of penal control. Conventional prison courses were described as 'superficial' 'tick-box exercises' (David). While these courses were considered helpful for 'getting you out of jail quicker', Grendon was regarded as the only place that could 'keep you out' (Michael). Michael described taking part in a drug rehabilitation programme in which he would sit in silence with other prisoners for the first half of the session, take drugs in the tea break and return to 'talk the ears off each other for the second half'. The prominence of traditional criminal values, in addition to 'superficial' psychological courses, meant that residents unanimously dismissed the potential for conventional prisons to help them on their path to desistance. The experiences of these men suggest that Grendon does rely on 'the system' being as awful as it is, in order to maintain an obvious difference between itself and other prisons' (Wilson and McCabe, 2002; 290; see also Genders and Player, 1995; 135). That Grendon is

perceived by the men as their *only* chance of therapeutic change provides a vector of power. The therapy at Grendon becomes a precious rehabilitative lifeline in a system that otherwise offers little chance for men to overcome their behavioural and emotional issues. To retain their place at Grendon and this rare opportunity for progress, they must be open with their disclosures, compliant to the regime and committed to therapy. Grendon is therefore paradoxical in that providing hope in a 'hopeless' system (Stevens, 2010) is a positive endeavour. Nevertheless, that such hope is unique means that it becomes mutated into a mode of penal control.

In addition to using its privileged position in the penal system as a source of power, Grendon mobilises psychological practices to strengthen its control structure. Psychologists working in prisons have never been more powerful (Thomas-Peter, 2006). Much of this power is derived from their central role in assessing risk and influencing crucial decisions such as categorisation (Warr, 2012). Staff at Grendon do use information disclosed in therapy sessions to underpin risk assessments (Rhodes, 2010b; 457). The therapeutic regime encourages residents to reveal information that they would usually hold secret in a mainstream prison (Genders and Player, 1995; Rhodes, 2010b). Self-disclosure becomes a technique of power whereby participants make audible and recordable their secrets and wrongdoings (Foucault, 1978). As such, self-disclosure becomes a 'crucial disciplinary instrument' (Hook, 2010; 35) and tool of surveillance (Butchart, 1997):

Another problem you've got with that is it might come on you at the last moment. So they [Grendon staff] keep their views in a box and it builds up over time and then at the last report they throw it in there. And then you think 'why didn't you say that to me long before?' It can be damaging in parole hearings and stuff like that. It can be very damaging. (David)

Thus, Grendon's 'regime of truth' underpins the prison's disciplinary mechanism (Fox, 1999). Residents are encouraged to reveal all the information about their risk in the name of therapy, which in turn is fed into 'generic' systems such as 'OASys' (Henry). Crewe (2011) described this as psychological power, which may not have the immediate effect of physical brutality but can have a delayed impact to deny progress at a later date.

Surveillance at Grendon is further strengthened by residents' role in monitoring one another and the principle of non-confidentiality. As David bemoaned, 'you could be doing therapy 24 hours a day'. This 24-hour nature of therapy is not an accident. Therapy at Grendon is 'a culture that is lived, rather than a group that is attended' (Morris, 2004; 36). All behaviours, regardless of whether the context is therapeutic, are eligible for challenge and therapeutic examination (Shuker, 2010b). Each and every action is monitored and holds the potential for challenge from other residents. This system of peer surveillance is supplemented by the principle of non-confidentiality. Secrets are not allowed in Grendon; they are viewed as 'compromises' to the therapeutic process (Adam). This principle 'exposes' (Henry) the residents' lives to the institution. These systems combine to become a method of surveillance and regulation, making Grendon a total institution 'even more encompassing than most' (Rhodes, 2010a; 206). The system of surveillance resonates with Crewe's (2011; 522) descriptions of 'tightness'; it is simultaneously

'oppressive and yet somehow light'. Residents are surrounded by surveillance that motivates them to behave in a manner consistent with Grendon's rules.

The 'total institution' has been recognised as launching an assault on the personality (Goffman, 1961). Given that Rhodes (2010a) argues that Grendon is a particularly intense total institution, it is unsurprising that it comprises a substantial assault on the personality. To some extent, this is stating the obvious. Residents enrol in therapy specifically to make changes to their personality. However, these are positive changes that residents have chosen to make. Grendon also imposes therapeutic ideas onto residents' identities that they do not agree with. Lewis found it frustrating that it was assumed he behaved a certain way 'because it's one of my criminal traits'. He countered: 'No I'm doing it because this is how Grendon's making me feel.' David provided a particularly emotive account:

'Cause I'm a criminal, it's all about crime. Not that I want to be an individual, that I want to maintain a set of morals, that I want to stand up for myself. None of that's important, forget all that 'cause you're a criminal. I'm expected to just drop all that and become a loyal servant to the cause. I refuse to do that and that can cause you some damage. It can knock you back for being recognised as achieving something, it can definitely stop you getting parole.

Thus, although Grendon tends to avoid the 'dehumanising' psychiatric diagnoses that cause distress for prisoners in mainstream institutions (Crewe, 2011), psychological assessments at Grendon can also feel one-dimensional and frustrating. Fox (1999; 94) describes resistance as 'an opposition to the 'privileges of knowledge' – the power of experts to determine what's real and right'. David (quote above) recognised the power that psychologists have, but chose to resist anyway. In particular, he resisted Grendon's interpretations of what was real and what was right about his path to offending. Grendon attributed his offending to his father's criminal involvement but David felt his crimes were an autonomous choice. As a result he was labelled as a 'problem'. Consistent with Crewe's (2011) description of psychological power, David's resistance to the dominance of psychological discourse has the potentially 'severe cost' of damaging parole applications.

However, most of the research participants recognised the power that psychologists operated and chose to comply. Lewis told me that when he was faced with labels or assessments he disagreed with, he nodded 'yeah, yeah, yeah' to each one. He did so in recognition of the power psychologists have to delay his progression to a lower security prison: 'The pen is mightier than the sword'. Lewis continued, 'They can write something in a report, everyone's going to listen to it, everyone's going to believe it whether it's true or false.' The power of psychologists is clearly demonstrated when residents attempt to leave Grendon before they are considered to have 'completed' therapy. Although residents are ostensibly given a choice of whether or not to leave, David scoffed at this idea:

No-one's here for 18 months unless you forcibly remove yourself from therapy. At which point you'll be, not threatened but it's an underhand threat. You know these types of language that's basically in a roundabout way saying we're not going to support you; it's going to go against you effectively.

Lewis reiterated these points, the process is 'like blackmail' because leaving against Grendon's wishes would result in more prison time. When he had tried to leave, he had been given a 'little talk' by psychologists to discuss his options; he was left thinking 'well I didn't really have a choice'. In the face of this psychological power, it is in residents' best interests to comply. The 'choice' of whether or not to leave is restricted to such an extent that it is no longer a choice between two realistic options. Such instances epitomise the psychological power identified by Crewe (2011). Control is not physically brutal, but is nevertheless coercive. Psychologists have the power to influence the progression of inmates and it is generally in their interests to comply.

Chapter conclusion

It is crucial to strike a balance between recognising the pains that arise from psychological practices, while also appreciating what is often valuable rehabilitative work. The material that the men bring to therapy stems from pain; recognising the pain they inflicted on others and their own pain as victims. The emotional pain that is experienced in therapy is perceived as constructive. Observing their own progress cultivates hope and positivity for the future. Yet, the hope residents attach to therapy also forms the foundation of Grendon's power structure. This is supplemented by the professional influence of psychologists and the intersections between therapy, surveillance and risk. Grendon operates a particularly pervasive form of all-encompassing psychological power. Psychological practices at Grendon not only deliver hope and transformation but also cultivate a form of soft, psychological power which serves penal interests of control.

