Finding Comfort in Community: An exploration of the community formed by imprisoned sex offenders at HMP Glenochil

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Abstract

This thesis examines the experience of imprisonment for those convicted of sexual offences. It is primarily based on interviews conducted with twenty-five imprisoned sex offenders at HMP Glenochil. These interviews uncovered the existence of a community among this population. This research explores the nature of this community, how it is formed, and its implications. The community was found to exist on the basis of shared identity and shared norms. The shared identity in question is that of "sex offender". This pervasive label is reinforced throughout imprisonment in a number of ways (in particular through segregation from mainstream and from the stigmatisation that still seeps in despite this segregation) and results in a wealth of shared experiences as a result. This develops a sense of solidarity among this population – a central concept in community formation. The shared norms of this community all relate to one central idea: avoiding conflict. This is a key idea in creating the sort of prison experience desired by this population, one of peace where they are granted the safety and acceptance that is denied to them elsewhere. The peaceful community formed in prison can therefore be a source of comfort for these individuals. Being based on these concepts of safety and acceptance, the sex offender prisoner community provides a sharp contrast with the hostile community this population are faced with outside of prison on their release. This can have the unintended consequence of this group coming to prefer their lives in prison to their lives outside. This can lead to giving up on seeking parole or getting intentionally recalled after release. For some within this community, the challenges of release can seem too daunting when juxtaposed with a peaceful existence in prison.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis considers the experience of sex offenders in custody at HMP Glenochil and the community formed by this population. This was explored in order to address the gap in the literature that exists around imprisoned sex offenders. There is no contemporary Scottish research with this population which, in itself, was significant. I also came to understand that the sex offender prison population were increasing in significance in Scotland due to their increasing numbers (with the population having risen from an average of around 750 year on year prior to 2012 to now over 1200) and the challenges in population management that result from the policy decision to keep this group separate from other prisoners. In Scotland this population are kept segregated from mainstream prisoners but, since the closure of HMP Peterhead in 2013, there is no establishment exclusively for sex offenders. They are housed in the same prisons as mainstream prisoners but kept segregated. The situation in Scotland can be considered a hybrid of sorts between sex-offender-only establishments and entirely mixed populations. How such a hybrid system operates in relation to community development has not been considered in any of the identified research. There is therefore a gap in knowledge in terms of worldwide prison sociology around the experiences of sex offenders who are segregated from mainstream prisoners but within an establishment that houses both. This quasi-segregation was worthy of exploration as these spatial arrangements within a carceral environment can have a wide-reaching impact. After spending some time in prisons prior to fieldwork I became interested in how these spatial arrangement within a prison could come to influence the experience of imprisonment. In particular, this thesis explores how this contributes to community formation. Bringing together these two areas of literature, one which explores the nature of community and one which explores the organisation of prison spaces, is new in prison sociology and therefore contributes to knowledge in a way that goes beyond the Scottish experience.

Existing studies identified in this research relate to either mixed populations – where sex offenders and mainstream are housed together and mix like any other prisoners or wholly segregated populations – where sex offenders are housed in a sex offender only prison. Research that examines sex offenders' experiences when housed alongside mainstream offenders has found a very negative experience of imprisonment with sex offenders subject to vilification from mainstream prisoners (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012). The body of research, which examines wholly segregated establishments, is smaller as there are few prisons which exclusively house sex offenders. One key study that falls into this category is Ievins and Crewe (2015). This study is similar in many ways to the current study, analysing the community that forms among incarcerated sex offenders. However, the differences in being entirely separated and being housed in the same prison in different halls are not insignificant. Segregation provides safety and freedom from the abuse sex offenders experience from mainstream prisoners. However, in an establishment like HMP Glenochil where these populations are in the same prison, complete segregation at all times cannot be guaranteed. This means some abuse from mainstream can still occur, something that would not happen in a sex offender only establishment and serving to remind sex offenders of their stigmatised status. Furthermore, segregation within the same prison means a stricter prison regime needs to be maintained to avoid contact and access to prison facilities and opportunities is more limited. These difficulties, as well as the vilification at the hands of mainstream (even though limited in a segregated establishment), serve to increase the solidarity felt between sex offenders in prison, strengthening community bonds. Community forms through solidarity and this solidarity is stronger in the face of the challenges that stem from sharing the prison with mainstream. The experience of sex offenders in this study is therefore different from both sex offender only establishments and mixed establishments. In Scotland where there is no sex offender only prison and also

7

no outright mixing of populations, this research is therefore much more relevant than existing work. This research is able to address a gap in the literature by examining community development in a segregated but shared establishment.

Research Questions

This study was very explorative in nature, seeking to understand the prison experience of sex offenders as they wished to present it. Therefore, there was only one, very general research question: how do those imprisoned for sexual offences experience imprisonment? The open nature of this research question allowed for exploration of many different areas, whichever participants felt were most significant to their experience. One area that all participants discussed at length as very important to their experience was their relationship with others in custody. What became apparent was a community formed among sex offenders in custody. In exploring this further, several, more specific, research questions arose: how is this community formed/what binds this community together; what are the "rules" that must be followed to be a member of this community; what are the results of membership? Each of these are considered in the three findings chapters. All of the chapters contained in this thesis are briefly outlined below, but first it is worth defining some of the important terms used throughout.

Definitions

Throughout this thesis there are several terms utilised, the meanings of which ought to be set out as their use may differ slightly from technical usage or different definitions may be available.

Firstly, the term 'rapist' is used, particularly in the findings chapters, in a manner that differs from its legal definition. In law, the crime of rape is defined as penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth by a penis without consent (Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009, s1). However,

participants used this term more broadly, applying it to all of those who had offended, in any way, against adults. They spoke of their community being made up of 'rapists' and 'paedophiles'. Other offences against adult women are unaccounted for in this division and those convicted of other forms of sexual assault against adult women fall under 'rapist' in this conception. This labelling was not directly discussed with participants accused of offences which might be considered less serious than rape to understand how they feel about being encompassed within this term. However, some participants did discuss sex offenders all being viewed equally regardless of specific offence and showed some frustration with this and yet this self-labelling of 'rapists' and 'paedophiles' demonstrates that sex offenders themselves do this to an extent.

'Sex offender' is used throughout this thesis to discuss those who have committed any sexual offence against any victim type. The acronym 'SO' is utilised for this term in several quotes throughout this thesis. The term 'sex offender', and simply 'offender', is a term that has fallen out of favour in recent years. It is considered stigmatising and such negative labelling is thought to be problematic (see, for example, Scottish Government 2016). Colin McConnell, Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service, also takes this view, recently stating: 'the term "offender" is in itself a stigma and label which in 21st century Scotland, we should seek to avoid' (McConnell 2016: 6). The stigmatisation stemming from this term is something one participant (Tom) even alluded to, taking issue with being referred to as a sex offender within the prison. Despite these concerns, I have chosen to use this term. The main reason for this is that participants referred to themselves in this manner. It has become a self-adopted label. This was even the case throughout Tom's interview despite his objection to the term. Utilising the term as participants did is not felt to be inappropriate.

'OLR' is an acronym that arises in extracts from interview transcripts. When used by participants it can denote a type of sentence or a person serving that type sentence. An OLR is an Order of Lifelong Restriction. Anyone sentenced to an OLR is subject to licence conditions for life and an indeterminate prison sentence.[1] The order is accompanied by a minimum prison sentence that is deemed adequate for punishment. Thereafter release will be determined based on the risk posed by the individual. OLR prisoners are kept in prison until they are no longer considered a risk. This can therefore mean a much longer sentence than the minimum set out at sentencing. These sentences were particularly feared among interviewees due to the perception that sex offenders sentenced in this manner would spend a very long time in prison.

The term "community" is hugely significant to this thesis. The definition utilised draws on existing community theories, particularly Bhattcharyya (2004) and Goel (2001). Community is understood as a social collective with a sense of solidarity (stemming from shared identity and experiences) and following shared norms.[2] It was felt this definition truly represented the social structure that this research identified. This was the key consideration in adopting this definition: it had to accurately reflect the findings. Furthermore, this definition has the benefit of not straying too far from commonplace understandings of community. Oxford Dictionary (2018) provides two definitions of community: 'A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common' and 'the condition of sharing or having certain attitudes and interests in common'. The idea of commonality is shared by these definitions and the more technical definition adopted by this thesis. Adding some confusion to the use of the term "community" is the fact that it is also used to describe the community outside of prison that prisoners will be released into, i.e. 'prisoners may face

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[1] Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003, s1.
[2] More on reaching this definition can be found in Chapter 2, page 16.

difficulty returning to the community'. The community outside of prison and the community inside are discussed in a very different sense. This "community outside" is not discussed in relation to the definition above. In this context the term carries an ordinary, non-academic, dictionary definition: '(the community) the people of a district or country considered collectively, especially in the context of social values and responsibilities; society' (Oxford Dictionary 2018). Throughout the thesis it has been made clear which of these meanings of community is being discussed by use of the term "community <u>outside</u>" when discussing the community outside of prison.

The term 'comfort' is often used in this thesis in discussing the nature of the community formed in prison. This term is meant in its weakest sense. It is meant only to convey that certain pains are alleviated. It is a relative form of comfort, the best that can be found in the difficult environment of a prison. When it is discussed that the community of sex offenders in prison is one of comfort, it means only that it is safe and (in a limited sense) accepting. Certain pains associated with the stigmatisation accompanying the sex offender label are alleviated by the sex offender prisoner community, and because of this, participants are able to find some comfort in prison. This is only viewed as comfort when juxtaposed with the community outside which is unwelcoming to sex offenders and which they can find particularly challenging. It is not to say that prison is comfortable in the same sense that we might find our own homes comfortable, or the company of close friends comfortable. It is comfort in a much less warm sense.

Each of these terms are used throughout this thesis, the structure of which will now be outlined and a brief overview of each chapter provided.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is set out in seven chapters, this introduction being the first. Chapter 2 is a review of existing literature. Chapter 3 considers the methodology adopted in this research. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 exploring the findings of this research and chapter 7 is an analysis chapter. The content of each of these is outlined below.

The next chapter of this thesis will examine the existing bodies of literature which are relevant to this research. As this thesis connects to a broad range of areas, the literature review examines a number of diverse topics. It considers the field of carceral geography which helps understand the prison environment and the important role the structure of the prison can play (e.g. Moran and Jewkes 2015; Hancock and Jewkes 2011; Moran, Piacentini and Pallot 2012). The physical segregation between sex offenders and mainstream prisoners is a significant part of community development among sex offenders. The impact such geographical factors can have is therefore something that needs to be properly understood. Pains of imprisonment are also considered. There is a wide body of literature in this area which helps understand the experience of those who are incarcerated and the difficulties they face (e.g. Sykes 1957; Cohen and Taylor 1972; Crewe 2011). How these pains are experienced by the sex offenders in custody at HMP Glenochil directly affects both how their community forms and their desire for this community in the first place. Denial and minimisation of offences is also examined (e.g. Evans and Cubellis 2015; Sykes and Matza 1957; Hudson 2005). As many participants in this study denied their offences or sought to minimise them, it is important to explore why this occurs. Techniques of minimisation relate directly to the bases on which offenders might judge each other. For example, only offending on one occasion can be considered a way of minimising offending and offending multiple times can be considered worthy of judgement. How this judgement pervades the sex offender prisoner community and impacts its development needs to be understood.

Literature considering the concept of "community" and what this entails is then considered (e.g. Bhattacharyya 2004; Goel 2014; Mann 2012) for what it can offer to understanding the community formed among sex offenders in prison. Stigmatisation is also explored. This includes consideration of the stigmatisation suffered by sex offenders, their awareness of their stigmatised status and the impact this has (e.g. Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Schwaebe 2005; Tewksbury 2012). This plays an important role in relation to community development in prison as the community created aims to be a place where sex offenders are free of this stigmatisation.

Chapter 3 considers the methodology adopted for this research and seeks to justify the approach taken. It discusses the ethical issues that were applicable to this research and explains the process of gaining access to prisons, conducting the interviews and analysing the results. Thematic analysis was adopted in analysing results. This approach is explained and the process in this case is outlined. This chapter elucidates how this methodology was utilised to better understand the experience of incarcerated sex offenders.

There are three findings chapters in this thesis, exploring the results of the fieldwork. They argue that a peaceful community is formed among sex offenders in custody where they can find the safety and acceptance that they cannot find elsewhere. The first of these chapters, chapter 4, considers how this community forms. Solidarity is pivotal to community development and this develops through a shared identity and shared experiences. In the case of the community studied, the shared identity is that of a sex offender prisoner. This chapter discusses how this identity is reinforced in prison and how this serves to form bonds between community members. Several issues are discussed over which sex offenders in prison can bond, all of them relating to their identity as a sex offender and the common experiences that result from this.

The second findings chapter considers the norms of this community, all of which relate to creating a peaceful community, free of conflict. There is a code of conduct within this community that must be followed or individuals will no longer be welcome members. Community membership is presumptively granted on the basis of shared identity but this is subject to revocation if norms are not followed. Several norms clearly emerged among this population - firstly, complying with staff. In trying to create a peaceful prisoner community, positive relationships with staff are desired. Anyone causing difficulties for staff threatens the peace of this community and is not looked on favourably. The second norm was not discussing offences. This seeks to prevent judgement from entering the community. This is important as the community seeks to provide safety and acceptance for sex offenders in custody. Not acting on judgement was the last readily identifiable norm. What sex offenders in custody really seek is the absence of judgement altogether. However, this is difficult to maintain and the best that can be accomplished is that the consequences of this judgment are kept minimal, with no one being mistreated or excluded on this basis. Each of these norms relate to the overarching goal of the community to be a place of peace. Each of the norms seek to avoid conflict, either with staff or with other prisoners. Such conflict must be avoided if a peaceful community is to exist.

Chapter 6 is the third findings chapter. It considers the juxtaposition of the sex offender prisoner community and the community into which sex offenders are reintegrated on release from prison. The sex offender prisoner community provides a peaceful community of safety and acceptance. This could not be further from the community outside which treats sex offenders with extreme hostility when their status becomes known (Willis, Levenson and Ward 2010; Kernsmith, Craun and Foster 2009; King and Roberts 2017). Many fears were identified about release from prison and the difficulties that would be faced reintegrating. These fears, combined with the comfort found in the sex offender prisoner community, can

lead some to prefer prison to release. Some have given up on parole and others discuss intentional recall when the outside world becomes too difficult for sex offenders. The community formed in prison can in this respect be seen to have a somewhat negative effect. By providing comfort to sex offenders inside, which juxtaposes so sharply their experience outside, their desire for reintegration can be lost. The sex offender prisoner community plays an interesting role of, on the one hand, alleviating pains of imprisonment and, on the other, creating new pains by exacerbating fears about release.

The analysis chapter draws together the findings of this research and establishes their place in the current literature. This research is able to contribute numerous new ideas to a variety of fields. One significant contribution is to the field of prison sociology, particularly in its consideration of the pains of imprisonment. The research can also add to the body of literature that looks at minimisation of offending. It identifies a new means by which offenders can make themselves feel better about their offences – acceptance of guilt. One further field that this research can contribute to is research into communities. It looks at a community heretofore unexplored in this body of literature but considers how it fits within existing models of community by being founded on shared identity and shared norms. Contribution to the carceral geography literature is also made in increasing the understanding of how the spatial arrangements within a prison (in this case, segregation) can have a significant impact. Examination of the community formed among sex offenders in a segregated hall of a mixed prison has not been undertaken until now. This is a significant gap in the current literature as the community formed is of great significance to this population and segregation plays in interesting role in this. Consideration of these issues together brings together two heretofore distinct areas of literature to develop new ideas in prison sociology.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter considers a range of literature relating to the experience of imprisonment for sex offenders. Each of the areas considered contributes to developing a clear understanding of the sex offender prisoner community. First to be considered is the carceral geography literature. Geographical constraints within the prison environment are hugely significant to the experience of imprisonment. Of particular relevance to this study is the way in which these impact on the development of relationships. The physical segregation of sex offenders and mainstream is a particularly significant issue to the development of this community and will be considered in some depth below and in the findings chapters. Pains of imprisonment are also considered in this chapter. The experience of these pains increases the desire for a community in prison, with relationships with others being considered a means of relieving some of these pains. Interpersonal relationships are also considered in this chapter. These are obviously pivotal in community development as the community is a social entity. The existing literature on communities is examined to understand how communities form. This allows a nuanced definition of community to be established that explains the social structure found at HMP Glenochil. This, in turn, allows for the particular attributes of this community to be explored in the findings chapters. Stigmatisation is also considered in this chapter. Stigmatisation is experienced very strongly by sex offenders and permeates their prison lives in many ways. Principally for this research, it creates the desire for a community where they can be free of such stigmatisation.

Carceral Geography

The design of prison spaces, has been shown to impact on many areas of prison life. Most significantly for this research, which focusses on a community formed in prison, prison spaces impact on interpersonal relationships in custody: 'Alongside delivering punishment, prison

16

spaces also organize the social life of captives' (Piacentini and Slade 2015: 193). A community is made up of social ties so if carceral geography is impacting on the development of these then it is impacting on community development. The impact of carceral geography can be seen most clearly in this study when it comes to the physical segregation of sex offenders from mainstream offenders. This segregation, while maintaining safety for sex offenders who frequently suffer abuse when mixed with mainstream (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012), has far reaching consequences.[3]

Specific prison designs serve specific purposes. Beijersbergen et al (2016) consider six prison designs and the specific purposes behind their creation. Firstly, the Panopticon design: this is 'a circular structure with a domed roof and cells arranged in tiers on the circumference of the circle. The centre of the building contains the "inspection house," from which the staff are able to watch the prisoners' (Beijersbergen et al 2016: 847). This design is based on the work of Jeremy Bentham and places primacy on surveillance and maintaining control of prison inhabitants. Secondly is the radial design: 'any arrangement of cell buildings that converge on a center' (Beijersbergen et al 2016: 848). This design also prioritised surveillance and control as the centre point can be used by guards to inspect all of the wings. A further important feature of this design is keeping prisoners separate and communication between them minimal. The rectangular design is simply 'one rectangular building or two parallel rectangular cell buildings connected by a passageway' (Beijersbergen et al 2016: 848). These are often on more than one level and the cells line each wall, facing each other. This is a more open design than the approach favoured in some areas of the US of having cell back to back, facing the outer wall of the building. The courtyard design is 'a rectangular building with one or more inner courtyards' (Beijersbergen et al 2016: 848). This design focusses on

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[3] See chapter 4.

discouraging escape. The fifth design utilised in the Netherlands is the high-rise. This design features 'multiple small stacked pavilions that form a multistory building'. Each level provides a small unit and has communal space and a '"homely" atmosphere' (Beijersbergen et al 2016: 847). The last design, the campus design, describes 'freestanding pavilions arranged in a large open space… [which provide] [s]mall, semi-autonomous living units' (Beijersbergen et al 2016: 848).

These last two designs, the high-rise design and the campus design, allow for more interaction between inmates and between inmates and staff. However, there may be some downsides to this. Morris and Worrall (2014) found that security-related and property-related misconduct was less in prisons with a telephone pole style design (several wings coming off a central corridor) than in campus designs. This suggests there is, as suggested by Hancock and Jewkes (2011) a conflict between creating a more communal environment and ensuring control and discipline. However, as Morris and Worrall (2014) discuss, their results could simply be due to the fact that there are more opportunities for misconduct in a campus design due to the increased interaction, or there may be an increased likelihood of being caught, so it is not necessarily that the telephone pole style discourages misconduct. Furthermore, Morris and Worrall (2014) found no difference in violent misconduct between the two prison designs. Prison structure has also been shown to impact on resistance (Rubin 2017). Resistance, viewed traditionally as an exercise in agency, is generally considered without reference to structure but Rubin (2017) argues that this is problematic as both structure and agency play a role in resistance as: 'the prison regime enables, constructs and shapes the range of actions available to prisoners' (Rubin 2017: 658). These different designs can also impact on staff-prisoner interaction more generally. Panopticon and radial designs discourage staff-prisoner interaction whereas this is encouraged by high-rise and campus designs. Beijersbergen et al (2016) found that this translated to prisoners in panopticon style

prisons perceiving their relationships with officers as worse than prisoners in any other type of design. Those in campus style prisons were the most positive. High rise and rectangular designs seemed at first to provoke a positive view but when controlled for other variables the effect decreased in these cases as it was partly explained by the effect of the officer to prisoner ratio – where the officer to prisoner ratio is higher, relationships between these groups seemed to improve (Beijersbergen et al 2016). Other specific design features were also found to have an effect on staff-prisoner relationships. Prisoners experienced their relationships with officers more positively in newer units and in units with a lower percentage of double cells. The impact of carceral geography demonstrated here, on resistance, misconduct and general staff-prisoner relationships is hugely significant for this research. Avoiding conflict is key to the sex offender prisoner community and each of these issues impact on the potential for conflict with staff. When this conflict is so determinedly avoided it is interesting to see how the physical prison environment may be helping facilitate this lack of conflict, or making it an even greater challenge.

HMP Glenochil, where this research was conducted, does not entirely fit any single model described above. The building which housed the participants in this study had 5 separate storeys. These are entirely separate as in the high-rise design, not like the Victorian era designs in the UK where the hall is open plan across several landings that can see onto each other. The only prison left in this style in Scotland is HMP Barlinnie. Like the high-rise design, HMP Glenochil provides a communal area on each landing with (limited) recreation materials such as pool tables. This would seem to encourage interaction and perhaps go some way to alleviating alienation that could be felt in prison. However, the landings at HMP Glenochil are larger in size than a typical high-rise landing which contain only around 24 cells (Beijersbergen et al 2016). Each landing at HMP Glenochil is arranged in an L shape with the officer desk in the corner of the L. As with radial designs, this allows officers easy surveillance

from a central vantage point. There are no blind spots in the communal area of the hall, although cells themselves cannot be seen into without walking down the landing. The design of these landings seems therefore to facilitate interaction but also ensures surveillance is maintained. The role of surveillance in carceral space is discussed below. However, though design seems to encourage interaction on each landing at HMP Glenochil, it is strictly discouraged between prison halls as one hall houses sex offenders and the other houses mainstream. These populations are kept segregated. The building housing sex offenders is separated from the building containing mainstream by an external (though enclosed) corridor and 4 secured doors separate these populations. Movements are planned so that these populations avoid meeting and there is no mixing at the learning centre, work sheds, etc. Interaction between these populations is strictly avoided. This is due to concerns that sex offenders would be subject to abuse from the mainstream population due to the nature of their offences (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012).[4] This segregation is therefore ensuring the safety of prison inhabitants. However, it may serve a negative purpose of feeding the idea that sex offenders will never be accepted back into the community – if they cannot be accepted by the wider prison community, who have also committed wrongs, how can everyday society accept them again?[5]

Segregation is one particular way that prison space can have a significant impact on the experiences of those within prison walls. Martel (2006) noted that: 'Segregation is a space of immobility constituted through the includer's elaborate labor of division between the "normal" and the "dangerous" prisoner whose mobility throughout the prison is deemed problematic' (Martel 2006: 601). This was referring to segregation units rather than the separation of different types of offender across the prison as is done at HMP Glenochil but

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[4] See discussion below at page 24.
[5] See Chapter 4, page 3.

the result is the similar in that segregation creates a divide, in this case between the 'normal' mainstream prisoner and the 'sex offender'. This divide is created more out of a desire to protect sex offender prisoners, who are known to experience abuse in prison when mixed with mainstream (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012), rather than because they are inherently dangerous. Furthermore, in the context of HMP Glenochil, the immobility described by Martel is experienced by both halves of the divide. Both the 'sex offender' and the 'normal' prisoner are limited in their movements through the prison in order to keep these groups separate. Regardless of these differences, the experience of segregation is still significant in this context. It increases feelings of division between sex offenders and mainstream. When it comes to the design of prison spaces, this segregation is the most significant factor for the sex offenders at HMP Glenochil in relation to their sex offender prisoner community. As Sparks (2002) found when prisoners spoke of time spent in a segregated unit known as 'the digger':

> that isolation, paradoxically, of course creates solidarities. Whereas ordinary prison locations tend to be factious, competitive and ridden with cliques and jealousies, prisoners undergoing the shared deprivation of the Digger can see themselves as a crew, an embattled platoon, a literal 'dirty dozen'. It is a sense of shared identity that can have an ecstatic effect and one that may sustain a stance of opposition (Sparks 2002: 561).

Again, this segregation is different from that of the sex offenders at HMP Glenochil as 'the digger' was designed to be experienced as punishment, the segregation at HMP Glenochil is not meant to be experienced as such, rather, it is designed to avoid conflict between these populations. However, even though the goals of segregation are different in these cases, it nevertheless develops a sense of shared identity. Shared identity is a necessary component

of the sex offender prisoner community.[6] As outlined above, community is defined in this thesis as 'a social collective with a sense of solidarity stemming from shared identity and following shared norms'.[7] How the physical space of the prison is organised is therefore having a direct impact of community formation. This segregation is hugely significant to this thesis and will be discussed in depth in Chapter 4 which considers how community forms through shared identity.

As well as the organisation of physical space within a prison being significant, the more general look and feel of this space also plays a role in the experience of imprisonment. 'Over the last two decades UK prisons have been built according to logics of cost, efficiency and security. Most prison exteriors share a bland, unassuming and uniform style with vast expanses of brick, few, small windows and no unnecessary decoration' (Moran and Jewkes 2015: 174). These establishments have an institutional feel where functionality is at the forefront. Modern prisons have been considered, 'virtually identical to private hospitals, no-frills chain hotels or the kind of nondescript corporate HQ you might expect to find in a business park' (Hancock and Jewkes 2011). These modern designs prevent these establishments from ever feeling "homely" as was the recognised goal of the high-rise design utilised in the Netherlands (Beijersbergen et al 2016). This could be serving a political function to avoid the media backlash that occurs when prisons are considered too comfortable.[8] However, prisoners do find ways to make prison space feel more their own. Cells have been considered a particularly important space within a prison as these are considered a private area (Crewe et al 2014). Of course, in a prison setting privacy is always

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[6] See discussion below at page 19.
[7] See Introduction, page 8.
[8] See, for example: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/03/01/britains-cushiest-jail-super-prison-inmates-men-not-offenders/ https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/karen-buckley-killer-alexander-pacteau-6452541 https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/8789794/Slopping-out-case-life-of-luxury-in-British-jails.html
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5226101/Prisoners-allowed-use-phones-computers.html

compromised but this space has particular significance to prisoners. Studies have identified ways in which prisoners adapt these spaces to increase their comfort in prison. Baer (2005) found the use of such everyday artefacts as air fresheners and shampoo bottles to decorate cells. These were often kept on display in large quantities so it was not simply about the functional purpose of improving the smell in cells. Such everyday materials have even been described as 'an ornament' (Baer 2005: 213). This was viewed as a way of projecting an identity from the scarce resources in prison (Baer 2005). Similarly, in dormitory prison settings personal space was also created 'making use of a minimum of artefacts and considerable imagination' (Sibley and Von Hoven 2009: 201). Prisoners seem to demonstrate a desire to make their prison space as comfortable as they can using the limited means at their disposal. As one participant in Baer (2005) stated: 'You settle down. Cell's like your home. A lot of people won't look after it – "not my cell". But a lot of people will try to make the cell clean and tidy, like home' (Baer 2005: 213). However, as Baer (2005) observed:

> Walking inside of the confined area of a prison cell – a stopped-up toilet, damaged walls from violence, posters of scantily clad women on the wall – I cannot imagine that this is anywhere else. When the cells are particularly well maintained, they still seem starkly different from what I would find elsewhere (Baer 2005: 212).

This quote articulates that while prisoners might engage these techniques to make their space more comfortable prison will never be "homely". Despite the intention behind some of the prison designs discussed above, the prison environment is still in strict contrast with the comforts found in a home and there is only so much that can be done to counteract this as maintaining security is still a fundamental principle of prison operation. Baer (2005) considered that 'the decoration of prison cells could be a reflection of personal identity, within the rules and pragmatics of a prison culture' (Baer 2005: 213). Prisoners in custody

can undergo a crisis of identity (Liebling 2013) which can be experienced as a pain of imprisonment.[9] The decoration of prison cells may be one small way in which those in custody can mitigate this and retain some of their pre-imprisonment identity. Identity is an important concept throughout this thesis and will be explored in more depth in the findings chapters.

As well as prison spaces being felt as a pain of imprisonment in relation to identity, they are also related to the pain of lack of privacy. Lack of privacy is a long recognised pain of imprisonment linked strongly with surveillance, a critical aspect of the experience of prison spaces (Moran and Jewkes 2015: 174). Hancock and Jewkes (2011) discuss that the use of technology now allows for a more laid back prison design. There is now no need for Bentham's panopticon design, a more relaxed campus style is possible with the use of technological surveillance. However, use of constant surveillance can make it hard to create trust, both between staff and prisoners and staff and management as well as there being ethical considerations associated with constant surveillance (Hancock and Jewkes 2011). However, even prisoners do acknowledge the benefits of such surveillance, primarily safety, as it is difficult to hurt someone and go unseen. The risk of being seen and punished was felt to affect behaviour (Van Hoven and Sibley 2008). Some further pains of imprisonment are considered in the next section.

Pains of Imprisonment

Certain pains of imprisonment are well established in the existing literature but with new pains being identified in contemporary research (most significantly Crewe 2011). Sex offenders in custody will experience these pains of imprisonment, suffering the same deprivations as any other prisoners. This is therefore a significant part of the experience of

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[9] See below, page 14.

imprisonment for this group. These pains make prison difficult to cope with and the community formed by sex offenders in custody can make them more bearable.

Sykes (1957) identified five 'pains of imprisonment' that can be felt by those who are incarcerated in his seminal work. He stated: 'These deprivations or frustrations of the modern prison may indeed be the acceptable or unavoidable implications of imprisonment, but we must recognize the fact that they can be just as painful as the physical maltreatment which they have replaced' (Sykes 1957: 286). The five pains he identified were: deprivation of liberty; deprivation of goods and services; deprivation of heterosexual relationships; deprivation of autonomy; and deprivation of security. Deprivation of liberty was described as the most 'immediately obvious' of all the pains of imprisonment and relates to both 'confinement to the institution and… confinement within the institution' (Sykes 1957: 286). In the prison environment an individual is separated from his friends, family and life outside and must follow strict rules and face restricted movement. Confinement within the institution is a particularly significant pain for those in custody at HMP Glenochil due to their regime being stricter due to the need to segregate populations. Movement is therefore restricted to a greater degree at HMP Glenochil to ensure there is no cross-over of populations. Deprivation of goods and services is the second pain identified by Sykes and though the basic needs of the imprisoned individual are met, in terms of the goods and services they are provided, they are denied 'amenities' that go beyond 'necessities'. This is experienced as a pain as: 'in modern Western culture, material possessions are so large a part of the individual's conception of himself that to be stripped of them is to be attacked at the deepest layers of personality' (Sykes 1957: 288). So Sykes argues that it is not the lack of goods and services themselves so much as the associated stripping of identity that makes this deprivation painful. The impact of imprisonment on identity has also been considered in more contemporary research. Liebling (2013) found that prisoners in her study suffered from

a crisis of identity and of recognition. These inmates were struggling to survive psychologically as they found it difficult to find meaning in their environment. Some responded positively when they found music or study as a way of dealing with this. As discussed above, decorations in prison cells could also be a way of coping with this (Baer 2005). However, Cohen and Taylor (1972) found that the high security prisoners they worked with hardly lost their identity. Liebling (2011) also did not describe the prisoners in her study as 'losing' their identity, rather, she took the view that they had to reshape it. They were preoccupied with both their new public identity which was required for their release and the identity they required for survival in their present prison environment. As will be more fully discussed in chapter 4, identity is a particularly important concept for imprisoned sex offenders in custody as their shared sex offender identity is foundational in their sex offender prisoner community. This identity is thrust upon them in custody whether they view themselves as a sex offender or not (those who deny their offences do not view themselves as sex offenders and those who have offended only once and view this as out of their character may also question the label). Every aspect of their prison lives is determined by their sex offender status as this is the basis for the prison regime – keeping the sex offenders separate. The continual reinforcement of this identity throughout the experience of imprisonment gives it particular power to create a sense of solidarity among this population which leads to the development of the sex offender prisoner community.[10]

A third pain of imprisonment identified by Sykes is deprivation of security. While in prison: 'the individual prisoner is thrown into prolonged intimacy with other men who in many cases have a long history of violent, aggressive behavior' (Sykes 1958: 292). Simply the fear that an individual might find himself subject to violence can cause anxiety among inmates and this

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[10] See Chapter 4.

itself is experienced as a pain of imprisonment, though this might never occur. There is evidence to suggest this might also be a pain experienced more strongly by sex offenders as their heavily stigmatised status gives them greater reason to fear violence from other inmates. Studies have shown sex offenders are particularly victimised when it comes to prison violence (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013). This pain of imprisonment, in particular, heightens the desire among sex offenders to create a community of safety.

Sykes identified two further pains of imprisonment. Firstly, the deprivation of heterosexual relationships. This 'involuntary celibacy' has been considered to cause both physiological and psychological issues for those in prison. Secondly, the deprivation of autonomy which relates again to the strict rules of a prison regime meaning every aspect of a prisoner's life is outwith their control. These pains are a common experience across the sex offenders at HMP Glenochil so can help to bind the community. However, these pains have not been shown to be experienced by this community to any greater degree than other prisoners or be of more significance to this group, they are not therefore considered in greater depth here.

A further unavoidable pain of imprisonment, as mentioned in the previous section, is the lack of privacy. Cohen and Taylor (1972) discuss the lack of privacy experienced by the men in their study and describe 4 different states of privacy that are lost: solitude; intimacy; anonymity; and reserve. Solitude is simply being alone, with no observation. Intimacy is the privacy sought between people to achieve 'personal affinity' (1972: 80). Anonymity is freedom from identification and observation in public which allows people to 'switch off'. Reserve is the ability not to reveal aspects of yourself that you do not want to (Cohen and Taylor 1972: 79-81). As Cohen and Taylor (1972) discuss, while we may choose to give up one of these at a time for various reasons, we are never without all four simultaneously for such an extended period of time. Relatedly, Crewe (2007) described the significance of the loss of

autonomy that results from the gates, walls, searches, CCTV, rules, etc. associated with imprisonment. Increased technological surveillance in modern prisons might exacerbate this pain further.

Crewe (2011) revisited the pains of imprisonment, identifying several new pains and reconceptualising how these are experienced. He discussed the existing concepts of "depth" and "weight". "Depth", in the experience of imprisonment, was defined by Downes (1988) and related to the 'humanity and survivability of the prison experience' encompassing issues such as 'relations with staff and prisoners, the quality of rights, privileges and conditions, positive activity, the severity of discipline and punishment' (Crewe 2011: 521). Then King and McDermott (1995) argued that the experience of these issues was better conceptualised as "weight". They considered that when prisoners use 'imagery of depth' they are discussing oppressiveness through 'security and control' whereas the issues previously considered to be experienced as "depth" were discussed by prisoners using metaphors of "weight" (Crewe 2011: 521). Prison's 'psychological onerousness' was described as weighing down on prisoners: a 'weight on the shoulders' rather than depth which suggests 'being buried far from liberty, deep below the surface of freedom' (Crewe 2011: 521). However, Crewe argues that neither of these concepts can fully encapsulate the modern prison. He argues:

> A better metaphor is "tightness". This noun gives a sense of the way that power is experienced as both firm and soft, oppressive yet also somehow light. It 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 (Crewe 2011: 522).