3: Self-government: Extension of control, reduction of pain?

Crewe's (2011) final pain of imprisonment is the 'pain of self-government'. He found the requirement that prisoners self-govern, without clear instruction of the rules that they should be self-imposing, causes feelings of anxiety and insecurity. They are constantly 'walking on eggshells' while under never-ending scrutiny (Crewe, 2011; 520). The full weight of state and penal power is looming in the background, available in instances when prisoners fail to self-regulate.

As is the case in the conventional system individual Grendon residents are expected to self-regulate. However, self-government takes on an added dimension because each TC is a 'self-governing' community (Stevens, 2013). The findings further develop the idea that the experience of soft power is not always painful. Grendon operates a complex system of control which does mobilise residents to self-regulate and therefore serves to strengthen the prison's power (Genders and Player, 1995). However, for the six residents interviewed this system of control did not amount to a 'pain of imprisonment'. At times it was frustrating. But for the most part, it allowed the men to take ownership of their rehabilitation. They were appreciative of their chance to play a role in governing their community. I therefore argue that it is necessary to separate the concepts of 'control' and pain.

Self-government as individuals

Given the prominence of psychological practices at Grendon, a natural starting point is considering how they intersect with responsabilisation goals. The psy-disciplines have been identified as instrumental in compelling self-assessment and regulation throughout society (Rose, 1998). Individualisation underpins this by constructing behaviours as matters of choice, neglecting broader societal and structural influences on behaviour (Pollack, 2005). Grendon does encourage residents to embrace neoliberal concepts of responsibility, choice and self-regulation (Genders and Player, 1995):

Everything about Grendon is, you're encouraged to take responsibility for your own behaviour. (Henry)

However, Grendon does not neglect the social and economic backgrounds of residents. Instead, residents are encouraged to explore their upbringings in great depth, often for the first time. The fundamental basis of the therapy is to explore childhood experiences (Jefferies, 2010). The governor of Grendon, Dr Jamie Bennett, has written about responsabilisation policies and the tendency of criminal justice policies to ignore the wider structural contexts of race and poverty (Jamie Bennett, 2008a). Grendon's institutional approach is therefore more enlightened than the conventional institutions upon which much of the responsabilisation literature is based. For many of the participants it was the first time they formed connections between childhood experiences and their offending. Adam told me that he used to lash out violently when he felt vulnerable. He now understands that these feelings reminded him of being raped as a child and his aggression was a response to that:

Because that vulnerability would take me back to my childhood you see – if you don't deal with stuff from your childhood, you'll always deal with them as a 12-year-old boy. So, now I recognise them feelings and emotions I know what it's all about, I don't feel I have to protect my vulnerabilities no more, I can sit with them.

Similarly, Lewis began to recognise the significance of seeing his brother sexually abusing his sister when he was a teenager:

Maybe the path I've chosen wasn't all my fault. Maybe it's little things that triggered it and it only took one trigger to make all those little things become one big thing that changed my pathway.

Both accounts demonstrate how the therapy at Grendon makes explicit links between residents' behaviours and their pasts, rather than constructing offending as a choice. As the men spoke, their childhoods and past experiences were woven into how they interpreted their offending behaviour, emotional wellbeing and relationships. Being encouraged to take responsibility was accompanied by a caring approach to understanding hardships residents had faced. Rather than dismissing social and economic contexts and histories of abuse, Grendon's therapeutic orientation takes these issues as its very foundation.

Residents' journeys to Grendon and then through therapy neatly demonstrate the transition from 'responsibilisation' in the traditional system and supported responsibility at Grendon. Bosworth (2007; 68) argues that the choice for rehabilitation has become 'the individual prisoner's sole responsibility' in the US. Similarly, in order for prisoners to access rehabilitation at Grendon, prisoners must make the *choice* to apply. They are responsible for seeking out rehabilitation and for making a case that they should be given a place at Grendon, often with little support from their previous prisons. However, once accepted, there is a transition from responsibilisation to responsibility with support. Grendon supports residents in their rehabilitation and importantly shares responsibility for therapeutic progress. In the information given to residents in the *Induction Booklet*, they are told that staff members 'want to help you to help yourself'. This allows residents to take ownership of their progress and feel a sense of self-sufficiency, with the support network available if required. As Henry told me proudly:

I'm rehabilitating myself, Grendon won't change me, I'll change me. It's me that's going to make the changes. Grendon is there to help facilitate things... Now if I can take responsibility for myself, for my own behaviour, I feel that I can fight. I feel like I can flourish, move forward with my life in a positive way.

Henry does not perceive taking responsibility for his future behaviour as being left to cope alone. Instead, understanding consequences and taking responsibility were perceived as a way of taking control and producing change. Henry believed he was principally responsible for his therapeutic progress and change. However, Grendon is recognised as facilitating that progress. Rehabilitation will inevitably involve the client (or resident) taking some responsibility for progress (Gostas et al., 2013). The important difference

between mainstream institutions and Grendon in this regard is that Grendon provides therapeutic opportunities and supports prisoners during the process.

Self-governing communities

Residents in Grendon are responsible for governing their own communities by participating in wing meetings where issues are discussed and voted upon. As Adam points out however, it is not fully democratic since 'the community's vote is one vote but if there's 10 staff that's 10 votes'. The system is therefore more accurately described as 'democratised' rather than democratic (Stevens, 2012; 101).

Nevertheless, the residents unanimously concluded that 'it's as fair as you are ever going to get it' (Adam).

There's more of a democratic role here than there is elsewhere. We do vote, we vote people in and we do all of that. So there's a form of democracy it's just a light-hearted one. It's like yoghurt; you got full fat and Müllerlight. This is like democracy light. (David)

The impact of democratic participation on residents' perceptions of Grendon's legitimacy is discussed more fully in the following chapter. Here I consider Genders and Player's (1995:195) claim that the democratic decision-making strengthens Grendon's 'coercive and authoritarian nature' by masking 'the identification of accountability'. From the data gathered, and the literature about mainstream prisons, this does not appear to be the case. If anything, the opposite seems more accurate. Voting at Grendon is not anonymous, so residents know who is accountable for decisions. If residents fail to vote or are believed to have voted a certain way for the wrong reasons, 'they can be challenged for that' (Lewis). Moreover, when staff do decide to overturn the community's decision, they are accountable to the community. Decisions taken with this process are perceived to be as fair as possible and transparent. This contrasts starkly with what Crewe (2011) describes in traditional prisons; decisions are taken at a bureaucratic level that is out of prisoners' reach, by people they do not know and cannot negotiate with. In Grendon, the transparency of the democratic processes makes flows of power visible to the residents. Decisions are made at a level that they can challenge, question and understand in ways that are difficult in conventional institutions.

In addition to voting in wing meetings, men are responsible for policing behaviour in their community. Garland (2009; 124) describes how communities in society have become part of a 'responsibilisation strategy' whereby the state expands its reach by using communities to utilise control. This phenomenon is replicated in Grendon. As Garland (2009) describes, residents are encouraged to become 'active citizens' in the maintenance of their communities and adhere to a sense of duty. The community's comprehensive knowledge of its members and their activities are mobilised as a means of surveillance (Rose, 2000). Enlisting community members as well as staff to monitor one another by definition expands the scope of surveillance:

So we're monitoring each other all day long. You could go upstairs and hear an argument with two lads, before they've even finished arguing there's someone in the office telling staff. The staff don't just go up and stop it, they'll let us deal with it. (Lewis)

David claimed that in Grendon, 'everyone believes they're being watched'. The almost permanent status of being under surveillance was described as tiring. As Adam noted, 'there's no rest – you're under the spotlight 24/7 here.' Although the men felt that their therapeutic progress was genuine, the system of surveillance meant that any lapse, no matter how minor, becomes open to challenge and questioning. Even non-therapeutic activities, such as work or leisure time, are monitored in the name of therapy. Any behaviours which emerge during these activities must be 'fed back' to the 'clinical pot' for examination and potential community sanction (Shuker, 2010b; 124). Community surveillance therefore produces active citizens who not only monitor one another but who self-regulate in the context of this scrutiny. In a manner reminiscent of Foucault's panopticon, the potential that one could be being watched motivates self-regulation.

Residents not only monitor one another, but are encouraged to initiate dispute resolution (Rose, 2000) by 'challenging' and 'booking' one another. Challenging involves residents verbally confronting one another, with the rationale that being challenged by one's peers enables greater insight into the impact their behaviours have on others (Brookes, 2010). 'Booking' is a further disciplinary process available to residents whereby events are written in a book in the staff office. If a resident receives three 'bookings' they will go on to a commitment vote (Michael and Lewis). Thus, dispute resolution is devolved to the men; the prison institution steps back and lets 'fellow community members challenge each other first' (Adam). Henry describes the efficiency of the challenging system:

Everything that I do I'm accountable to forty other people, including staff. If the way I speak to someone, I offend them, it's stuck on me. It's put on you: 'why are you speaking to him like that? What's going on with you?' Everything about my life, absolutely everything is questioned. I'm accountable to everyone on the wing.

As is the goal of the 'responsibilisation strategy' (Garland, 2009), residents do indeed become active citizens who co-produce security. They control the risks posed to the therapeutic community by challenging behaviour that jeopardises therapy and ultimately exclude those whose risk is too great. Government of security is carried out by activating residents' individual commitments to Grendon and to therapy. Although challenging is a way for Grendon to intensify its control of deviance, it is also perceived by the residents as a valued therapeutic tool. As Henry said, criticism is 'the hardest thing in the world but it's how we learn'. Meanwhile, Adam credited his 'transformation' to the challenges his fellow residents had given him. By integrating control with therapy, being monitored by peers was thus perceived as furthering progress, rather than a painful infliction of power.

As well as receiving challenges, residents discussed the experience of giving out challenges. Initially, challenging their peers contradicted residents' sense of self. Making the transition from a 'lifetime of criminal values' to 'grassing people up' (Michael) was a difficult change and a source of internal conflict. Unfortunately, the men in my sample had all been at Grendon for a number of years and so I did not speak to anyone in the midst of this conflict. However, the men recalled that during this period they struggled with abandoning these values and with taking on the role 'of a screw' (Michael). All of the participants spontaneously identified the 6-month

mark as a turning point, after which they became more at ease with the challenging process. They now saw the process as preparation for looking after their communities outside prison, that it was admirable to stop bullying (David), littering (Adam) and crime (Yasir) in one's neighbourhood. Becoming involved in their community in Grendon gave them confidence that they could become an active member of society upon release. They were able to use challenging to realign themselves with 'moral society' and reduce the 'alienation' they felt from the 'rejection' of being in prison (Yasir). Moreover, challenging became a way for residents who feel they have progressed to help and teach others. Helping others becomes a purpose beyond their own goals in therapy (Stevens, 2012). As Adam told me, he felt he was 'one of the strongest challengers on the wing because I know what it's done to me'. After initial reluctance, challenging became a way that residents could maintain the values of Grendon which they saw as worthy of preserving; rehabilitation, community and peer support. Being able to play a role in protecting those sources of positivity from deviancy provided residents with a sense of purpose, agency and evidence of their own moral development.

For those residents who have deviated but not badly enough to warrant a commitment vote, community responses aim to be therapeutic. Compared to traditional prison based punishments¹, responses in Grendon are therefore also likely to be more intrusive. Lewis, for example, did not vote for either job candidate in a group meeting. He was 'booked' for this and, after failing to discuss his failure to vote with his small therapeutic group, was brought to the wing to discuss these actions. As he describes below, this seemingly minor 'wrongdoing' opened discussion to much broader considerations of his offending behaviour and past experiences:

It starts off as a little thing. Then for an hour and a half it's 'where in your life did this come from? When did you do this? Can you link in with this?' Oh man, your head just explode you think 'How did we get to this? So it's scary.

Thus, as previous scholars have noted, receiving a sanction at Grendon is still an unpleasant experience (Genders and Player, 1995; Smartt, 2001). Just because something is therapeutic does not make it painless. On the other hand, it does often mean that the residents afford these processes legitimacy because of the values they rest upon. Residents might be asked by the community to write about the incident. Adam explained that these 'show *your* understanding of what you've learned from this instance and they work. It works'. Rather than being punished solely for punitive reasons, they are treated fairly and consistently by community members who know and understand them. For those who have been reintegrated, control takes the form of re-establishing self-regulation and adherence to values of the community.

However, those whom the community believes cannot be reintegrated are rejected from Grendon. As Rose (2000:335) states about society in general, '[t]hose who

¹ The Government website states that punishments for prisoners who break rules include being kept in their cells for up to 21 days, given up to 42 extra days in prison on top of their original sentence or having privileges taken away (<https://www.gov.uk/life-in-prison/prisoner-privileges-and-rights>). See also the Howard League's (2015) 'Punishment in Prisons: The World of Prison Discipline' report.

refuse to become responsible, to govern themselves ethically, have also refused the offer to become members of [their] moral community. Hence, for them, harsh measures are entirely appropriate.' Unsurprisingly, then, the threat of expulsion is a key mode of governance. Involving the community in this process increases residents' motivation to comply. Residents know that the community members who are observing their behaviours could also play a role in determining whether or not they keep their place at Grendon at some point in the future. This increases motivation to behave well in the community. Again, Crewe's (2011) notions of soft power and tightness are relevant. Residents are not coerced into compliance, but the 24-hour surveillance that surrounds them and threat of exclusion motivate self-regulation.

An analysis of pain caused by the commitment vote is difficult given that my sample were still in Grendon and had therefore avoided this harsh sanction. For those men who had survived commitment votes, they felt that community participation afforded the process legitimacy. Michael felt that the majority of men 'vote for the right reasons'. All of the participants emphasised the amount of thought that they and their peers put into their votes. The men therefore considered the overall result of their own and other commitment votes to be fair. The residents viewed voting to decide other peoples' fate in the community as a way of protecting the environment that they needed to continue their progress. The residents ascribed the success of Grendon to the process of being able to remove those who posed too great a threat to others' therapy. As Adam said 'community means common unity, so you need everyone to have a common interest in therapy'. Thus, for the men I interviewed the commitment processes were perceived as valuable and fair, rather than painful. However, it seems a fair assumption that those who have survived commitment votes will afford the process more legitimacy, or at the very least have different opinions, than those who were voted out. In order to understand the more painful aspects of collective community governance, interviews with men who were voted out may be more insightful.