Crewe considered some specific pains of imprisonment that are experienced as 'tightness'. He described a 'pain of psychological assessment' suffered by prisoners where prisoners feel like they lose control over their own identity when officials decide who they are and what

they are like (Crewe 2011: 515). They are often given 'an enduring master-label' which feels dehumanising, for example labels such as 'impulsivity problems' and 'anti-social personality' (Crewe 2011: 515). However, these labels may be at odds with their own perception of themselves. Crewe (2011) found that some just made up characters for themselves that matched what officials wanted to hear: to be considered honest they felt they had to lie. Crewe (2011) also found a feeling among inmates that officials are not there to help them. They feel uneasy as they sense that any comment can be used against them and believe comments can be taken out of context. With sex offenders subjected to strict risk assessments and sex offender specific programmes, this pain of psychological assessment is something they experience strongly. This pain is also related to the issues of identity, discussed above, due to these imposed labels. As discussed, identity development in prison is of particular significance to the sex offender population at HMP Glenochil.

Crewe (2011) also discussed the pains of self-government felt by some in modern prisons where the use of incentives and reports means direct contact is not necessary to exert control. These changes mean prisoners themselves are responsible for more of their own decisions but these decisions will be considered in their assessments. They are no longer told exactly what to do, though nor are they left entirely to their own devices. They are not allowed to be 'docile' and just pass through prison as they have to address their offending. They are offered some choice in how to do that – what programmes to engage in, etc. – but doing this opens them up to risk in the form of reports. Crewe (2011) describes this as 'the difference between being an object of discipline and an agent of one's own incarceration' (519). One of his participants stated of this: 'The screws [used to] let you know: "you step over that line, and I'll have you". These days, they'll let you step over the line. They'll give you enough rope to hang yourself. You can just tie yourself up and then kill yourself with it.' (Crewe 2011: 519).

A further new pain identified by Crewe (2011) is the pain of 'uncertainty and indeterminacy' (513). This applies in many different ways. For example, in their relationships with the officers, inmates may feel they do not know where they stand. One day they may be friendly with an officer and the next day find them much stricter. Some felt that the responses given to requests made to staff were often arbitrary (Crewe 2011). So, while prison officers now are less likely to use aggression, the experience in modern prisons has been described as 'softer but shitter' due to its lack of predictability (Crewe 2011: 514). A further example of the pain of uncertainty is through the use of indeterminate sentences. These mean that offenders need to reduce their "risk" to be released. Prisoners often feel unsure of how to do this (see related discussion on the pain of psychological assessment, above) and the uncertainty of not knowing how much time they have left to serve makes it difficult to cope with their time in prison (Crewe 2011). Liebling (2011) also found that prisoners can find their sentences hardest to face when they are indeterminate. This, again, is a particular issue for the sex offender population due to the use of Orders for Lifelong Restriction (OLR) sentences for this group. OLR prisoners are subject to supervision for life and given an indefinite prison sentence that will continue until risk is sufficiently reduced. This can lead to sex offenders spending a great deal of time in prison after the 'punishment part' of their sentence has been served, with no end in sight.

Relationships in Prison

The relationships formed in prison are a pivotal part of the experience of imprisonment (see, for example, Cohen and Taylor 1972; Liebling and Arnold 2012; Crewe 2014). Relationships are a vital component of the sex offender prisoner community, discussed in the next section, which is made up of social ties between community members. However, despite the importance of prison relationships, there are challenges to forming these social bonds. These

are challenges that need to be overcome in order for the social ties that make up the sex offender prisoner community to develop.

Relationships with Other Prisoners

Cohen and Taylor discussed that the need for friends was heightened by the prison environment but it was hard to find them as there was a limited number of people to choose friends from and they may be off put by others' 'acts of deviance' (Cohen and Taylor 1972:63). In particular, it was sex offenders that other offenders did not want to associate with (Cohen and Taylor 1972:64). Research suggests that even among sex offenders there exists a hierarchy of offences (Crewe 2007; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Evans and Cubellis 2015; Ievins and Crewe 2015) so others' 'acts of deviance' may impact on the development of relationships even within this group who, as a whole, are heavily stigmatised. However, Cohen and Taylor (1972) found that the crimes committed by the inmates were not enough on their own to stop friendships being formed. These are issues that were generally played down. Cohen and Taylor (1972) found that even some sex offenders over time had limited interaction with the other prisoners – though they never developed a close relationship. In a population of only sex offenders, where all are heavily stigmatised, interaction can also develop over time and the nature of offences can be 'played down'. Sykes (1958) identified an "inmate code", one aspect of which was that prisoners "do [their] own time". This would preclude prisoners from focussing too much attention on the offences of others, preventing this from becoming an insurmountable obstacle to relationships forming. The presence of judgement therefore presents a challenge to community development but not one that cannot be overcome.

Crewe (2014) investigated homosocial bonding in prisons and found that this bonding was achieved through 'sexual and sexist joking, rites of passage, shared mythologies, and

collective acts of watching and chasing women'. He found that "manhood" was granted by

male peers which created complex feelings as inmates both identified with, and felt

competition towards, other men in the group. Crewe (2014) described prisons as 'homosocial

institutions *par excellence'* through the forced intimacy of this environment and the lack of

women (2014: 397). He found that conversation related to 'sexual story- telling, bragging

(about criminal activity and the accumulation of wealth), and "war stories" (e.g., about

experiences "back in the day" in "tough nicks" and austere conditions)' (2014: 397). He

explains that: 'these stories appear to bond prisoners through shared reference points and

macho nostalgia, and to grant them differential status according to their experience of penal,

criminal, and sexual activity' (2012: 397). He also found that prisoners created friendships

through repetitions of everyday routines such as making tea, watching television, etc. as

these 'echo familiar practices of home and family' (2012: 398). Offenders in this study did

express concern for each other but in public did not show any emotion. Sentiments were

often shown through jokes or non-verbal behaviour like sharing cigarettes. Offenders were

confronted with the conflict of needing company to deal with the prison experience on the

one hand and the need to avoid showing emotion on the other. Showing this emotion or

explaining their feelings about friendships would lead to ridicule. It seems therefore that

while developing friendships with other inmates is an important way of alleviating the pains

of imprisonment, being open about the importance of these relationships would add to this

pain through loss of respect. This is a delicate line to walk down.

Liebling and Arnold (2012) found that it was difficult to do a prison sentence without an

affiliation to some group. However, prisoners in this research described their relationship

with others as 'cautious and limited' and were guarded around each other (2012: 416).

Impacting on these relationships, Liebling and Arnold (2012) described a powerful 'culture of

distrust' at the prison they researched where:

only 12 per cent of prisoners 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement, 'I trust the officers in this prison'; nine per cent felt that 'this prison is good at placing trust in prisoners; 54 per cent 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the statement 'I feel that I am trusted quite a lot in this prison'; and 24 per cent 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they trusted other prisoners.

This lack of trust makes relationships both with staff and with other prisoners difficult to sustain. However, the formation of friendships with other prisoners is vital to survival in this environment where contact with friends and family outside the prison is so restricted (Cohen and Taylor 1972). Crewe (2007) found that offenders differentiate between 'transient' acquaintance relationships and a small number of trusted friends. He found that those in the 'friend' category were often known from outside prison or from past sentences. Cohen and Taylor (1972) also found that it can be difficult for prisoners to retain friends due to prisoners being moved prisons, or released, and visits not being permitted. This problem of contact not being permissible is also experienced after release for those convicted of a sexual offence and released on licence. Licence conditions would preclude contact with other sex offenders meaning any existing friendships could not be continued. Mann (2012) found that some of the sex offenders she spoke to took steps to prevent friendships developing in order to protect themselves from 'the emotional toll of losing friendships'. This restriction can result in the loss of all support networks if contact with friends and family outside prison has been lost and friends made inside cannot be contacted. This can make the community outside of prison particularly challenging, increasing the importance of the community formed inside prison to this group who find it difficult to find a sense of belonging anywhere else.

Relationships with Staff

The relationship prisoners have with prison staff is also an important aspect of prison life. Cohen and Taylor (1972) found a very hostile attitude towards staff from their participants who generally viewed officers as 'thick, insensitive, callous… spiteful, vindictive and personal' (Cohen and Taylor 1972: 119). They found an "us and them" mentality existed among the offenders so even when inmates spoke of 'good screws' they were still viewed as bad overall as they were on the wrong side. However, in spite of this there was cooperation with the officers which was described as a situation of 'uneasy tolerance' and, while officer were often laughed at and put down, their rules were largely followed (Cohen and Taylor 1972: 120). More contemporary research considers the changing role of the prison officer (Crewe 2007) who can now 'fuck you up with a pen' rather than their fists (Crewe 2007). Past prison life is viewed as more straightforward with inmates at least knowing where they stood. One participant in Crewe's study (2007) actually believed violence was better than the current experience of imprisonment as it was predictable and short lived, not like notes in a file. The new approach is viewed as more dishonest with things happening behind the backs of the inmates. Crewe (2011) found that relationships between officers and inmates were harmonious in the past with a particular lack of trust existing now due to officers being pleasant to a prisoner's face then writing negative reports. Though changing, it does not seem as though relationships with prison officers have become any more positive. However, sex offenders are known to be more compliant than mainstream (Ievins 2014; Liebling et al 1997) potentially impacting on these relationships. This distinctive population may have distinctive staff-prisoner relations. While this could be in a positive sense due their increased compliance, it could also be in a negative sense due to the negative views staff may hold of this population. There is some evidence that staff working with sex offenders may carry negative views towards them (Ricciardelli and Spencer 2014; Weekes, Pelletier and

Beaudette 1995; Higgins and Ireland 2009; Lea, Auburn and Kibblewhite 1999). Some participants in the study conducted by Lea, Auburn and Kibblewhite (1999) felt that they were unable to ignore these negative feelings and their practice was affected. Such negative views also affected the practice of officers in Ricciardelli and Spencer's (2014) study who had been known to expose individuals as sex offenders when they were trying to keep this hidden from other prisoners to avoid potential abuse. This particular action of officers is not relevant to the population at HMP Glenochil due to their segregation from mainstream but negative attitudes of staff could play a significant role in other ways due to the control they hold over every aspect of prisoners' lives.

The Prisoner Community

This section draws together the literature on community formation generally and the literature on prisoner communities to establish a basis for the discussion of the formation of a sex offender prisoner community. There is limited existing research into the prisoner community (e.g. Hayner and Ash 1940; Caldwell 1956), though this is not contemporary and does not consider the community formed exclusively of sex offenders when kept in a segregated environment. Instead it focusses on the community across a whole prison, encompassing all types of offender. This is a significant difference as when sex offenders are mixed in such prisoner communities, they face ostracisation and abuse (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013, Cohen and Taylor 1972, Tewksbury 2012; Schwaebe 2005), vastly different from their experience among those similarly stigmatised. However, the existing literature can help to reach an understanding of what is meant by "community" in this setting. The more general literature on community development is also considered in this section. This literature has not considered prisoner communities but again can be drawn on in developing an understanding of how communities form in other contexts which can be applied to the sex offender prisoner community that this research examines.

Hayner and Ash (1940) made an important distinction between "prison community" and "prisoner community", the first of which represents a more formal organisational structure, with prison staff being included in this community. The "prisoner community" relates to more informal social structures among prisoners. This community is naturally occurring rather than held together by the formal rules of a prison. Caldwell (1956) describes such an informal social group within a prison as:

> a number of persons possessing established patterns of social interaction, similar social attitudes, social values, and group loyalties, mutual interests, and the faculty of cooperation in the performance of a natural function… The members generally display similar types of attitudinal behavior and adhere to the same set of social values (Caldwell 1956: 649).

It is this type of community, the informal *prisoner* community, that this research is principally concerned with. Although, as Caldwell (1956) notes, 'these two parts of the prison structure are inseparable' (Caldwell 1956:649). The formal structures within the prison setting are part of what binds prisoners together, part of what allows them to perceive they have the commonality which is one of the foundations of a community (Glaser 2001; Brint 2001; Goel 2014; Bhattacharyya 2004). While the definition adopted in this thesis does not require the same degree of commonality as Caldwell (1956) set out, this concept remains pivotal. As discussed in more depth below, common identity and common norms are what bind this community together.

Caldwell (1956) identifies several different informal social groups within a prison which might constitute 'prisoner communities', including 'politicians', moonshiners, dope peddlers and the gambling syndicate. The community formed by sex offenders in prison might therefore

be conceptualised as forming one such informal 'prisoner community'. As Mann (2012) found in her study of aging child sex offenders:

> Many of the men in my study discussed the strong sense of community which exists amongst sex offenders within prison. Strongly bound by a sense of unity against mainstream prisoners based on the vilification they tend to receive at their hands, this naturally-occurring community provides a great source of comfort and support to the child sex offenders to whom I spoke (Mann 2012:354).

This supports the idea that such a community may exist among sex offenders and that it is 'naturally-occurring' (a *prisoner* community) rather than being created by the rules of the establishment (a *prison* community). However, this conceptualisation of the sex offender prisoner community is imperfect. The groups identified by Caldwell (1956) form their own distinct communities but are all able to interact with each other. They all exist within the same broader 'prison community'. For the participants at HMP Glenochil there is no mixing of sex offender and mainstream populations. While these groups might exist in the same prison it would not be correct to view them as forming part of the same 'prison community' as there is no interaction between them, staff cross-over is minimal, different treatment programmes are attended and so on. It is therefore better conceptualised as two co-existing but separate prison communities one of mainstream offenders and one of sex offenders. Within the formal *prison* community of sex offenders, which all sex offenders housed together would be a part of, there is a *prisoner* community with a smaller membership. What defines this narrower *prisoner* community will be considered in the following subsection.

Finding a Definition of Sex Offender Prisoner Community

Different definitions of community have been developed that can be drawn on in developing a definition that works for this research. Originally these were based on people within a

geographical area. As Goel (2014) discusses: 'The earlier and most commonly held meaning of "community" refers to people living in a place who have face–to-face contact with each other' (Goel 2014:1). Such definitions are now insufficient, particularly since technological development has led to many "online communities" separated geographically by a great distance (Goel 2014; Bhattacharyya 2004). Community has now 'crossed physical boundaries of place and people could connect with each other by using technologies and still fulfil most of the functions of the community' (Goel 2014:1). In a prison setting there is still a geographical space in which the community is found and, as discussed above, this space has a significant impact on the lives of those incarcerated. Therefore, though modern definitions of community have moved away from this focus, as they should to encompass a broader range of social collectives and get to the heart of what makes these groups "communities", the significance of the shared geography of the particular community being examined in this thesis should not be underestimated. The experience of this common geography is part of what binds this community together.

Glaser (2001) critically considers another traditional definition of communities: 'collectivities of people (a) who share values or beliefs, and (b) whose social relations are relations of affect, characterized by mutuality and emotional bonds, and (c) who frequently interact' (Glaser 2001:1). He has questioned this definition as some communities do not have face-to-face interaction, do not have emotional bonds, are of an unknown size and without clearly identifiable members or are faced with inequality or conflict among their members. Some of these issues are applicable in the case of a sex offender prisoner community. For example, it may be a stretch to describe their bonds as being emotional, rather they are bound by shared experience and shared geography and common values (which will be discussed further below). The solution proposed by Glaser (2001) to the problems of this definition was to conceptualise community in a differentiated way.

Glaser (2001) identified four subtypes of community based on what members have in common. First, he identified producing communities. Their relation to others is a common subject matter of work and the community's actions are coordinated by this. Secondly, he identified communities of practice in which members were related to each other through common activity and coordinated partially by institutions. Third were social movements which were related by a common goal and coordinated partially by institutions and ad hoc organisations. The last subtype Glaser (2001) identified was 'traditional' communities with common norms and values. The coordination of this group was unspecifiable as it depended on the specific norms and values binding the community. The prison sex offender community does not fall entirely neatly into any one of these categories. The best fit is the 'traditional' communities due to common norms and values binding this group (see below for discussion of the values of this particular community). However, overlap can certainly be seen with 'communities of practice' as their actions are largely coordinated by institutions (the prison in which they are housed) and their relation to others is, at least in part, common activity (all of the everyday activity of prison life). However, while this typology does not allow a perfect fit for the community studied in this thesis, the means of establishing membership is applicable. Glaser (2001) explains that, in each of these communities, membership is established by the perception of having something in common with others. In terms of establishing membership of the sex offender prisoner community, there is a range of matters which can constitute this commonality. Principally, there is a common experience of prison life and common experience of being a sex offender (a label which can lead to particular stigmatisation, see below). There may be different levels of engagement with this community due to the range of issues upon which commonality can be founded rather than a simple "in the community" or "out of the community" set up. Some people in prison for sex offences do not consider themselves "sex offenders". This is either because they completely deny their

offences, or because they see themselves as different in some other way, perhaps drawing on the distancing techniques identified by Hudson (2005) discussed below, for example, that their offending was a one off 'temporary aberration' and they are not therefore 'real' sex offenders. However, a common experience of prison life can be enough to allow these individuals, who find it difficult to view themselves as 'real' sex offenders, access to this community to some degree, though perhaps not obtaining the same comfort from membership as those who embrace all aspects of their common identity as incarcerated sex offenders.

Brint (2001) also established subtypes of community. His subtypes are determined following a branching pattern. The first branch is defined by the context of interaction among members and divides geographic and choice-based communities. Straight away this is problematic for the sex offender prisoner community as it cannot be defined either as entirely geographical or entirely choice based. There is a common geographical area (the institution housing the community) but this geography does not force individuals to engage with the narrow form of prisoner community this thesis considers, which involves common norms which not everyone within this geographical space might follow. However, neither is it entirely choice-based. Yes, individuals can choose the degree with which they engage with the sex offender prisoner community but in the prison setting choice is always severely limited and no one chooses in the first instance to be an imprisoned sex offender. However, the general definition provided by Brint (2001) is more helpful in defining the sex offender prisoner community than his branching organisational chart. This defines community as: 'aggregates of people who share common activities and/or beliefs and who are bound together *principally* by relations of affect, loyalty, common values, and/or personal concern' (Brint 2001:8). This general definition does work for prison sex offender communities though the typologies stemming from it are imperfect. This definition allows for a community to be

based on both common activities and common beliefs whereas Glaser (2001) differentiates these types of community. As discussed, in a sex offender prisoner community, there are common activities as well as common beliefs that bind this group together so a conception that allows for both of these commonalities in one community is favourable.

Solidarity and Shared Identity

Goel (2014) theorised solidarity as a key aspect of community. She viewed community relationships as based on a shared identity among community members and that this identity 'helps bring solidarity amongst people' (Goel 2014:2). Bhattacharyya (2004) also placed importance on the concept of solidarity, which he defined as 'a shared identity… and a code for conduct or norms' (Bhattacharyya 2004:12). He identified this as the defining feature of community that allowed it to be distinguished from other social groups. This definition is narrower than Glaser (2001) above which specifies that members in a community have 'something' in common. Here the shared feature is specified as an identity and code of conduct for norms. This is appropriate when considering the sex offender prisoner community. De Jaeger and Hoyer (2016) considered that feelings of solidarity increased in the face of a common enemy. This is significant for sex offenders in custody who can feel bound together against those who stigmatise them (Mann 2012).[11] Similarly to the concept of solidarity, Anderson (2006) discusses the 'imagined community' that exists around a nation as defined by 'comradeship' and 'fraternity' (Anderson 2006: 50). Anderson (2006) theorised that it is these concepts that make citizens kill and die for their countries. These bonds in 'imagined communities' exist between those who may never meet, simply because of a perceived commonality. Similarly, all sex offenders in custody at HMP Glenochil may not meet each other but when they do meet, the commonality of their sex offender label is

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[11] See discussion on stigmatisation in the next section of this chapter.

enough to ensure a sense of comradeship and a presumptive place in the community until norms are breached. In some senses this community may also be considered an 'imagined community' as bonds exist even among those who do not meet.

When stigmatisation results in a sex offender losing existing relationships with friends and family and experiencing a general rejection from those in the community outside prison, they may seek new relationships to fill this void: 'new relationships and memberships can psychologically replace those that have ended' (Richman and Leary 2009: 370). Membership of the sex offender prisoner community is something that could replace lost social ties. Richman and Leary (2009) found that 'when people are unable to re-establish a relationship that has been damaged or destroyed by rejection, they usually seek acceptance and belonging from other people' (Richman and Leary 2009: 371). Among those similarly stigmatised, this sense of acceptance and belonging is more easily achievable. The need to belong has been considered a significant motivator in human interaction. Carvallo and Pelham stated that 'a host of closely related motives that we refer to as "the need to belong" or "the need for acceptance" dominates much of the human interpersonal landscape' (Carvallo and Pelham 2006: 96). Similarly Baumeister and Leary (1995) stated: 'human beings are fundamentally and pervasively motivated by a need to belong' (Baumeister and Leary 1995: 522). Branscombe, Schmitt and Harvey (1999) considered Tajfel and Turner's (1989) social identity theory which considers that when 'the powerful majority is prejudiced and discriminates against one's ingroup' it leads to increased identification with that group (Branscombe, Schmitt and Harvey 1999: 137). The prejudice and discrimination experienced by sex offenders can therefore strengthen their identification with other sex offenders, strengthening in turn, the sex offender prisoner community. Branscombe, Schmitt and Harvey (1999) believed this increased identification was explained by people's inherent desire to belong:

attributions to prejudice can increase group identification [due to] people's desire to feel that they belong… when devalued group members believe that acceptance and fair treatment by a more powerful group is improbable, identifying with the lower status in-group may be the best possible strategy for feeling accepted and enhancing psychological well-being. In other words, if one cannot gain acceptance in the group with much of society's power and prestige, the most adaptive response might be to increase one's investment in one's own group (Branscombe, Schmitt and Harvey 1999: 137).

Baumeister and Leary (1995) considered that this desire to belong results in 'People who have anything in common, who share common (even unpleasant) experiences, or who simply are exposed to each other frequently tend to form friendships or other attachments' (Baumeister and Leary 1995: 520). In the sex offender prisoner community, members share the common experiences of imprisonment and are exposed to each other, and only each other (barring contact with staff and limited prison visits), continually. Social bonds can therefore be created among community members on these bases.

As discussed above, Glaser's (2001) 'traditional community' is based on common values and norms and the more general definition provided by Brint (2001) also draws on the ideas of common beliefs and common values (which can be translated into corresponding common norms). Adding to this, Goel (2014) and Bhattacharyya (2004) place a great deal of importance on shared identity causing solidarity. Drawing from all of these conceptions of community their most useful attributes for the population of sex offenders being studied here, we can reach the following definition of a sex offender prisoner community: a group of people bound together by shared identity and sharing common norms.

Community Norms

The sex offender prisoner community has been defined here as bound together through a shared identity and acceptance of common norms. What these specific norms may be needs specific exploration through primary research (see chapter 5 of this thesis) but existing literature may be able to identify some established principles that may form part of the shared norms of the sex offender prisoner community. Sykes (1958) described the 'inmate code' as being significant to adapting to prison life. This can be considered as representing values and norms held by the prisoner community (Sykes considered a more general prison population, not specifically sex offenders). The inmate code relates to the following central tenets: do not grass; do your own time; do not exploit or steal from other prisoners; be a man; do not side with/show respect for prison officers. However, as Crewe (2007) discussed, the code will vary slightly across different prisons and even across different wings in the same prison and will also adapt over time. Any code such as this might therefore be very different for a sex offender population which, as discussed further below, experiences imprisonment differently from others. One such difference might be in showing respect to staff. Sykes' (1958) code described siding with or showing respect for officers as impermissible and Ricciardelli (2014) found 'don't get friendly with staff' to be a central tenet of the prisoner code for the population she studied. However, sex offenders are considered a very compliant population who cause little trouble to staff (Liebling et al 1997). Those who do cause problems for staff are not looked on favourably in the sex offender prisoner community. One further difference might be evidenced by the fact that sex offenders are considered more likely to place formal complaints than to solve problems with violence (this perception existed among participants and staff in HMP Glenochil). This difference might be considered to fly in the face of two tenets of the inmate code 'do not grass' and 'be a man' as well as Ricciardelli's (2014) tenets 'never rat' and 'act tough'. Formal complaints made to staff about

other prisoners could be perceived as 'grassing' and dealing with problems in this way rather than man-to-man could be viewed as contradictory to prison notions of masculinity encompassed by the tenet 'be a man'. This is discussed in greater depth in chapter 5.

Stigmatisation

The experience of stigmatisation is particularly heightened for sex offenders in custody and could be considered a particular pain of imprisonment attaching to this population. It is in the face of this stigmatisation that a community forms among sex offenders in custody that can provide them a place of belonging, among those similarly stigmatised, where they are safe and accepted. Stigmatisation is therefore a key concept throughout this thesis and will be considered in some depth in this section.

While in custody sex offenders are the 'stigmatized among the stigmatized' (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013). This can result in this group being subject to various forms of harassment: verbal and physical abuse, theft, extortion and/or threats. Furthermore, it leads to exclusion for these individuals – sometimes through informal means such as other prisoners being unwilling to spend time with them, and sometimes more formally in them being excluded from certain prison activities. Adding a further layer of difficulty to this experience is the additional hierarchy that exists among sex offenders, with those offending against children afforded the lowest status. For those lowest in this hierarchy the experience of stigmatisation in prison is even greater. They are the stigmatised, among the stigmatised, among the stigmatised. This makes them subject to worse and/or more frequent harassment and makes forming supportive relationships in prison even more difficult. The Scottish prison system remains absent from the studies below, however, so the experiences of sex offenders in Scottish prisons cannot be presumed to be the same as those described here but these studies are still indicative of the issues that may arise in this context. The experience in

Scottish prisons may differ as sex offenders are largely kept separate from mainstream populations. In HMP Glenochil, this was certainly the case with the populations kept entirely separate as much as possible. This may lessen the abuse suffered in prison but could strengthen the feeling that sex offenders are a distinct group that are unwelcome among non sex offenders.

Stigmatisation by Other Prisoners: Abuse and Exclusion

One particular result of the stigmatisation faced by sex offenders is the abuse and harassment they are subject to in prison. Schwaebe described sex offenders as 'a highly stigmatised group subject to humiliation and violence' (Schwaebe 2005: 616) and Ricciardelli and Moir (2013) found verbal abuse to be frequent among their research subjects. Some favoured terms were: 'sick', 'weirdos', 'skinners', 'evil', 'scum of the earth' (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013: 367). 'Skinners' was also a term identified by Waldram (2007) as was the term 'hounds'. Tewksbury (2012) describes the harassment suffered by this group as mostly verbal, although it can be physical. Similarly, Ricciardelli and Moir (2013) identified both physical and verbal abuse as well as having property stolen as ways sex offenders are targeted in prison. Schwaebe (2005) additionally identified the use of threats and extortion on this population. These experiences of abuse may be lesser in establishments designed to specifically address the stigmatisation of these offenders. For example, Ievins and Crewe (2015) found that their participants did not feel unsafe at Whatton but those with experience of other establishments described the violence, victimization and fear suffered elsewhere. Similarly, Blagden et al. (2016) looked at experiences within a therapeutically orientated prison and participants felt safe there compared to other establishments where they felt they had to 'look over their shoulder' (Blagden et al. 2016: 382). Participants attached great significance to this, believing that it gave them a better ability to reflect on themselves and the changes they wanted to make. This is limited, anecdotal, evidence but it does suggest

that at least some in custody for sexual offences might be held back by the stigmatisation suffered in a typical prison.

Another way in which sex offenders' stigmatised status manifests itself in prison is through social exclusion. Ricciardelli and Moir (2013) found that others in prison did not want to be associated with sex offenders and that there was often no 'concrete reason' for this other than their offence (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013: 368). One potential reason for this is fear of the stigma that extends to those who associate with sex offenders: 'if you hang around with trash you are trash' (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013: 371). This is what Goffman (1963) terms 'courtesy stigma'. In order to avoid this courtesy stigma, if one individual becomes aware that another has a sex charge they need to make it known immediately (Goffman 1963). A further reason friendships with sex offenders might be avoided was identified by Ricciardelli and Moir (2013) who found that being a sex offender was often linked to being an informant or collaborating with staff: 'paedophiles, rats, rapists' are all lumped together and concerns are expressed about associating with 'sex offenders who run and tell' (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013: 369). This perception can be offered as a reason for socially excluding this group alongside fear of courtesy stigma and a general disgust at the nature of their offences.

These experiences are those of sex offenders held in custody alongside mainstream offenders. HMP Glenochil therefore offers a strong contrast to these experiences. With interaction between sex offenders and mainstream avoided as much as possible, there is little opportunity for sex offenders to suffer any abuse. As for social exclusion, sex offenders are housed only among other sex offenders. Among the similarly stigmatised any experience of exclusion is diluted. However, there is some literature suggesting that even among sex offenders, a hierarchy remains. This has been found to result in some degree of exclusion of

those with child victims even when in environments with only sex offenders (Ievins and Crewe 2015).

Hierarchy

The interpersonal relationships between sex offenders at HMP Glenochil and their place within the segregated prison is something that will be explored in the findings chapters of this thesis as these issues are key to understanding the experience of imprisonment for this population. Within the existing research it is well established in research that a hierarchy of offenders exists in prison with sex offenders at the bottom (e.g. Ievins and Crewe 2015, Ricciardelli and Moir 2013, Cohen and Taylor 1972). Sex offenders experience 'strong, persistent, negative labelling within the inmate community' (Tewksbury 2012: 612). This hierarchy seems to remain intact regardless of the population of an establishment. For example, Schwaebe (2005) conducted research in a prison where 65% were sex offenders (and inmates believed this to be even higher) and even in this establishment the minority of non-sex offenders had a higher status. Sex offenders endured the same treatment as ever (though those with experience of other places did think this was experienced at a 'lower level') (Schwaebe 2005). However, on top of this hierarchy of offenders, some studies have demonstrated that a further hierarchy exists among sex offenders themselves (e.g. Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Evans and Cubellis 2015; Ievins and Crewe 2015). Participants in Ricciardelli and Moir (2013) described those with female victims as being accorded higher status than those with child victims though this was described as 'only slightly higher' (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013: 367). Ievins and Crewe (2015) also found that distinctions among sex offenders are primarily founded on the age of victims. They discussed that the hierarchy among this population could be problematic in a treatment setting as programmes encouraged participants to view each other as equals but they could not. There was a dislike among participants of being treated together as they did not like listening to others' 'offence

narratives' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 486-7). However, from the perspective of non-sex offenders, as crimes can be lied about or exaggerated by other inmates, it can be considered that the specific offence does not matter: a sex offender is a sex offender (Schwaebe 2005). When all sex offenders are grouped in this manner they are generally accorded the status of the worst among the population and stereotyped as predatory contact offenders. This is a source of frustration for some sex offenders who feel their offences do not warrant the same treatment as those they view as 'real' sex offenders (Hudson 2005: 71).

In HMP Whatton, an exclusively sex offender establishment, it was insisted that no hierarchy existed among the population; all were viewed as the same (Ievins and Crewe 2015). Because all are sex offenders, none are outsiders. This has been described as 'a ton weight lifted off your shoulders' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 491). Ievins and Crewe (2015) interviewed those in custody in HMP Whatton and they described avoiding trying to find out what others were convicted of so that they can continue to think well of them due to their desire for friendship while in prison. Participants expressed a desire to avoid prejudices about people as they wanted to judge others as people, not for their offences. However, Ievins and Crewe state, 'public claims of equality masked an underlying culture of judgement' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 494). Several in their study did admit that paedophiles held a lower status than other sex offenders. Several participants said that they were less likely to be friends with someone whose victims were children, though they said they would continue to be polite and not abusive. Some said that the younger the victim the worse it was, while others differentiated between repeat offenders and those who had made a 'genuine mistake' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 494-5). Some even admitted that there was a degree of verbal abuse when an individual is thought to 'look the standard photo fit' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 495). The lack of knowledge about others' offences became a source of mistrust in HMP Whatton and could make individuals feel anxious about who they associated with. In order to combat this, some

volunteer what their offence is just so that no one speculates about them. However, in the low-trust environment of a prison, people can be sceptical of what someone claims their offence is (Ievins and Crewe 2015). Those at HMP Whatton are stuck in an uncomfortable position whereby if they choose not to disclose their offences it will be presumed to be really bad but if they do disclose they may not be believed – and if they are perceived to be discussing it too often they are believed to be 'trying to cover up' their real offences (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 495). Even in an establishment like HMP Whatton where conscious efforts are made to reduce the stigmatisation of those residing there, offenders are 'unable or unwilling to divorce themselves from the moral standards of wider society' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 497). The hierarchy among offenders seems too well established to be easily overcome.

The Impact of Stigma

Research has demonstrated that sex offenders do recognise that they are stigmatised (Tewksbury 2012, Schwaebe 2005). This recognition is gained through a combination of what is said in the media and public discourse and how others in prison interact with them (Tewksbury 2012). However, most in Tewksbury's research did not internalise this stigma, they saw themselves as different from how others saw them. This leads Tewksbury (2012) to describe stigma as the difference between how others see you and how you see yourself. Ricciardelli and Moir (2013) consider stigma similarly and state that it 'creates a virtual social identity that erases all positive characteristics of the sex offender's actual social identity' (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013: 376). Though not every sex offender will internalise their stigma, it has been considered that: 'In the experience of incarceration sex offender stigmatization leads to internalization of negative feelings and a diminishment of self esteem and damage to one's self concept' (Tewksbury 2012: 614). In cases where such internalisation does occur, Tewksbury (2012) suggests it 'most likely has disintegrative consequences' as individuals feel

more stressed and see fewer possible ways of coping (Tewksbury 2012: 615). Three particular internalised feelings were identified by Tewksbury: shame, hopelessness/depression and fear. This fear sometimes manifested as a general fear of not knowing how people will react rather than a specific fear that they will be treated in a certain way (Tewksbury 2012). These internalised feelings can then lead to external reactions including challenging the fairness of their low status and becoming resentful of those who label them (Tewksbury 2012). This resentfulness can create an "us vs them" mentality when it comes to sex offenders and those who stigmatise them. Unity can be established in the face of a common enemy (Simmel 1955; De Jaegher and Hoyer 2016; Coser 1956) increasing 'feelings of solidarity' (De Jaegher and Hoyer 2016: 644) making this a powerful bonding agent when it comes to the development of a sex offender prisoner community.

The increased stigmatisation makes sex offenders slightly different from other categories of offender. This stigma, as well as making it harder to get the social goods which aid desistance, may impact on subjective level desistance factors. A person is less likely to desist if they see themselves as a 'discredited person facing an unaccepting world' (Goffman 1963:19). This is described as 'stigmatising shame' rather than 'reintegrative shame' – where the act is regretted but the individual's sense of internal worth preserved (LeBel et al. 2008). Reintegrative shame would allow the individual to view themselves as a *good person* that did a *bad thing*. Conversely, stigmatisation means the individual is viewed as a bad *person* and this has negative consequences for how they view themselves and their lives. Maruna et al. (2004) explain a 'Pygmalion effect' that individuals facing such labelling might experience where they come to view themselves as others see them. Leake and King (1977) conducted a, now famous, experiment in which they informed a group of people in recovery from alcohol addiction who among them was likely to be successful. Those described as likely to be successful were chosen at random but those chosen did then prove to be more likely to

succeed. This provides an example of 'the Pygmalion effect'. Maruna et al. (2004) explain that, not only in the context of Leake and King's experiment, people can come to see themselves as others see them. If others believe they can be successful, they are more likely to succeed. If others believe they are irredeemable, they are more likely to give in to this viewpoint and fail to change. In the context of offending this means that when offenders face heavy stigma this can impact on the way in which they see themselves and could directly impact their ability to maintain desistance. There is evidence to suggest that internalising stigma is a significant predictor of reconviction (LeBel et al. 2008). Stigmatisation might therefore be directly impacting on desistance through internal desistance factors rather than only by preventing the attainment of social goods.