Chapter conclusion

Self-government is clearly a key feature of Grendon's governance strategy. Individuals are encouraged to self-regulate and the communities are self-governing. These also interact; community surveillance motivates self-regulation. Grendon therefore implements an intricate control structure more encompassing than those in mainstream prisons (Rhodes, 2010a). However, residents did not resent being responsible for themselves. The received wisdom about the concept of empowerment is that it transfers responsibility of being self-reliant to prisoners (Hannah-Moffat, 2000). Such analyses are based on mainstream prisons. It is possible that where 'empowerment' discourses in traditional prisons lack substance, in Grendon the TC does deliver a more genuine form of empowerment. Although my sample was too small to draw any definitive conclusions, this was the case for the residents I spoke with. They did not experience self-regulation and responsibility as negative. Self-control, with the necessary therapeutic and social support, was instead perceived as a way of taking control and a chance of taking positive steps in the future. In the case of the communities, while there were frustrations with certain aspects of community control, the opportunity to play a role in running their community was experienced as exciting and fulfilling.

Interpretation of this, on a broader level, is not clear. If one takes the view of Genders and Player (1995), it might be concluded that self-government is not perceived as painful by the residents because the power structures are so cleverly concealed. This is certainly a possibility. However, if it is assumed that the men do recognise the power structures the analysis takes a different and more optimistic direction. The data prompts an examination of the nature of the relationship between power and pain. In Crewe's (2011) analysis, power and pain appear to go hand in hand. Although the nature and size of my sample prevents any strong assertions, the experiences of the men I interviewed suggest that self-government need not necessarily be painful. Self-governance at Grendon forms an efficient and pervasive system of control. Nevertheless, residents did not express the same emotion or strength of pain that they did about uncertainty and psychological practices. Instead they expressed pride, belief in their own ability to self-regulate and in the fairness afforded by community participation. Prisons are increasingly adopting the Foucauldian mode of governance whereby prisoners are encouraged to self-regulate (Crewe, 2011). The findings in this chapter suggest that if the appropriate support mechanisms are put in place self-government must not necessarily be painful.

4: Legitimacy and fairness

The concept of legitimacy is intimately related to the concept of self-government, and governance more generally. Legitimacy is broadly defined as the fairness of authority (Liebling; assisted by Arnold, 2004; 244). Despite the pains that have been outlined already, the residents admired Grendon as an institution because they perceived it as fair and transparent. Even when they experienced aspects of its regime as painful, it was not because of a perceived injustice. In this final chapter I present findings showing how the residents recognised Grendon as fulfilling different elements of legitimacy. Given that the contemporary pains are intimately connected with soft power, much of the current discussion has explored ways that Grendon maintains order and control. However, a range of sources of control interact to produce order (Genders and Player, 1995). This chapter argues that Grendon's perceived legitimacy is likely to serve as an additional foundation to its control.

A number of scholars have focused on how issues of fairness and legitimacy are related to order maintenance in prison (Liebling assisted by Arnold, 2004; Sparks and Bottoms, 1995). Tyler (1990) argues that utilitarian desire to avoid sanctions is not the only source of compliance. If this were the case, securing order would be simple, merely requiring a severe enough sanction to deter deviance. For Tyler and others (Sparks and Bottoms, 1995; Sparks et al., 1996), legitimacy of authority plays a central role in order maintenance. Compliance with rules depends very much on voluntary acceptance of those rules and the institutions of power that enforce them (Franke et al., 2010). Theoretical analyses would therefore suggest that residents at Grendon do not only comply because they are concerned about losing their place. Rather, they also perceive Grendon as legitimate and are therefore more motivated to abide by the rules. Sparks and Bottoms (1995; 55) argue that two elements of legitimacy are important to order maintenance in prison; fair procedures and high quality staff behaviour. The data collected suggests that residents at Grendon experience each of these aspects of legitimacy.

A key theme emerging from the data was the importance residents attached to having a say in how their community was run. Liebling (assisted by Arnold, 2004) argued that fairness does not mean prisoners always get their own way. Rather, it means that prisoners have a chance to express their views, are listened to and treated equally. Evidence supporting procedural justice theory shows that peoples' assessments of criminal justice institutions are more heavily dependent on the fairness of the procedure used to reach an outcome, rather than the outcome itself (Tyler, 2003). Henry articulated the importance of the democratised process in Grendon in a statement that closely mirrors the concept of procedural justice:

It's the build up, the process to it. We've brought it in for discussion, we've discussed it, we've voted on it. That's what's really important. We've sat there and made the decision. The process alone is important, whether the outcome be positive or negative. (Henry)

Moreover, although staff have the power to overturn community decisions the residents told me that this was unusual. Adam trusted the staff group because 'if they

know that the men have voted fairly and in line with the constitution then their vote usually goes along with ours'. On occasions where staff overturned community decisions, the reasons were communicated clearly to residents. Even Henry, who told me he had been 'anti-authority' all his life, and didn't want to 'sound like he was speaking up for them too much', conceded that 'the reasons they've decided are quite fair'. Such perceived procedural fairness underpins the legitimacy afforded to prisons (Jackson et al., 2010). Given that perceived legitimacy in turn underpins law-abiding behaviour, the democratised system and procedures may serve to perpetuate order in Grendon by maintaining legitimacy.

Staff members at Grendon go beyond treating residents fairly, to cultivating friendly and caring relationships. Shefer (2010) found that 80% or more residents agreed that staff at Grendon showed concern for them, treated them as human beings and shared good relationships with them. The qualitative data gathered here compliments these results. Whenever I arrived on a wing to do an interview, I witnessed a jovial atmosphere between residents and staff. They would tease one another, make jokes and have casual conversations. When residents entered the office to express a concern, such as the medical department failing to deliver medication, the guards were sympathetic and immediately took action to resolve the problem. The staff office was never empty and always had a relaxed atmosphere. During the interviews, participants reported that staff play a central role in monitoring and improving wellbeing. Yasir explained that, in comparison to mainstream prisons, at Grendon 'the relationship between the inmates and staff is different'. Importantly, that interaction with staff made him 'feel a bit more human'. Lewis echoed this view, also appreciating that he had 'always been treated as a human being':

In Grendon they don't just open you up it's 'morning, how are you?' 'You don't look very well, have you not slept well?' It's the caring side: 'we are here for you'. That's the difference. You want to talk, they're there for you'.

The participants shared stories of how staff members had been integral to helping them in times of distress or frustration. The staff in Henry's previous prison had falsely told him that he had been rejected from Grendon. When he was put in a van to be transferred to Grendon, he was not told where he was going. As a consequence he missed a visit from his family. When he arrived at Grendon, the staff trusted his account of events, a gesture that helped in his feelings of isolation and frustration. From this initial positive encounter, Henry developed 'trust' in the staff that enabled him to 'settle down' and begin focusing on his therapeutic work. Such experiences lend credence to the idea that 'relations between staff and prisoners are at the heart' of the prison experience (Home Office, 1984; para 16). Given that Sparks and Bottoms (1995) identified high quality staff behaviour as a key component of legitimacy, these findings reinforce the idea that Grendon is perceived as fair and legitimate by residents.

A point of shared identity between myself and many of the men interviewed was that of being Criminology students. The 'Learning Together' programme delivered by the University of Cambridge enables residents at Grendon to study Criminology alongside university students. Michael was enthusiastic about the programme and began discussing those aspects that most interested him. When discussing the 'legitimacy of Grendon as an authority' he concluded:

I suppose it's legitimate in the fact that if you're prepared to take chances, it enables you to do what it says on the tin. It enables you to look at things from a different point view. So yeah, I suppose it is legitimate. The opportunity is here to do what you're meant to be doing here.