In Ievins and Crewe's research one of their participants expressed the feeling that the labels attached to those who have committed sexual offences were more lasting than for other offenders, stating: 'You don't label someone a burglar and they'll always be a burglar. [...] You're stuck in a loop, I think, as a sex offender' (Ievins and Crewe, 2015: 490). Similarly, Tewksbury (2012) found in his research that:

> The message of being socially devalued because of their status as sex offenders is learned in part by how incarcerated sex offenders experience social life inside of prison. While recognizing that society in general sees them as ''monsters,'' ''not a citizen,'' and just a sex offender, so too do incarcerated sex offenders report experiencing strong, persistent, negative labeling within the inmate community. (Tewksbury, 2012:612)

This suggests that the experience of imprisonment might actually be key in perpetrating this potentially problematic stigmatisation. Ievins and Crewe (2015) found that these labels were not always, but were sometimes, internalised and, in either case, their participants viewed

this label as a large part of how they were viewed by others and prisoners expressed concern that the label would change how people viewed them. The sex offender label is hugely significant to participants in this study, being the basis of their whole prison regime. As a sex offender they must be kept segregated from mainstream prisoners. This consideration impacts on the whole prison regime including when prisoners were moved around the prison; which work sheds they could work in and when they could attend education. Having the sex offender identity continually reinforced by the prison in this matter strengthens its ability to create solidarity which, as discussed above, is a pivotal component of community.

Evans and Cubellis (2015) considered the stigma of the sex offender label as stripping a person of their identity and giving them a 'new social identity'. While this is a public identity, a shift in personal identity can also result (Evans and Cubellis 2015). Most of the participants in this study viewed their crime as a mistake that overshadowed all of the good they had ever done. Participants identified the sex offender label as forming part of their identity and some believed they were now viewed as no more than a sex offender (Evans and Cubellis 2015). One stated that the label 'redefines the person… I'm a sex offender first' (Evans and Cubellis 2015: 601). Similarly, though Harris (2014) found largely positive results from her participants there was some evidence of the negative attitudes of resentment, resignation and pessimism which was largely related to the stigmatisation that stems from being labelled a sex offender. Her sample was made up of those who were desisting from crime with different reasons being given for their desistance. The three participants who attributed their desistance to "natural desistance" felt a sense of resignation due to the permanent stigma of the sex offender label (Harris 2014). By contrast, in the group who attributed their desistance to cognitive transformation, only a further three had any negative attitudes. They too were resigned to the permanency of the label but in their cases this was 'tempered by a sense of acceptance' and a feeling that they were in control of their lives (Harris 2014: 1569).

However, an interesting point to keep in mind during this discussion is that Maruna et al. (2004) found those being labelled to be 'active participants' not 'passive victims' of the labelling process. The typical view taken of labelled individuals may paint them as too submissive (Maruna et al. 2004). Similarly, in this study participants frequently referred to themselves as "sex offenders". The importance of this sex offender label and corresponding identity is of particular significance to this study. As discussed above, this shared identity is the means of creating solidarity among this population to allow a sex offender prisoner community to form.

Coping with Stigma in Prison

One approach to avoiding the harassment that can accompany stigmatisation in prison is for an individual to demonstrate that they can defend themselves (Schwaebe 2005). In Schwaebe (2005) participants described the need to 'keep face' if confronted and explained that they would be viewed as victims forever if they did not stand up for themselves (Schwaebe 2005: 620). In contrast to this, Ricciardelli and Spencer (2014) identified a strategy of passivity utilised by some of their participants when their offences were discovered. Individuals utilising this approach did not react to others, stayed passive, let others dictate how things would be and remained quiet. A further direct contrast in coping with stigma can be seen when it comes to disclosing or hiding your sex offender status. Link et al. (2004) identified a coping strategy of 'preventative telling' and educating the non-stigmatised. This involves telling individuals the truth to avoid them finding out at a later time. Evans and Cubellis (2015) looked at sex offenders specifically and also found examples of this preventative telling. However, they also identified the converse of this – concealment – as a coping strategy (Evans and Cubellis 2015). Several other studies have found this this to be a coping strategy of sex offenders in custody to avoid stigmatisation (Ricciardelli and Spencer 2014, Schwaebe 2005, Tewksbury 2012). Some studies have even found sex offenders to

harass other sex offenders in an attempt to pass as a non-sexual offender (Schwaebe 2005, Tewksbury 2012). In Ricciardelli and Spencer (2014) participants described attempting to pass as a non-sexual offender by avoiding acting like what they viewed as the stereotype sex offender. This primarily involved acting more stereotypically masculine:

> some sex offenders explained that they, if possible, tried to manipulate their appearance to look more like a "gangster" or "biker", or even just less like this stereotypical sex offender. They tried to look more "tough" and aggressive in line with normative masculinities of hypermasculine prison cultures (Ricciardelli and Spencer 2014: 437).

In HMP Glenochil, however, there is neither the ability to, or the need to, conceal sex offender status. All sex offenders are held together in one hall of the prison. Anyone in this hall knows that everyone else in it is also a sex offender. Furthermore, this status cannot be hidden from the mainstream side of the prison as different coloured jumpers are worn to differentiate the type of offender. However, the inability to hide the nature of offending is not problematic at HMP Glenochil due to the entirely segregated nature of the populations. Sex offenders and mainstream are moved around the prison at different times, attend education classes at different times, work in different work sheds, etc. This provides a degree of safety to sex offenders that is not present when housed alongside mainstream offenders and being held among the similarly stigmatised negates the need for any concealment.

A further way of coping with stigma in prison is developing relationships with other prisoners. This can be through joining a gang/clique in prison that will offer protection from victimisation (Schwaebe 2005). Alternatively it can be through 'grouping', which involves drawing support from others within the stigmatised group (Evans and Cubellis 2015). However, this only works when the group see each other as equals which can be problematic

among sex offenders as there can exist a hierarchy with child abusers at the bottom (Evans and Cubellis 2015; Waldram 2007). Sex offenders have also been found to form a 'moral community' to cope with stigma and exclusion (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 483). Ievins and Crewe described that sex offenders in HMP Whatton 'form an accepting and supportive community' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 483). However, they explain that this is difficult to maintain due to the lack of trust experienced in prison and the fact that sex offenders judge other sex offenders. This makes this community 'anxious and conflicted' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 483). This paradox of an accepting and supportive community on one hand and an anxious and conflicted community on the other demonstrates the complexity of the prison experience for this population. There is a desire to create something positive but this cannot negate all the negative attributes of the environment. Similar challenges must be faced by the sex offenders at HMP Glenochil. The sex offender prisoner community aims to provide a place of safety and acceptance but its formation is not without its difficulties.

Participants in Ievins and Crewe (2015) wanted to ignore what they were in prison for as a response to the pain of their label. Related to attempting to ignore stigma, it has been found that stigma is often deflected through the development of a new, pro-social identity (LeBel et al. 2008), for example that of "good parent" or "provider". Other studies have shown that questioning the legitimacy of the label is a way of coping: 'to correct or account for the disconnect between the actual social identity and virtual social identity' and 'resist fully internalizing the stigmatizing negative labels' (Tewksbury 2012: 621). Evans and Cubellis (2015) found that denial of the sex offender label was utilised by participants who had isolated offences which were not violent or against children. These participants believed they did not warrant the sex offender label and denied its applicability to them. They felt it only really applied to repeat sexual offenders – they viewed themselves as having committed a sexual offence, but not being a sex offender. Denial therefore does not necessarily operate

as denial of the offence, just denial of the label. Ievins and Crewe discuss 'reconstructed narratives' of sex offenders and explain that these 'exist on a spectrum ranging from categorically denying having committed the offence ("I wasn't there") to insisting that a non-criminal act was committed ("It was consensual") or that they cannot justly be held responsible for it ("I didn't know what I was doing")' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 484). This demonstrates the number of ways that some form of denial might be maintained by sex offenders.

Several studies of sex offenders' experiences in prison have found that denial of offending is another way in which these individuals address their stigmatisation (Evans and Cubellis 2015; Blagden et al. 2011a; Blagden et al. 2011b). This denial has traditionally been viewed as problematic for ensuring desistance and for this reason can, in various jurisdictions, prevent individuals from participating in programmes or even from being paroled (Hood et al. 2002). However, it has been suggested that this denial might actually be unproblematic in terms of desistance because it does allow individuals to create a non-offending identity (Maruna and Mann 2006). There is evidence to suggest that denial is not linked to recidivism (Marshall, Marshall and Ware 2009; Hood et al. 2002). Blagden et al. viewed denial as an understandable response of sex offenders as denial is utilised in everyday life and the costs for sex offenders of admitting their offences can be very high (Blagden et al, 2011a). Blagden et al. (2011b), in line with Maruna and Mann (2006), identified a theme of 'maintaining viable identities' when considering the process of maintaining denial. They conceptualised denial as a way of rejecting the sex offender label from an individual's identity so that they could maintain a 'coherent sense of self' (Blagden et al. 2011b: 580). This is similar to the view taken by Evans and Cubellis (2015) that denial was utilised by their participants to maintain their earlier identity. Not everyone, therefore, finds denial inherently problematic for desistance. However, there has been considered a lack of knowledge as to how to approach

denial in a treatment context (Blagden et al. 2011a). Blagden et al. (2011a) addressed this when they discussed the distinction between "positive responsibility" and "active responsibility". Positive responsibility requires an individual to take responsibility for the past. Deniers cannot do this. However, active responsibility looks to the future and requires individuals to take responsibility for their actions now, to prevent future actions. For this type of responsibility the offence itself would not need to be admitted to. Active responsibility has been linked to desistance (Maruna 2004; Maruna and Mann 2006) so working with deniers to develop this active responsibility could be a useful approach for treatment programmes (Blagden et al. 2011a). However denial is addressed in a treatment setting, it seems it is a behaviour that is very related to the concept of identity development, an important concept in the present study.

Hudson (2005) also considered the issues of denial and minimisation in her research with sex offenders. She split those that she studied into 3 categories: total deniers; justifiers; and acceptors. However, she found that even acceptors made some use of 'distancing techniques' to cope with stigma and prevent internalising negative views. Hudson (2005) identified nine distancing techniques. Firstly was by category of offence, relating to the hierarchy discussed above with child abusers at the bottom. Those low in this hierarchy point to other crimes they dislike, such as murder and drug offences. The second distancing technique is by degree of physical contact, the less physical contact the better an offender can think of himself. Third is consent, either claiming consent was present up to a point or that there was no force involved (for example, some child abusers utilised this technique, highlighting that they were not violent and claiming their victims enjoyed it – this also provides an example of 'denial of injury', one technique for minimising offending identified by Matza and Sykes (1957), discussed below). Premeditation was also considered worse and the age of the victim and the relationship with the victim were a further two distancing

techniques. In terms of relationship with victim, those with known victims could claim attacking a stranger was worse but those who victimised strangers can claim otherwise. This therefore operated as a distancing technique regardless of which side of the divide the individual fell on. There was no consensus on whether it was considered better or worse to victimise a stranger. A lack of previous offences was also used as a distancing technique. In Hudson (2005) 68% had no previous convictions and all of them used this as a distancing technique. One participant stated that because he was not a repeat offender he was not a 'real paedophile'. Evans and Cubellis (2015) similarly found that offenders in this category did not feel stigmatising sex offender labels really applied to them. Temporary aberration was the eighth distancing technique Hudson (2005) identified, with individuals claiming their offending was not like their usual self but a one-time mistake. Often external factors such as alcohol, drugs, personal problems (e.g. relationship breakdown or coping with being a sexual abuse victim themselves) were blamed. Placing blame on these external factors relates again to Sykes and Matza (1957) and their technique of neutralization 'denial of responsibility' (see below). The last distancing technique identified by Hudson (2005) was shame. It was viewed as worse if no guilt/shame was felt at offending. Offenders were able to take the view "at least I feel bad and know I did wrong" as opposed to those who flippantly discuss their offences.

Similarly to Hudson's (2005) 'distancing techniques', Sykes and Matza (1957) identified five 'techniques of neutralization' that can be utilised in relation to criminal behaviour to make an individual feel better about their offending. These are: denial of responsibility; denial of the victim; denial of injury; condemnation of the condemners and appealing to higher loyalties. Mann (2012) found three of these utilised by the group of child sex offenders she interviewed. Denial of responsibility was used typically to explain that the offender was not in control of his actions, or there were other factors at play in his life to blame for his

offending. In relation to denial of injury, Mann found this tended to rely on the lack of physical injury suffered by her participants' victims. The third technique used by those in her sample was condemnation of the condemners. This related to viewing the media, or society more generally, in a negative manner for attaching a label to the offender – treating them as the real villain. Spraitz and Bowen (2016) found all five techniques of neutralization utilised in their sample of clergymen who had committed sex offences:

> the 18 priests who had direct statements included in their personnel files used techniques of neutralization to justify their behaviors 106 times. The most-used technique was condemnation of condemners (n = 42) followed by denial of responsibility (n = 33). Denial of the victim was used 16 times, denial of injury was used 11 times, and an appeal to higher loyalties was used 4 times.

Denial of responsibility and denial of injury were used in the same way as the participants in Mann (2012). Condemnation of the condemners was also used similarly but with additional condemnation directed at psychologists and the church for the way their cases were handled. Denial of victim was utilised by blaming victims and claiming they initiated the sexual contact. Victim blaming is a common reaction in sexual offences though the literature in this area tends to relate to adult victims being blamed for provocative dress, flirtatious behaviour, etc. (e.g. Teague 1991; Scully 1991; Polaschek and Gannon 2004; Hudson 2005) so it is still somewhat surprising to find examples of this among child sex offenders. Literature which considers attribution of blame in relation to child sexual offences has found a much more pro-victim stance (Davies and Rogers 2009; Rodgers, Titterington and Davies 2009). Spraitz and Bowen (2016) also identified reliance on an appeal to higher loyalties but not in the original sense. Rather than justifying their behaviour with reference to higher loyalties, participants looked to a higher loyalty, in this case God, as the meaningful source of

judgement and as the source of forgiveness which they believe they are entitled to. Though this last technique has been re-defined here, the others continue to be utilised by this population in the way set out by Sykes and Matza (1957) demonstrating this understanding still holds true today and is equally relevant to a sex offender population. These techniques operate as a way of 'protecting the individual from self blame' (Sykes and Matza 1957: 666). These techniques, and those identified by Hudson (2005) allow offenders to feel comfortable with themselves. In this way denial and minimisation can be seen as a coping mechanism. If offenders can compare themselves in some way favourably with others they feel some sense of comfort that they are not the worst person there. This inevitably leads to judgement of those who they consider "worse". This judgement presents a challenge to community formation but, as will be discussed in the findings chapters, this is a challenge that can be overcome.

Conclusion

One strong theme to emerge from this literature review was the challenges of the prison environment. The pains of imprisonment were considered as was the carceral geography literature which considers how the physical characteristics of a prison can be experienced painfully, for example by damaging identity or reducing privacy. However, physical attributes can also be experienced positively, facilitating the development of relationships. Prison relationships have been shown to be significant in this chapter, helping with the difficult experience of imprisonment. These relationships are particularly important for this thesis as they are the foundation of a community. As discussed above, community is conceptualised in this thesis as a social group bound by shared identity and following shared norms. Identity is therefore an important and interesting concept that existing literature can shed some light on. As mentioned, the carceral geography literature indicates that physical design of a prison can impact on identity. Of particular relevance is that fact that segregation has been shown

to be significant to identity. The findings chapters will consider this idea further, analysing how segregation strengthens the sex offender identity and thus facilitates development of the sex offender prisoner community. Stigmatisation is also significant in this regard. As this chapter has discussed, stigmatisation is a central part of a sex offenders experience and this also has an impact on identity. The findings chapters will bring together these two central concepts, stigmatisation and segregation, to examine their impact on identity – and, thus, their impact on the development of the sex offender prisoner community. Before this analysis is undertaken, the methodology adopted for this study will be discussed.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This research sought to address one central research question: how do those convicted of sexual offences experience imprisonment? The research question posed was very general in nature and was framed that way deliberately. It was considered important that the researcher did not influence the focus of the interviews, and thereby the results, by seeking to answer very specific research questions. It was considered important to keep the conversations non-specific, exploring all aspects of prison life, to see what emerged from participants as the most significant parts of this experience. Having said that, it is impossible for researchers to entirely avoid forming ideas prior to the fieldwork. It is important to acknowledge this and remain aware of it throughout conducting interviews and analysing results to reduce the chances of the researcher interpreting results in the way they expected rather than as they really are. Researcher reflexivity is essential to ensuring qualitative research is trustworthy and potential bias is managed (Poggenpoel and Myburgh 2003; Chenail 2011). Based on prior reading, the idea of stigmatisation of sex offenders became the particular aspect of participants' experience I wanted to explore. I wanted to understand if, and how, this idea of stigmatisation surfaced in this setting and what effect this had on participants in terms of their view of themselves and their views on rehabilitation. However, I did not want to force this line of inquiry into the research definitively. Therefore, questions were not asked directly about stigmatisation (other than in probes after the issue was raised by participants) but questions were asked which allowed participants to discuss this if they felt it relevant. For example: "how do you think you're viewed by others in prison?" opens the door to allow participants to discuss feeling stigmatised by staff or other prisoners but does not force participants through the door as would questions such as: "do you feel you are stigmatised in prison?" – questions like these were avoided as they were felt to be too

leading. A very open approach was taken to the interviews to allow participants true concerns to really shape results.

The research question was designed to fill the hole in the existing literature that largely ignores the experience of imprisonment for sex offenders. Research with this population is, in general, lacking but this study is able to offer something particularly new. There is no existing research into the experience of sex offenders in Scottish prisons. This is therefore a particularly relevant study for anyone engaging in research into Scottish prisons or research in any way related to the experience of sex offenders in this country. It also offers a new perspective as HMP Glenochil, where it was conducted, operate a system where sex offenders are segregated from mainstream prisoners while remaining within the same prison. This has a number of interesting consequences that will be explored throughout this thesis. This thesis is therefore able to illustrate the significance of this partial segregation to the experience of imprisonment. This is not an issue that has received attention in existing literature.

The methods utilised throughout the research in trying to address this research question and to do so in as open and explorative a manner as possible are detailed in this chapter. Firstly, an overview of the approach and justification of this is provided. Secondly, the relevant ethical issues and how these were addressed is considered. This is followed by a section detailing the organising of the fieldwork which involved obtaining access and recruiting participants. Next is the most detailed section of this chapter: conducting the interviews. This section considers the environment, the sample, participant engagement and reflections on the researcher's experience of the process. The chapter then addresses how results were analysed. This involves looking at transcribing and anonymising the data as well as the hugely significant aspect of the research, coding and identifying themes. Lastly, this chapter looks at

the limitations of this research. This relates to the small sample size and, therefore, lack of generalizability of findings. However, this methodology, with the smaller sample size that results, was still considered the best approach to addressing the research question.

Overview and Justification of Approach

For this research, 25 semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants serving custodial sentences for sexual offences. These varied in length from approximately 23 minutes (Stanley) to approximately 1 hour and 26 minutes (Charlie). Lee also lasted under 30 minutes and Gareth also lasted over 1 hour and 20. These extremes aside, interviews averaged a length of around 50-55 minutes. The interview schedule was designed to ensure the interviews were conducted within 1 hour so this was as expected. It was found that the length of the interviews did not necessarily reflect the quantity of relevant of data drawn from participants. This is discussed further below in relation to participant engagement. Two interviews were planned per day. This was due to the consideration that limiting the number of interviews conducted in any one day reduces the risk of distress to the researcher when research focusses on difficult subject matter (McCosker, Barnard and Gerber 2001). On three occasions only one interview per day was conducted. Charlie and Gareth each took too much time to conduct a second interview that day and on the day Ollie was interviewed the other person scheduled changed his mind about participation and no other participant was available on short-notice. (One other person also changed his mind about participating on the day of interview but on this occasion another volunteer was available and willing to talk to me earlier than planned).

The overarching research question this study sought to address was: how do those convicted of sex offences experience imprisonment? The best way to gain this understanding was to conduct research with those in custody as these participants could give first-hand accounts

of this experience. It was considered preferable to conduct the research with those currently serving sentences as opposed to those now released for a number of reasons. Firstly, from the perspective of obtaining the best research results, it was preferable to engage participants while they were still experiencing life in prison, while this environment and its challenges are fresh in their minds and a part of their day-to-day existence. Secondly, by conducting the research in prison the researcher was able to better understand references made by participants and gain a limited appreciation of the environment in which they live. Thirdly, from a practical standpoint, these participants are easier to recruit. After release from prison people are settled in communities all over the country, may no longer have ties with the criminal justice system (after licenses end), and may be less willing to participate due to a desire to put that part of their life behind them. There would also be a potential fear that in engaging in such research after release they might be "outed" as a sex offender within their community which could result in exclusion from that community or abuse from its members (Willis, Levenson and Ward 2010; Kernsmith, Craun and Foster 2009; King and Roberts 2017).

Interviews were the favoured approach due to the ability to probe more deeply into answers – this has been considered the main strength of interview research (Marshall and Rossman 2006: 102). Due to the desire to utilise this strength of interview research only a small number of substantive questions were selected in advance as these questions could potentially raise a lot of different issues that could be delved into in (non-directive) follow up questions. This semi-structured format encompasses the flexibility that interviews allow for but does have some planned questions to ensure the issues vital to the research questions were addressed (Gillham 2000: 70). However, in some interviews some of these pre-prepared questions were not utilised when it became apparent that the issue was not one on which the participant had strong views. For example, many of those who denied offending had

some trouble engaging on questions relating to what they felt would prevent re-offending as, obviously, they did not admit to ever having offended in the first place. In these cases these questions were reframed to allow participants to reflect on what might cause others to reoffend rather than having the questions directed at their own offending. However, even with this amendment these participants had often not given much thought to these issues. In these cases less time was devoted to this portion of the interview and more time was spent on understanding their relationships with others in prison, worries about the prison environment, concerns about release and so on. This flexibility was an important benefit as it minimised the risk of the researcher's assumptions shaping the interview by allowing participants to shape the interview in a way that truly reflected their experience in prison and what they considered important to their prison lives.

Furthermore, interview research allows for questions to be reframed or explained if necessary to ensure participants understand what it being asked of them. Conscious effort was made to ensure questions were framed as clear, short and to the point which has been considered important to conducting good research (Kvale 2007: 131). Using basic language is also important to avoid triggering 'question threat' which can damage the relationship between interviewer and interviewee (Foddy 1993: 113). Simple questions were particularly essential in this context due to the varying educational levels of participants (from having obtained no qualifications at all to being educated to degree-level). However, despite this effort there were still some cases where questions had to be reframed, particularly when participants' first language was not English, so this benefit to interview research was one which was taken advantage of.

A further benefit to utilising face-to-face interviews, not recognised prior to beginning the interviews but which became apparent during, was that it was easy to identify which issues

were of real significance to participants, which they felt were the most important aspects of their prison lives. If questionnaires had been utilised it would have been impossible to tell when participants had very strong views on a topic and when they were ambivalent but provided some answer anyway. This information can only become apparent during interviews in observing gestures (such as shrugs), facial expressions, the time taken over answers, speech patterns (e.g. use of "eh", "em", "um", sighs and pauses). When participants spoke for large stretches without much need for prompting and without many hesitations ("eh", "um") it was clear that we had hit upon an issue that the participant had clear views on and had spent some time thinking about. This suggested the issue was something of importance to that participant. This 'richness and vividness of the material' is considered a major benefit of interviews (Gillham 2000: 10). Even if structured interviews had been used this detail would potentially have been lost as structured interviews would not allow the flexibility to dive further into the issues participants most wanted to reflect on, at the expense of issues where it was evident participants had no strong views. The importance to participants of the various matters discussed is vital information as it allows a deeper understanding of each participant's experience. This additional information adds important detail to the research and allows a more accurate understanding of the experience of imprisonment for the participants.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis (TA) was the utilised method of analysis in this research. Braun and Clarke (2006) considered that this is a very popular research method in qualitative research although 'It can be seen as a very poorly "branded" method, in that it does not appear to exist as a "named" analysis in the same way that other methods do' (2006: 6). They found that many studies purported to be doing another form of analysis when methods were really

more akin to TA or named no method of analysis at all but, again, the methods adopted suggested TA:

> We argue that a lot of analysis is essentially thematic - but is either claimed as something else (such as discourse analysis, or even content analysis (e.g., Meehan, Vermeer, & Windsor, 2000)) or not identified as any particular method at all – for example, data were "subjected to qualitative analysis for commonly recurring themes" (Braun & Wilkinson, 2003: 30) (2006:7).

Braun and Clarke (2006) believed this lack of attribution to have led to a lack of 'kudos' for TA. They set out to rectify this with their article explaining TA in greater detail than had been done before and which set out a clear six step process of TA. This is therefore the key source utilised in developing the methodology for this research. Braun and Clarke's article does seem to have become an influential source, being cited by many researchers in a variety of fields who are now describing their data analysis as TA, specifically the Braun and Clarke model of TA (e.g. McCarthy et al. 2013; Evans, Pistrang and Billings 2013; Bay-Cheng and Fava 2014; Mckie, Lachowsky and Milhausen 2015).

The six steps involved in TA that were followed in this research were set out by Braun and Clarke (2006). These are outlined briefly here but are considered in more depth later in this chapter, mostly in the section 'Coding and Identification of Themes'. The first step in the TA process was familiarisation with the data. This is largely achieved through repeated reading of the transcripts but the transcription process itself aids with this. Secondly is generating initial codes. This requires working systematically through the data. As will be discussed further below, the TA utilised by this research was data-driven so the codes were drawn closely from the text of the transcripts rather than based on previous literature then applied to this text. The next step is searching for themes by considering which codes combine to

form a potential theme. This stage results in a selection of candidate themes being identified.

Step four in the TA process is reviewing themes. This requires refining the candidate themes by discarding any that turn out not to be a theme, combining themes, splitting a theme into two, etc. At this stage a thematic map is created of themes that still seem to be working after review. This considers how themes relate to each other and how they are supported by the data. The accuracy of the map is then considered to determine if it offers a true reflection of the data. If not, the data is reconsidered. This step is repeated as many times as necessary to identify appropriate themes. The next stage is to define and name themes. This simply identifies what each theme is about and why it is interesting. This is also an important stage to verify that there is no overlap or inconsistencies between themes. The last step to TA is the write-up. This tells the story of the data and provides a convincing analysis. In TA writing should not all be done at the end of the process – it is a key part of TA that writing is undertaken throughout the whole process, even if this is simply noting ideas or potential codes.

TA is designed to describe and interpret data to identify patterns and meaning (Crowe, Inder and Porter 2015). It can 'create a narrative understanding that brings together the commonalities and differences in participants' descriptions of their subjective experiences' (Crowe, Inder and Porter 2015: 616). TA provides a 'flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data' (Braun and Clarke 2006: 6). The present study from the outset had the potential to require such a complex analysis and a flexible approach was required due to the inductive nature of the research meaning the study was very exploratory in nature, with few preconceived ideas. Walker, Brown and Hicks (2016) adopted TA with a similar consideration in mind. Their research sought the perceptions of people who worked with offenders and offenders themselves on a particular method of treating intimate partner violence. They considered the flexibility of

TA a key benefit to their research 'to explore initial ideas, thoughts and experiences around the workbook, with no pre-determined theoretical position' (983). They felt this allowed them to select the themes of most significance to their participants rather than being driven by existing theories. This was also felt to be important in the present research. When so little research has been done with incarcerated sex offenders[12] an exploratory approach was considered beneficial so that all important aspects of participants' experience could be identified.

As TA is a very flexible approach it can use inductive or deductive analyses, sometimes termed exploratory or confirmatory. Inductive analyses 'primarily have a descriptive and exploratory orientation' (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2012: 7). Exploratory approaches ask questions such as 'what do X people think about Y?' and results are 'content driven' with codes not predetermined but derived from the data. This contrasts with a confirmatory approach which makes a hypothesis such as 'X people think Z about Y' which is then tested. Codes are predetermined having been generated from hypotheses. (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2012: 7). This research is inductive/exploratory in nature. There was no hypothesis or predetermined codes, only the research question 'how do those convicted of sexual offences experience imprisonment?'. To fit the mould above this could be reframed as: 'what do sex offenders (X people) think about their prison experience (Y)?'. It was felt this was the best approach to this topic for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is little existing literature in the area on which to found hypotheses. Secondly, when the research seeks to understand the experience of participants it was felt to be important to allow those participants to shape the focus of the research rather than having predetermined key experiences to explore. It was desired that the research be shaped by participants' accounts rather than researcher

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[12] See Chapter 7 for a fuller discussion of this point.

prior knowledge to ensure an accurate reflection of their whole experience was provided not just specific aspects the researcher had hypothesized.

With TA, Braun and Clarke (2006) considered that there is no right or wrong time to engage with the literature. From a practical perspective under the time-restricted process of conducting a PhD, avoiding the literature until after the fieldwork would not have been possible. Organising the fieldwork, getting access to the site, ethical clearance, etc. all took some time and this time would not have been utilised to its fullest if nothing else had been done while waiting on the various approvals that were required. Therefore, during this time there was engagement with the literature. However, there was no in-depth theorising that would put the inductive approach undertaken in any real jeopardy. All that was sought at this stage was a general understanding of the prison environment. A further consideration was that, given the nature of this research topic, it was important for the researcher to be as prepared as possible for what to expect from this population, from this environment and when dealing with sensitive subject matter. This preparation cannot be done without engaging with the literature. Additionally, prior engagement with the literature may have served the benefit, identified by Tuckett (2005) of increasing the researcher's sensitivity to the more subtle aspects of the data.

Braun and Clarke (2006) considered that an inductive approach to TA 'bears some similarity to grounded theory' (12). Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012) also consider the similarity in the process of TA and the process of grounded theory. The main difference between the two approaches is that grounded theory focuses on developing a theory whereas TA's 'primary goal is to describe and understand how people feel, think, and behave within a particular context relative to a specific research question' (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2012: 13). TA is 'about understanding people's everyday experience of reality, in great detail, so as to gain

an understanding of the phenomenon in question' rather than necessarily generate a theory about that phenomenon (McLeod 2001). This makes TA also similar to phenomenology (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2012; Braun and Clarke 2006) which 'seeks to understand the meanings that people give to their lived experiences and social reality' (Guest, MacQueen and Namey 2012: 13).

There are certain pitfalls of TA that need to be avoided. These were considered by Braun and Clarke (2006). The first potential pitfall is failing to analyse the data at all. This is obvious when the questions asked of participants are used as themes. The themes identified in this study are distinct from the questions asked of participants so this has been avoided. Alternatively, there may be no analytical narrative to the research, instead just offering a series of quotes drawn together. This is something else that will be carefully avoided. A second opportunity for error with TA is selecting themes that do not work. This may mean they overlap, are inconsistent or do not relate to the central research concept. Each of the identified themes contributes something to this concept. Each theme has been clearly defined to ensure overlap and inconsistency has also been avoided. Themes may also be considered as not working if insufficient examples are given of a theme, making it unconvincing. This point is, in part, simply a caution on how the thesis is written and the importance of ensuring enough evidence is provided for every point. Care will be taken to ensure this is done. There is no doubt that there are enough examples in the data of each theme selected as this has been carefully verified (more on this below) so all that is required is to ensure this comes through in the body of the thesis. A third pitfall that needs to be avoided with TA is that researcher interpretations mismatch the data. Steps have also been taken to avoid this. There is more on this below in the section 'Coding and Identification of Themes'. It has been ensured that the themes correspond with the data and in the write-up evidence for all interpretations will be provided. Where contradictions are present in the

data these will be discussed and are not treated as problematic but rather as providing an interesting dimension to the research as it helps to understand the complexity of prison life and people's often very varying experiences and interpretations of the same challenging environment. This chapter will now move on to provide a full account of how this research was actually conducted.

Research Ethics

Before the fieldwork began, ethical approval was obtained both from the University Ethics Committee (UEC) at the University of Strathclyde and the Research Access and Ethics Committee (RAEC) at the Scottish Prison Service. This meant the project was subject to rigorous scrutiny before the fieldwork was undertaken to ensure all ethical issues had been considered and steps taken to minimise any risks. The RAEC had to consider the ethics of the project alongside whether access could be facilitated and whether the strain put on resources in a busy working prison would be too much to justify granting access. These access issues are discussed further below. In terms of ethics, there were four main ethical issues relevant to this study which needed consideration: obtaining valid consent; protecting participants from harm; confidentiality; and protecting participant privacy and data security.

Consent

Ensuring informed consent is vital to ethical research (Wiles 2013: 25). In the context of imprisonment there is a particular concern that participants may feel obligated to participate due to the nature of their environment and having to do as they are told by staff in the prison (McDermott 2013). A conscious effort was, therefore, made to ensure consent was entirely voluntary. It was made clear to participants, both in an information sheet provided to them in advance and in person immediately before interviews began, that participation (or not) in the research would have no effect on their sentence or prison experience. As well as an

information sheet participants were provided with a consent form that outlined these points. These consent forms were signed by participants and returned to prison staff who then passed them on to the researcher. In the forms participants agree to participate in the interview and to have their voice recorded.

It was also emphasized that participants could withdraw from the research. To date no participant has withdrawn from the research. It was also highlighted to participants that they could end or pause the interview at any time. Only one interview (Dennis) was ended early and this was due to a health issue with the participant causing him some pain rather than any frustration with the interview causing withdrawal of consent. Participants were also informed that their consent did not mean that they had to answer all questions; they could refuse to answer any question if they wished. There were two interviews where participants exercised this option but this was only done in a limited sense whereby answers were given to questions but participants were reluctant to go into further detail after providing basic answers.

In order to ensure all of this was understood by participants, it was reiterated verbally prior to the interviews commencing and participants were given the opportunity to ask any questions. All participants expressed that they understood the information they had been given and were happy to proceed with the interview.

Protecting Participants

Protecting participants from harm is a key aspect of ethical research (Wiles 2013: 55). As this study involved only interviews, which are physically non-invasive, participants were at no risk of physical harm as a direct result of the research. However, it is equally important to avoid any potential psychological harm that could be caused by discussing sensitive subject matter such as that involved in these interviews. Reflecting on these matters risks distress to

participants (Draucker, Martsolf and Poole 2009). An attempt was made to diminish this risk by wording questions in a way which avoids judgement or accusation and by ensuring the interviewer remains passive throughout the discussion, avoiding expressing emotions such as surprise or disapproval which could exacerbate a participant's discomfort in discussing personal matters. Keeping questions open and lines of discussion flexible also helped in minimising the risk of distress as the interviewee is able to feel more in control of the discussion. Issues that need to be discussed can be brought up in many different ways so if one line of questioning seemed to be making the participant uncomfortable it is easy in an interview setting to pick up on that and switch the discussion. It was also made clear to participants in their information sheet and at the beginning of the interview that they can pause or stop the interview at any time and refuse to answer any question. This was also intended to allow participants to feel some sense of control over the discussion which should reduce the risk of causing them any psychological harm.

Respect has been shown to be of particular importance to prisoners (Liebling 2011; Hulley et al. 2013) and being respectful can also reduce the chances of participant distress. Respect was shown towards participants in many simple ways including asking their preferred name and using it, asking how they were, asking permission before starting the audio recorder, asking if they had any questions, thanking them for their time, etc. These simple matters were important in ensuring effective engagement and making participants feel at ease in the setting which is an important step in reducing the potential for distress. To this end, more time than was strictly necessary was spent on preliminary factual questions such as "have you taken part in any treatment programmes or education?". Having more of a discussion about something like which classes a participant enjoyed allowed participants to become comfortable speaking to me before we discussed more sensitive topics.

However, even with these measures in place, the risk of participant distress could not be entirely alleviated. In several interviews there was some distress, to varying degrees. Ron got visibly upset during his interview when discussing his relationship breakdown. From that point on Ron became intermittently upset again throughout the interview, when discussing a variety of subjects. He was asked every time he got upset if he wanted to stop the interview or take a break and on each occasion he was insistent that he wanted to continue. With his relationship breakdown identified as the trigger this subject was avoided from then on but it seemed to open a gate for him emotionally and so it became impossible to predict what else might cause him distress. This left me with little else I could do except ask if he was ok, if he needed anything and if he was sure he wanted to continue. Vince also became a little distressed when discussing his own victimisation. This was less obvious than in Ron's case but Vince did appear to get teary. However, Vince was one of the more talkative participants and was onto the next subject before anything could be done to ensure he was comfortable. Perhaps moving on so quickly from the issue as he did was his own way of minimising his distress. He did not show any signs of distress throughout the rest of the interview and this was despite returning (of his own volition) to the subject of his own victimisation. Elliot and Winston also discussed their own victimisation during their interviews but they did so in a very matter of fact manner and there were no signs at all of distress.

Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality throughout the research is also an important aspect of ethical research (Oliver 2010: 81). The information obtained in this study was all kept confidential - nothing discussed by any of the participants was ever disclosed to other parties in a way that would allow them to be identified. This, on one occasion, did cause a bit of an awkward exchange between myself and a prison officer who was asking if the participant I had just interviewed had explained to me the details of his offence. The officer wanted to make a

point about the case but did not want to give me details about the participant if the participant had not done so himself (as it happened the participant had given me these details already but I was unwilling to mention anything that had been discussed in the interview to the officer). This led to an awkward conversation as neither of us was able to communicate openly our knowledge about the participant due to maintaining confidentiality.

The only exception to confidentiality in ethical research is when a participant discloses that they or another is going to be harmed. This limitation does not make research unethical as it has been accepted that legal requirements can take precedence over confidentiality agreements (Oliver 2010: 83; Wiles 2013: 43). Furthermore, to ensure research was still ethical this limitation to confidentiality was explained to participants in their information sheet and repeated in the consent form to ensure they were aware that such a disclosure would not remain confidential. No ethical issues arose on this front as no participant made any disclosure that met with this exception. There were several participants who discussed feeling depressed in prison but the risk of harm stemming from this was considered too remote to warrant breaching confidentiality. No participants had any questions regarding confidentiality and only Hal ever mentioned it during interview. He wanted it confirmed that what he told me would be kept confidential before he detailed his past offending. As potentially identifying, these details were removed from transcripts and the only thing documented was that he had previous convictions of a non-sexual nature.

Protecting Participant Privacy and Data Security

Ensuring participants' privacy is protected is vital to ethical research (Oliver 2010: 77) and an important aspect of that is ensuring data is held securely (Oliver 2010: 90). All copies of the data obtained were stored on secure devices with password protection. Interviews were

recorded and stored as audio files until transcribed. This transcription was completed within two weeks of the interview date. After transcription audio files were immediately deleted. The data was immediately fully anonymised – pseudonyms were used and any identifying details excluded from transcripts. Pseudonyms were used rather than 'interviewee A', 'interviewee B', etc. as I felt this was more humanising. I also expected that I would find it easier to remember participants if they were attached to a real name rather than a letter. Furthermore, for readability of the thesis, I believed that using names would be easier to follow than identifying participants by letters or numbers. All files stored, for any length of time, were securely stored on the researcher's password protected, private computer and backed up to the University of Strathclyde's hard drive which is, again, only accessible with use of personal login details. The data was accessible only by the researcher. These details were included in participant information sheets and in particular the issue of anonymity was emphasised to participants at the beginning of the interviews. No participants had any queries about data security or their privacy. This chapter will now turn to consider the organisation of the fieldwork after these ethical issues had been identified and considered.

Organising Fieldwork

Access to the Fieldsite

Access to prison is obviously something that is kept restricted and those who are granted access must go through a rigorous approval process. This firstly involves applying for access with the Scottish Prison Service Research Access and Ethics Committee (RAEC). The RAEC need to consider both the quality of the research proposal (proposed methodology is robust, any ethical issues have been addressed, etc.) and the operational considerations (demands placed on the service, suitability of the researcher, sensitivity to the site, etc.). Obtaining RAEC approval can therefore be a significant hurdle to obtaining access to prisons to conduct

research. However, completing an internship with the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) shortly before submitting the RAEC application had allowed me to develop an understanding of the reasons other researchers' applications were considered problematic and ensure I avoided these issues in my own. The experience with SPS therefore ensured the RAEC application was as strong as possible when submitted.

Through time spent at SPS it was clear that the organisation were in no way hostile to research within their establishments so with a strong research proposal in place that made clear what exactly was planned and what resources were required (these were kept to a minimum) there was reason to be optimistic about the chances of gaining access. What the RAEC essentially have to do is a cost-benefit analysis. They do want to see useful, rigorous research in prisons but this cannot place too many demands on the service as, obviously, facilitating research is not their first priority. It is important to be respectful of this when seeking access and contacting people from SPS as these relationships will be key in facilitating the research. It is also important to be flexible and work around the operation of the prison. In this study that meant ensuring interviews were completed in time for the researcher to be escorted out of the prison before prisoners started to return from work for lunch as this "route move" is strictly choreographed at HMP Glenochil to avoid the mainstream population and the sex offender population meeting. This is therefore a busy time for staff and should not be made more onerous by having to escort a researcher out of the prison.

After access was granted by SPS at headquarters, disclosure checks were conducted and contact was made with the prison to make arrangements for the project. In this case the relevant prison was HMP Glenochil. There are other establishments within the SPS estate that house sex offenders but HMP Glenochil is one of the main sites, alongside HMP Edinburgh. The RAEC are mindful of the number of research projects ongoing in any

establishment at any one time to ensure there is not too much strain on any of the prisons. This made HMP Edinburgh unsuitable for research at the time of the application and so HMP Glenochil was selected as the sole research site. If only one prison in the estate can be visited for a project such as this then HMP Glenochil is the preferable establishment as there is discussion around making it a solely sex offender prison (as HMP Peterhead was formerly before being replaced with HMP Grampian which now has a mixed population). No firm plans to make this change are known of but it was speculated about (with very mixed views) by many of the staff members at HMP Glenochil during the course of the fieldwork. Developing positive relationships with the staff within the establishment is vital to the smooth running of the research. Again, being respectful and flexible is key in this respect as is keeping staff informed about the development of the research and what they should expect of you. As this project did not place many demands on staff, in this case all this involved was informing staff of which days I would be in the establishment, at what times, and what prisoners I wished to speak to that day. Staff were relied on to escort me through the prison and to bring participants to the interview rooms. Staff never seemed to find this too inconvenient and were always very helpful and friendly.

Recruitment

As participants were recruited from among those in custody at HMP Glenochil, communication with staff within the prison was again key at this stage of the research. Officers within HMP Glenochil provided potential participants with the information sheet and consent form explaining the research. Due to potential issues with participants feeling obligated to take part, all staff were asked to do was hand out the forms. They were not required to speak to potential participants about the research or try to encourage participation in any way. This was essential to ensuring consent was voluntary. Anyone who did want to participate was required to return their signed consent form to a member of

staff. Those who did not want to participate needed to do nothing, they simply ignored the form. No incentives were given to participate and there was no benefit to be derived from participation or negative effect to be felt from refusing to take part. This was all made clear to participants in the information sheet, consent form and in person prior to interviews.

This is a more appropriate method of recruitment in a prison setting than other methods. For example, having a gatekeeper to explain the research and seek participants was considered inappropriate in this setting due to the potential for participants to feel coerced due to the power imbalance in these prison relationships. Methods such as posting advertisements for participants was also considered inappropriate as the study sought to recruit sex offenders. There was concern that using a method such as this would require those convicted of sexual offences to "out" themselves as sex offenders in order to participate. The adopted recruitment method was more discreet, protecting the safety of this particularly vulnerable population. Such discretion was considered essential in dealing with this population who often aim in prison to keep the nature of their conviction from other prisoners (Schwaebe 2005). This was considered an important aspect of protecting participant privacy, an essential part of ethical research. However, having now gained a better knowledge of the regime at HMP Glenochil it would perhaps have been possible to do a recruitment utilising posters as all of those convicted of sex offences are kept entirely separate from the mainstream population so recruitment in such a manner could have been done in the halls filled only with sex offenders. Staff in these halls are already aware of the convictions of the population so participants would not have to give any information to staff that they did not already have. This information was unknown at the time of recruitment and SPS staff felt the methods proposed were suitable and ethical in the environment so they went unchallenged.

It was considered sensible by the main contact person at HMP Glenochil to over-recruit among this population as many would not want to participate. Around 20 participants were sought due to the in-depth nature of interviews and limited time frame which meant a greater number would have been difficult to properly analyse. However, over-recruitment meant that 37 consent forms were returned agreeing to participate. This was considered too many for this project and so only 25 interviews were conducted. These were selected at random from the returned consent forms. As no details about participants were requested on the consent form there was no other basis on which to select participants without seeking further information on them from prison officers – which seemed ethically questionable. The sample, as detailed in the next section of this chapter, did contain participants of a variety of ages, a mix of offences, victim types, previous offences, etc. This was beneficial to the research but was not considered essential in recruitment as with such a small sample size results were not intended to be generalizable across the whole population.

Conducting the Interviews

The Environment

Prison is an unpleasant physical environment with many locked doors and gates, limited natural light and a cold, institutional feel. Visiting prisons prior to beginning fieldwork during an internship with SPS offered some preparation for this. Engaging with people who had worked in prisons and hearing their accounts of what this environment was like to work in offered further preparation. Working in an environment where people are sent as punishment can have a negative psychological impact so this was a concern prior to beginning the fieldwork. However, being in this environment for only a few hours at a time and having a day in between visits meant any negative impact was able to be avoided. Some participants discussed that they believed the public thought prison was too nice a place, they

were too well looked after and had things easy (e.g. Andy). This view, if indeed it does exist in the mind of the public, was not one shared by the researcher. Though time spent in this environment was limited it was enough to appreciate the hardship that would accompany living there for often very lengthy periods of time. Some empathy was therefore felt for participants' experience despite the nature of their offences.

Interviews were conducted in small rooms referred to as "agents' visit rooms" on whichever floor of Abercrombie the participant was housed (there being 5 floors). Peter and Raymond were exceptions to this, their interviews were conducted in a large meeting room on the floor in which they were housed. Ollie was a further exception, he was interviewed in a classroom near his place of work. The "agents' visit rooms" contained a table and two chairs and had room for little else. In keeping with security procedures at the prison, the researcher was always seated nearest the door and had a personal alarm.

All participants were housed in Abercrombie hall, which houses only those convicted of sexual offences, and all interviews (except one – Ollie) were conducted there. At HMP Glenochil sex offenders are housed separately from mainstream prisoners and are kept separate at all times with very limited exceptions (e.g. one participant mentioned a lecture he attended where mainstream were also present; several mentioned the fact that the health centre only separates the groups by a thin partition and this causes some tension). Due to this desire to ensure mainstream and sex offender prisoners are kept segregated at all times HMP Glenochil operates a very strict regime. All movements of prisoners are kept strictly to time to avoid these two groups meeting and all work parties and education classes are organised so that the groups do not mix. On 07/11/2016 (at the time of writing this chapter) the population of the prison was approximately 625 and approximately 350 of these were convicted of sexual offences. The mainstream side of the prison housed a mix of short

and long term prisoners but Abercrombie housed almost entirely long term prisoners – there were 6 short term sex offenders on 07/11/2016. It was the perception of participants that HMP Glenochil, or Abercrombie hall at least, operated as long-term only but SPS data shows that this view is not entirely accurate. These population figures change slightly on a regular basis with releases and new people moved to HMP Glenochil every day but these figures are considered generally representative of the population at any given time.

The Sample

Participants had an average age of around 48. The youngest participant was 23 and the oldest in their 80s. Several participants were in their 70s and 80s but these were not considered by staff at HMP Glenochil to be anomalous of the population at the moment. Staff had witnessed an increase in average age of the prisoners in their care and explained this as due to an increase in prosecutions for historic offences and the use of the Order of Lifelong Restriction (OLR)[13] in sentencing. An OLR sentence means the individual is subject to lifelong supervision and time spent in prison is indefinite. Some participants (Ned and Vince) expressed a particular fear of OLR sentences and this was a driving force behind their attempts to ensure they would not reoffend – they did not want to return to prison as an OLR. One participant, Glen, was an OLR and was already 7 years past his tariff date. Glen is in his 80s and expressed concern about dying in prison. Brett was also an OLR. He is eligible for parole in 2019 but was not hopeful. Brett was only 36 years old at the time of the interview but expected to die in prison.

The participants had been in prison for an average of 9.5 years. Three participants were on OLRs and 9 were on life sentences. There were 7 in the sample who denied their offences and 14 who fully admitted all of their offences. In 4 cases this was either unclear or the

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[13] Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003, s1.

participant denied some charges but admitted others. Eleven participants offended against children and 15 offended against adults (3 participants had offended against both). In two cases the victim types were unclear. Fourteen of the participants had served one or more previous prison sentences and 6 had done so for a previous sexual offence. It was felt that this provided a varied sample though, given the limited sample size, any generalisations across the population would be inappropriate. This research aimed to uncover a deeper picture of the prison experience for a small number as opposed to gathering more generic facts across a larger sample.

Twelve participants were drawn from the third floor of Abercrombie which was distinctive in that it was considered a "high healthcare needs" floor. It was the most accessible as it was the level you entered Abercrombie on from the rest of the prison. However, not all in the flat did have high healthcare needs and this was the source of some complaining during the interviews. The participants from this floor did tend to be older and in poorer health. For this reason most of this group did not work. No one from this flat had to be kept off work in order to be interviewed (Frank did work but the nature of that work meant it was also unnecessary in his case). On floors 4 and 5 where the other participants were recruited from, most participants did work and had to be kept off work in order to be interviewed (which they did consent to). Because of this it was vital on these days to keep to time to ensure there was enough time to interview both participants that had been kept off work that morning as having them also stay off work the following day because of poor time-keeping would have potentially caused a lot of frustration. However, this does mean that some of those interviews were not as detailed as they could have been. In particular, it was felt that the interview with Ray elicited a lot of useful data and a lot of the ideas he brought up could have been explored further. He was one of the more thoughtful and articulate participants so it was felt that a lot more could have been obtained from him.

Participant Engagement

Most participants engaged well during the interviews. It was found that the length of the interview did not necessarily reflect how well participants engaged. Some longer interviews, notably Charlie at 1 hour and 26 minutes, did not reflect a high degree of engagement with the topics planned for discussion. Large portions of Charlie's interview were complaints about his health and the healthcare offered in prison. While he was able to engage briefly in discussion related to the research questions he tended to go off at tangents in relation to every question. These tangential discussions were closed down where possible but Charlie was particularly difficult to steer and it was important to avoid damaging rapport. If Charlie had been moved too forcefully from topics he wished to discuss he could have shut down and I would not have been able to gain all of the relevant insights he had to offer. In general, those interviews that went over the 1 hour mark did not elicit any more relevant data than those kept to the approximately 55 minutes intended. One exception to this was Gareth. His interview lasted 1 hour and 23 minutes (the second longest in length after Charlie) and all of this discussion was very relevant to the research questions and his responses were always thoughtful.

Denial was a factor that did affect engagement to some degree. The interviews were essentially divided into two, related, discussions: relationships with others and the views others take of sex offenders; and changes undergone in prison. Those who denied their offences were frequently less able to reflect in any depth on changes they have made in prison. Ollie, for example, explained in his interview that he had not changed in prison because he did not need to. In particular, discussion of how participants' views of their own offending behaviour had changed was impossible with deniers and for admitters this often took up a large portion of the interview. This therefore meant that, in general, the interviews with deniers were shorter in length. Peter and Ron were exceptions to this as they denied

their offences but still had interviews lasting between 50 minutes and 1 hour. Ron was able, in spite of his denial, to reflect well on all aspects of the discussion. However, Peter's interview being of a longer length than other deniers is more due to tangential discussion of the specific facts of his case than any superior level of engagement.

It was not felt that there were any participants who intentionally tried to make interviews difficult or intentionally refused to engage. In relation to those who engaged to a lesser degree, it was felt that they just genuinely struggled to reflect on the issues in depth. Those falling into this category were Brett, Dennis, Glen and, to a lesser extent, Frank. These interviews were shorter in length for this reason (each approx. 35 minutes). However, this lesser engagement is not to say that there was no relevant data gained in these interviews, just that there was less relevant data and less richness in their descriptions of their experience and environment. The participants from whom most relevant data was drawn were David, Gareth, Jon, Ned, Ray, Tom, Vince and Winston. This group all admitted their offences but other than that seem to have little in common that is distinct from other participants (in terms of offence type, sentence length, age, etc.) that might suggest any other factor has an impact on engagement. It has, therefore, not been possible to identify any objective factor (other than denial, discussed above) that seemed to impact on participant engagement.

Two participants, Gareth and Ned, specifically commented following their interview that they had enjoyed taking part. Though not stating it explicitly, it was felt that several other participants also had a particularly positive experience of the interview (for example, Andy, Tom, Vince and Winston). Only Jake and Will were felt to be slightly uncomfortable with the experience and in both cases this eased as the interviews progressed. These feelings go beyond engagement or lack thereof and impact on the researcher's experience. When

participants had had a positive experience the researcher left the fieldsite feeling positive, not only that good data had been obtained in these cases but simply because the experience had made another human being feel good. When participants became upset or discussed topics where some comforting seemed necessary this was very difficult. In the setting of a prison, and in the role of a researcher, the natural ways of providing comfort are of little use so the researcher is left feeling helpless as there was nothing that could be done but offer a trite "are you ok?" and ask if the participant wished to end the interview. On these occasions the researcher left the fieldsite in a more negative frame of mind and the experience of conducting interviews was more draining in these cases.

Protecting the Researcher

As with participants, there was potential for psychological harm to the researcher during the interviews due to the nature of the discussions taking place. This concern was primarily addressed through preparation to minimise the chances of the researcher being caught off guard by participants. This preparation included reading extensively studies that have employed a similar methodology, particularly those that deal with sex offenders, to identify the challenges past researchers experienced (e.g. Hudson 2005; Scully 1991; Sussman and Bordwell 1977; Pemberton 2012). There is also a vast array of prison sociology literature that addresses the issues associated with conducting research in this environment and the psychological challenges that may be faced (e.g. Liebling 2013; Rowe 2014). These challenges were also discussed in person with other researchers who are familiar with this type of research and professionals that work in prisons or with offenders in the community. Furthermore, visiting several prisons prior to the research allowed familiarisation with the environment which was hugely valuable preparation. Keeping in regular contact with supervisors and gatekeepers at SPS throughout the fieldwork was also a useful method of avoiding any distress. Additionally, limiting the number of interviews (in this case to no more

than two per day), limitations to time spent listening to recordings (no longer than one hour without a break) and not reading for the literature review about potentially distressing topics while also conducting the fieldwork have been identified as useful strategies for avoiding researcher distress (McCosker, Barnard and Gerber 2001) and were all utilised in this project.

Analysing Results

Transcribing

Transcribing was done over largely the same period of time as the interviews were conducted. Generally Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays were spent in the field and Tuesdays and Thursdays were spent transcribing. On one week these days were switched to allow time to catch up on the transcribing which had fallen behind. However, the transcription process was still more time consuming than this allowed for so the week after interviews were completed transcripts were still being completed. This still ensured that all transcripts were completed, and corresponding audio recordings deleted, within the two week period set out in ethics applications and in the participant information sheet. All transcription was completed by the interviewer and no software was used to assist with this. A simple, though time-consuming, process of listening to part of recordings, pausing them and typing what was said was undertaken. Errors were checked for simultaneously, though there did remain a few typing errors which were noticed during coding. These were obvious typing errors and any time a participant used an incorrect word or mispronounced a word it was noted in the transcript that this seemingly incorrect word was correct to avoid it later being mistaken for a typo. The first few interviews to be transcribed took up to 8 hours for every one hour of audio recording. This was too long to be sustainable so changes had to be made. A second laptop (also a laptop personal to the researcher which was password protected to be in keeping with information provided in the participant information sheet

and ethics applications) had to be utilised so that the audio recording could be listened to on one and typing done on another to prevent the need to move between tabs. This, and simply gaining more experience of transcribing, did significantly reduce the time taken to approximately 4 hours of transcribing to one hour of audio. Though this process was time consuming: 'the time spent in transcription is not wasted, as it informs the early stages of analysis, and you will develop a far more thorough understanding of your data through having transcribed it' (Braun and Clarke 2006). Transcription plays an important role in the first stage of thematic analysis, familiarisation with the data (Braun and Clarke 2006).

Where Scots or Doric words were utilised these were transcribed faithfully but when it came to only slight variations in pronunciations from written English it was decided not to produce a completely faithful representation of participants' speech. So, for example, words such as "wean", "bairn", "loon", "quine", etc. were all transcribed. However, words pronounced as "dusnae", "hudnae", etc. were written as "doesn't", "hadn't", etc. This was for three reasons. Firstly, from a practical standpoint, it was more time-consuming to work out how to accurately represent a participant's dialect and the transcription process was already lengthy (this was established as the first 3 transcripts were an accurate representation of dialect and took much longer to produce). Secondly, it was not felt that representing dialect accurately added anything meaningful to the transcripts as no linguistic analysis was being undertaken. Therefore, additional time would be added to the transcription process but no benefit derived from this. Thirdly, some dialects are particularly distinctive, for example participants from Aberdeenshire, and it was felt that having their dialect so apparent might risk making participants identifiable. Ethically, it was important to ensure participants could not be identified and it was specified to participants that any potentially identifying details would be removed. It perhaps seems over cautious to interpret dialect as potentially identifying but it was considered best to err on the side of caution, particularly given the consideration above

that nothing meaningful would be added to the transcripts. For the same reason, hometowns were removed from transcripts when mentioned by participants even when these were cities with large populations.

Transcribing was more difficult with some participants than others due to differences in dialect, clarity of speech, speed of speech, etc. Some transcripts are marked "[inaudible]" at various points when the recordings could not be deciphered. This does not feature often and generally only covers very short periods of speech and the main point being made is still easily understood. However, in Will's interview this features more regularly as his voice was not picked up well by the audio recorder. This was primarily due to his very quiet speaking voice but was also influenced by his accent and his mannerisms meaning he often stared at the floor while speaking rather than facing the recorder or muffled his voice by holding his hands near his face. There was therefore less data drawn from Will's interview than others.

Anonymising

The anonymising process was largely done alongside transcription though there were steps taken even before this stage. Participants' names were never written on fieldnotes or computer files and consent forms (which did not contain printed names but did have signatures that were sometimes legible) were kept in a randomised order to make it harder to match these with participants and were filed away immediately in an attempt to avoid becoming familiar with the real names of participants. This was in order that the participants were largely unidentifiable even to the researcher. This was fairly successful as there are few participants whose real names have been retained in my memory. Pseudonyms were used immediately when audio files were saved and when transcripts were created.

When transcribing, any mention of the participant's own name, names of victims, family members or friends (either within prison or outside) were removed as were identifying

details such as details of their offences, hometowns, references to media coverage of their case, etc. When such details have been removed this is marked in the transcript. This was rarely felt to take away from the subject matter being discussed by participants. However, there were some issues. Some participants mentioned medical conditions that they viewed as linked specifically to their experiences but, as potentially identifying, details of participants' medical histories were removed. When it came to discussing the media participants often gave specific examples from their own cases that provided interesting examples but these too had to be removed. There was one further striking example of something key that had to be removed that would have impacted on the participant's whole experience but this is so easily identifying that it cannot be detailed here. Though these issues only arose in a few interviews it was disappointing as a researcher to have to lose this detail but it was necessary to protect participants' privacy.

Coding and Identification of Themes

Coding is an essential part of thematic analysis to aid with the accurate identification of themes. This was viewed as an attractive method as it would be able to reduce researcher bias influencing the results. For example, without coding to rely on for some objectivity it would be easy to mistake something for a bigger issue than it really was because existing research identified it as such. It would be more difficult to do this when coding is utilised as the chosen themes need to be supported by the codes from the data. Of course this process is not entirely objective as it is still the researcher who chooses the codes. However, as described below, a diligent process of coding was utilised here involving an initial very descriptive line by line coding which could not have ignored any issue. Furthermore, due to the prevalence of each code being noted, it would also have been very difficult to miss an important issue or to wrongly identify something as important when it was not.

The coding was done without any specialist software so required the researcher to be very familiar with the data and diligent with the attention given to it. Though the lack of coding software made the task perhaps more arduous than it might otherwise have been, the familiarity with the data which comes from this level of absorption is, as discussed above, an important aspect of thematic analysis. As almost all of the interviews at some point addressed very heavy subject matter and this process meant the researcher was looking at this data very closely, the coding could not be continuously performed for long periods of time or researcher well-being may have been jeopardised. During the coding process time was therefore split between the coding and other writing tasks which needed to be completed. This meant the process took longer than anticipated but this was felt to be preferable psychologically and it was felt that pace of coding actually increased by taking these longer breaks from such a detailed, and therefore sometimes draining, process.

The first stage in coding was a very descriptive line-by-line coding of what was being discussed by participants. These codes kept very closely to the wording actually used by participants. For example: "don't want to do groups with child molesters", "dislike paedophiles", "rapists think they are better than child abusers" Thereafter more general codes were identified that could be applied more broadly across participants. For example "divide between rapists and paedophiles". Familiarity with the data by this point made it easy to identify applicable codes across the data set. So essentially data was coded twice, once very descriptively, then with the intention of making it possible to identify common themes later. This second level coding still left a very long list of codes. Which participants each of the secondary codes occurred in was noted in order to later check the prevalence of each code. This was done through use of a simple table that listed each code and had space to add each participant's initial if that code featured in his interview. Some of the codes were combined at this stage, being reframed slightly where necessary to accommodate this, where

they were expressing essentially the same view (for example, "participant keeps to himself" and "participant keeps his distance from other prisoners" were combined). This allowed for a more accurate view of which codes were most prevalent. The importance of codes to participants was also noted. When a code expressed something a participant seemed to find of particular importance an asterisk was placed next to his initial. This was so that any patterns in which issues were particularly important to participants could be ascertained more readily. Familiarisation with the codes resulting from this process then allowed a number of candidate themes to be identified.

It was important that there was little overlap between final themes selected, that they covered the most important issues to participants in relation to the research question and painted an accurate picture of the data. In choosing between candidate themes the most prevalent codes were utilised to identify the themes which covered the key issues in the data. The codes appearing in 6 or more transcripts (n = 23) were identified. These were used to select the candidate themes which worked together to ensure all of these codes were encompassed with minimal overlap. The codes appearing in 4 or more transcripts (n = 59) were then identified and utilised to ensure these codes were also encompassed by the candidate themes chosen at the last step. This ensured no key code was ignored in the selection of themes. Systematic checks such as this to ensure findings represent participants' experience has been considered a key practice in ensuring the findings of thematic analysis are credible (Shenton 2004). This level of prevalence might seem low to be considered a key code but this simply reflects the way in which codes were kept very specific so that they closely matched the data. Many of the codes were very related so while individual codes might not be found in a large number of transcripts, when several related codes are viewed together as a theme, this occurs far more frequently. Braun and Clarke (2006), key

proponents of thematic analysis, discussed 'what counts as a pattern/theme, or what "size" does a theme need to be?'. They considered that:

> Ideally there will be a number of instances of the theme across the data set, but more instances do not necessarily mean the theme itself is more crucial. As this is qualitative analysis, there is no hard-and-fast answer to the question of what proportion of your data set needs to display evidence of the theme for it to be considered a theme.

Determining whether a theme is an accurate reflection of the data is therefore left to the researcher's judgement as in qualitative research it does not all come down to incidence of codes across the data set. It was with this in mind that the perceived importance of codes to participants was noted by the researcher. This, along with the prevalence of codes, was considered to have a bearing on determining 'what counts as a pattern/theme'. Some less prevalent codes were also added to the thematic map where relevant as further evidence that a theme accurately represented the data. However, some codes were not utilised in identifying themes. This was either because they occurred infrequently and were not significantly related to other codes and/or they were irrelevant to the focus of this research (for example, "participant suffers health issues").

This process resulted in six distinct themes being selected as accurately reflecting the data: the divide between mainstream and sex offenders; lack of progression; judgement; avoiding conflict; desire for a better life; and fear of release. These themes all relate to the sex offender prisoner community that is formed among this group. The themes will be examined under three organising concepts which each represent a chapter in this thesis, these are: forming community through solidarity; the norms of the community; and trying to move on.

Limitations

The main limitation to this research is the small sample size. There are over 1000 sex offenders serving sentences in Scottish prisons and only 25 of these were interviewed. This makes findings difficult to generalise. This research can only describe the experience of these participants, which may be very different from others. Furthermore, all of the sample were housed in the same prison, HMP Glenochil. The regime at HMP Glenochil and the facilities and opportunities available there may be different from other establishments. While across Scottish prisons the policies are the same – the programmes offered are the same, education and work opportunities are available, there are similar forms of recreation offered – seemingly small differences will still exist that could have a large impact. For example, many participants in this study discussed incidents between mainstream prisoners and sex offenders occurring at the Health Centre. This was significant to these participants and fuelled the "them vs us" mentality that existed about mainstream offenders. Other prisons may operate differently so that even during Health Centre visits there is absolutely no mixing of the populations. If this was the case, sex offenders in these prisons may have different views about mainstream offenders, and different reflections on how they believe they are viewed by mainstream.

The easiest way to overcome this limitation would be to utilise questionnaires rather than interviews to increase the sample size. However, this could not have achieved the same richness of data that one-on-one interviews did. It was therefore considered better to work with a smaller sample in the first instance to allow in depth discussions to draw out many significant issues. Interviews were needed to allow flexibility to discuss issues the researcher had perhaps not considered. With most researchers not having experienced imprisonment themselves, it would have been very difficult for any researcher to correctly identify all issues that would arise in conversations with this population and explore these well in quantitative

research. However, this study could now be expanded on using quantitative techniques to see if the issues identified as significant to the population interviewed are really representative.

Chapter 4: Forming Community by Creating Solidarity

This thesis argues that a peaceful community is formed by sex offenders in custody that offers them the safety and acceptance that they are denied elsewhere. This chapter considers specifically how the sex offender prisoner community is formed. Existing theories propose that communities can be bound by a shared identity (Bhattacharyya 2004; Goel 2014). This shared identity can create solidarity among community members, which has been theorised as a particularly significant aspect of community. Goel (2014) describes community as: 'an entity where people share identity that brings solidarity in relationship' (Goel 2014:2). The community that became apparent in this study did have a sense of solidarity stemming from their shared identity as sex offenders. This identity is continually reinforced by the prison environment as sex offenders are segregated from mainstream prisoners. This measure ensures the safety of this population, but also reinforces the idea of difference, strengthening the sex offender identity. This chapter will focus on how solidarity is created among this population in the face of the challenges of prison life associated with their shared sex offender identity. The main challenges discussed by participants were: the divide between mainstream prisoners and sex offenders; and the perceived lack of progression in prison for sex offenders. It is interesting that these negative aspects of prison life ultimately have a somewhat positive outcome of creating the solidarity which bonds this community allowing its members to derive some comfort in prison. As Goel (2014) describes: 'Communities through identification and symbolic artefacts provide a sense of belongingness to their people… This sense of belongingness connects people with each other' (Goel 2014:4). It is this sense of 'belongingness' that is denied to sex offenders when they are released back into the community outside or when mixed with mainstream. It is in this sense that the sex offender prisoner community provides an intentional contrast – it provides a place where sex

offenders can belong. It is from this sense of 'belongingness' that members of this group can find comfort.

Firstly this chapter will consider how segregating sex offenders from mainstream offenders develops a sex offender identity. This is the shared identity from which solidarity develops to form a strong sense of community among this population. Next the chapter will consider how sex offenders progress in prison, to open prison and release. There is a perception of greater barriers to progression for sex offenders, again strengthening the sex offender identity through a view of shared hardships and a sense of uniting in the face of injustice. The findings discussed in this chapter, in illustrating how solidarity is created among this population to form a community, provides the foundation for the following chapters. The norms of this community, discussed in the next chapter, can only be considered after evidencing here that such a community does indeed exist.

Identity Formation through Segregation: Mainstream vs Sex Offenders

> *They're the goody two shoes and you're the rubbish – Dennis*

At HMP Glenochil sex offenders are kept segregated from the mainstream population. As Goel discussed: 'The earlier and most commonly held meaning of "community" refers to people living in a place who have face–to-face contact with each other' (Goel 2014:1). This physical proximity is therefore sufficient for some definitions of community. However, this segregation can result in a more meaningful sense of community developing. The field of carceral geography tells us that physical prison spaces impact on interpersonal relationships: 'prison spaces also organize the social life of captives' (Piacentini and Slade 2015: 193). Social bonds form among the sex offender prisoner population as a result of the hardships faced because of this physical segregation within the prison. Common sources of complaint or worry through this shared experience develops solidarity. Two particular issues with

segregation that arose in interviews were the restricted access to facilities and the worry about lack of acceptance from the mainstream population. More generally, experiences of conflict with mainstream prisoners, or the belief that they are receiving better treatment in prison, can create an "us vs them" mentality which can strengthen the bonds among the sex offender population. The negative views this group held towards mainstream prisoners were key in developing solidarity: the population feel united against a common enemy. Existing literature has considered the unity that stems from facing a common enemy. Simmel (1955) argued that this can bring together even those with little else in common. De Jaegher and Hoyer (2016) describe the effects of a common enemy on a group as 'increasing their feelings of solidarity' (644). Similarly, Anderson (2006) considered the 'imagined community' that exists around a nation, allowing members of one nation who may never meet to feel a sense of community. He explains this as a sense of 'comradeship' that is the basis upon which nations go to war (Anderson 2006: 50). They view themselves as comrades against an 'other'. Strangers become bound together against a common enemy. Though not comrades-in-arms, the sex offenders in custody at HMP Glenochil share this sense of bonding against a common enemy, in this case the mainstream prisoners who stigmatise them and who they perceive as privileged within the prison system. This feeling of unity is the first stage in developing the sex offender prisoner community. Only from that point can norms among community members be established, first and foremost, the community members develop social bonds between them.

The strength of the sex offender identity was evidenced in many interviews where it was clear participants felt this was not an identity they could escape. Seven participants discussed feeling unable to move past their sex offender status feeling that this is all people come to view them as. David, for example, stated, 'the public perception of sex offender is just one big label. If you're labelled a sex offender then that's what you are'. Similarly, Jon stated: 'it's

just you're a sex offender. You know? Expects you to, you know? You're treated like you're about to reoffend at any moment'. However, as a result of this shared identity a community is able to form and from this some comfort can be derived in prison. Brett described 'a close knit community' among sex offenders in prison and Charlie claimed 'it's like a big family in this hall'. Some participants drew direct links between the bonds that form within this community and their status as a sex offender. Winston, for example stated: 'mainstream don't like us for what we've done and sex offenders can get on with sex offenders quite simply for the fact that we're all in the same boat so to speak'. Stevie also seemed to feel a sense of community, using the term 'we' throughout our interview when discussing views on a range of issues such as a dislike of certain offenders, preferring HMP Peterhead to HMP Glenochil, and shared difficulties sex offenders face. All of these issues are discussed further below as they each provide matters over which people can bond and a shared mentality can be created and each relates to their shared sex offender identity.