Michael's summation of legitimacy refers not to staff, as much of the literature does, but to what Grendon offers. That is, the legitimacy he grants Grendon is its willingness to offer therapy and more importantly, deliver the therapeutic benefits promised. This resonates with findings from Franke et al.'s (2010) randomised control trial conducted in the US, which compared a traditional prison with a military correctional boot camp. Those who attended the boot camp were more likely to perceive the staff and programme as beneficial and aiding self-improvement, which in turn produced higher perceptions of legitimacy (p.112). Those institutions that are seen to help its prisoners, even if the method is painful, are seen as more legitimate.

An important element of legitimacy is the acceptance of the rules imposed by an authority. The residents I spoke to accepted Grendon's rules:

You know, if it's violence or drugs or stuff like that, you have to go. Grendon works because of trust, if there's no trust people can't do their work. If people have got mobile phones on the wing, trust is out the window. If there's drugs on the wing, I can't sit in group with a guy who's there out his nut. So you need to go for that, it needs to be done. (Adam)

According to theories of legitimacy, perceiving the rules of Grendon as legitimate is likely to underpin order. In the case of Grendon this argument is taken a step further as residents are not only compliant, but actively help to maintain others' compliance. Although this strengthens Grendon's control, Grendon's power is paradoxical since it is tighter, more efficient and more encompassing yet simultaneously appears to be regarded as more legitimate.

Chapter conclusion

To say that Grendon is absolutely 'legitimate' would be contentious since prisons have an inherent legitimacy deficit (Liebling; assisted by Arnold, 2004). Nevertheless, some prisons correct for this legitimacy deficit better than others (Liebling; assisted by Arnold, 2004). Treatment by staff and resident participation in decisions making means that Grendon appears to at least partially make up the legitimacy deficit in the eyes of the residents. This finding suggests that it is not simply prisoners' utilitarian goal of avoiding sanction that underpins order. Rather, order may also be perpetuated because the residents believe in the rehabilitative principles that it represents and trust the staff to treat them fairly.

Discussion

The residents' accounts reveal that experiences of uncertainty, psychological practices and self-government are more multi-dimensional in Grendon than those described by Crewe (2011) in conventional prisons. Returning to Stevens' (2012) claim that Grendon's regime produces a 'less painful experience', the findings from this study show that the reality is much more complex. In comparison to Crewe's (2011) account of mainstream prison, the pain in Grendon varies in kind, is intensified in some areas and ameliorated in others. The pain arising from therapy was qualitatively different to that described by Crewe (2011); it was perceived as constructive. The difficulties in predicting violence, uncertainty while on the induction wing and the frustrations of psychological power were exaggerated in Grendon. On the other hand, self-government was a positive experience for the residents I spoke to. In contrast to Crewe's (2011) description of mainstream prisons, feelings of hope were prominent for the residents in this sample.

This multi-dimensional experience of pain is interesting, considering that the soft-power structure in Grendon is more encompassing than those in mainstream prisons. Grendon's control structure epitomises the soft power Crewe (2011) described. The prison is run almost entirely using psychological power. By making residents' places at the prison uncertain, and by linking that insecurity to behaviour, uncertainty becomes a key technology of power. The hope that residents gain from therapy means that prisoners feel they have much to lose by being removed. Motivated to retain their opportunity for rehabilitation, residents are moulded into self-governing subjects by the threat of expulsion. Psychological practices supplement this control. The role of the community in regulating behaviour means that residents are constantly being watched, monitored and scrutinised. The men's knowledge that they are being observed incites self-regulation. The combination of uncertainty about their place, psychological practices and the interaction between self and community governance forms an exaggerated soft power structure.

Intuitively, it might be assumed that this intensification of soft power would result in a corresponding amplification of pain in each of the areas explored. The increased imposition of power through psychological practices was accompanied by frustration and anxiety. However, the rest of the findings show how the relationship between power and pain varies. Having the insecurity of their places used to help govern their behaviour initially invoked anxiety for residents. Nevertheless, the experience of this power was not painful throughout their stay. Thus, the intensification of power did not translate into increased pain. Similarly, the men are expected to self-govern their own behaviour *and* participate in governing their community. This more encompassing control structure and increased demands for self-government was not only experienced with an absence of pain, but was experienced positively, as a source of pride and self-determination. Such findings suggest that increased use of soft power does not necessarily result in pains of imprisonment.

If future penal regimes continue to become increasingly dependent on soft power, and Crewe (2011) convincingly argues that they are, the findings from this research suggest that there are ways of implementing this change more positively, even if it is still painful to some extent. That Grendon's authority is perceived as legitimate may

play a part in explaining why the imposition of power is not necessarily painful. The residents accept that power is generally imposed fairly. They accept that to protect therapeutic values their places have to be uncertain, that therapeutic progress requires emotional pain and that having a say in their communities improves fairness. Much of Grendon's perceived legitimacy was afforded because the men found that authentic opportunities for change are available, even if the change itself is painful. The chance to develop skills, in addition to giving the residents genuine control of some aspects of their lives, transformed the experiences of uncertainty and self-government. They could control whether they were expelled and could take pride in contributing to their community. Experiences of the men interviewed indicated that institutions could impose soft power in a way that is more legitimate, transparent and open to challenge.

There are several limitations to this study. First is the size and nature of the sample. There is no agreed upon 'minimum sample size' for qualitative research, with the sample size depending on the research aims and the researcher's methodological and epistemological stance (Boeri and Lamonica, 2015). It was therefore frustrating that access issues, rather than these considerations, ultimately determined the number of interviews conducted. Access issues are a central challenge for prison research in general and can cause significant delays for projects (James, 2013). In this case these delays impacted the quality of the sampling. In particular, there was little variation in the length of time the residents interviewed had been at Grendon. All had been there for a number of years. This had particular impact on the analysis in the self-government data. I could not collect data from anyone who was currently finding the process of self-government painful, something that likely affected the findings. Nevertheless, the experiences of the men interviewed provide meaningful insights into the pains of imprisonment and this is particularly the case when their experiences counter existing understandings. The data did show that self-government was not experienced as painful after a certain amount of time. This finding counters existing, albeit implicit, assumptions in Crewe's (2011) analysis and shows that a small sample is enough to raise questions for future theoretical and empirical work.

A further weakness of this study is the limited attention to issues of race. Differential experiences of minority groups are not detailed in Crewe's (2011) paper and unfortunately this shortcoming was mostly replicated in this analysis. Given that minority groups 'experience the weight and pain of imprisonment more acutely' (Bennett, 2013; 130) it is imperative that experiences of prisoners from a wider range of cultural backgrounds are incorporated into our understanding of the contemporary pains of imprisonment. This sample was not large enough or diverse enough to begin this task. This is disappointing as it was anticipated that residents from ethnic minority backgrounds might experience Grendon differently (see Newberry, 2010). Yasir's account provided some insight into how his cultural identity influenced his experience of self-disclosure in therapy. I was also interested in how ethnic minority residents experienced the community government processes: did residents feel they were treated equally and fairly? The data collected in this regard did not differ according to ethnic background. While these accounts provide some insight, using the voices of such a small number of people to represent not only their own ethnic group but also the broader category of 'ethnic minority' would conceal diverse experiences under 'umbrella classifications' (Garland et al., 2006; 430). A much

larger and more diverse sample would be required in future work to understand the specific concerns of different ethnic minorities in Grendon.

The data collected nevertheless raise questions of an existing framework. Life at Grendon for the residents interviewed was not negative and hopeless as described in Crewe's (2011) analysis of conventional prisons. Experiences of uncertainty, psychological practices and self-government are complex, multi-dimensional and often counter-intuitive. Pain and penal power were prominent features of life at Grendon, but so too were fairness, optimism and hope.