The Problems of Segregation

Several participants discussed the restricted access to prison facilities caused by segregating these two groups. Brett discussed that sex offenders can only access the education department in the morning as mainstream use it in the afternoon. David discussed that certain jobs are reserved for mainstream prisoners, limiting work opportunities for sex offenders. For example, jobs in the kitchen – which also led some sex offenders to be wary about their food in case it had been interfered with. Jon also discussed the restricted access to facilities:

> you've not got the full benefit of the prison, you've not got full access to the prison.
> Because they've got their own worksheds and we've got our own worksheds and
> stuff like that you know what I mean? So nobody in this hall could ever work in the

cookers, see what I mean? So there's things in here that we're not going to get because of them, and there's things they're not going to get because of us. You know? So it's, they're trying to run two completely separate regimes in one prison. It's difficult I suppose. I suppose it's working fine, it is manageable. That's the only real downside is you don't get the facilities of the whole prison.

Unlike other participants he seemed to have some sympathy for the difficulties involved for staff in keeping these regimes separate and acknowledged that mainstream were also affected by this. He did not seem to view mainstream as privileged in this respect but rather as also suffering as a result of having to share the prison but be kept separate. Views about segregation and its associated problems do not always, therefore, come with a hostile attitude about mainstream prisoners or the staff enforcing the segregation. However, even when there is an understanding of staff difficulties, this does not alleviate the underlying problem that access to prison facilities is restricted. Even those who have an appreciation of staff's difficult position and the way that mainstream are also restricted will still therefore have a sense of frustration about this restriction, as Jon here appeared to. This restricted access therefore, remains a common source of frustration which can operate as a bonding agent among the sex offender prisoner population, creating solidarity to develop a sense of community.

As well as restricted access to facilities, having a segregated sex offender population caused concern among some participants that they would never be accepted in society again. Ned stated that:

[Segregation from mainstream] kind of puts a lot of doubt in one's mind about whether they're ever going to be accepted again. Because… to have sex offenders

segregated from mainstream, that's maybe a sex offender going out the door saying, well if mainstream can't accept us, society will never accept us.

It can therefore cause some concern about reintegration that these groups cannot mix. If sex offenders perceive that mainstream offenders cannot accept them, this can make them feel more negative about the chances of the community outside accepting them on release. This was an issue also raised by Frank and both he and Ned felt that the division that existed in the minds of prisoners between sex offenders and mainstream was a result of the physical barriers imposed by the prison. They seemed to suggest that the physical divide put in place by the prison was the cause of the tension between these groups rather than a solution for avoiding this tension manifesting in dangerous ways. Existing research does not support this view as it has frequently found that tension does exist in mixed establishments (e.g. Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012). However, the suggestion that this segregation causes fear about the ability to reintegrate outside of prison is an important point. Fear about reintegration is something that can bond this community. As will be discussed in chapter 6, there was a significant fear of release from prison amongst participants and the physical set up of the prison in keeping the sex offender population segregated can contribute to this. Furthermore, several participants spoke of feeling defined by their offence – Jon, Ron, Stevie, Tom and Vince – and this physical divide between mainstream and sex offenders, by identifying this group of prisoners by their type of offending, could contribute towards this. Feeling defined in this way could make it harder to move on as individuals often come to view themselves as others see them (Maruna et al 2004). The segregation itself therefore becomes a large part of forming the shared sex offender identity in prison. Having your whole prison life revolve around the sex offender label emphasises the significance of this identity. Sex offenders in custody are unable to forget this label and this constant reminder feeds the idea that it is a label they will never

escape, strengthening the sex offender identity. This population are then able to bond in solidarity against the pervasiveness of this label or simply bond due to the knowledge that they share this label and that they may face hardships as a result. This bonding facilitates community development among sex offenders in prison. This community allows sex offenders to find some comfort in prison. It is somewhat ironic that comfort is derived as a result of bonding that stems from such a negative experience of labelling.

Lee discussed the possibility of not having mainstream and sex offenders segregated and believed this might be workable: 'They'd probably get a hard time over there to start with but they'll get sick of it at some point'. He believed any abuse from mainstream towards sex offenders would lessen over time. Lee spoke of his own experiences being mixed with mainstream where he did not face any problems. However, Lee had spent a lot of time in jail previously for non-sexual offences and always knew people where he was placed. He believed this was why he faced few difficulties despite his offence being known. This is not the position for many sex offenders who come into prison having served no previous sentences and not knowing anyone. In this sample, ten of the twenty-five participants had served no previous sentences. Furthermore, literature does not support Lee's view that these populations could be safely mixed. Sex offenders are continually harassed or ostracised as part of their everyday prison experience when in mixed populations (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012). Tewksbury found: 'incarcerated sex offenders report experiencing strong, persistent, negative labelling within the inmate community' (Tewksbury 2012: 612) and physical assaults alongside verbal harassment. Schwaebe (2005) also found that sex offenders experienced physical violence and Ricciardelli and Moir (2013) found: 'SOs were prone to physical and verbal victimization, as well as theft. They were openly taunted and physically harmed by other prisoners and had their canteen or personal goods stolen' (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013: 372). It does therefore seem that the

violence sex offenders are exposed to is significantly lessened when these populations are kept segregated as much as possible. Certainly in the present study, violence among the sex offender prisoner community was found to be all but non-existent in their attempt to create a safe, accepting community to make their time in prison more comfortable. This study therefore found a very different prison experience to those which examined mixed populations and segregation, and allowing sex offenders to feel safe, is a significant part of that difference.

Lee's view on integrating sex offenders and mainstream was certainly a minority among this sample with other participants feeling strongly that the segregation was needed. Several participants discussed their experiences of having been in mixed populations and their experience was not positive. Gareth felt that mixed populations created a very aggressive environment and preferred being segregated. Charlie describe being mixed at HMP Barlinnie which he described as 'pure hell'. Hal also discussed being in a mixed regime and said there was a lot of bullying. There was also some fondness for HMP Peterhead (a sex offender only prison which is now closed) based on its sex offender only population. Stevie stated:

> We hate this prison. Ninety-nine percent of us have said, if they opened Peterhead tomorrow, we'd all be running to get on the bus because that was our prison. We just, you just opened the door and walked wherever you went. There was none of this oh you'll have to do this because of the mainstream, this gate has to get opened, this door.

The picture painted by Stevie of HMP Peterhead was of a much more laid back prison and this made for a more positive experience of incarceration. Being segregated in the same establishment, by comparison, requires a much stricter regime to ensure the populations are kept separate. In terms of sex offenders finding comfort in prison, it seems that complete

segregation in a separate establishment is the gold standard. However, Jon did not view it as entirely positive that HMP Peterhead was more relaxed: 'the problem with that was you had lifers especially, they then became afraid of moving back into a mainstream environment, into top end and stuff like that. So aye it had its benefits but it does have its downsides an all'. This idea of becoming too comfortable in prison is an important idea that this research raises and will be explored chapter 6 as a potential downside to sex offenders forming a community within prison from which they derive comfort. The juxtaposition of a comfortable prison environment with the anticipated hardship of life outside prison can make prison seem preferable to attempting to reintegrate.

As this section has indicated, segregation is a key concept in this thesis for three reasons. Firstly, segregation ensures the safety of the sex offender population who are often subject to abuse when mixed with mainstream. This is important to the formation of a sex offender prisoner community as safety is a chief concern amongst this group. This segregation is therefore an essential factor in community development. Without the safety that segregation ensures, the community would be of an entirely different, much less relaxed nature. Secondly, segregation results in a number of negative consequences, namely, the limited access to prison facilities and opportunities and the growing concern among sex offenders that they will never be able to reintegrate. This is important to this thesis as these issues provide something for this population to bond over. A sense of solidarity developing in the face of these challenges facilitates the formation of a sex offender prisoner community. Thirdly, being segregated from mainstream feeds the perception that sex offenders are different from others. The sex offender label is reinforced throughout their time in prison, strengthening the sex offender identity. This shared identity is principally around what community members have in common and this commonality is essential for community formation. This research therefore offers an entirely new perspective on community

development in studying a population heretofore missing from the research. However, while segregation plays an important role in this community, the community is not simply a by-product of segregation. It is actively created by its members to provide safety and acceptance. Membership is not granted universally to all of those segregated as sex offenders. Membership is only permitted if certain rules are followed. These are discussed in the following chapter. However, it did seem to be the case that, initially, all were welcome in the community who shared the sex offender identity. Only when norms are not respected is membership denied. Membership is presumptively granted but subject to revocation.

Judgement from Mainstream

Many participants discussed judgement they faced from mainstream prisoners. Mann (2012) found in her study of aging child sex offenders that: 'Many of the men in my study discussed the strong sense of community which exists amongst sex offenders within prison. Strongly bound by a sense of unity against mainstream prisoners based on the vilification they tend to receive at their hands' (Mann 2012:354). Vilification at the hands of mainstream was also evident in the present study. When Brett was asked about stigmatisation in prison he replied: 'it's never really shown apart from a lot of the mainstream'. Although these groups are kept segregated, not all contact can be avoided. Visits to the health centre seemed a particular source of tension as there these groups are held in separate rooms but can see each other through windows adjoining these rooms. Charlie described mainstream shouting 'beasts' during these visits and Gareth described them banging the separating windows. Frank, Hal and Dennis also mentioned the health centre as a particular problem area within the prison. Gareth also described things being shouted over from mainstream to the sex offender block at night through the windows which (at a distance) face each other. David described mainstream shouting up at the sex offender block from the recycling yard below, as well as an occasion in another prison when he was being moved and was physically attacked by a

mainstream prisoner that passed him. Such incidents as these serve to heighten the sense of "us vs them" that exists in relation to mainstream prisoners. Unity can be created in the face of a common enemy (Simmel 1955; De Jaegher and Hoyer 2016; Coser 1956) so these negative interactions actually serve to create the solidarity that provides the foundations of a sex offender prisoner community. This community is built around the central value of creating a peaceful prison experience, free from conflict. This is in deliberate opposition to the experience that occurs when sex offenders interact with mainstream. The community is intentionally set up to provide a place free of such hostilities. All of the community norms, which will be discussed in chapter 5, centre around ensuring a community free of conflict in which members can experience the safety and acceptance they are denied when mixed with mainstream or when released back into the community outside of prison. The judgement faced from mainstream is therefore particularly significant. It not only serves to create a common enemy, or at least a common negative experience, which creates the solidarity so pivotal to community development, it is also plays a significant part in creating the initial desire for a peaceful community. If sex offenders were safe and accepted among mainstream or the community outside of prison, they would feel less need to create a community which provides this.

The judgement faced from the mainstream population was questioned by several participants who felt that mainstream prisoners were not entitled to any moral superiority. Ned stated: 'I also view mainstream as not being any better than us. Because the way I see it is at the end of the day it doesn't matter what crime you commit, there's a victim at the end of every crime'. This also seems to be the point being made by Tom when he stated: 'I mean if you get stabbed with a knife or you get stabbed with a penis is there a difference? Both cause physical scarring, both cause mental scarring, both cause a whole range of different things to a person'. Stevie had the most negative view of mainstream of all the participants:

'Mainstream hate us because [of] what we've done… but we hate them for what they've done so… I think it's equal'. Stevie seemed to be particularly disgusted with the crimes of mainstream offenders whereas other participants adopted a "we're all the same" philosophy. In discussing this a number of stereotypes about mainstream emerged from Stevie: 'They reoffend to get the drugs. Because they're called the granny-bashers. Because they bash the grannies for the pension to get the drugs. So… Because they're all on methadone over there, three-quarters of the hall'. This view of mainstream as 'granny-bashers' and drug addicts is not representative of the overall population but is a view Stevie repeated several times. Stevie was not the only participant to engage stereotypes of mainstream offenders. Gareth also viewed mainstream as drug dealers and Brett drew on the stereotype that they were all violent when he said he would not manage in mainstream because he's not a good fighter. Dennis shared similar views: 'mainstream prisons are categorised [sic] by the fact that they are violent they rob people stab people, they're not the baddies, you know what I mean. But if you're a sex offender yes you definitely are'. Dennis seemed to be questioning the fairness of mainstream being viewed more positively. He made clear throughout his interview that he felt sex offenders were viewed more harshly in prison and received worse treatment than mainstream prisoners. This view that mainstream are privileged is discussed further in the next sub-section. These negative views of mainstream again provide a subject over which this group can bond. As discussed above, being united against a common enemy can develop a strong sense of the solidarity required for community formation.

Frank described a further distinction between mainstream and sex offenders: that mainstream fight whereas sex offenders complain. Frank had previously been a mainstream prisoner so this view was based on his own experiences. Similarly, Vince had spent time as a mainstream prisoner and stated of the sex offender hall: 'it's not like the mainstream, there's

no tough guys, there's no hard boys that try to run it'. He described a much less violent environment in the sex offender hall than in his previous mainstream halls. This non-violent environment within the sex offender hall seemed to be valued. Foremost in terms of community values among the sex offender prisoner population seems to be ensuring a safe environment free of physical conflict. This freedom from conflict is actively pursued by the sex offender prisoner community and those who do not respect this value are excluded from the community. The absence of violence is a vital component of the safe and accepting community that sex offenders in custody wish to establish. More on the values of this community is discussed in the next chapter.

Mainstream Privilege

Six participants (Brett, Charlie, David, Dennis, Frank and Vince) discussed mainstream offenders being privileged over sex offenders in prison. Again, the health centre raised issues in this respect. Charlie complained that in the health centre mainstream are taken first and get the bigger waiting room even when there are fewer of them waiting and the sex offenders need the space for wheelchairs, etc. Gareth had the same complaint about room size and space needs. He discussed being in the health centre when only two mainstream offenders were in the larger room and there were not enough seats for all of the sex offenders in the small room and there were several present with mobility problems. Brett also seemed to be suggesting a mainstream privilege when discussing that sex offenders can only access the education department in the morning as 'mainstream want to do it in the afternoon'. This wording suggests that Brett believes the desires of mainstream influence the prison regime. As well as these practical issues, it was felt by some participants that the mainstream privilege extended to discipline, with mainstream getting away with more. Charlie stated: 'you're getting abuse off them but you cannae retaliate tae say anything back or you could, you could be put on report. 'Cause the officers behind the desk they just shake their heed

"aw it's mainstream let them away wi' it"'. Dennis also complained about this difference being made:

> Oh they're giving you dagger looks and "oh I'll, [mimes punch] I'll do this to you and do that to you" and this that and the other, you know? And they're giving you signals and eh the staff are just ignoring it because as I say they're not pulling them up for it and saying "hey you cut that out" or whatever.

Dennis felt that sex offenders would be put on report for similar behaviour. Frank shared this belief, claiming he had been disciplined for retaliating to mainstream when abuse was being shouted in the health centre. This perceived unfairness in the comparative treatment of mainstream and sex offenders is another means of creating solidarity among the sex offender population. They are able to feel united in the face of perceived injustices. This allows the social bonds to form that facilitate the development of the sex offender prisoner community.

The belief in mainstream privilege is related to the perception that some staff do not want to work with sex offenders and view them more negatively than mainstream prisoners: 'They're the goody two shoes and you're the rubbish or you're the bad yin and you're the… oh all sorts, you know? Monster' (Dennis). This belief therefore demonstrates an awareness of their sex offender label and speculation on the impact this might have. In terms of the behaviour described in the health centre, any repercussions aggressors may have faced on return to their hall, where they may well have been put on report, would be unknown to participants. Interestingly, Vince, who had previously served sentences as a mainstream prisoner, discussed the perception of mainstream that sex offenders are privileged: 'The mainstream prisoners, myself included years ago, used to think the guys over here were pampered and gave what they wanted'. So mainstream may well think the privilege goes the

other way. This research cannot speak to whether or not any mainstream privilege does in fact exist, as that was not investigated, but the perception of participants that it does is significant in itself. This feeling of being treated as "less than" can provide the basis for bonds to form within the group who feel that they are suffering injustice, whether that injustice is truly present or not.

Negative experiences with mainstream and their perceived privilege over sex offenders, or hatred towards sex offenders, can also be a means of creating solidarity between sex offenders. These experiences do this by creating an "us vs them" mentality which can bond the community. Individuals can feel united against a common enemy. Furthermore, this division felt between mainstream and sex offenders strengthens the idea that sex offenders are distinct, attaching more importance to the sex offender label and making this a more significant part of an individual's identity. This shared sex offender identity, and the experiences that accompany it, is the common link between all of those in the sex offender prisoner community, any issue over which they bond stems from their status as an imprisoned sex offender.

Lack of Progression

> *You're no as encouraged to progress in here. Seems to be more courses to do, more obstacles, more hurdles to jump over – Vince*

Progression was viewed as a particularly difficult issue for sex offenders. The length of time taken to progress to open conditions or to complete all of the programmes necessary for release mean sex offenders spend a long time in prison, even past the date at which they qualify for parole. This makes the need to form a community in prison even greater. If people are resigned to the fact they will spend a long time in prison they want to make their time there as comfortable as possible. The sex offender prisoner community, in providing safety

and acceptance, is something from which sex offenders in custody can derive such comfort. As well as increasing the desire for a comforting community, the perceived lack of progression is a further issue over which this group can bond. Related to the preceding discussion, there are perceived differences in progression for sex offenders and mainstream. As with the issues discussed in the previous section, this can increase the significance attached to being a sex offender, strengthening this aspect of an individual's identity. Issues with progression, whether the frustration relates to differences between mainstream and sex offender or just with the prison system in itself, can be perceived as unjust. Social bonds can form in the face of this perceived injustice to develop the solidarity needed for community formation.

Five interviewees – Ned, Ray, Tom, Vince and Winston – felt that there needed to be more (or was not any) progression in prison for sex offenders. Relatedly, Frank, Gareth, Jon and Ray discussed that there was a lack of rehabilitation for sex offenders and Jon, Stevie, Vince and Winston felt that sex offenders could not move on with their lives after their offences. Some of these participants overlap but still nine different participants raised the subject of lack of progression in some way. This was not something participants were asked directly about, so in each case it was something that arose directly from them. Frank stated: 'they're always on about rehabilitation, but yous boys aren't getting – there's no rehabilitation out there for you. Because when they find out you're an SO, nut, nut, nut'. Jon seemed exasperated during his interview that his offence was all anyone wanted to talk to him about. He felt unable to put it behind him and move on. He stated: 'surely there must be a point where we move on a bit. You know what I mean? Because there's no progression. There isn't any progression'. Vince compared his experience as a sex offender to his time as a mainstream prisoner on previous sentences and he felt there was a marked difference when it came to progression: 'You're no as encouraged to progress in here, seems to be more

courses to do, more obstacles, more hurdles to jump over'. This caused him some frustration having previously experienced life as a mainstream prisoner. In mainstream Vince progressed quickly and got to an open prison within two years of a six year sentence. As a sex offender he found it harder to progress to open due to having to wait longer for courses he was required to complete than he had had to wait as a mainstream prisoner, which meant he did his whole sentence in a normal, high-security, prison. Vince suggested that public perception of sex offenders might be playing a role here. He believed the public do not want progression for sex offenders, they want prison life to be as difficult for them as possible. He seemed to be suggesting that SPS fear public perception so SPS policy makes progression difficult for sex offenders to avoid adverse public commentary. Again, such claims are not what this research has investigated but whether there is any truth in this belief or not, as stated earlier, such perception in itself is significant. Views that progression is being made difficult as a matter of policy can create a sense of injustice that can create solidarity among this population. The more general view that progression is difficult for sex offenders is also enough to allow social bonds to develop. Such shared frustrations with the prison system can also create the solidarity required for community formation.

Nine participants discussed the particular problem of waiting for space on programmes (David, Gareth, Jake, Kevin, Ray, Stevie, Tom, Vince and Winston). This, as discussed by Vince, above, is one reason for the lack of progression for sex offenders: a lot of time has to be spent waiting to complete the programmes required for progression. Vince stated that he was not offered a course until three years after coming to prison for a sexual offence. When he had previously served a sentence as a mainstream prisoner he had a good job and all required courses completed within 18 months. This difference in experience was a source of frustration for him. Ray also described his experience with lack of progression:

I have to sit and wait for this one group [clears throat] excuse me, before I progress, and from day one I was told at Polmont do this, this, this, this, this and exactly roughly when I'll do them, then I went to Peterhead and I was laughed at. They said you'll do this in 2013 and that and that... I come here and it's changed again.

Ray explained that because he has to wait on this one programme before he can progress, it will not be possible for him to be released from prison until at least seven years after his tariff date (while programmes are not, as such, compulsory for progression, completion of these is used as evidence that risk has been reduced sufficiently so progressing would be difficult in Ray's case without this). These progression issues took significant focus in Ray's interview and he blamed the system for perpetuating this difficulty by allocating opportunities based on tribunal dates:

the now you've got this big thing with the recall prisoners because their tribunal date's every year, they're getting opportunities to everything first before your lifers, other LTPs [long term prisoners], so they're backing up the system and it's a complete... clusterfuck really.

He was frustrated that, as a life sentence prisoner, he was always at the back of the queue despite his model behaviour as a prisoner, the other opportunities he had undertaken to demonstrate his readiness for release (for example, engaging with the education department and becoming a trained 'listener' for other prisoners to speak to) and his desire to undertake these opportunities. These frustrations with waiting times for programmes are something many sex offenders in custody share. Shared frustrations provide something over which these individuals can bond. Lack of progression, in the view of participants, was a particular issue for those with sexual offences. They believed progression was harder for this group than for mainstream. This is therefore another issue that is related to their identities as sex

offenders. This shared identity is the bases for the solidarity that is so essential to community formation. This is a further example of negative prison experiences having a positive result in helping the development of a sex offender prisoner community which can provide this group with some comfort while in prison.

Gareth was another participant who seemed frustrated with the prison service during his interview. In his case he believed they were not really trying to rehabilitate:

> It seems more to be done with… what's that word… not retribution because that should be… revenge! It seems to be a lot more of that than actually helping anybody move on and get them better. If it's going to be, if you're going to say "you're coming to prison to be punished and that's the way it should be" then that's acceptable. But why pretend and say "oh we're going to rehabilitate them, we're going to do this"? Because they don't do it.

He felt the prison service were being disingenuous in their professed goals of imprisonment. Ray showed similar scepticism about the true motives of the prison: 'you see the writing on the walls as you came through? The transforming lives? Nut. That's lies written there'. Later Ray continued: 'the way it's getting here is they're taking away the judicial system and putting in a punitive one because there's no rehabilitation here whatsoever, there's no justice, it is you're here to be punished and that's it'. Neither Gareth nor Ray seemed to believe the prison service actually cared about rehabilitation, rather viewing prison as solely for punishment. This perceived lack of rehabilitation for sex offenders at HMP Glenochil actually led to two prisoners taking legal action (Petitions of John Mackie and Kenneth Fraser [2016] CSOH 125). This particularly related to being unable to take advantage of opportunities to demonstrate rehabilitation until after punishment parts of sentences were complete, which for life sentence prisoners is often a considerable period of time in prison. This action was

unsuccessful as the court felt it inappropriate to intervene in timetabling issues when they were not best placed to understand all of the considerations – it was felt this was best left to the 'experience and expertise of the prison authorities' (Petitions of John Mackie and Kenneth Fraser [2016] CSOH 125: para 29). Nevertheless, the effort involved in bringing such an action demonstrates how passionately some prisoners feel about this issue. In turn this indicates that this is an issue with particular ability to create social bonds among this population. Issues that can spark common passion among this group are going to be significant in developing a sense of solidarity.

Several participants also showed frustration with risk assessment in prison which plays a key role in preventing progression. Elliot and Glen had particular issues with risk assessment, feeling it was too general and did not take account of their individual circumstances. Hal and Vince were frustrated that everything bad they had ever done made it on to their record, however trivial or long ago this may have been, yet positive things they had done in their lives were not noted. They felt that as a result their files presented a distorted impression of them. These feelings relate to what Crewe (2011) described as 'pain of psychological assessment' that he found to be suffered by prisoners. Prisoners feel like they lose control over their own identity when officials decide who they are and what they are like. They are often given 'an enduring master-label' (Crewe 2011: 515) which feels dehumanising. What they are told, and what is found in their files, might be at odds with their own perception of themselves. This pain of imprisonment correlates strongly with the experience of Hal and Vince, who felt they had done a lot of good in their lives that now counted for nothing. Crewe's research was not with sex offenders specifically but his idea of an 'enduring master label' is certainly of relevance to this group who felt that their 'sex offender' label was one which they would have great difficulty moving on from. The relentless nature of this label forces being a sex offender to become such a significant part of the identity of these

individuals. While this can make them feel unable to move on, as will be discussed in chapter 6, it is also the foundation of the sex offender prisoner community from which this group are able to draw comfort.

Frustration was also expressed at not knowing what is actually required for progression. Dennis, Gareth and Ray were frustrated that they followed the rules and did everything they were advised to and still did not progress. Crewe (2011) also considered this a pain of imprisonment, the pain of 'uncertainty and indeterminacy'. There is certainly evidence of this pain in the accounts of these participants. As Dennis stated: 'a lot of people have done group work and this that and the other and they've went for parole after parole after parole and they've still not got out. So it's just sort of a hullabaloo.' Similarly, Gareth stated: 'They do set you up for coming, oh this'll happen that'll happen, if you educate yourself better and do this then you'll move on but you don't. You really don't'. Not knowing how to progress was particularly frustrating for some participants, for example Ray, and over time this can deflate hope that progression is possible at all. This can be seen in Jon's case where he felt that there was no moving on from what he had done and had given up entirely on progression, no longer attending his parole meetings. Prison was described as a low hope environment by Jon, Jake and Tom. The perceived lack of progression for sex offenders might be one reason for this. This does seem to be what Tom suggests when he states: 'this is a strange environment. One that you feel leaves no hope. In fact they should write that on the door as you come in, abandon all hope ye who enter here. Because all hope's lost, especially if you're got a life sentence or an OLR. There's no end game'. Indeterminate sentences were specifically identified by Crewe (2011) as a source of the pain of uncertainty and indeterminacy. He found that the uncertainty of how much time had to be served made this time more difficult to cope with. Negative feelings such as these can be more easily coped with by drawing on the support of others, particularly those who can understand this

experience. This is what makes the sex offender prisoner community so important; it can help alleviate these pains of imprisonment. Furthermore, the experience of these pains is common to many sex offenders in custody, providing them with another issue over which they can bond in order to create the foundations for community development. Again, it is in the face of difficulties that a positive result can be achieved.

The difficulties with progression that sex offenders experience in custody serve to bond this community. This is in the first instance through shared frustration with the prison system. Common sources of complaint can allow social bonds to develop which provide the foundation of community. More specifically for this population, the perceived differences between progression for them and progression for mainstream offenders further heightens the importance attached to the sex offender label, making this aspect of an individual's identity seem more significant. This shared identity is the basis for the sex offender prisoner community.

Conclusion

The sex offender prisoner community at HMP Glenochil is bound together by a shared identity. This shared identity is that of a sex offender in custody. It is reinforced throughout incarceration by the segregation of these populations and strengthened further by the experience of mistreatment from mainstream and perceived injustices sex offenders suffer. These issues provide something over which sex offenders in custody can feel a sense of solidarity. This solidarity is a necessary component of community. This solidarity is in face of perceived adversity but this adversity can have the positive result of creating the foundations for a community from which sex offenders in custody can derive some comfort.

The experience of this group at HMP Glenochil, due to segregation of sex offenders from mainstream is notably different from sex offenders housed alongside mainstream. When

housed together sex offenders are known to be subject to victimisation from mainstream prisoners (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012). The absence of this ill treatment allows a community of safety to be formed. Sex offenders cannot feel safe among mainstream prisoners - this important component of the sex offender prisoner community identified at HMP Glenochil would therefore be absent. This would make the community entirely different in nature. The sex offenders at HMP Glenochil are also distinct from those in Ievins and Crewe (2015) due to the nature of segregation. Ievins and Crewe (2015) considered a sex offender only prison. Their participants would not therefore have experienced many of these issues. For example, incidents with mainstream, limited though they are in HMP Glenochil, could not occur at all in a sex offender only prison. Issues arising in relation to limited access to the prison facilities and opportunities because they must be shared across two separate regimes are also absent in sex offender only establishments. The belief in mainstream privilege is something else that may be absent in a sex offender only facility as they would have less knowledge of how mainstream are treated so would find it more difficult to make comparisons. These issues are all key in developing a sense of solidarity among the sex offender prisoner community at HMP Glenochil. Any community that exists in sex offender only establishments must therefore be formed in a different way. The present research, while able to make smaller contributions to research focussing on entirely segregated prisons or the mixing of populations, offers an in depth and unique look at a system that can be considered a hybrid of these two approaches.

Segregation means that sex offenders' whole prison lives (where they are housed, when they can move around the prison, when they can use the education department, which jobs they can do) revolve around their identity as a sex offender. The judgement received from the mainstream creates an "us vs them" mentality which strengthens their identity as a sex offender and provides a means of creating solidarity by bonding over common sources of

hardship. Solidarity can be created through the wealth of shared experiences this group have to draw on from their time in custody. This relates not only to issues associated with segregation but experiencing frustration with the prison system in relation to progression. These issues were hugely significant to the participants in this study giving them the potential to create community bonds. Furthermore, the issues discussed in this chapter demonstrate how important it is for this group to have a sex offender prisoner community. When hostility is faced from mainstream and those outside of prison (or if hostility outside of prison is expected) it becomes all the more important to this group to find a place where they feel safe and accepted. The sex offender prisoner community can provide this and add a degree of comfort to the difficult experience of imprisonment. This safe and accepting environment is ensured through the shared norms of this community which all focus on avoiding conflict. These norms will now be explored in greater depth in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Forming Community by Accepting Shared Norms

This thesis argues that prisoners form a sex offender prisoner community of safety and acceptance from which they can derive comfort while in prison. This community is initially bound by a shared identity and follows a set of shared norms. The preceding chapter considered the shared identity of participants as sex offenders in custody and how this created the solidarity required for community formation. This chapter will now examine the shared norms of this community. These norms need to be followed in order to remain a member of the community. Membership is presumptively granted to anyone sharing the sex offender prisoner identity but this is subject to revocation if community norms are not respected. These norms therefore form a strict code of conduct which, if not followed, makes you unwelcome in the community and subject to disapproval from those within it. The community sought is one of peace where this population can find safety and acceptance. Baumeister and Leary (1995) suggest that 'aversive or conflictual interactions fail to satisfy the need [to belong]' (Baumeister and Leary 1995:520). The sex offender prisoner community is so significant as it provides a place where sex offenders can find a sense of belonging, and so must be absent of these 'aversive or conflictual interactions'. The shared norms therefore all relate to avoiding conflict. A lack of conflict is essential to creating a peaceful community.

Firstly this chapter considers three specific norms of this community, all of which ensure conflict is avoided. This first of these is being compliant. This involves following prison rules and doing as staff instruct. Avoiding conflict with staff is just as important as avoiding conflict between prisoners when the goal of the community is to create a peaceful environment. Antagonistic relationships with staff are not desired and this population do not wish to risk any privileges they are granted by causing difficulties for staff. The second norm is not discussing offences. Not discussing offences can keep offences unknown, which prevents this

population from being able to pass judgement on the offences of others. A lack of judgement is essential to create the community of acceptance that is so desired. This norm, in seeking to prevent judgement, is therefore very related to the third norm that will be discussed – not acting on judgement. Judgement among this population is a complex issue. As will be discussed, judgement does persist and there are a variety of bases for this judgement. However, what is key to the sex offender prisoner community is that this judgement has no external consequences. Individuals still feel judgemental of others, but this is not acted on. People are not excluded or abused as a result of being judged by others. However judgemental community members may feel within themselves, externally the community presents itself as a community of equals where everyone is safe and accepted.

The chapter will then go on to consider a strategy for avoiding conflict that is not in itself a norm, namely, maintaining distance from other prisoners. This is a key strategy adopted by some participants to ensure they avoid conflict. This does not reach the status of community norm as it is a strategy adopted only by some in the community. Others do not keep to themselves but rather engage in close friendships with other prisoners. Either approach is acceptable within the sex offender prisoner community where all that is required is an avoidance of conflict.

Compliance

> *The last thing I want to do is be put forward as someone who causes problems, causes trouble – David*

Compliance with staff and rules of the prison is the first norm of the sex offender prisoner community. This avoids creating conflict with staff which is fundamental to the peace of the sex offender prisoner community. Negative relationships with staff would reduce the comfort that could be derived from the sex offender prisoner community and could result in

privileges being lost. Many participants expressly stated that they complied with staff. Gareth, for example stated: 'the officers will tell you I don't cause any bother or anything' and Ray believed staff viewed him as 'the model prisoner'. Those who did not explicitly state that they complied with staff gave no indication that they did not. The only exceptions to this were Lee and Hal stating that previously they were uncompliant but had changed. In Lee's case he admitted that this was only to increase his chances of being released and that if not for the chance of parole soon he would be continuing to cause trouble for staff. Lee felt that because of trouble he had caused in the past a lot of people in prison now disliked him. Causing trouble is not looked on favourably among this population who are seeking a peaceful community in prison. As Michael discussed:

> the guys that have been in a while like a quiet time and if somebody starts something stupid that's going to cause the longer terms guys to either lose privileges or it's going to put pressure on various different things, they'll just walk into a guy's cell and go "shhh, sit, shut up and listen". And they'll just go and they'll tell him we don't want trouble, we don't want riot bells going off every 5 minutes.

This clearly demonstrates that peace is valued within this community. Anyone jeopardising this peace has their behaviour called out. Continuing to cause difficulties would then exclude this person from the sex offender prisoner community. As David stated: 'The last thing I want to do is be put forward as someone who causes problems, causes trouble'. In the sex offender prisoner community, "trouble-maker" is the most unwelcome label.

An exception of sorts relates to programmes. Several participants refused to take part in the programmes the prison had requested they complete. This is non-compliance with a prison request. However, programming is not compulsory, certain programmes are simply recommended to each prisoner. So refusing to participate cannot be considered a serious

form of non-compliance when no prison rules are broken. Furthermore, in day-to-day interactions with staff there was no evidence that these participants were uncompliant. As Ollie, who has refused to do programmes, stated: 'it's not as if I've deliberately went against the system in being hard to work with, I've not, I've done everything I've been asked to except programmes'. Refusing to take part in programmes does not necessarily mean prisoners are then more uncompliant in general. When non-compliance is limited to refusing treatment, this would not preclude membership of the sex offender prisoner community. This is a quiet dissent that does not cause particular problems for staff and therefore does not result in damaged staff-prisoner relationships or the loss of any privileges. In other words, refusing treatment does not affect the peace of the community in any way. As this is the underlying goal of all community norms this is why this limited form of non-compliance is tolerated. Norms operate to ensure peace is maintained within the community. As long as peace is maintained, the community imposes no restrictions on an individual's choices.

Sex offenders are known to be more compliant than mainstream. This was the general perception obtained from informal conversations with staff at HMP Glenochil and SPS HQ as well as being the view expressed by many interviewees and is a view found in existing literature (e.g. Ievins 2014; Liebling et al 1997). However, the sex offender population are considered more likely to make formal complaints. Again, this was the view presented by staff in informal communications and the view of participants. As Tom stated: 'here the… clientele, if you like, are more easy-going. We will take things more. We're not so quick to maybe use our fists. We'll put pen to paper'. This means of challenging staff or the prison regime does not preclude membership of the sex offender prisoner community. Raising issues within the permitted parameters put in place by the prison is considered acceptable. Only open rebellion is not tolerated. This difference between sex offenders and mainstream can be considered to fly in the face of two tenets of Sykes' (1958) classic inmate code 'do not

grass' and 'be a man' as well as more recent research into inmate codes which found identified 'never rat' and 'act tough' as central tenets (Ricciardelli 2014). Formal complaints made to staff about other prisoners could be perceived as 'grassing' and dealing with problems in this way rather than 'man-to-man' could be viewed as contradictory to prison notions of masculinity encompassed by the tenet 'be a man'. Furthermore, positive relationships with staff are viewed less negatively among this population than in mainstream. Vince discussed an incident where he broke up a fight between two prisoners in the sex offender hall. He stated that he could not have done this in mainstream because it would be seen as helping the staff which is looked on badly by mainstream prisoners. Other participants, for example Frank and Ned, also described very positive relationships with staff. Hal and Tom also discussed positive relationships with particular members of staff and Ray discussed particularly positive relationships with the education staff. This demonstrates a further way in which this population is very different from mainstream populations who adhere to Sykes' (1958) inmate code which includes the rule: do not side with/show respect for prison officers. Again this was confirmed by Ricciardelli (2014) who found that 'don't get friendly with the staff' was a component of the inmate code in the prison she researched. Contrastingly in the sex offender hall, those causing trouble for staff are those who face the condemnation of the population. Sex offenders when segregated therefore seem to be distinct from other prisoners in their inmate values. The specific values that do exist within this population have received little attention. This research is able to fill this hole and add to understanding of an under-researched prison population.

Do Not Talk About Offences

It's a question you never ask in the jail what anybody's in for - Hal

Several specific norms emerged which served to avoid conflict with other prisoners. One which came through very clearly was not talking about offending. This encompassed not asking others about their offences and not talking about your own. This is in order to avoid potential judgement which could create conflict and threaten the acceptance offered by the sex offender prisoner community. Fourteen participants stated that there was a rule in prison that you do not ask about offences: 'that's another rule, we don't ask what people are in for' (Brett); there's some that come up and say "what are you in for?". I say "how long you in the jail? It's a question you never ask in the jail what anybody's in for". Up in Peterhead it would have been a bang job straight away. You just don't dae that (Hal); 'if there's one thing that I haven't done when I came into prison is I don't ask people what they're in for. As far as I'm concerned it's none of my business and I never really pry into what people are in for (Ned). Ron also discussed not asking people about their offences as he prefers to judge them for how they are with him now rather than their offences. Vince gave the same reason and believed this is how he managed to get on with everyone:

> I've no heard anyone say anything bad about us in the jail system. And it's because maybe because I don't judge them. I don't, I don't differentiate, there is people in here with horrendous offences. Another thing that helps me is I don't ask what people have done. Don't want to know. Don't want to know the details.

Ron and Vince make direct links between not asking about offences and avoiding judging others. Vince reflected that this was important to developing positive relationships. It stands to reason that as avoiding discussion of offences can avoid judgement it allows people to feel more positively about each other. Andy provides further evidence of this when he states, 'well sometimes it's equal, sometimes it's not. If they find out what you're in for it's a different story'. He views equality as conditional on offences remaining unknown. Ievins and

Crewe (2015) also found that their participants avoided trying to find out what others were convicted of so that they could continue to think well of them due to their desire for friendship while in prison. Trying to avoid discovering others' offences can therefore be viewed as a technique that is utilised in order to allow equality to exist based on wilful ignorance. This view of all community members as equal is helpful in ensuring the sex offender prisoner community is one of acceptance. To ensure acceptance, judgement must be avoided and one simple strategy to avoid judgement is to avoid gaining knowledge of the offences of others.

As well as not asking others about their offending, you should not be too open in discussing your own. As Ray stated: 'you don't really talk about your offences in our hall'. Lee, Ollie and Vince mentioned that there were some in the hall who were too open about offending: 'half the ones that's in here have got no shame in admitting half the shit they're in for and I try to avoid that' (Lee); 'I wouldn't talk to someone who likes to talk about his offences and all that, I'd stay well away from him because I don't like it when they do that. There are boys like that in here so I'd stay far away from them' (Ollie); 'I know how guys think in here. Guys talk about rape and I'll no stand for it myself, if they want to talk about a thing in here that appeals to them that doesn't appeal to me' (Vince). This was perhaps particularly significant for these participants as none of them really identified as a sex offender (Ollie was a denier and Lee and Vince viewed their sexual offences as one-time events wholly out of their character). This may have made them particularly uncomfortable hearing others discuss sexual offending as they did not feel they belonged among them. As Vince put it:

> I live with kind of, with people that are sick. I live with people who don't think
>
> properly. And I live with people that've got a twisted mind and they seem to embrace

sexual offending and joke with each other about it in here. I still struggle with it feeling the jacket doesn't fit with me.

Focus on Yourself

Related to not asking about offences is the idea of focussing on yourself and 'doing your own time'. This came up in eight interviews. Ollie stated: 'I just try to focus on myself'. Winston felt similarly, stating:

> I'm no going to sit and judge them about your offence whether it be against a minor child or a teenager child or an adult. That's not my place to do that and the judge has already judged them for that. So it's my job to get on with my sentence and focus on how to show people that I've changed... and focussing on others isn't going to help me.

Frank, Hal and Ned all felt similarly: 'we've all got our own sentence to deal with' (Frank); 'I'm no interested in what you done. And I think a lot of the guys is like that. They're not interested in anybody else, they're just interested in what they've done themselves' (Hal); 'don't tell me because I don't want to know. I'm dealing with my own offence, I don't want to deal with half a dozen others. At the end of the day I'm only here to do what I need to do for myself, not to judge other people' (Ned). On this matter the participants in this study fell in line with the 'inmate code' (Sykes 1958) which includes the requirement to 'do your own time'. This is one area where the sex offender population and the mainstream population (Sykes did not consider sex offenders specifically) do not differ. This rule also helps to prevent judgement which avoids any conflict and allows the safe and accepting prisoner community to form. All of the norms of this community centre on these objectives.

Do Not Act on Judgement

We've got to remember that this is prison and it's a microcosm of what, what society is. So every single thing you get out in society you get here. If people are going to be jealous outside in society, they're going to be jealous in here. If people are going to be judgemental out there, they're going to be judgemental here – Peter

The idea of judgement arose in every interview conducted. Triggering this, participants were asked to reflect on how they felt others viewed them. Participants provided very detailed accounts of how judgement operates within a prison setting. Furthermore, participants often displayed judgment of others during their interviews. When this arose it did so completely organically. Some participants were open about their judgement of others, other participants claimed not to be judgemental but examples of judgement were evident in their accounts and a third (very small) group genuinely demonstrated no judgement during their interviews. Those who demonstrated no judgement did not necessarily feel no judgement, it could be that these feelings did not happen to arise over the course of the interview or that the participant disguised these feelings. Even those who displayed no judgement themselves were able to give examples of the judgement of others or explain how judgement manifested in a prison setting. As this section will discuss, it was clear that judgement was present within this population. This is in spite of the attempts of this group to create an accepting (and therefore judgement free) community. However, this community can still be established by ensuring that any judgement felt does not result in adverse consequences such as exclusion or abuse. The community cannot therefore really be said to be a community of true acceptance as there remains an underlying current of judgement. However, even this limited form of acceptance allows this population to derive some comfort from the community as even such limited acceptance is denied elsewhere. The comfort to be derived is therefore at a very basic level.

Bases for Judgement

Five clear bases of judgement were identified in this study: the age of the victim; repeat offending; degree of contact; relationship with victim; and denial of responsibility. The first four of these were identified in Hudson (2005) as 'distancing techniques' to make sex offenders feel better about their offences. The fifth basis for judgement however, denial of responsibility, has not been identified previously as a reason sex offenders might judge each other. This is therefore able to add something significant to this body of literature. What is significant about this judgement among the sex offenders at HMP Glenochil is that it is not acted on in any meaningful way. While the discussion below identifies some reasons that this group judge each other, this judgement is internal only. There are no outward consequences of judgement such as abuse or ostracisation, as will be discussed further later in this chapter.

Age of Victim

The age of victims was identified very frequently by interviewees as a reason offenders might be judged. Ned, for example stated, 'I do know that in the halls yes there's a lot of judgement. Especially when it's boys that's committed sexual offences towards kids'. Thirteen participants identified those with child victims as worse than those with adult victims. Demonstrating this judgement is David's statement: 'I know there's one guy in here who was convicted of sexually assaulting a 3 year old. Now let's face it, anybody's books, no matter who you happen to be, that is the lowest of the low'. Michael similarly stated that those who had assaulted young children were at the bottom of the prison hierarchy: 'and then the worse ones as you go down the line is rape of elderly, rape of children, eh… eh, in one or two cases in this establishment animals. Eh and then there's a couple in for sexual offences with under 12 months old so, they're sort of the footstool'. Those who have been convicted of offences against children are aware of this viewpoint. Kevin's was a well-known case, with a high degree of media attention, so his crime was widely known among other prisoners and he did

believe he faced judgement for this: 'a lot of them don't like that, when somebody's in for killing a young child. So they tend to judge you on that. Because a lot of them here are Dads themselves so how would they feel if it was their son or daughter and their life was took away?'. However, this statement seems to show that he does not link his judgement solely to the age of his victim, rather it was a combination of this and the fact that he had taken the life of his victim. Degree of violence is another factor that can be the basis of judgement and is discussed further below.

Jake also discussed the judgement faced by those with offences against children. He stated: 'I'm here for raping a child. Which is uh a lower class of scum I suppose'. However, unlike Kevin, Jake felt his offence was largely unknown around the prison so he did not describe any particular judgement he had faced personally. However, he did describe having heard judgement levelled at others. When asked what sort of thing he had heard people say about child sex offenders he stated: 'the usual things you could say against a child sex offender, "you not even man enough to rape a woman"'. This statement would not only demonstrate a view of child sex offenders as more worthy of judgement but would suggest some actually view offending against women as a demonstration of masculinity. Ricciardelli and Spencer (2014) found that: 'heteronormative penal context indicates that inability to "conquer" women sexually and, worse yet, a need to turn to weak children to satisfy sexual urges represent masculine inferiority. These men are deemed pathetic and incompetent, and thus emasculated'. The present study does provide support for this idea that those who offend against children are perceived as less masculine but this 'masculine inferiority' does not seem to apply to those who have offended against adult women. This difference is likely accounted for by the segregation of the participants in this study from mainstream populations. In a sex offender only population, distinction between types of sexual offence are likely to count for

more. In mixed populations, past research suggests, all sex offenders are "tarred with the same brush" (e.g. Tewsbury 2012).

There was some defensiveness from some of those who had offended against adults who wanted to make sure it was clear they had not offended against children. David for example, stated, 'My crimes were -yes they were sexual, yes – but not against children in any shape or form' (one of David's offences was possession of child pornography but he claims the content was unknown to him). Frank also demonstrated defensiveness about his status as an adult sex offender stating 'I'm just a rapist'. These provide clear examples of judgement being used as a technique of minimisation to make those judging feel better about their own offences. Frank's description of himself as 'just a rapist' is particularly striking and a strong example of how adult offenders can use child sex offenders to give themselves a higher status. This is in keeping with the research of Hudson (2005) which identified the age of victims as a distancing technique utilised by the sex offenders she researched.

Repeat Offending

Repeat offending was viewed particularly harshly by Ollie who stated: 'anybody that's come in for a second sex offence doesn't have a leg to stand on when they say "I'm not a bad person"'. Will also seemed to view repeat offenders particularly harshly: 'I see some people like, some people is being here for this crime. And he's done it again. And he's done it again. And I believe these people are sick'. Gareth also discussed a case of repeat offending, seeming to judge on this basis: 'he's one of the really bad sex offenders – no that there's any good ones – he attacked an 8 year old boy [details of offence redacted as potentially identifying] then did it again when he got out with a 12 year old, got recalled'. Brett had experienced judgement on this basis. He stated that since he had returned to prison for re-offending a lot of people had stopped speaking to him. He believed this was due to other

prisoners believing he had 'fucked it up for them'. Several participants discussed the views

the public had of sex offenders that they were irredeemable and could never be trusted.

David for example stated: 'Whether it's the most minor or the most major, you're still a sex

offender in their eyes. And not to be trusted'. Similarly, Jon felt: 'you're treated like you're

about to reoffend at any moment'. Those, like Brett, who reoffend after release are therefore

viewed negatively as they provide support to arguments that sex offenders do not change

which feeds the already very negative view of sex offenders. These negative public views can

then make it harder for sex offenders to reintegrate. Problems and fears around

reintegration are discussed further in chapter 6.

While some judgement about repeat offending will be on the basis of damaging public

perception, this can also be used as a minimisation technique. Hudson (2005) identified a

lack of previous convictions as a distancing technique. In that study, 68% had no previous

convictions and all of them relied upon this as a distancing technique. One participant stated

that because he was not a repeat offender he was not a 'real paedophile'. Evans and Cubellis

(2015) similarly found that offenders in this category did not feel stigmatising sex offender

labels really applied to them. Some in Ievins and Crewe (2015) similarly differentiated

between repeat offenders and those who had made a 'genuine mistake' (Ievins and Crewe

2015: 494-5). Michael and Elliot seemed to draw distinctions between those who had

intended to offend and those who had 'made a mistake'. Michael took a better view of 'guys

it's their first ever offence it was a mistake or whatever and it's not something they're likely

to repeat'. Along similar lines, Elliot discussed a 'spectrum' of offenders where some set out

to offend and enjoy doing it, while others fall into offending:

> at one end of the spectrum you've got people who enjoy doing what they do, enjoy
>
> offending, so they get a thrill out of the hunt of the chase and they will tend to sort

of escalate towards murder because that becomes the sort of ultimate thrill for them. Um. And then at the other end of the spectrum you have people who end up with almost a sort of perfect storm of circumstances or events or whatever and their offending isn't intentional but is something that comes as part of going with the flow.

This idea of "making a mistake" is related to a further distancing technique of 'temporary aberration' Hudson (2005). This was when individuals claimed their offending was not like their usual self but a one-time mistake. This distancing technique was particularly relied upon by Ray who stated, 'It wasn't in my character to commit that'. Lee, while acknowledging that offending was in his character, claimed sexual offending was not. Similarly, Gareth claimed his attempted murder charge was out-of-character and discussed in some depth his non-violent personality.

Violence/Contact

Several participants drew a distinction based on whether offences were contact or non-contact or the degree of violence used. David seemed to draw a distinction based on contact when he stated: 'sexual crimes have a multitude of faces, you can be a Jimmy Saville type person or you can be somebody who's caught watching child pornography. Now whether it's child pornography or anything else it's obviously still a crime but there's a big difference'. At several times throughout Gareth's interview he seemed to suggest a violent offence was worse than other sexual offences. He stated this explicitly at one point: 'a sexually violent crime would probably be worse because it's more dangerous, it could kill the person'. Peter also made reference to use of violence stating that this was worse as it risked life or permanent physical injury. However, Peter argued that the crime should be separated from the person committing it – he viewed violent crimes as worse than non-violent but he did not view those perpetrating violent crime as worse than those committing other offences. In his

view the crime may be worse but the person themselves is not necessarily. Again this basis of judgement can be seen to be used as a minimisation technique by the participants in this study. The offences David admitted to were all non-contact and Gareth's sexual offences were non-violent (although he did have an additional violent offence which he claimed was out of character, relying on the 'temporary aberration' distancing technique discussed above) and they chose to draw distinctions along these lines. This is again in keeping with Hudson (2005) who found degree of physical contact to be used as a distancing technique.

Relationship with Victim

The relationship between participant and victim was raised as an issue by Peter, though he did not actually claim to view this distinction as appropriate: 'there's always this sort of hierarchy people think aw well because I was involved with, this was my partner, this was my wife, this was my girlfriend, so they place themselves higher'. Gareth also mentioned this, although, like Peter, he disagreed that this was an appropriate distinction. He said he frequently heard people describe their offences as 'just a wee domestic' when there was an existing relationship with the victim. This also arose in Michael's interview. He believed 'date rape' was considered better 'because aw I was going out with her anyway, she just decided she didn't want it that night but…'. Again, in Michael's interview he did not lend any support to the view that this was less serious. Therefore, in the three interviews in which this idea was discussed, none seemed to actually defend the distinction. There were no interviews in which participants distinguished their own conduct on this basis to minimise their own offences, although this has been previously identified as a minimisation technique utilised by sex offenders (Hudson 2005). This does not mean Peter, Gareth and Michael are incorrect in their beliefs that people view a distinction on this basis, or that this research conflicts with Hudson (2005) - it could simply be that none of the 25 interviewed in this study placed reliance on this themselves. However, though no reliance was placed on being in a

relationship with the victim, Tom seemed to somewhat minimise his offence due to his victim being a prostitute. This is linked to minimisation based on a previous relationship as these both relate to stereotypes of rape. In particular, the idea that rape is not 'real rape' (Estrich 1987) when there is an existing relationship (Lees 2002; Ellison and Munro 2013) or when a woman is perceived as being promiscuous (Malloch 2004; ICM 2005; Temkin and Krahe 2008).

Denial

Those who denied their offences also faced judgement from some participants. Jon's disapproval was fairly mild, having previously denied his offences himself he seemed to have more sympathy for the position of deniers. He stated: 'it's not so much of a problem it just gets weary because I've heard it so many times before. I done it myself at one point'. Elliot mentioned those who accepted responsibility in more favourable terms though this is not something he dwelt on to any extent in his interview. Winston also stated: 'I do tend to get annoyed more with people who blatantly sit and still continuously deny their offence because to me, as I said before, they're just not taking any responsibility for it'. Gareth raised the issue of denial several times and seemed to take a much harsher view of deniers than other participants, finding it difficult to build relationships with deniers. In spite of this he did claim that he did not think less of them. However, this claim was not in keeping with the rest of his interview where he did frequently refer back to deniers in a manner that suggested judgement. This could be an example of the conflict in prison between judgement people cannot help but feel, and the comfortable environment that they are trying to create. Gareth does judge those who deny their offences but wishes he did not as it is out of step with creating an accepting community of equals.

Lee seemed to use the fact that he had admitted his offences as a way of feeling better about his own conduct stating: 'Ever since I read statements I – "guilty", know what I mean? I never ever put the victim through court. Never ever put witnesses through court'. He seemed to use this as a source of comfort about his conduct, that at least he had not subjected anyone to the additional pains of testifying in court. In this way acceptance of guilt can also be used as a minimisation technique. Gareth, Jon, Lee, Michael and Winston all gave indications that they considered it worse when offences were not admitted – and all of these participants admitted their own guilt. They could therefore be relying on this as a distancing technique. This is not one of the distancing techniques that have already been identified by Hudson (2005) so can add something new in this area. Acceptance of guilt offers a technique of minimisation in a number of ways. Firstly, as can be seen in Lee's case, comfort can be drawn from pleading guilty right from the start – never putting a victim through court. Winston accepted guilt at an even earlier stage, calling the police and an ambulance himself and waiting with his victim. He is also able to draw on this as a distancing technique. This technique can also be used, in a weaker sense, by those who now admit their guilt, even if they did not until after conviction. In this sense acceptance of guilt is less linked to the initial offence and experience of the victim and more linked with moving on. Gareth (who initially denied his offences) believed that people could not move on from offending and maintain desistance without first accepting their guilt. People in this category therefore view their acceptance of guilt as a commitment to change that deniers have not made.

Hierarchy or Divide? The Structure of Judgement

Existing literature has established that within a prison there is a hierarchy of offenders with sex offenders at the bottom (e.g. Ievins and Crewe 2015, Ricciardelli and Moir 2013, Cohen and Taylor 1972). However, Abercrombie hall at HMP Glenochil exclusively houses sex offenders and there is very little mixing with mainstream, meaning this type of prison

hierarchy is not something experienced by the participants in this study. However, there is some literature discussing a further hierarchy among sex offenders themselves (Evans and Cubellis 2015; Waldram 2007). This is something that has been shown to exist even in sex offender only environments (Ievins and Crewe 2015). Supporting this, some participants in this study did describe a prisoner hierarchy among sex offenders. Notably, Elliot discussed this in some detail. He explained that the younger the victim the lower in the hierarchy you are but that degree of violence also contributes so that those who have killed children in the course of a sexual offence would be 'lowest of the low'. However, Elliot claimed the hierarchy 'becomes very convoluted' and he himself did not seem to respect it as a concept. Ray also suggested a hierarchical arrangement when he used the term 'ladder' in describing the perceived severity of various offences. However, Ray claimed that this ladder of offences was of less importance than 'the way you present yourself', calling into question how important this hierarchy really is among this population. The term 'hierarchy' was also used by Peter, Gareth and Jon. In all cases this word choice arose spontaneously from participants, it was not proposed by the interviewer. Peter stated: 'there's always this sort of hierarchy people think aw well because I was involved with, this was my partner, this was my wife, this was my girlfriend, so they place themselves higher. I think it's stupid to have a hierarchy like that because a crime is a crime, a sin is a sin'. Jon also discussed a hierarchy based on age: 'they'll talk about other people "aw he's in for weans" and all that, know what I mean? As if, you know, because your victim was 17 and that that makes you any different, you know what I mean? There is still that hierarchy thing. Don't talk to him he's a...'. Similarly, Gareth discussed rapists (by which he meant those who offended against adults) believing they did not belong in with other sex offenders, that they were more akin to mainstream offenders.

However, though some did describe a hierarchy, more participants spoke of a *divide* between "rapists" and "paedophiles" rather than a hierarchy (these terms "rapist" and "paedophile"

were used loosely to denote a distinction between those who had offended against adults and those who had offended against children). Even those who did speak of a hierarchy were rarely able to specify how this worked other than with reference to victim age. Frank explicitly characterised the relationship between offenders as a 'divide' rather than a hierarchy: 'there is a divide there between child molesters and adult sex offenders'. Similarly, when Gareth stated, 'Basically the rapists and the paedophiles, we don't get on' this speaks more to a divide than a hierarchy. A divide seems a more accurate description as the term "hierarchy" would seem to suggest an arrangement with a tacit agreement of those within the hierarchy that this is how offences should be ranked. This study found no such agreement on severity of offences or the relative judgement that should fall on various offenders. As will be discussed below[14], many bases of judgement were identified during interviews (including, but not limited to, the age of the victim) and these could be relied on by different participants to elevate themselves above others in custody. The hierarchy would therefore differ in the minds of every person so would not form a consistent basis on which to dole out judgement. A divide was found to be supported by the findings of this research, and judgement was certainly present in many ways, but a hierarchy as such was not readily identifiable.

Some participants (Andy, Brett, Charlie, David, Gareth, Glen, Stevie and Winston) claimed there was no hierarchy or divide and that everyone in Abercrombie was equal. Lee, Ray, Ron and Winston also made reference to everyone in Abercrombie being "in the same boat" conveying a sense of equality among people housed there. However, Andy went on to describe some judgement based on offences and when probed about this inconsistency he stated 'well sometimes it's equal, sometimes it's not'. In fact, there was no participant who claimed equality that did not also describe judgement. Claims of equality sat right alongside

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[14] See page 5 of this chapter.

descriptions of judgement among prisoners. This inconsistency has been found before. Ievins and Crewe (2015) conducted research in prison with sex offenders and found that 'public claims of equality masked an underlying culture of judgement' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 494). The present study would seem to add support to Ievins and Crewe's assertion. However, this thesis delves further into this idea of the conflict between equality and judgement. This population, by the nature of their offences, find it difficult to find acceptance and freedom from judgement outside of prison or when mixing with mainstream populations. Participants desire an equal community to find the acceptance denied to them elsewhere and make their prison experience more comfortable. However, for reasons discussed below[15], judgement in the prison environment cannot be avoided. As with Sykes' (1958) 'inmate code', the equality participants desire can be viewed as an ideal standard rather than something that actually describes accurately the nature of this prisoner community. Ideal standards are desired and efforts are made to maintain these standards but the reality falls short. This is why some participants cling to the claim that everyone is equal despite their own discussions of the judgement that exists in this community. They want that claim to be true, they want a community where everyone is truly equal and they can find true acceptance. This desire to create a community where all are accepted, while not actually working to full effect, does minimise the consequences of judgement. While internal judgement is still present, the consequences of this judgement is minimal in nature due to attempts to maintain an accepting community – this will be discussed further in the next sub-section.

While most participants described the ways in which others in custody judge each other, they claimed that they themselves did not engage in this, instead viewing and treating everyone as equal. Thirteen participants explicitly claimed that they themselves did not judge – David,

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[15] See page 13 of this chapter.

Elliot, Frank, Gareth, Hal, Kevin, Ned, Ollie, Peter, Ron, Tom, Vince, Will and Winston. Ned described focussing on himself rather than judging others 'I'm only here to do what I need to do for myself, not to judge other people'. Winston and David also claimed not to judge, believing they had no right to judge others: 'I'm not in any position to judge anybody. I'm not going to start judging people' (Winston); 'I'm not here to judge. Who am I to judge anyway?' (David). Ned also discussed that in having a history of crime himself he also had no right to judge others. The only participants who were open about their judgement of others were Lee and Stevie. Lee stated: 'half the ones that's in here have got no shame in admitting half the shit they're in for and I try to avoid that. Can you imagine half the people that are in here? Know what I mean? That's why I choose not to associate with some of them'. Stevie specified certain types of offences he was judgemental of: 'sex with an animal' and 'we don't like paedophiles too much'. Stevie was also very judgemental of mainstream offenders labelling them 'granny bashers'. With other participants, judgement of other prisoners was implied in much of their discussion even when they claimed to avoid this. For example, Gareth claimed not to judge others but a negative attitude about those who denied their offences was apparent. Conversely, there were others who were judgmental when people spoke too openly of their offences (e.g. Ollie). A negative attitude was also apparent in Ollie towards repeat offenders despite his claims of no judgement. However, in some cases, those who claimed they did not judge others genuinely did display no judgement throughout their interviews. This was true of Kevin, Ned, Peter, Tom, and Winston. It was also largely true of Ron who described a conscious effort not to judge others but did admit to finding this challenging when, as a father, he was faced with those who had killed children. Ron, despite this difficulty, did seem committed to the idea of trying not to judge others. He stated: 'I think crime is a crime. I think, I use this term, I think we're all in the same boat. You need respect each other and help each other make easy, easy for each other here every day.' This is an

interesting statement as he refers to making things 'easy' for each other. Similarly, Vince

stated, 'I think to make my sentence easier I get on with people here, and I try not to judge

them'. This is why the norms of the community insist on the avoidance of judgement, or

(since judgment felt internally cannot be controlled by the community), at least on the

avoidance of overt displays of judgement. Any judgement felt must be kept internal, not

acted on in any meaningful way such as isolating or abusing others. In line with these quotes

from Ron and Vince, this norm operates to make life 'easy' for this population by creating a

peaceful sex offender prisoner community. That some participants expressly state this as a

recognised goal adds further credibility to this argument. Judgement is avoided as much as

possible in order to create a peaceful community for sex offenders in prison from which they

can derive some comfort to make their prison lives easier.

The Real Consequences of Judgement

Due to the desire to create an accepting prisoner community, the real consequences of

judgement to those in the sex offender prisoner community are relatively minor. While

judgement itself cannot be entirely avoided, the judgement that people feel does not seem

to be manifested into any significant ill treatment. This is so that a safe prisoner community

can still develop in spite of the inescapable judgement felt by many of its members.

Judgement, although internally felt, is largely ignored in order to create a positive

environment. Frank described trying to ignore what others have done: 'we sort of turn off to

it because we've got our own sentences to do'. This "stick-to-your-own-sentence" mentality

was prevalent, also being mentioned by David, Gareth, Hal, Michael, Ned, Ollie and Winston.

This is related to Sykes' (1958) inmate code which required prisoners to 'do your own time'.

Ignoring what others have done is important in the sex offender prisoner community as it is

a way of trying to minimise the effects of judgement. This relates to the community norm "do not talk about offences" which has been discussed above.[16]

When feelings of judgement are not entirely ignored, the consequences are still minor. Elliot stated that when judgement occurred people were only nominally ostracised. Discussing child murderers he stated: 'they tend to be nominally they tend to be ostracised. But in reality that's not the case. They seem to have as many associates and do as many groups and activities. Pretty much same as everybody else'. In a similar vein Andy stated that he had experienced being judged (he was convicted of raping a child) and this manifested in various ways but tended to be short lasting: 'people looks down at ye saying "wow this is what he's done". Sometimes they walk away and then they come back and then they talk to you again. Ken? Just how they feel at the time'. He did not therefore feel that he permanently was ostracised. Andy, Kevin and Ray all suggested that any experiences of judgement lessen over time in prison. After people "settle in" and become more accepting of the values of the sex offender prisoner community they become more committed to avoiding acting on their feelings of judgment. The longer people are in prison, the more they accept their situation and the environment they are faced with, the more accepting they become of prisoner community values that seek to allow people to find some comfort in prison.

Andy expressly stated that people's judgement of him did not lead to bullying, 'they will say stuff but they don't go on a way as to bullying you'. Supporting this Stevie stated: 'Ah well we don't like paedophiles too much but we won't abuse them or shout abuse at them or anything like that… But we don't like them very much… We tolerate them'. This does speak to limited acceptance being available in the sex offender prisoner community even when people within that community may be masking judgement. David, in talking about a

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[16] See page 3 of this chapter.

particular child sex offender who he viewed as 'lowest of the low', similarly stated: 'I'm not going up to him and say "aw you dirty old sod" you know "children piddler" and all the rest of it. That's not how I am'. David is relatively open here about his feelings of judgement (despite denying elsewhere in his interview that he judged anyone, again demonstrating this conflict between judgement and the desire for equality) but also maintains he would not mistreat this individual. However, he does indicate that others would be 'open about their dislike'. It is unclear what he meant by this but he does not mention any abuse so he may simply be referring to the consequences already discussed of nominal ostracisation.

The only time that there seemed to be real issues as a result of judgement was when it came to group work. As Frank (convicted of the rape of an adult woman) stated: 'they want us to sit in groups with child molesters and we'll no'. This unwillingness to deal with child sex offenders in this context is certainly a real negative consequence of judgement. It could be significant that this reluctance was only discussed in relation to groupwork. As discussed above[17], it is a norm of this community not to talk about offences. This is in order to avoid judging others. The less known the better. Completing groupwork makes this impossible. It is harder to avoid judgement when offences are being discussed openly and in depth as required for groupwork. This can make groupwork tense as the feeling of being judged becomes harder to shake. Several participants (David, Dennis, Elliot, Frank and Gareth) described issues with groupwork on the basis of judgement. Again though, while participants described their discomfort in groupwork in these settings they did not actually describe abuse as a result, only an unwillingness to interact. As will be discussed below[18], avoiding interaction with others is not a breach of community norms. In fact, it is a valid strategy to ensure norms are followed – conflict can be avoided by limiting interaction. No conflict is

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[17] See page 3 of this chapter.
[18] See page 14 of this chapter.

described here, only the reluctance of adult sex offenders to spend time with child sex offenders. This is not therefore, in breach of community norms.

There is support in existing literature for the limited impact of judgement in this setting. Ievins and Crewe (2015) had several participants state that they were less likely to be friends with someone whose victims were children, though they said they would continue to be polite and not abusive (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 494-5). The limited consequences of judgement are due to the desire of this group to keep their time in prison as peaceful as possible. Conflict is avoided to ensure peace is maintained. Any judgement felt cannot therefore result in conflict within the community. This would be a breach of community standards that would not be permissible. The presence of judgement is one of the challenges faced in developing a sex offender prisoner community but not allowing internal judgment to result in outward conflict allows this community to form in spite of this difficulty. The prisoner community is therefore a complex environment where feelings of judgement are continually in conflict with the desire to create a peaceful community of safety and acceptance.

Why Does Judgement Persist At All?

In spite of the desire of this population to create a community of acceptance, judgement still persists. It is worth considering why this is: why is it so difficult to maintain the ideal community standard of no judgement? Winston stated what he felt was the reason for judgement among sex offenders in prison: 'it's to make them feel better. It takes all the attention and the aggravation away from them and it helps them get over whatever hatreds that they hold about their own charges and their selves'. This statement identifies two reasons for judgement: firstly, as a coping mechanism to deal with their feelings about own offending; and secondly, to deflect attention away from themselves and their own offending.

Hudson (2005) identified judgement of others as a coping mechanism used by sex offenders to minimise their own offending. This was also identified as an explanation of judgement by Elliot, Hal, Jon, Kevin, Peter, Tom and Winston. Elliot stated: 'it seems to stem mainly from people's attempts to minimise their own, minimise the impact of their own offending rather than any sort of genuine basis'. As discussed above[19], there did seem to be several examples of participants using judgment to minimise their own behaviour. For example, David drew a distinction between contact and non-contact offences, admitting only to non-contact himself. Gareth judged those who denied their guilt, being an admitter himself. Gareth also seemed to draw at times on rape stereotypes of extremes of violence to minimise his own, non-violent, offences. Many distinguished themselves as having offended against adults rather than children. With so many potential bases for judgement existing, it is possible in many different ways for people to minimise their own offending in comparison with others. Being able to make themselves feel better about their offending through judging others is one reason that judgement among this population is difficult to eradicate despite the conflicting desire to create an accepting community.

Jon also discussed minimisation as a reason for judgement. He stated: 'You try to minimise it and you try to – you know? Because you don't want people to see what's in there. You don't want people to see – for want of a better… – how much of a bastard you've been your whole life'. This quote also relates to the idea of deflecting attention from yourself by judging others. These ideas can certainly overlap. Deflecting attention from the judger was identified as a motive for judgement by David, Michael, Ray and Winston. As Ray discussed: 'in here it's more about, it's trying to deflect as much heat off theirselves as they can'. Trying to avoid attention has been identified as a strategy for coping with prison life in other studies

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[19] See page 5 of this chapter.

(Schwabe 2005; Ricciardelli and Spencer 2014; Tewksbury 2012). However, these studies were all in the context of mixed prison populations not segregated sex offenders. The present study can add to these findings that this need to deflect attention persists even in a setting where all have the same status as a sex offender.

Peter believed that anything found outside prison can also be found inside, so if people are judgemental outside then they are judgemental inside. This can provide another potential reason that judgement persists in prison among sex offenders. These individuals have been exposed to the same views about sex offenders as the rest of society. If this group are vilified by society, this is not something that has escaped the attention of those who have been labelled a sex offender themselves. Therefore, genuine negative feelings might exist towards others in custody despite their own status. Kevin discussed that his crime was viewed particularly negatively because many people in prison were fathers so judged him particularly harshly for having taken the life of a child. He explained negative views people held of him as stemming from genuine negative feelings rather than any of the reasons discussed above. Genuine negative feelings about the offences of others are also difficult to eradicate. This is why the community norm must be described as "do not act on judgement" rather than "do not judge others". However strong the desire to create an accepting community is, it cannot negate ingrained hostilities felt about other sex offenders. The best the community can accomplish is to ensure these hostilities are not manifested in any way that creates conflict. This maintains the peace of the community and allows some comfort to be derived from the safety and (limited) acceptance it offers.

Avoiding Conflict through Limiting Interaction

I keep myself to myself - Stevie

Avoiding conflict emerged strongly from this research. Clear efforts were made by prisoners to maintain positive relationships, or at least avoid negative relationships. Many participants discussed trying to get on with others, many actually using the word "try": 'I try and treat everyone as best I can' (Ron); 'most of us are doing a long time in here and we try to get on with each other' (Andy); 'you try to get on with everybody 'cause we're all in here for the similar thing' (Brett); 'I try and get on with everybody as best I can' (Tom); 'to make my sentence easier I get on with people here, and I try not to judge them' (Vince). This demonstrates a conscious effort to create a comfortable prison environment based on a safe and accepting prisoner community. This includes efforts to avoid conflict with other offenders. One specific tactic adopted by some community members to avoid conflict is keeping a degree of distance from other prisoners. It was common to hear participants express the view that they kept other prisoners at arms' length.