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Appendix – Reflecting on the research process

It is tempting, particularly as a student researcher recounting their first foray into prison research, to portray a smoothly accomplished research process. However, the reality of my research experience was far from the neat process implied in many research articles. Instead, it fluctuated between times of great activity and a sense of triumph, to infuriating bureaucracy, frustration and burnout. Here I present insight into the processes of negotiating and renegotiating access, emotion and the research experience, power in the research relationship and reflexivity.

Negotiating and renegotiating access

The literature is replete with details of the practical difficulties of prison research (e.g. Dickson-Swift et al., 2007). I was invited to conduct this research by Grendon's governor, Dr Jamie Bennett. The project had not only been accepted, but had in fact had been instigated by a key gate-keeper. Given that internal gatekeepers can often pose a significant barrier to prison research (Matfin, 2000) the invitation to carry out the project was accepted with the anticipation that some of the barriers to conducting prison research would be mitigated. Nevertheless, the difficulties of negotiating access were only slightly, if at all, diminished.

Separate from the prison service, the first hurdle was gaining ethical approval from the University of Oxford. In the early stages, the process of filling out the application prompted a deeper level of reflection about ethical issues. The form required me to complete courses (e.g. about vulnerable adults) that better equipped me for fieldwork. The committee pointed out gaps in my application, encouraged critical thinking about issues I had not yet considered and prompted me to seek additional information from the prison. However, after a period of constructive dialogue, the feedback began to resemble that which is criticised in the literature (Israel and Hay, 2012). Criminologists have become increasingly alienated by bureaucratised ethical review boards, whose tendency to scrutinise the precise wording of information sheets and consent forms distracts from the matter of whether the research is actually ethical or not (Dixon, 2004; cited in Israel and Hay, 2012). Indeed, my information sheet was sent back multiple times with contradictory instructions. One set of feedback instructed me to add information about the data being used to 'write up a thesis'; the next instructed me to 'remove words such as thesis'. Thus, the ethical procedure transitioned from the stimulating process that is recognised but less often focused on the literature (Israel and Hay, 2012), to the familiar account of bureaucratic and trivial procedure that is experienced as an obstacle to research.

Next, I needed to gain approval from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). Although it took over a month to receive a response, I did eventually get approval with some adjustments and advice. Having been told I could start fieldwork once I received NOMS approval, I was then told I couldn't start recruiting until I had secured yet another round of approval from Grendon's own Research Committee, another month later. This was particularly frustrating since, when I did attend the meeting, the panel implied there was little they would add since the governor had approved the research anyway. A further meeting with the 'research representatives' followed a few weeks later. Each wing at Grendon appoints a resident to the role of

research 'rep' which involves meeting researchers and subsequently 'feeding back' the research to the wing at a community meeting. Thus, having secured access, the prisoner community itself posed a further potential barrier to securing participants. As it turned out, the research reps were the most accommodating of my research schedule. They initially told me that it would be at least another couple of weeks until any participants could take part, since each resident had to secure backing from their group, wing and staff. However, after they understood my project was being done for a near approaching deadline they decided that they could make a case for 'emergency backings' to speed up the process: 'No, don't be stupid she needs time to type up everything we say and stuff!'

Having gained access a number of 'crises' emerged each time I arrived to conduct interviews. I would arrive on the wing only to be told that although my research had been approved, my presence on that particular *wing* had not been. This would require backing or at the very least approval from the chairman. Another time I was told I was not allowed to use my audio recorders, although these had been clearly indicated on the application forms. Each time I arrived to do the research I was told that a member of staff needed to facilitate the research. This was something I had to resist since having a staff present during the interview would have undoubtedly changed the nature of the data gathered.

Frustration with access procedures does not take away from the fact that they are necessary to protect vulnerable prisoners. Moreover as Blagden and Pemberton (2010) point out our own research seems incredibly important, but is at the lower end of an over-stretched gatekeeper's priority list. Nevertheless, it is important that criminology students have time to conduct research in prisons since such experience has a dramatic and positive effect on learning (Ridley, 2014). Speaking to prisoners and spending time in prison even for a short amount of time brought the human aspect of prison to the fore in a way that had not been possible by any other mode of learning. Moreover, it is crucial that access to prisons for researchers in general is maintained. Already 'too much of what happens in prisons is hidden from the world' (Warr, 2015; 14). Prison research provides insight not only into the efficacy and experiences inside prisons, but into 'the deepest contradictions and darkest secrets' of modern societies (Wacquant, 2002; 389).

Emotion and the research experience

Given the closed off and secretive nature of prisons, it is important to provide information about the research experience. Doing so presents the background of how the data were produced and further contextualises the participants' experiences. Despite the highly emotional and challenging nature of prison research, accounts of prison researchers' experiences and emotions are all too absent in the literature (Jewkes, 2012). As noted in the introduction to this appendix, the research process is not the simple, linear process that is often implied. Indeed, feelings of anxiety, embarrassment, loss of confidence, sadness, anger and vulnerability punctuated my process. These emotions were present not only during the interviews, but when I was being searched at the gate, when I moved around the prison and when I entered the wing to find six or seven men staring at me. Given that prison research is 'emotionally turbulent' (p.150) and makes extreme demands of researchers (Liebling, 1999) neglecting the actual experience of research means that findings are

presented in a way that does not allow the reader to fully understanding the context in which they emerged.

Grendon's exterior is a high grey wall surrounded by coils of barbed wire. It sits down a small hill from HMP Springhill, an open prison where the prisoners move around freely. Security checks and identification processes precede entry. Entering the prison takes you to the 'M1' corridor, a long, narrow and slanting corridor, lined with paintings by the residents. Heavy doors clang; each double door is locked and rattled as a check. Entering the wing is a self-conscious moment. The guards' office is by the wing door and each time I arrived prisoners were gathered here to talk to one another and the officers. They surveyed me as I entered and while these moments were intimidating, there was never a sense of immediate threat.

My first encounter with prisoners was the 'research reps' meeting. As we waited for everyone to arrive, the men who had arrived early told me about the criminology programme organised by Cambridge University. In fact, they were familiar with Ben Crewe, whose work my thesis builds upon; "we know the pains of imprisonment, wasn't it in that lecture we had?" Once everybody had arrived the reps proposed that we go round the circle and introduce ourselves. I went from having no direct contact with prisoners to sitting in a room with six of them doing the well-recognised 'Grendon round-robin'; 'My name is Joe and I'm serving a life sentence for murder, IPP for rape' and so on. As I nervously made my own introduction, they smiled in encouragement. The questions they asked were concise and all incredibly pertinent, details I probably should have been the one to disclose rather than leaving it to be asked. I left the meeting feeling slightly stunned but also relieved that the residents had been helpful and friendly.

When it came to the interviews, I felt Grendon, as opposed to a mainstream prison, was a good fieldwork site for me as a first time researcher. Despite the delays to access noted, Grendon is more open than most prisons. Open days are held for students to visit and interact with residents, and a large amount of research is done there. The participants were therefore used to talking to students. Moreover, all of my participants had been in therapy for a number of years. They had grown used to being open with others about their offences, victimisation and prison experience. A number of them commented that prior to arriving at Grendon they couldn't have participated in this kind of study. This meant that although I was not familiar to them, the process of sitting down and discussing their lives and experiences was a relatively ordinary experience for all of the participants. It was a relief, as an inexperienced researcher, to ask a single question and receive a 20-minute-long answer containing rich data.