Individuals can be as engaged with others in the sex offender prisoner community as they wish, as long as no interaction is creating conflict. They can create strong friendships with many prisoners or they can keep to themselves. All that is required is that conflict is avoided. David was one of the group who preferred to keep to himself. He stated: 'I've always been someone who kept my own counsel anyway. The last thing I'm going to sit down and do is talk about my life, etc. etc. to anybody'. Other participants made similar statements: 'I get on reasonably well with them [other prisoners]. I don't really have any bother with them. I just keep myself to myself get my head down and get on with it. Stay out of bother' (Kevin); I don't tend to have conflict with anybody but that's because I tend to keep myself to myself' (Elliot); 'I'm viewed alright I think. Not particularly well known. So I just keep myself to myself' (Ollie). Kevin, Elliot and Ollie all seemed to directly suggest that keeping their distance from others avoids conflict. This demonstrates that maintaining distance can be done for this purpose and with success and none of these participants described particular conflict with

others. In terms of avoiding conflict to create a safe and accepting sex offender prisoner community, limiting interaction with others is an appropriate strategy.

Stevie and Dennis also claimed they kept to themselves: 'I keep myself to myself. They'll tell you that. I stay more behind my door than anything' (Stevie); 'I try to keep myself to myself' (Dennis). Dennis uses the word 'try' here, again showing a conscious effort to maintain this behaviour. This indicates that Dennis has identified this as a strategy to avoid conflict with others. However, in spite of these claims of maintaining distance from others, Stevie and Dennis described friendships they had formed in prison. They both spoke of a bond with others based on age, with both of them being older participants and spending time with others of a similar age. However, Stevie did qualify that these are 'not strong friendships'. Similarly, the participants in Liebling and Arnold (2012) described their relationships with other prisoners as 'cautious and limited' and were guarded around each other. Cohen and Taylor (1972) found that people generally made few friends and Crewe (2007) found that offenders differentiate between 'transient' acquaintance relationships and a small number of trusted friends. This is supported by the findings of this study. As well as Stevie stating friendships were 'not strong', Vince stated 'I've not got any friends, I've got acquaintances' and Kevin made a similar observation: 'See a lot of them call themselves friends or pals in here, best friends. But I don't see them like that. They're acquaintances'. Nevertheless, even limited relationships like those described – for example Dennis describing a group of men he could play dominoes or pool with – can alleviate some of the pains of imprisonment and make the prisoner community more comfortable. However, keeping a degree of distance from other prisoners is not counter-productive to community formation. Deep bonds of friendship are not required within a community. In the case of this community, as its purpose is to derive comfort from safety and acceptance, what is essential is a lack of conflict. This lack of conflict can be ensured through distance as well as through friendship.

The chief value of this community is peace. If conflict is avoided through lack of interaction, this does not jeopardise this peace. Engagement with other prisoners is tolerated to any degree, from total avoidance to close friendship, so long as no interactions are hostile. There is no need for the deeper bonds of friendship to create the limited sense of comfort that this community provides. Brint (2001) developed a typology of community that demonstrated that the strength of the social ties within a community can vary. Some have deep bonds of friendship while others have less meaningful bonds. One example of community Brint mentions are 'virtual communities' that can exist online and be made up of, for example, 'fans of the same singing group'. The bonds between these fans will not reach the levels of intimate friendship but this does not negate their status as a 'community'. Glaser (2001) also believes that the 'content of social relations' should be excluded from definitions of community. His typology includes 'producing communities' in which the commonality felt is based on work. Bonds felt between colleagues often do not reach the level of friendship but they can still form academic communities based on the subject matter of their work. In the same way, the sex offender prisoner community may not form friendships. This does not negate their status as a community as solidarity still exists based on their shared identity and a code of conduct is still followed. Solidarity can be felt without friendship. This is sufficient for a community that is defined by shared identity and shared norms.

The avoidance of conflict was not the only reason for keeping distance from other prisoners. Lack of trust is a further potential reason. David was one participant who claimed to keep to himself and trust issues were very evident throughout his interview. Limiting contact with others is also a tactic to avoid being talked about: 'I keep out of people's faces. The less people see me, the better. The less chance they've got to talk about me' (Ray). Ray talked about people being bullied in prison and felt this was less likely the less contact he had with others. This is therefore a type of conflict avoidance: not avoiding arguments and fights but

avoiding becoming a target for bullies. Ray also described keeping his distance because he cannot be friends with other sex offenders outside of prison so felt there was no point forming friendships while inside. This view was also taken by the sex offenders studied by Mann (2006). This was raised by others in this study (Charlie, Kevin, David and Ray) and presents a barrier to forming friendships. Lee, Ollie, Vince and Will kept their distance from others due to feeling unlike others in custody. Vince stated: 'I can't really accept friendship in here, you know? I can't really say. I'm still critical of people in here. I live in here but I still know some of these guys, I know some of these guys want to go out and offend again'. He described not really fitting in with those around him: 'I live with people that've got a twisted mind and they seem to embrace sexual offending and joke with each other about it in here. I still struggle with it feeling the jacket doesn't fit with me'. Will was the most striking example of keeping to himself. He painted a very lonely picture of prison, stating that he did not interact with anyone at all. He said that this was due to feeling that he was unlike others, could not trust them and did not belong in prison. However, even when these negative reasons are the basis for keeping distance from others this does still serve to avoid conflict. In such cases, the absence of conflict is merely a by-product of the self-imposed isolation rather than its purpose. While participants keeping to themselves is negative in terms of forming friendships it can avoid conflict which is enough for creating the safety and acceptance that is needed for a comfortable prisoner community. Those who are able to form friendships are perhaps more comfortable in prison than those that do not but this is an additional comfort that is not viewed as being a necessary component for membership of the prisoner community. Prisoners may find comfort from friends in the same way that others find comfort from their prison job (e.g. Frank, Ron, Tom) but these are additional comforts beyond those provided by the prisoner community which provides comfort only at a most basic level.

Conclusion

Knowing that a long time will be spent in prison, prisoners try as best they can to make themselves comfortable. Forming a peaceful community that provides safety and acceptance is part of finding this comfort. There are two essential elements to this community: shared identity and shared norms. This chapter has considered the shared norms within the community. There is one overarching concept upon which all of these norms are based – avoiding conflict. When creating a community of peace is the desired objective, conflict must be avoided. A number of norms have been shown to exist with the goal of avoiding conflict. Firstly, community members are compliant in prison. This involves following the prison rules and any instructions given to them by staff. Complaints are tolerated (whether against staff or other prisoners) but rebellion is not. Nothing is tolerated by this community that compromises the peace they seek to create. This means maintaining positive relationships with staff and not jeopardising any privileges. In this sense the sex offender prisoner community seems to have very different inmate values from those established in existing literature (e.g. Sykes 1958; Ricciardelli 2014). When studying mainstream populations research has shown that 'grassing', which complaints might be considered, is not tolerated. Furthermore, positive relationships with staff seem to be discouraged among mainstream populations whereas in a sex offender only hall it is negative relationships with staff that will draw consternation from other prisoners. These differences in inmate values demonstrate the necessity in examining sex offenders specifically as their prison experience is in many ways different. This research is able to go some way to addressing this gap by considering, as this chapter has, the code of conduct that exists among this population in HMP Glenochil.

A second shared norm of this community is do not talk about offences. This includes asking others about offences or speaking too openly about your own. This norm serves the purpose of avoiding conflict by reducing the presence of judgement. If offences remain unknown then

judgement is more easily avoided. Even when the offence is known, as long as it is not something being consistently discussed, it is something that community members can push to the back of their minds in interactions with others. This norm is therefore very related to the third norm of the sex offender prisoner community – do not act on judgement. What the sex offender prisoner community really desire is to be entirely free of judgement in order to create a truly accepting community. This is why many participants made claims, demonstrated to be untrue throughout their interviews, that the community was equal. Examples of judgement were identified in almost all interviews and a number of bases for this judgement were identified. These bases for judgement also operated in some cases as distancing techniques utilised to make individuals feel better about their own offending by comparing themselves with others. For example, the rapist who uses the fact his victim was an adult or the child sex offender who uses the fact he was never physically violent. These findings add to existing research by Hudson (2005) and were able to contribute one new distancing technique – 'acceptance of responsibility'. While judgement was still plainly present among this population – in part so that it could be used as a distancing technique – the consequences of this judgement were found to be minimal. Judgement did not result in ostracisation or abuse as it does when sex offenders are mixed with mainstream (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012). Judgement is kept contained within the minds of community members; it does not result in any external consequences for those being judged. This determination not to act on judgement is an important community norm. Only when judgement is ostensibly absent can an accepting community exist. With the remaining presence of judgement, even internal, a truly accepting community cannot be said to exist. But this pseudo-acceptance is still more than granted to sex offenders when mixed with mainstream or released back into society. It is the best the sex offender prisoner community can accomplish while internal judgment still persists.

A further issue discussed in this chapter is avoiding conflict through limiting interaction. This is not a norm in itself as all community members are not required to keep to themselves. Any degree of relationship is tolerated within this community so long as it is not one of conflict. Rather than a norm, limiting interaction is a means adopted by some of ensuring they respect the underlying motivation for these community norms – avoiding conflict. For some people, the only way they can avoid conflict with others is to keep away from them. This is respected within the sex offender prisoner community and these individuals, while a lesser part of the community due to their choice to largely remove themselves from it, are not excluded from the community when they do wish to engage. They will not face any negativity from community members unlike those who clash with staff, talk about offences or abuse others. Keeping away from others may seem contrary to community formation but, in relation to the sex offender prisoner community, it is not. Like many other communities, the sex offender prisoner community does not require deep bonds of friendship (Brint 2001, Glaser 2001). Solidarity is required but this is developed through shared experiences that relate to the shared sex offender identity rather than on more sentimental social ties. Solidarity can exist without friendship. Limiting interaction is therefore a valid strategy for avoiding conflict which respects the spirit of the sex offender prisoner community to create a space of safety and acceptance.

Chapter 6: Desiring Better but Fearing Worse

Sex offenders in prison experience a complex environment where they suffer many pains of imprisonment[20] but can also find a place of safety and acceptance within the sex offender prisoner community. In the community outside of prison, the pains of imprisonment are relieved but new pains of release can be experienced as a result of the stigmatising nature of sexual offence convictions. Expectations of release are very negative, with significant fears about stigmatisation they might experience and a sense of hopelessness about achieving reintegration. This leaves this population in a difficult position where they desire better than their challenging prison environment, but they fear worse than their peaceful prisoner community. Coming through strongly from participants was the sense that in prison they were trying to better themselves and move on with their lives after offending. For many this was coupled with a strong desire to reintegrate and build lives for themselves out of prison. However, sitting alongside these desires were strong fears about release. These fears can become overwhelming and when fears about release are contrasted with the known peace of the sex offender prisoner community, sex offenders can become too comfortable in prison and lose their desire for release. The sex offender prisoner community might in this sense be considered negative if it reduces motivation to reintegrate. The peaceful community of safety and acceptance offered inside prison is such a sharp contrast to the hostile community this group expect to face on release that some find this too difficult and prefer the known pain of imprisonment to the unknown pains of release. This chapter will consider the desire participants had to move on from prison and some attempts that had been made to further

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[20] See Chapter 2, page 14 and the discussion in Chapter 4 of some of the particular issues sex offenders are faced with in custody.

this desire then consider their fears about release. It will then consider how these fears can overwhelm the desire to move on, making prison seem like a preferable option.

Trying to Move On

There was a strong desire from many participants to try to move on and create new lives for themselves outside of prison. Trying to move on seemed to be a key goal of many participants. Fifteen participants expressed a strong desire for a life outside of prison. Andy stated: 'I want to have a steady life again. I want ta make sure… I want ta make sure I'm able to have a steady life and I want ta make sure people understand why I done it and try and get on with my life again and be happy'. Winston was also determined to move on from his conviction and build a life outside:

> What drives me is that fact that I want to go out and show that I have changed and to try and show that once we commit an offence we're not always that same offender. We can change. We can move on with our life and make a contributing factor to society. We can actually bring something decent to society.

There were various motivations behind this desire to move on. For some this was a desire for a life outside of prison, where they did not feel they belonged or fit in (Ollie, Vince). Many participants wanted to be able to have relationships with their family outside of prison (e.g. Lee, Andy, Winston, Ned). Familial support is one thing that the prisoner community cannot replicate while issues of trust and judgement persist in prison (Crewe 2011; Liebling and Arnold 2012). Those who had an existing support network outside of prison drew on this in discussing their attempts to move on. Family was a significant motivating factor. Andy, Ned and Winston were strongly motivated by their families. Andy stated that this was the reason for his motivation to make changes to avoid reoffending: 'I want to see my family. And that's my big changing point. I want to be with my family before – this may sound sad – before any

of them dies, or any of them pass away and that's, I think, how I have changed to make myself where I am today'. Ned discussed his family throughout his interview and how he felt he had let them down. His dedication to avoiding reoffending was based on fear of OLR sentences as these would mean never seeing his daughter again:

> I'd never heard of this OLR, life restriction order and things like that, never ever heard of it. And I was put through the process of getting one of those, I was put through the process. And it kind of scared me. I wouldn't say kind of, it did scare me. It really scared me because I says to myself, 'if I ever end up with one of them I may never ever be able to be a father again to my daughter'.

Winston also described his desire to continue to build relationships with family members, a process he had started during his sentence: 'I need to be outside with my family. And building these relationships and showing everybody that I have changed'. When there was no support outside, life outside of prison can seem more daunting. Jon was the most negative participant about the chances of reintegration and he did discuss his lack of existing support network and the difficulty in building a new one on release. Ned appreciated the importance of support outside of prison, expressing that this motivated change:

> I find that if I didn't have anyone on the other side of the wall that showed they really cared then I'd quite possibly turn round and say to myself , well if there's no one out there willing to talk to me or that really cares then what's the point of me really wanting to change. And I think it's helpful that people have got someone at the other side of the wall because you know? as I say without that, it could be quite tough. It could make life a lot tougher.

Tewksbury and Copes (2012) found similarly among their participants – incarcerated sex offenders close to release – that the support of family played a key role in having positive

expectations about re-entry. They found that: 'The focus on family encompassed both a typically strong desire to reunite with loved ones and to have family members provide practical and emotional assistance in a successful reentry process' (Tewksbury and Copes 2012: 113). Having this assistance and support can make the reentry process a lot less daunting. When these positive relationships outside of prison are missing, sex offenders might find life outside prison too difficult to face. The community bonds inside prison, while not so strong as familial bonds or those of close friendship, provide some sort of comfort to members. When this is contrasted with a complete lack of any social ties outside of prison, prison can come to be seen as preferable. The weaker relationships offered by the sex offender prisoner community are preferable to no relationships at all. As Richman and Leary (2009) discuss: 'when people are unable to reestablish a relationship that has been damaged or destroyed by rejection, they usually seek acceptance and belonging from other people' (371). This is what sex offenders at HMP Glenochil are able to do – they can use the social ties of the sex offender prisoner community to replace the social ties they previously held with friends and family outside. This community offers them the 'acceptance and belonging' that they are denied elsewhere.

One principal way that participants tried to move on from offending was by trying to gain understanding about themselves or their offending. Thirteen participants discussed this approach. Some felt they had gained understanding, others viewed themselves as being in the process of doing so and others hoped to explore this later (for example upon getting a place on the treatment programme for sex offenders). Tom was one of the participants who felt they had gained an understanding of themselves while in prison: 'being in prison has really given me an opportunity to understand myself, understand what my life is and what it's about'. Tom felt that this was useful to him in coping when he faces problems now:

> I like the analogy of the ocean, you know? Storm waves above the ocean. Down at the ocean floor it's peaceful and still. That's kinda like your mind. So because I understand my mind, I know what it does and to watch it so rather than get caught up in the storm I can simply go down to the depths and watch the storm.

He explained that he has found a better way to live in prison. He described a more peaceful existence without violence or anger. Winston was particularly reflective about how he had increased his understanding through participation in programmes and how this has allowed him to feel more positively about himself and his chances of building a life for himself outside prison. He stated:

> I first came to prison I viewed myself as just completely what the public viewed me as. A horrible, nasty, dirty, deviated person. Where now, yes I have committed those offences, but I'm a different person, I'm a stronger person, I am a person in fact. I'm not this pervert, this monster, this beast that everybody has to fear. I have found my emotions, I have found what makes me human, what makes me me. And I couldn't have done that without being in prison and doing programmes.

From this new understanding of himself, and more positive view, he became committed to the idea that he could contribute positively to society and became more determined to prove this to people outside and move on from his offending. Vince also felt he now understood himself better. He felt that he now understood what had led to his offending and understood his triggers. Similarly, Andy stated: 'I feel like the prison system has helped me understand where I went wrong, where I can go wrong, what could go wrong in the future'. Both Andy and Vince, as well as Jon, Ned and Winston, viewed programmes as particularly helpful in this regard. Jon discussed having used his time in prison to better understand his offending, describing this as 'the most important thing'. However, he presented with a lot more

negativity than other participants. While he felt his understanding would help him avoid reoffending, he remained hopeless about the chances of successful reintegration. Jon tried to better himself by gaining understanding, hoping to move on from his offending. However, his experiences of release were so negative that he now believes successful reintegration is impossible and has resigned himself to a life in prison. Jon is the clearest example of the difficulties of release becoming so overwhelming that the desire to move on dwindles.

Eight participants explicitly expressed a "just get on with it" sentiment about their time in prison (David, Lee, Kevin, Ned, Peter, Tom, Vince and Winston). There are some with this "just get on with it" frame of mind who simply go through the motions of what the prison wants them to do. This compliance without real commitment is their way of getting on with things. They just do what the prison wants them to do even if they feel they get nothing from it. This does not preclude them from community membership as all that is required for this is avoiding conflict. However, some who expressed this "just get on with it" sentiment were genuinely trying to move on in positive way. As Winston discussed: 'it's my job to get on with my sentence and focus on how to show people that I've changed'. He felt that some of the most significant changes he had made related to his view of women. He stated that he previously viewed women as just for his needs but now views them as people with their own thoughts and feelings. Nine participants explicitly stated that they made conscious decisions to make changes to their lives in prison to move on from their offences. For Tom this was particularly strong. He described having changed his whole life and way of thinking and felt himself a totally different person from who he used to be. He and Jon were the most striking examples of changed men. For Tom this was in a very positive sense, having accepted prison with serenity and built a life he feels is better than the one he had previously. Jon was much more negative. While there remained no signs of the violent life he once led, his acceptance of prison life came with resignation, not serenity. One significant difference between these

two participants is that Tom did not change in order to reintegrate, he did it to find peace in himself. Jon held a desire to reintegrate. Those who make efforts to change themselves in order to try to build a new and better life outside of prison face a harder challenge as the success of this is measured by external attainments such as finding a job, a relationship, making new friends outside, etc. all of which is very difficult on release from prison – particularly for sex offenders (Harris 2015). Further, as some participants were on life sentences or OLRs there may never be a chance to try and obtain these goals if they spend their life in prison. Positive changes in these cases may then lead to a feeling of depression or hopelessness when no reward for these changes is available. This is the situation Jon found himself in. In these cases, when successful reintegration seems impossible, it may seem easier to resign yourself to a life in prison. Jon had done just this, no longer attending parole hearings, giving up on chances for release. He had experience of life outside of prison, having experience in open prison with time spent in the community. He found this experience so challenging that he no longer believes that reintegration can really be accomplished for him. Inside prison he can be part of the sex offender prisoner community. Outside of prison Jon did not feel any sense of community, describing a lonely experience due to his strict restrictions and the lack of trust he felt others put in him. Any community is better than none at all, meaning that for people like Jon with no external support network, the sex offender prisoner community offers something unavailable elsewhere. Everyone wants a place to belong: '"the need to belong" or "the need for acceptance" dominates much of the human interpersonal landscape' (Carvallo and Pelham 2006: 96). This sense of belonging is offered by the sex offender prisoner community. While prison is still not a pleasant environment if a sense of belonging cannot be obtained outside of prison, then prison, with all of its challenges, becomes preferable.

The desire to move on, and attempts made in this regard, operate in parallel with the fears about release from prison that will be discussed in the next section. Participants demonstrated both a desire to move on and a fear of what this might bring them. These conflicting feelings add to the complexity of the experience of imprisonment. These fears about reintegration can become overwhelming and result in the desire to move on fading and prison becoming viewed as the preferable option when it provides a peaceful community of safety and acceptance that participants fear will never be available outside.

Fear of Release

In here it's ok. The hardest hurdle is walking out that door – Frank

There was a fear expressed by many participants of community reintegration. There are two main strands to this: fear of stigmatisation from the community; and fear of recall. Participants feared that stigmatisation in the community could lead to isolation or abuse which could impact on their ability to reintegrate and create new lives for themselves. While some presented an "us vs them" mentality where the public were concerned, most participants expressed a desire to fit in within the community again. Fear of recall was based on the perception of many participants that licence conditions for sex offenders on release were very strict and could be difficult to follow. Many shared stories of recalls based on what they perceived as flimsy reasons and took the view that social workers outside prison did not really want to help sex offenders reintegrate, they just wanted them returned to prison. These fears can become so strong that it impacts on the motivation to reintegrate. Prison is viewed as easier due to the peaceful sex offender prisoner community which offers this population some comfort. This comfort is in extreme contrast to the life they expect outside.

There was a view expressed by several participants that on release from prison is when the real challenges would be faced, not while in custody. This meant that for many in custody

their main concern was not their present experiences in the prison environment, but anticipated difficulties on release. The perceived risk of recall and the negative position this places people in within the prison (e.g. having to start programmes from scratch) led some participants to express the view that they would rather just stay in prison until their licence was up. Frank, for example stated: 'I'm no really interested in parole. They can shove parole up their arse for all I care because I've still got 3 and a half years licence so I get parole that's another year on licence outside. Where the hard work's no in here… the hard work is when you step outside.' However, this view that prison is easier was not always based on fear of recall – some participants viewed prison as easier than the community even after licence conditions were over due to the stigmatisation they anticipated facing in the community. Stanley, for example, felt 'it's easier to live in here than it is outside', explaining that: 'because they keep harassing us we think well it's better to come back inside… We just say, well we get more peace inside'. Jon anticipated stigmatisation from social workers outside who he believed would place no trust in him on release: 'I've stopped going to parole hearings and stuff. I've just gave up. This is going to be a life sentence for me. Because there's no point going out to that'. Jon had resigned himself to life in prison. Though he could not be described as happy in prison, the hardships he had faced outside were felt to him to be a worse experience. This idea of prison being preferable to life outside has not been found in the existing literature. This is therefore a new consideration that can contribute to the body of literature on community reintegration for sex offenders, as well as to the literature on the pains of imprisonment as it would seem that, for some of these participants, the pains of imprisonment are preferable to the anticipated pains of community reintegration. The stigmatisation anticipated from those outside of prison is a key motivation in developing a community in prison of safety and acceptance. The sex offender prisoner community offers the safety and acceptance that is in direct contrast to the hostility they expect to face outside.

Additionally, these concerns about reintegration can operate to create solidarity among sex offenders in custody to help form the sex offender prisoner community in the same way as the challenges discussed in chapter 4.

Stigmatisation

It was widely accepted by participants that they face judgement from the public. Research has demonstrated that this is the case, with the public demonstrating very hostile attitudes to sex offenders (Willis, Levenson and Ward 2010; Kernsmith, Craun and Foster 2009; King and Roberts 2017). This, as with judgement from mainstream discussed above[21], can help develop a shared identity among sex offenders which can allow a community to form. This community becomes particularly important in creating a place where this population feel safe and accepted, something they do not expect from life outside of prison. All participants except Will and Glen, to varying degrees, reflected on judgement faced from those outside prison. Andy stated: 'I think all the world thinks we're dangerous men… evil men'. Brett believed he was viewed by the public as a 'scumbag'. Similarly, Michael used the word 'scum' to describe how he was viewed. Kevin addressed the hatred he believed the public felt in saying: 'They want to hang me from the highest tree they can find'. Stevie also believed sex offenders were hated and discussed some of the consequences of this: 'Oh they hate us for what we've done. We know that. They shout names at us outside, don't want us in their area either'. This abuse and lack of acceptance after release was a significant fear for many in custody who wanted to fit back into the community. This is what heightens the desire to create a place in prison where they are safe from such abuse and where they can find acceptance. When Tom discussed the view the public took of sex offenders he placed sex offenders within the victim category entirely when he made the following comparison:

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[21] See Chapter 4, page 53.

Interviewer: How do you feel you're viewed by people outside prison?

Tom: In the same way that the Jews were viewed by the Nazis.

This is in contrast with many other participants who had sympathy for the public view and believed that, at least to a degree, sex offenders deserved to be hated. There was some understanding shown towards the hostile views of the public. Winston, for example, stated:

I think on the outside we're viewed as in a very very, and rightly so, negative and bad manner. Because what we've done, the offences we've committed are horrendous. Any offence that's committed is horrendous, more so for sex offences. Especially when it's against women who are vulnerable or whether it be males who are vulnerable or male children, female children. And it is, it's disgusting and rightly so the public view as, well the public view us as perverts, deviants, and people who shouldn't exist. And yeah I would agree with that to a certain degree.

Brett also spoke of deserving stigmatisation and Glen accepted his label as a 'beast' stating that he was not bothered by this because he should not have done what he did – both Brett and Glen expressed views that sex offenders had brought ill treatment on themselves. Stevie was sympathetic to the mistrust of the public, believing that after such an offence had been committed once, it was reasonable for the public to believe it might be repeated. Ned was also able to view sexual offences from the perspective of non-offenders by considering how he would feel if his daughter was victimised: 'society like to protect their own and why not? And I'd very much say you know? We're the lowest of the low. I mean I've got family of my own. I've got a daughter. And I would say that for the crime I've committed if it had happened to my daughter I'd be thinking the same way as society'. Winston was also able to think in this way, imagining his outrage if his nieces or nephews were ever victimised. Jon discussed

several times throughout his interview his understanding of the mistrust and hostility directed towards him. This seemed a particular source of anguish for him:

> I can understand why people are afraid. I can understand the fear that comes with it. I can understand the reluctance of people to trust me. That's what does make it so difficult. As I say, it's easy now for me to just sit back and say because of the offences I've committed, I'm just going to spend the rest of my life in prison because I don't feel comfortable in the community.

His sympathy towards the views of the public seemed to add a layer of complexity to his experience of stigmatisation. The community formed in prison offers a sharp contrast from the stigmatisation faced outside, providing some comfort for this population that 'don't feel comfortable in the community [outside]'.

It was fairly common among participants that a positive self-view was retained in spite of their offending. Participants were able to think of themselves not as bad people, but as good people who did a bad thing. This is known as 'reintegrative shame' (LeBel et al. 2008) and is more positively associated with desistance than 'stigmatising shame' where an individual views themselves as a 'discredited person facing an unaccepting world' (Goffman 1963:19). Ned, Ron, Tom, Vince and Winston all expressed the view that they still had good inside them: 'Although I've committed a horrendous crime... yes it's a really really bad crime, but I know that inside myself there's still a lot of good, there's still a lot of good. And I just need time to prove it' (Ned); 'because you done something wrong, your life is not all wrong' (Ron); 'I still think I've got a good personality and I think I can offer a lot to people that are in my life. That's the reason I think I've still got family support and people still care about me' (Vince). For these individuals, demonstrating to the world that they are good people in spite of their offending is a significant challenge due to the very negative views the public have been

shown to hold towards sex offenders and their re-entry into the community outside prison (Willis, Levenson and Ward 2010; Kernsmith, Craun and Foster 2009; King and Roberts 2017). The stigmatising nature of their sex offender status is difficult to shake. Participants such as Jon, Vince and Brett who had all spent time in the community on licence have already found this to be the case. Their negative experiences can lead to the particularly negative sentiment expressed by Jon that there is no point to seeking parole when a meaningful life outside of prison seems impossible. The comparative lack of stigmatisation within the sex offender prisoner community can make life in prison seem like an easier option when contrasted with this negativity from the community outside.

Andy discussed that the judgement of others has made him stronger and he feels confident in going outside and standing up for himself. Similarly Winston believed the negative views of others have added to his determination to show people he has changed:

> it makes me more determined to go out and, yes I have committed these horrible offences, but my time in prison has changed me. And that's what drives me is that fact that I want to go out and show that I have changed and to try and show that once we commit an offence we're not always that same offender. We can change. We can move on with our life and make a contributing factor to society. We can actually bring something decent to society.

The optimism of Andy and Winston contrasts dramatically with Jon who came across as completely drained from so long trying to prove himself. All three of these men are facing indeterminate sentences (Winston and Jon are on life sentences and Andy is an OLR) so this does not necessarily prevent optimism or cause pessimism. However, while Winston and Andy had spent a substantial period of time in prison (13 years and 8 years respectively), Jon had been in for 24 years. It could be that the more time spent in prison, the easier it is to

become negative about the chances of reintegration. Furthermore, Jon already had experience of release from prison during time spent in open prison. This only served to increase his sense of hopelessness at ever reintegrating. Tewksbury (2012) found feelings of hopelessness among the sex offenders he interviewed to be one of the consequences of internalising stigma:

> sex offenders also report that knowing how they are publicly perceived and labeled leads them to feel as if their lives are hopeless. This sense of resignation includes depression and sadness. Realizing that their lives are restricted and their opportunities to pursue goals, engage in 'normal' relationships and social lives and to 'simply be able to live my life' are severely constrained as a result of both formal, legal restrictions accompanying sex offender registration and the informally imposed restrictions connected to their stigmatized status, sex offenders express a sense of hopelessness and depression (2012: 615).

Jon was the most obvious example of such hopelessness in this research but there was often a sense of pessimism from participants about the ability to reintegrate successfully. This is problematic as past research has shown hope to be an important factor in relation to desistance (Farmer, McAlinden and Maruna 2015; LeBel et al. 2008). Negativity about being able to reintegrate outside of prison creates a need for the sex offender prisoner community from which support can be drawn and some acceptance can be found. This community offers a way of coping with fears about reintegration. Among people similarly stigmatised, these individuals can find a place where they feel a sense of belonging. This allows this population to derive some comfort in prison from the community they form to offer a counterpart to the stigmatisation they face elsewhere.

The view that all sex offenders are viewed as one was expressed by ten participants – Brett, Charlie, David, Frank, Gareth, Jon, Michael, Ollie, Ron and Tom. David stated: 'the public perception of sex offender is just one big label. If you're labelled a sex offender then that's what you are. Whether it's the most minor or the most major, you're still a sex offender in their eyes. And not to be trusted. Or they'll try and kick the hell out you'. These participants believed all sex offenders were "tarred with the same brush" and all viewed as equal to the worst of those to whom this label attached. This forces a common identity on all sex offenders whether they feel this is fair or not. As David stated: 'the perception the public have of sex offenders is that we're all as bad as each other and there's not one of us you know have any redeemable feature'. The belief that sex offenders are irredeemable has been discussed across the literature as a common view taken of sex offenders (Hudson 2005, Quinn et al 2004, Gavin 2005). Many participants reflected on how life outside prison would be more difficult because of this stigmatised status. Andy stated: 'I feel like it's going to be hard to get a steady life, get a happy life out there with everybody judging you all the time and stuff like that'. He mentioned finding work and finding a house as particular concerns. When the topic arose he also expressed concern about developing romantic relationships outside. Brett and Ray also mentioned difficulties with work outside and Brett spoke of previous relationship problems that resulted from his offending. Vince had also experienced problems with both work and relationships on his previous release from prison due to his sex offender status. These common concerns provide a means of bonding the sex offender prisoner community in the same way as the challenges discussed in chapter 4. Furthermore, they serve to make the community outside of prison appear more daunting. While in prison, these concerns do not exist. It is therefore the expectation of these difficulties, juxtaposed with the comfort these individuals are able to find from the sex offender prisoner community, which can make prison seem a preferable option to life outside.

Isolation and victimisation were the two manifestations of stigmatisation that participants feared would face them on release from prison. Isolation as a result of being ostracised from the community was particularly feared by Charlie, Dennis and Gareth. In Charlie's case his fear of being isolated was related to his fear of being victimised. He expected himself to feel trapped inside alone as a result of his fear of victimisation if he went outside: 'Nobody to talk to, nobody to get on with. Stuck behind my door just for thinking about what'll happen to me if I go outside if people find out I'm a sex offender and what it's going to be like in the community'. The isolation he expected was therefore of a self-inflicted nature rather than the community refusing to engage with him. A lack of support network outside can add to the fear of being isolated if there are no friends or family to interact with. This can make the idea of being ostracised from society all the more daunting as there is no one to turn to at all. Michael was one of the participants who did not have anyone outside of prison. He stated: 'Well the only ones who were in contact were my immediate family, they're all now dead. The rest of the family have just shut the door and don't want to know. Eh… friends… Well, nearly 20 years so they'll have moved on with their life'. Similarly Gareth felt he was left with no one to turn to outside and in his case this was something that he seemed particularly affected by: 'I've got nothing left now, I've got no friends – that's my own fault, everything's my own fault anyway – but I've got nothing left now'. As discussed above, lack of support network outside of prison can make life outside prison seem more daunting. This can lead to prison seeming preferable as it offers a community where people can find the safety and acceptance that may be unavailable to them outside when they have no support network and the public may treat them with hostility. It is also potentially problematic as positive relationships have been shown to be important to promoting desistance (Elisha et al 2013; McNeill 2009; Weaver and McNeill 2015). Desistance can therefore be more difficult for those who feel that they have no one to turn to outside of prison. This can therefore make

the sex offender prisoner community more significant for these individuals as they are able to draw from this community some support that they cannot get elsewhere.

Fear of victimisation arose in several interviews. For example Winston stated: 'I think what would worry me the most is yes that kind of treatment if I didn't have anything in place then yes it would be that kind of abusive treatment whether it be shouting, or physical violence towards me'. Vince was also worried about receiving poor treatment in the community after release: 'Go out there to hostility, go out there to violence, go out there to getting the finger pointed at me'. He also expressed a concern that abuse suffered outside could lead him into situations where he might face recall, for example, in defending himself if he was ever assaulted. This fear of recall is discussed further below but this demonstrates how interlinked all of these fears about community reintegration are.

There was also a view expressed by some that if sex offenders are harassed outside, or treated as if they are expected to reoffend, then they think that they may as well reoffend since they are not being given a chance outside anyway. This view was expressed by Frank, Gareth, Kevin and Ray. Frank stated: 'I ken that boys have said that when you get out you're as well just fucking daein it because you're classed as it onyway so what difference is it going to make?'. Similarly, Kevin felt: 'if they're thinking he'll just reoffend, he'll just do that, he's not got the strength or he's not got the toughness not to reoffend. That can play a psychological effect on you as well'. He believed that for him personally these views would make it harder for him not to reoffend. Kevin's statement in particular seems to be describing what Maruna et al. (2004) term the 'Pygmalion effect', where people come to view themselves as others see them. Maruna et al. (2004) explain that if others believe an individual can be successful, they are more likely to succeed. If others believe they are irredeemable, they are more likely to give in to this viewpoint and fail to change. This

demonstrates, again, the importance of a support network in encouraging desistance – it is important that there are people who believe the individual can change. Unfortunately, as discussed above, for many sex offenders there is no such support available outside of prison. This is why the sex offender prisoner community becomes important. It can provide a source of support for those with no one else.