Nevertheless, this openness presented emotional challenges for me. The 'absence of pain' from accounts of prison research is surprising (Liebling, 1999; 149), particularly given the wide literature on the pains of imprisonment and the traumas that often precede and follow incarceration. Reading about crimes or hearing about them in normal circumstances affords a level of detachment. The frankness of the participants about their own offences and victimisation meant that I found this detachment is near impossible in the interview situation. A substantial amount of 'emotion work' was therefore required during and after the interviews. I tried to avoid any verbal or non-verbal actions that might be perceived as condoning their crimes

(see DeShong, 2013; 13). However, I had to simultaneously ensure that the atmosphere remained open and that I conveyed appropriate levels of sympathy for their victimisation experiences. It was sometimes difficult to balance these aspects. The interview with Lewis, was particularly challenging. The interview lasted 3 and a half hours and hearing about his sex offences was emotionally exhausting. After the interview, I felt physically exhausted and nauseous. Yet I was simultaneously conflicted as I felt sympathy for the childhood abuses he had suffered. Adam had told me that one of the hardest parts of Grendon was gaining an understanding of people 'you would never normally talk to'. This too was one of the most emotionally challenging parts of conducting the research.

The prison research experience was distressing, exhausting and at times scary, but it was not an entirely negative experience. While I felt scared during the process, nothing was done or said to *make* me feel that way. The men were polite and carefully considered where to sit, with all of them sitting with either opposite me or with a chair in between us. They always showed me to the chair nearest the door. They displayed concise insight into my emotions and experience. 'What about your own feelings?' Yasir asked me, 'What about your feelings, coming in to prison with serious offenders? Because we have professionals to help us, who are you going to go to and say [something to]?' Participants made revealing disclosures, they revealed details of their lives to me and made themselves emotionally vulnerable. They told me about their childhoods, of fond family memories and shared their therapeutic progress and hopes for the future. Thus, the interviews were punctuated with much more humour and kindness than I had expected.

Power in the research relationship

This section presents ways in which I addressed power relations in the research relationship: the rationale underpinning my approach and how these ideas played out in practice. The power differential between the researcher and participant was a key concern throughout the project. Feminist researchers have proposed that one way of reducing this differential is to build reciprocal relationships with participants (Oakley, 1981). A potential criticism of this approach is that it threatens the neutrality of the interview. However qualitative researchers have increasingly accepted the notion that neutral research is impossible anyway (Becker, 1967; Rapley, 2004). Answering participants' questions is not a threat to a non-existent neutrality but can lessen power differentials between the participant and researcher.

However, such proposals are usually put forward in the context of women interviewing women; do the same principles apply when a woman interviews violent male offenders? Huggins and Glebbeek (2003; 364) argue that many of the strategies proposed by feminist researchers, such as making oneself as vulnerable as the participant, may not be 'practicable, productive or safe' when women are researching men. Thus, it is necessary to recognise that power does not flow in one direction, with the researcher occupying a permanent position of greater power. Rather, power is negotiated, renegotiated and taken by different actors at different times. The researcher and participant occupy power according to different dimensions; the status of the researcher holds power, in this case the cross-gendered nature of the research meant that the participant had power. I therefore took the decision to engage reciprocally with my participants, to build rapport as much as I could within the bounds of appropriate disclosure.

As it turned out, the participants did not ask me any questions that posed a challenge to this decision. They displayed concise understanding of the issues at hand, meaning that I did not have to address these dilemmas. When the participants were invited to ask questions, they kept their questions to topics of my experience as a student or the research itself. Mirroring the nature of conversations with officers, they were friendly but clearly understood their position and the limits of information sharing:

We've got staff in the office they'll sit there having conversations about their home life. They're selective in what they say but they try to treat you as normal. (Lewis)

This quote deftly demonstrates the approach I was striving for; one in which conversation flowed reciprocally yet simultaneously withheld certain information. It also shows that participants understood the nature of information sharing. As such, their questions were firmly focused on the research. I was, according to Adam, lucky that I was conducting my research at Grendon and not a conventional prison because Grendon had taught them to respect others and to address women in a more appropriate way:

I was arrogant, I thought I was God's gift and that, after this I'd probably ask you for your phone number – that's how cheeky I was. It's [Grendon] kind of brought me down to earth.

The lack of personal questions does represent a power differential; as a researcher I was asking participants to reveal deeply personal details about their lives and experiences. Participants did not have this same opportunity. However, as Huggins and Glebbeek (2003) point out, matters of safety must also be considered. Given the nature of the research context, some power differentials are necessary to physically and emotionally safeguard the researcher. Making attempts to reduce the differential may be all that is possible.

In any case, making reciprocal disclosures is not the only way to lessen the power differential between the researcher and participant. This can also be done by asking participants about their experiences of research (Bosworth, 2005). I therefore ended each interview by asking the residents how they felt about the research, which had the added benefit of ensuring that the interview did not end on a deeply personal topic as this could leave the participant feeling vulnerable (King and Horrocks, 2010). The participant was asked if they had any questions and I asked about the participant's experience of the research. The participants seemed surprised when I asked them how they felt about the research and were apparently unbothered by their experience:

Like I said Miss, I found it interesting but I'm not going to fall apart now because you asked me questions. It's not a major thing is it? (Henry)

According to Michael, as long as I wasn't 'putting lipstick on rabbits it's alright'. Given the emotive content of the interviews, the participants' apparent indifference was surprising. While it is possible that they did not answer these questions honestly, the participants were all very sincere throughout the interviews and I trusted that their

responses to these final questions were also truthful. I expect that the interview covered material that were now familiar topics of discussion and that the interview actually posed a less confrontational environment than the therapy groups. Nevertheless, the very act of asking the questions and providing the opportunity to discuss any negative experiences lessened the power differential between us and ended the research interview on a lighter note.

Asking these questions also enabled me to collect feedback about the research from the participants. The qualitative research style was something which participants were particularly positive about, spontaneously commenting that they liked the more open style. David commented:

One thing you've done that's a really good thing is that you didn't come in here with a list of questions 'cause I tend to think that stifles research. I don't know what your view on it is, but I think when you come in here and go 'boom, boom, boom' the response you're going to get is to those things is narrow. I'm pretty sure today you might have picked up something you weren't expecting to pick up. Because it's been open, and that's all down to the way you've let it flow by coming in here just some little things you want to ask me about.

Scholars have recognised these strengths of qualitative research outlined in the above quotation. As David points out, qualitative research is exploratory; it enables researchers to uncover new concepts and ideas, to understand the context in which they operate and under what circumstances (Tewksbury, 2009). This was the case in my study, since legitimacy emerged as a major theme which I had not initially anticipated. Semi-structured interviews can lead to a more natural account of events (Copes, Hochstetler, and Forsyth, 2013). Qualitative research allows for the participant's subjective meanings to come through, informing the research and also allowing the participant to more fully express their feelings and experiences.

The positive feedback received was likely due to a number of factors. The residents who participated had to go through a lengthy process of securing 'backing' from their therapy groups, the wider community and the staff. Thus, those who reached the end of this filtering process likely had conveyed positive ideas about research. Indeed, many of the participants were involved in the 'Learning Together' programme with Cambridge and had an established interest in criminological research. Further, the culture at Grendon is one of open discussion meaning that the research was not a drastic departure to what they had become accustomed to in their everyday lives. A number of the participants commented that the interview had helped them develop additional insight. Henry said that he'd found the experience 'quite helpful' since he answered 'some of [his] own questions about [his] own self just by having this chat'. Participants experienced the research as a welcome break from their normal routine as well as an opportunity to develop self-knowledge. Nevertheless, it must be noted that prisoners may have engaged in the polite practice of giving positive feedback, or may have felt unable to give negative feedback for fear of sanction either by the prison or in their representation in the final research. In a larger study this could be addressed by asking participants to write down their feedback anonymously.

Despite attempts to lessen the researcher-participant power differential, I remained responsible for writing the final thesis. The participants' accounts and experiences become imbued with my voice during the analysis and writing phase (Condry, 2011). Such realisations prompt reflection; researchers enter prisons and often pose critiques of the power structures at hand. Yet, researchers themselves are perpetuating power relations themselves, those of class, education and of whose voice ultimately takes precedence. Nevertheless, prison research remains fundamental to exposing issues in the prison system, a view that the participants agreed with:

People like yourself are bothered 'cause you come here to do things like this. You're putting things in papers and that for change, it can either help or whatever. I'm part of that process at the moment. Whether it's good or bad that's for people to decide. (Lewis)

As Lewis outlines, doing research in prisons at the very least excavates information for others to read and form an opinion about. Moreover, as research accumulates, it may also contribute to penal reform and progress. As such, the management of power relations and attempts to perform rigorous and accurate analysis, accompanied by a hope that prison research will contribute to policy development, is a compromise researchers must come to when considering the power relations they themselves bring to the prison context.

Reflexivity

This final section is about the processes of reflexivity. The researcher and participant co-construct knowledge, making absolute neutrality impossible (Finlay, 2002). Rather than fruitlessly trying to remove this bias, many qualitative researchers have argued that what the researcher brings to the interview should be incorporated, analysed and most importantly recognised. Thus, the process of reflexivity, of 'turning back on oneself', has been acknowledged as a way of adding depth and rigour to the interview and analysis stages (Pillow, 2010). Although this section is specifically dedicated to reflexivity, this is a somewhat artificial separation since, for example, addressing power relations requires self-reflection. I extend this analysis and address further aspects of my identity I believe impacted different stages of the research process.

One way of incorporating reflexivity into the research process is to consider how one's identity shapes the questions asked in each interview and use this reflection to shape the questions asked in the next. Following my second interview with Yasir, he asked a question which prompted my line of reflexivity. He asked why I had not enquired more about his offence, arguing that I must have been curious. Yasir was in prison for domestic homicide. I had listened to what he said but had not asked a follow up question, asking instead about the experience of prison itself. Ostensibly I had done so because my research was focused on the prison experience rather than offending behaviour. His question made me reflect that my reluctance to hear about his offence was also because of its seriousness and gendered nature. That the participant picked up on my hesitancy to discuss his crime meant that he perhaps had more to say which had not been explored. As a consequence, when I came to my last interview with Lewis, who had committed rape, I tried to be more open to information he put forward about his offending. This made the interview far more

emotionally exhausting; added depth can come at an emotional cost to the researcher (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007). However, by asking follow up questions more directly related to his disclosures, the participant made more detailed links between his lifestyle prior to imprisonment and his time at Grendon. I developed a more thorough understanding of the participant and recognised that a participant's offending and life experiences cannot be separated from their experience in prison.

Reflexivity improves the accuracy and rigour of analysis by enabling the researcher to subsequently reflect on how their identity has affected the interview (Pillow, 2010). One of the most prominent aspects of my identity which influenced the interviews was that of being a student, rather than an experienced researcher or professional. This was in many ways an added challenge; particularly during the access phase, I felt I lacked the authority to push for what I needed to do the research. However, when I conducted the interviews this aspect of my identity also aided my development of rapport with the participants. As mentioned, many of the participants were involved in the 'Learning Together' project with Cambridge. Thus, despite my identity as an 'outsider' along many other continuums – gender, age, class – we had in common the identity of 'student'. This appeared to facilitate open discussion, whereby topics were discussed and debated in an uninhibited manner. In the following discussions Michael refers to a debate he had with a criminologist about legitimacy which enabled me to ask about his opinions on Grendon.

Michael: In one of his papers he says 'you can't use trust and confidence to measure legitimacy'. I said how can you not? How can that not be relevant as to whether something is legitimate or not? He says you might not trust the police but if they burgled your house you're going to see them as the legitimate people to go to. Yeah I get that you know what I mean? I said 'but that's a different thing from like not having any confidence in the legitimacy of them as an authority. It's just like coming into government and saying 'were the legitimate authority now'.'

Researcher: Do you think Grendon is legitimate?

Michael: I suppose it's legitimate in the fact that if you're prepared to take chances, it enables you to do what it says on the tin. It enables you to look at things from a different point view, but that's if you're prepared to take chances. So yeah, I suppose it is legitimate. The opportunity is here to do what it, what you're meant to be doing here.

By engaging in discussion about concepts we had studied, were interested in and struggled with, avenues of discussion were opened. This produced rich data that would not have otherwise been gathered. Many of the participants were familiar with Crewe's work, since they had attended one of his lectures. This familiarity meant that I could openly discuss the research topic with the participants, enabling them to give their opinions. By lowering these barriers, both in terms of approaching the project with some shared knowledge and understanding, as well as removing any deception from the work, facilitated rapport and high-level discussion.

In addition to analysing how my identity as a student affected the interviews, I also had to consider how it had influenced the analysis of the data. My undergraduate

degree was in Psychology. Since beginning my post-graduate study of the Criminology and Criminal Justice, I have been aware of the often uneasy relationship between the two disciplines. I often found myself analysing material from either a psychologist's perspective or a criminologist's perspective; trying to reconcile these views into a coherent whole was often challenging. However, I felt that it benefitted the analysis in Chapter 2 where my knowledge of psychology underpinned analysis of the 'constructive' pain of therapy, but was followed by more critical, 'criminologist's' analysis of 'psychological power'. It highlights the interesting role that the identity researcher plays in shaping the final analysis and conclusions. How would the analysis of the current data differ if performed by an anthropologist, sociologist or someone who studied criminology as their sole academic discipline? Members of such disciplines would bring different theoretical and conceptual knowledge bases, different frames of analysis and a different literature base. As those scholars who advocate reflexivity have argued, noting these influences and presenting them to the reader with transparency allows the reader to read the piece with a fuller understanding of where those conclusions came from.

Summary

This appendix presents just some of the issues and emotions present in the fieldwork experience. Writing about the emotion and experience of fieldwork is not easy; the experience is surreal and it is difficult to remember emotions during interviews when one replaces another so quickly. However, inserting emotion and the researcher's identity into the analysis allows the reader to understand the context in which the findings and analysis emerged.

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About the author

Ailsa completed her undergraduate degree in Psychology at the University of Edinburgh where she carried out research exploring whether levels of social interaction affects social cognitive function in old age. She was also a research assistant on a study investigating experiences of parents of children with autism. Ailsa continued her studies at the University of Oxford where she completed an MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice. She is now based in London where she works for a global charitable foundation.

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The Howard League for Penal Reform is a national charity working for less crime, safer communities and fewer people in prison. It is the oldest penal reform charity in the world. It was established in 1866 and is named after John Howard, the first prison reformer.

We work with parliament and the media, with criminal justice professionals, students and members of the public, influencing debate and forcing through meaningful change to create safer communities.

We campaign on a wide range of issues including short term prison sentences, real work in prison, community sentences and youth justice. Our legal team provides free, independent and confidential advice, assistance and representation on a wide range of issues to young people under 21 who are in prisons or secure children's homes and centres.

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