Recall

Participants frequently discussed the strict restrictions imposed on sex offenders after release which lead to recall if broken. It was perceived that the restrictions for sex offenders were stricter than for other offences: 'The licence I think for sex offenders is probably more stringent than for mainstream. If you're a car thief I don't think they could say that you don't go near cars' (Jake). Again this idea of mainstream having it easier than sex offenders can act as a means of creating solidarity among sex offenders. Ollie was worried about specific restrictions that might be set in his case because he has a job to return to which involves some travelling and he was worried his conditions might prevent this. As employment is a good method of ensuring desistance (Kruttschnt et al 2000; Weaver and McNeill 2015) this would be a particular blow (although Ollie was a denier so did not express any concerns about desistance as he had never acknowledged guilt). Jon discussed his own experience being released from prison and finding restrictions difficult:

> you're treated like you're about to reoffend at any moment. You know what I mean? [laughs]. And as I say it does, it affects everything. It affects employment, it affects where you can stay, it affects where you can go, it affects who you can talk to, eh, absolutely every aspect. That's what I've felt anyway personally. Every single aspect.

He discussed being unable to access the support network he had developed during work placements organised by the prison as there was considered to be inadequate supervision

for him to visit these places and the people he had become familiar with. This left him feeling isolated and hopeless about reintegration. Brett also discussed his own experiences of release on licence. He experienced frustration at the harsh conditions and linked this to his reoffending. He complained of being unable to stay at friends and unable to access to the internet (though none of his offending was internet based). Brett linked these strict conditions to his reoffending. He claimed he got bored and depressed as a result of the strict licence conditions and wanted to lash out and get back at society, particularly the social workers who he perceived as responsible for imposing harsh restrictions. Ray discussed the difficulty that many people released from prison experience face: 'in here they've got friends, they've got respect, they've got a purpose, they've got work. They know what they're doing in here. When they get outside they're told, you can't do this, you can't do that, you can't – everything they had in here they're losing'. Tom also discussed the problems faced on release:

> that's the problem when people go out, they realise they're still in prison. Because they're connected to the offence that holds them down. That's the big chain on their ankle. And then they're connected to all these things that go along with it, all these restrictions. So, a lot of the time they're not given a chance.

It is important to note some contrasting views that were expressed by participants in relation to strict licence conditions, though these views were in the minority. Charlie was pleasantly surprised by his conditions as he was allowed a mobile, a car and alcohol. He still acknowledged that licence conditions could be strict and this could be problematic but in his case felt relatively positive about what he would and would not be permitted to do after release. Winston also took a positive view of restrictions. He stated:

Well as a life sentence prisoner my conditions are going to be very very strict anyway so I've already resounded [sic] myself, or accepted that fact that they're going to be those strong conditions and I know they're there to help me so those conditions don't really affect me that much.

He viewed these as a way of helping him to avoid reoffending rather than as a further punishment. This was a view shared by Ned. He viewed the conditions as for the offender's own good as well as for the good of protecting society.

One particular condition that received some attention from participants was the need to avoid other sex offenders while on licence. Some expected to find this difficult. As Charlie stated: 'I know it's gonnae be hard when I go out 'cause if I see somebody I ken I'll no be able to go n talk to him because sex offenders is no supposed tae associate wi' another sex offender'. Kevin was critical of this condition and discussed how it prevents real friendships from forming: 'you can't really call them friends because you're not allowed to keep in contact with them if you get out or they get out. Because they think you're going to cook up a – the two of you are going to get together and cook up an offence. But we don't see it that way'. He viewed the support of staff and other prisoners in prison as something particularly helpful so losing this outside could be a real negative for him. Kevin did not have contact with any of his family or friends outside so would be losing his whole support network on release. Gareth also viewed relationships with other sex offenders as a support network to prevent reoffending. He felt particularly positive about the possibility of doing groupwork outside of prison so that he could meet other sex offenders and share any problems he had been experiencing. He felt this would help him avoid reoffending. This is a coping mechanism identified by Evans and Cubellis (2015) which they term 'grouping'. As they discuss:

In mainstream social spaces, RSOs [registered sex offenders] are shunned or made to feel like outsiders, but in the presence of other RSOs, they are equals. No RSO can denigrate another RSO. By banding together, RSOs feel a sense of comradery. They can relate to and learn from one another. Respondents feel that if others have already gone through and continue to face difficult social circumstances, they too can endure (Evans and Cubellis 2015: 604).

This coping mechanism is denied to sex offenders on release from prison while they remain on licence. While in custody, however, the sex offender prisoner community can allow these individuals to adopt this technique. This is a particular benefit which can be derived from this community. When this sense of 'comradery' is removed and sex offenders are left feeling alone in the community outside of prison, this can cause prison to seem like the preferable option. Similarly, Anderson (2006) explains 'comradeship' as an important component in the 'imagined community' that is a nation, this spirit being the basis upon which people are willing to kill and die for their country (Anderson 2006: 50). This comradery is an important bonding tool that creates a strong sense of community and is something sex offenders lose when leaving the sex offender prisoner community to face release from prison without a support network.

David discussed that the future restriction of avoiding other sex offenders after release has stopped him from forming friendships in prison: 'I don't want to form friendships in prison because when I go out, one of the main things as far as sex offenders are concerned is they're not allowed to have friendships with anyone they knew in prison'. Ray also discussed deliberately avoiding being friendly for this reason:

Ray: I aim to be an arsehole in the section, I'm not here to be liked. I'm here for a reason. When I walk out that door, and there's people I've known in here for 11 year,

when I walk out this door if I see them in the street I'd walk the other direction. I can't get too friendly. That's my opinion, that's how I try to survive myself in here but it's… [trails off].

Interviewer: So is that just because you're not allowed to mix with them outside or do you not want to anyway?

Ray: Some people I've met if we'd met outside would be friends, but in here I can't take that chance. I get on with, I look after as much people as I can but when I walk out that door I'm myself. I can't go near people in here. Because that's me on a life's licence.

The expectation of this restriction on release from prison could therefore be acting for many as a barrier to friendships forming. Mann (2012) also found that some of the sex offenders she spoke to took steps to prevent friendships developing in order to protect themselves from 'the emotional toll of losing friendships' (2012: 355). This could be viewed as a barrier to community development. However, this is not necessarily the case. A friendship is a relationship of a closer nature than simply belonging to the same community. While this restriction may prevent friendships of a deep nature, it need not prevent the community from forming. All that "community" provides in this instance is safety and (limited[22]) acceptance. From this members are able to derive comfort in its weakest sense.[23] All that it offers is freedom from certain pains that are associated with the stigmatised sex offender label. "Friendship", on the other hand, describes something much warmer and more meaningful. This would involve a relationship of support and companionship which would form a deeper bond (Wellman and Wortley 1990). Restrictions on sex offender contact

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[22] See chapter 5, p64.
[23] See chapter 1, p7.

outside prison, even if restricting the formation of friendships, does not, therefore, act as a barrier to community formation as these stronger bonds of friendship are not a necessary component of a "community".

Many participants were afraid of recalls as these were perceived to be ordered for little. Several participants discussed stories they had heard of recalls that they felt were unfair. However, none of the participants spoke of being unfairly recalled themselves. Ray discussed someone being recalled for driving on a dual carriageway that ran through a park when the person was not allowed in parks. He also discussed someone who got on a bus which went through an area he was not allowed in. This was felt to be particularly unfair as his social worker had told him to take that bus. Jake discussed someone being recalled for having Sky installed because they were not allowed 'digital recording equipment'. Peter discussed someone having missed curfew by a few minutes on one occasion. He perceived it as harsh that there were no warnings or second chances in this case. There was a perception shared by several participants that outside authorities simply did not like working with sex offenders and would rather send them back to prison so used any excuse for this. As Frank stated:

> The hardest hurdle is walking out that door. And to the outside authorities. Because they take any reason. They send boys back for the daftest things. They're just wanting the boys sent back to jail. Because they don't want to work with them. And that's the worst thing about it.

Similarly Michael stated: 'some social workers really just don't like working with sex offenders… So any excuse they just pick up the phone. Police? Aye. I'm recalling this guy go and arrest him'. In Michael's account he made this claim of 'some' social workers. Other participants seemed to view this whole group as one. Jon discussed his own experience with social workers on the outside and felt that they did not like working with him. He described

feeling like a 'career ender'. He felt that social workers were so worried about losing their careers if something went wrong when they worked with a sex offender that they become overly strict. He felt that this concern about their careers was why social workers did not like working with sex offenders, rather than just judgement about their offences. Vince also discussed his own experience on the outside and described his experience as much less supportive than when released previously for non-sexual offences. This he found particularly striking since the social worker was the same person he had worked with after his previous release. Tom also shared this view of social workers actively looking to recall 'when you get out a social worker's in charge of your licence and there's no incentive for them to keep you out of prison. It's easier for them to have you recalled and sent back to prison'. He felt recall was 'virtually guaranteed'. This view, while perhaps exaggerated, is not entirely without merit with the numbers being recalled increasing significantly in recent years (Weaver et al 2012). Sex offenders seem to be significant to this rise due in particular to the use of short determinate sex offender licences. One in five recalls are due to failure to comply with this licence or a home detention curfew (a home detention curfew can apply to sex offenders or mainstream) (Weaver et al 2012). The use of extended sentences and OLRs (which can also be used for non-sexual violent offenders) could also be playing a role (Weaver et al 2012). Weaver et al (2012) were critical of this increase in recalls believing this is not something that receives sufficient attention. This study would support that this is an important area of the criminal justice system with far-reaching consequences that requires more attention. In the case of the participants of this study, the perceived ease of recall was impacting on desire for release. The chances of recall seemed so high that participants viewed it as easier to remain in prison while still on license. The strict licences that lead to recall make the community outside of prison seem too difficult an environment. When this is contrasted with the

comparatively comfortable lives in prison that this population have been able to create for themselves, the motivation to adhere to licence conditions outside fades.

The Unknown

Some participants expressed a more general fear that they do not know what outside will be like. This fear of the unknown can be just as unsettling. Tewksbury (2012) identified fear as one of the consequences of internalising stigma. Each of the fears discussed here could be considered a result of internalising stigma but Tewksbury specifically acknowledged that this fear often manifested as a general fear of the unknown. The unknown of outside was expressed as a fear by several participants – Ron, Charlie, Dennis, Hal, Kevin, Michael, Ned and Ray. Ron stated: 'I don't know what to expect after being here because I never been in prison before. Some days is very scared for me think I need to go there and face you know everyone and everything after being, being ah convicted of crime I've been convicted of'. Dennis, Frank, Michael and Charlie had particular worries about where they would live after release. Ned was also worried about housing issues as well as other issues:

> I do worry about release. I mean at the moment it worries me quite a bit, I don't know where I'm going to end up. I don't know if I'll be staying in a hostel or whether I'm going to get my own place. Em. I don't know what area I'm going to be living in, I don't know how the community's going to take me. You know and, there's lots of worrying things.

Hal was particularly worried about how much things had changed during his time in prison (21 years) making areas previously familiar to him now unknown: 'if they sent me to Moscow I'd just be as well off in Moscow'. He discussed that everything outside was unknown to him now as the places were different and he had no friends and family left to support him.

There were those who did not feel they were facing the unknown after release but rather had clear expectations for what their post-sentence lives would be like. Both Ollie and Lee expected to slip back into their old lives after being released. Ollie had his old job waiting on him outside and a large network of friends and family who all believed in his innocence. On this basis he expected little change to his life after release and worried only about strict licence conditions interfering with his plans. Lee also expected to return to his old life after release. When he was released previously he was able to do this and did not feel he faced any stigmatisation outside of prison. However, Lee's description of his life paints him as somewhat of a "career criminal" frequently in and out of prison for offences committed for the purpose of making money. He expects this aspect of his offending to continue (though he does not expect to commit another sexual offence) so does not share the goal of many sex offenders of finding employment, which is one area where stigmatisation might be expected to manifest. These fears about the unknown of what life after prison will bring can be just as daunting as fears of victimisation. After serving long prison sentences, which all of the participants in this study will do, prison is a known entity. Prisoners understand their roles within the prison, the prison regime is predictable, they have work and education available as well as a community of like others to draw comfort from. Outside prison individuals cannot be sure that they will obtain any of this. This can make the prospect of release from prison unsettling. Being thrust into this unknown world outside prison, even with the increased freedom this brings, can seem like the greater of two evils and prison viewed as the safe and preferable option.

The fear of release from prison and the hardship that will be faced reintegrating with the community outside is a central part of why forming a sex offender community in prison is so desirable. This prison community offers safety and acceptance that this group fear they will be denied outside. These common fears about life after prison also provide a basis on which

these individuals can bond. Furthermore, the perceived judgement felt towards sex offenders from those outside of prison serves a dual purpose of creating solidarity against a judgemental "other" (another example of bonding against a common enemy)[24] and reinforces the shared identity of this group as sex offenders. These are also significant aspects of community formation. These fears therefore provide the basis for a strong community to form, however, this community in dwelling on these fears can create a greater feeling of negativity about reintegration. This downside to the sex offender prisoner community will be considered in greater detail below in relation to sex offenders beginning to view prison as preferable to life outside.

Prison as Preferable

The hard work's no in here… the hard work is when you step outside – Frank

Many participants were able to express some positive aspect of prison life. However, some went further than this and discussed prison as a particularly positive environment that was preferable to, or at least easier than, life outside in the face of the challenges discussed above. Jon was the most notable example of this as he had entirely resigned himself to spending the rest of his life in prison. Tom also described prison as 'easy' and Lee explained that he would definitely be back in prison (though not for a sexual offence) as his life was easier inside. Relatedly, Ollie described HMP Glenochil as 'comfortable' (although he did have a negative overall feeling about his time in prison due to being separated from his friends and family outside). Prison was described as 'safe' by several participants. Ron stated: 'I think sometimes you feel more safe inside here than what you will face outside' (Ron). Similarly, Andy, in comparing the sex offender hall with a mixed prison, stated: 'In here you feel safe because everybody's doing the same kinda crime'. Charlie also discussed the difference

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[24] See Chapter 4, page 49.

between a mixed prison and sex offender only describing how unsafe he felt when in a mixed prison (HMP Barlinnie). Frank stated that in mainstream, even as a mainstream prisoner rather than a sex offender, there was a need to "watch your back" that did not exist in the sex offender hall at HMP Glenochil. Gareth also used the word "safe" when discussing why he did not want to leave HMP Glenochil to get a space on the programmes at another prison: 'what's the point in going there when I'm pretty safe and – I've got a single cell here – pretty happy here'. In spite of this sentiment, Gareth held some of most negative views about prison, repeatedly describing it as a 'strange place' that he could not understand. It seems that in spite of the confusing aspects of his prison life he has still found a degree of comfort, so much so that he is reluctant to be moved elsewhere even when there are benefits to be gained. This view of prison being "safe" for sex offenders is in contrast with existing literature that consistently uncovers their heavily stigmatised status and place firmly at the bottom of the prison hierarchy (e.g. Ricciardelli and Moir 2013, Cohen and Taylor 1972; Tewksbury 2012; Schwaebe 2005). Generally, sex offenders in prison in mixed populations are 'a highly stigmatised group subject to humiliation and violence' (Schwaebe 2005: 616). Verbal abuse is common with terms such as 'sick', 'weirdos', 'skinners', 'evil', and 'scum of the earth' (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013: 367) being examples of this. 'Skinners' was also a term identified by Waldram (2007) as was 'hounds'. Such verbal abuse was also identified in this study during the limited chances for interaction that existed between mainstream prisoners and sex offenders. Common terms that arose in this study were 'beast', 'paedo', 'monster' and 'scum'. Harassment suffered by this group in prison has been found to be mostly verbal but can be physical (Tewksbury 2012; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013) or having property stolen (Ricciardelli and Moir 2013) or being threatened or extorted (Schwaebe 2005). The difference in this study is that at HMP Glenochil sex offenders are segregated from mainstream, thus cutting down on the stigmatisation experienced. However, through having

mainstream housed in the same prison, some of this stigmatisation is able to creep in through the limited crossover of these populations. The experience of the sex offenders imprisoned at HMP Glenochil is therefore able to offer a unique perspective on imprisonment that is currently absent from the literature. As previously discussed, this segregation, while creating a safe environment, does have the negative consequence of making some participants fear that successful reintegration will never be possible – 'well if mainstream can't accept us, society will never accept us' (Ned). However, in terms of creating a safe and accepting community, having a segregated population is what ensures that safety. Segregation is therefore a double-edged sword and a hugely significant aspect of the experience of sex offenders at HMP Glenochil.

Nine participants expressed the view that, to some, prison is better than life outside – Frank, Hal, Jon, Ollie, Elliot, Ray, Stevie, Tom and Vince. The idea of prison as a preferable situation to the community is not something currently found in the literature. Generally prison sociology literature has focused on the pains of imprisonment which for most offenders would not make prison a positive option. Pains of imprisonment are well established in prison sociology literature and many specific 'pains' have been identified: deprivation of liberty, deprivation of goods and services, deprivation of heterosexual relationships, deprivation of autonomy and deprivation of security (Sykes 1957); lack of privacy (Cohen and Taylor 1972); loss of autonomy (Crewe 2007); psychological assessment, self-government and uncertainty and indeterminacy (Crewe 2011). Furthermore, for sex offenders in particular, mistreatment suffered in prison often makes prison even more difficult to cope with (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007). With all of this established research, the contrasting findings of this study that prison is a preferable option for some sex offenders is particularly surprising. The reason for this surprising finding is the community formed in prison among this group of segregated sex offenders. This community offers safety and

acceptance that is denied outside of prison. The comfort that can be derived from this community can become preferable to facing the unwelcoming community outside and dealing with the many challenges associated with reintegration.

In some cases it was qualified that life inside was better than life outside *while on parole*. As Hal stated: 'a lot of prisoners would just rather do their time, then that's it finished for them you know?'. This view relates to the licence conditions imposed after release which, as discussed in earlier chapters, many sex offenders feel are very strict. Frank was one participant who viewed parole as worse than prison: 'I'm no really interested in parole – they can shove parole up their arse for all I care – because I've still got 3 and a half years' licence. So I get parole that's another year on licence outside. Where the hard work's no in here… the hard work is when you step outside'. For Jon the restrictions imposed outside also seemed to be significant and was the reason he had stopped attending parole hearings. He stated: 'I've just gave up. This is going to be a life sentence for me. Because there's no point going out to that'. He discussed at length his experience when released from prison previously and his inability to regain any sort of normality in his life due to the restrictions placed upon him. As a life sentence prisoner he would be subject to these restrictions forever and he did not view this as a way he could live his life. Speaking of restrictions, Peter said of a case he had seen on TV: 'he's not living he's just existing'. This seems the same idea Jon was getting at in a lot of his interview. He felt unable to develop a meaningful life and was just going through the motions of what he had permission to do and did not see any way out of this.

Other participants went further than viewing prison as preferable to parole, they viewed prison as preferable to release even after licence conditions were over. Lee fell into this category, feeling his life was easier in prison. This was due to his life outside being chaotic

compared with the strict routines of a prison. For Tom it was the fear of recall that led him to believe he is better off in prison:

> then I'd be right back in the beginning again. So for me, it's probably better just staying in because it would be coming in from [inaudible] for the very first time again. Where you have nothing and you have to start, you're in a cell with... whereas just now my life's – I've got a pretty good life ae?

Tom had found comfort in prison and this quote demonstrates how this is impacting on his motivation for release. Comfort in prison can be a hindrance to seeking a new life outside and can result in the hostile community outside being too sharp a contrast that they find difficult to cope with. For other participants prison was considered easier due to the stigma they may face from those outside prison after release. Discussing this, Ollie stated:

> If someone gets out and every time they walk down the street someone is shouting at them or something, someone's coming up and spray-painting their house, if they've been here for so long, why would they want to stay out and get hassled when they could come in here and be fine?.

Stigmatisation is absent from the sex offender prisoner community and this is the primary way that this community can be seen to provide a better alternative to the community outside of prison.

Vince believed some preferred prison as they were able to build lives for themselves here when they cannot outside:

> Guys can get used to a routine in here and be happy. I mean I know lifers that have been in the groups that'll say what have I got to go out there for? Go out there to hostility, go out there to violence, go out there to getting the finger pointed at me.

In here, some of the guys in here go to the gym to keep theirself fit, they do a music class makes them feel good, they've actually got friends in here. That they consider friends. They've made a life for themselves in here so they don't see prison as a bad thing. They see prison as a nice place compared to outside.

Vince speaks of the lives people can create in prison through friendships, classes, etc. that is in sharp contrast with the empty lives they may face outside. Ray similarly compared outside and inside prison: 'in here they've got friends, they've got respect, they've got a purpose, they've got work. They know what they're doing in here'. Many sex offenders have more inside prison than they have outside and fear that they could not change this. Work may be hard to find for ex-offenders and contact may have been lost with friends and family while inside (as was the case for Dennis, Gareth, Jon, Kevin, Michael and Stevie who described having no support network outside). These 'social goods' have been considered even harder to obtain for those convicted of sexual offences (Harris 2015). In the present study, having friends or family outside had an impact on the view taken of prison. Those who had support networks outside seemed more determined to get out, whereas those without were more resigned to their prison life, feeling that they have more in prison than outside. Participants such as Ollie, Ned and Winston felt positive about their ability to build a life outside of prison and in each case they had a lot of family support outside of prison. Without such a support network outside to help with these challenges, release from prison can seem too daunting a prospect. The view is taken that any community is better than none and the sex offender prisoner community offers a place to those who are ostracised in the community outside. This offers sex offenders a place where they feel that they can fit in, this offers a comfort that is difficult to find outside prison without existing support networks.

Ollie suggested that prison intentionally tried to make you comfortable so that prisoners did not fight the system or try too hard to get release:

> They want to make you in here as comfortable as possible in here. i.e. giving you a PlayStation and stuff so you can sit and play the PlayStation. So when your parole date comes round, if you're an OLR or a lifer, they don't want you to go for them. The community is safer with you being in here. I think they try to make you as comfortable as possible in that way but do the programmes to make it look like they want you to change.

Gareth and Ray made related claims that the prison was not trying to rehabilitate at all, it was all for show. Some participants seemed to sense a real reluctance to actually release sex offenders back into the community and one way of trying to avoid doing this would be to create an environment where prisoners feel so comfortable that they lose their desire for release. However, Andy, Ollie and David all expressed a determination not to get comfortable in prison. Andy stated: 'I feel like the prison has changed me because it's starting to feel like home but I don't want it to and I'm trying to get oot a this feeling comfortable'. Andy was positive about what prison had done for him in terms of programmes but had a desire to move on and get a better life rather than becoming institutionalised. David was also reluctant to get too comfortable but stated:

> After a while, and it's true enough, they used to say to me, you become institutionalised – no I'll never do that – but the only way to get by in prison in fact is to decide at some point in your sentence that there's only one way to survive in here and that is to accept what's going on round about you and get on with it.

As discussed above, this "get on with it" mentality was common among participants but David seems to view it as a sort of resignation to becoming institutionalised. A similar attitude

was found by Schinkel (2014). She interviewed long-term mainstream prisoners and found that, 'In order to make bearing their confinement easier, the men adopted a strategy of "getting your head down"' (Schinkel 2014: 590). The men in her study stopped questioning the fairness of their sentence and just got on with it. She found this even to be the case among deniers. This was very much found to be the case in the present study, again, even among deniers. David denied aspects of his offending and yet was one of the strongest proponents of the "just get on with it" mentality. Similarly, Peter, another denier, stated: 'I've got to accept what's happened and just get on with it and serve time and hope the future holds, the future's better than the present is now'. This acceptance of your sentence is important to finding peace within the prisoner community. Those who remain completely unaccepting of their situation seem to find the experience of imprisonment more uncomfortable. Will was the strongest example of this. He seemed very distressed and dejected throughout his interview. He was a vociferous denier reiterating throughout his interview many times that he was not guilty. He said of prison: 'This is not my place. I believe I'm in the wrong place.' This lack of acceptance meant that Will kept his interactions with other prisoner very limited and described a very lonely experience of prison. This isolation however, is self-inflicted due to his refusal to in any way accept his situation. Denial does not preclude you from community membership, all that is necessary is the avoidance of conflict. Will was not a member of the community through his own choice not to engage. This prevents him from deriving any comfort from the acceptance he would find among those similarly stigmatised.

Returning to Prison on Purpose

David and Elliot made the claim that prisoners can become 'institutionalised'. Elliot stated:

Prison for some people is an environment where they feel very safe and they end up getting institutionalised. Everything is handed to them on a plate, they don't have to think, they have friends, they have activities they can do, they're fed, they're clothed, they're housed. They don't need to make any decisions.

Elliot suggests that people become so comfortable in prison that they do not want to be outside. Their fear of the outside and the difficulties faced there is an internal barrier to progression. This is because of the contrast between these hardships outside of prison and the comfortable community of safety and acceptance that is created within it. Outside prison such safety and acceptance is far from guaranteed and, as previously discussed, many participants shared stories of sex offenders facing abuse outside of prison. When prison becomes too comfortable in comparison with the challenges sex offenders face on release, people may intentionally return to prison. Eight participants discussed returning to prison on purpose – Frank, Gareth, Hal, Jon, Ollie, Ray, Stevie, Tom. Jon was the only participant who actually claimed to have done this himself, others spoke of others they had known to do this. He intentionally broke a condition in order to return to prison after finding that he felt unable to build a life outside. Tom stated: 'I hear guys time and time again saying "I couldn't do it, I just came back"'. Gareth spoke of a particular acquaintance who had claimed to get recalled on purpose because he found the community too hard. Hal had the same story about a friend of his:

he says 'Hal, I went out and see them bloody social workers out there telling you "you cannae do this" and "you cannae do that" and "you cannae…"' – it got that bad he never handed himself in to Barlinnie, he paid his fare up to Peterhead and he says you've got to let me back in, he says and he come back.

Intentional recall would suggest that the prison environment does become preferable for many. This is due to the contrast between the comfort provided by the sex offender prisoner community and the community outside. The community outside of prison can be unaccepting of those released from prison, particularly those convicted of sexual offences (Willis, Levenson and Ward 2010; Tewksbury and Copes 2012). Willis, Levenson and Ward (2010) found that: 'public attitudes and responses to sexual offending have profound impacts on the range and quality of opportunities for successful reintegration and desistance amongst persons convicted of sexual offenses' (2010: 554). With this in mind it does not seem that it is prison that is too comfortable, it is the community outside that is too uncomfortable. Prison is preferable for many but it can be considered "the lesser of two evils". As discussed, Jon intentionally returned to prison after finding the community too difficult. However, he does not find life in prison enjoyable, simply easier. His attitude is not one of contentment, just resignation.

More problematic than breaking licence conditions to be recalled is reoffending to return to prison. Ray discussed that the desire to return to prison can lead to repeat sexual offending:

> Half the time when you see getting recalled, might not be a case of another offence, another SO offence but you go hit somebody or smash a window or something like that. I know boys who have went another SO offence just to think well that means life, I'm not getting out and it's better that way.

Stevie made the same claim. Believing this to be related to the stigmatisation sex offenders face outside: 'I think because they keep harassing us we think well it's better to come back inside, then go and rape another woman or something like that. I think that's a lot of it. There's too much. We just say, well we get more peace inside'. The community created in prison is free from such harassment so the sex offender prisoner community can be viewed

as a barrier to reintegration. The comfort inside leaves people unprepared for the difficulties on release. This view was shared by Tom: 'they can get a hard time and that could make them go and reoffend again. Because they don't feel as if they have anything, they're better off in here. Prison's easy. There's nothing hard about being in here'. Elliot stated that he knew someone who had reoffended in order to get back to prison. As with intentional recall, reoffending to return to prison can be based on missing the life built inside prison and the comparative difficulty of building a life outside. However, the idea that people reoffend in order to return to prison is more serious than intentional recall as it does not relate to breaking technical conditions, it involves creating more victims. This is perhaps the most alarming finding of this research. The idea that prison does not prepare people for release was raised by Jon, Ned, Ray and Ron. Ned stated:

> I think that to have someone locked up in a prison like this to finish their sentence and then put them out there, that's, you're just getting put to the big test... I think that what prisons need more of is being able to integrate a lot of us into the community but at a steady pace. Instead of just opening the doors, 'right this is your release date, bye-bye, hope we don't see you again'. That is a big test for one person.

This is something that needs addressed. Greater preparation for release is needed to ensure these individuals are prepared for what they might face in the community and know how to deal with it appropriately in order to prevent reoffending simply to avoid the hardship of life outside prison.

Conclusion

While many participants do have a strong desire to move on with their lives, they also have significant fears about what their post-prison lives will hold for them. The sex offender prisoner community, in creating safety and acceptance for these offenders, provides a sharp

contrast with the community outside of prison which participants expected to treat them with hostility. Existing literature and the experiences of participants who had been released in the past, does suggest that the public are hostile to sex offender re-entry. This can result in sex offenders released from prison finding the realities of life outside too difficult to face and cause them to return to prison on purpose either through intentional recall or reoffending. There are those in custody who prefer their prison lives to any life they feel they could obtain outside and lose any desire for release. However, it is not necessarily that these individuals are overly comfortable in prison, only that they are more comfortable than they would be outside. Those with this attitude of preferring prison do not seem particularly happy in prison, only resigned to the fact that their lives outside would be filled with even greater challenges.

Chapter 7: Analysis

This chapter will bring together the preceding ones in order to highlight how the findings from the primary research interrelate with the existing body of literature and can contribute new ideas and findings to a variety of fields. Firstly this chapter will draw together how a sex offender prisoner community is formed in HMP Glenochil through the shared sex offender identity. It will then turn to consider the norms of this community which centre around the avoidance of conflict to ensure a peaceful community is maintained. Next this chapter analyses how this prisoner community experiences the pains of imprisonment. Fourthly, the implications of the research and potential avenues for future research are explored. Some reflections on the experience of the research process will then be made. The chapter will end by bringing together the central ideas brought out in this thesis.

Forming Community in Prison: Solidarity and Segregation

It was clear from the fieldwork conducted in HMP Glenochil that a community was formed by sex offenders in custody. By looking to existing community theory, it could be seen that the sex offender prisoner community at HMP Glenochil was formed in a similar way to other forms of "community". In keeping with Bhattacharyya's (2004) view of community formation, the sex offender prisoner community is bound by shared identity and shares values and norms. This conception of community draws primarily on Bhattacharyya (2004) who viewed community as a 'social configuration that possesses shared identity and norms'. Goel (2014) also views shared identity as an important factor in community development and the idea of shared norms and/or values within a community is found across this body of literature (e.g. Bhattacharyya 2004; Goel 2014; Brint 2001; Glaser 2001). This thesis explored the "sex offender" identity that exists among this population and examined how it lead to community formation. This is not something that has been examined in existing literature and can

contribute to understanding more fully the prison experience of this population as well as adding to the existing research on communities an in-depth consideration of a community that has received little attention. The shared identity of sex offenders is heightened by the prison environment due to the segregation of this population from mainstream. The treatment of sex offenders outside of prison (or at least the perception of this) was another key factor in developing the sex offender identity. These divisions increase the feelings of "otherness" experienced by sex offenders which develops the sex offender identity and binds this population in solidarity.

The present research is able to contribute to the body of literature on community theory by providing a detailed understanding of one example of a community – the sex offender prisoner community. This population tend to be subject to psychological research (e.g. Polaschek and Gannon 2004; Ward, Gannon, and Keown 2006; Auburn and Lea 2003; Groth 1979) rather than sociological. Other examples of communities have been studied, for example "fandom" communities (e.g. Hellekson and Busse 2006; Bury 2017) and "recovery communities" for those with addiction or mental health issues (e.g. Harris et al. 2008; Laudet et al. 2014; Whitley et al. 2008; Carpenter-Song, Hipolito, and Whitley 2012) and the prisoner community has received some attention (e.g. Hayner and Ash 1940; Calwell 1956). However, sex offenders specifically have received little attention and, as this thesis has discussed, this population face different challenges than mainstream prisoners due to the increased stigmatisation they suffer. The population studied here are unique in the literature due to their segregation within a mixed prison. This limited segregation is hugely significant as has been discussed throughout this thesis and will be considered further below. This work on a hitherto unexamined community is therefore original and can advance this literature.

As chapter 4 of this thesis has argued, shared identity is important in developing a community as it creates a sense of solidarity among community members and this solidarity is an important component of community development (Bhattcharya 2004; Goel 2014). The shared identity within this community is that of a sex offender prisoner. As a sex offender the experience in custody differs from other offences. In HMP Glenochil, sex offenders are kept segregated from other prisoners and this segregation in itself contributes to the development of a shared identity. This segregation also provides a geographical link between community members. All of those inhabiting this shared space are presumptively members of the sex offender prisoner community; only when community norms are not respected – when an individual causes conflict that disrupts the peace sought by this community – are they unwelcome. The spatial design of the prison therefore impacts directly on community formation. The organisation of prison space has been shown to be hugely significant throughout this thesis. In demonstrating that these spatial issues interrelate with community formation, this research brings together these, heretofore, distinct bodies of research.

This thesis has argued that segregation serves to strengthen the sex offender identity by highlighting difference between this population and mainstream prisoners. Their sex offender status then permeates every aspect of their prison lives: when they can move around the prison, where they can work, when they can attend programmes, what programmes they are expected to complete, etc. This constant reminder of their stigmatised status means this identity becomes ever more ingrained. Through segregation sex offenders come to view themselves as different from mainstream prisoners and vilified by them. This fuels an "us vs them" mentality that strengthens feelings of solidarity. These findings support Mann (2016) who found the population of sex offenders she studied (older prisoners who had offended against children) were 'Strongly bound by a sense of unity against mainstream prisoners based on the vilification they tend to receive at their hands' (Mann 2016:354). This

study suggests that this applies more broadly across the sex offender population than to only aging child sexual offenders. At HMP Glenochil, although populations are housed separately, there are limited contexts in which total segregation is not possible (for example during health centre visits). This leaves some opportunity for abuse from mainstream prisoners. Furthermore, these limited interactions, as well as knowledge that seeps into the sex offender hall about the mainstream regime, leads to speculation about the comparative treatment of sex offenders and mainstream. This leads some to believe mainstream prisoners are privileged over sex offenders which, in turn, causes bitterness about mainstream prisoners and fuels this "us vs them" mentality that segregation already facilitates. It has been argued here that this is important to community development as it strengthens the sex offender identity and bonds this population in solidarity against mainstream.

Ievins and Crewe (2015) conducted research with a population of sex offenders who were entirely segregated from mainstream in a sex offender only establishment, HMP Whatton. This complete segregation means that these participants at HMP Whatton had no interaction whatsoever with mainstream prisoners and could therefore draw no comparisons between their treatment and the treatment of mainstream. The "us vs them" mentality, discussed above, is not fostered in this environment as there is no speculation about mainstream privilege or experience of vilification by them during their sentence. Demonstrating how different it can be in a mixed but segregated prison compared to an exclusively sex offender prison, many participants in the present study discussed how different HMP Glenochil was from HMP Peterhead. HMP Peterhead was an exclusively sex offender prison before its closure in 2013; thereafter the population were spread across the SPS estate. Participants spoke fondly of HMP Peterhead and the more relaxed regime. Deprivation of autonomy is a pain of imprisonment suffered by all (Sykes 1957) but can be felt to a greater or lesser degree depending on the regime. When two populations that must be segregated are housed in the

same prison the regime must be particularly strict. This can be significant to the experience of imprisonment as freedom feels even more restricted, and this deprivation of autonomy felt more acutely. This is something prisoners at HMP Whatton do not experience and adds a new dimension to research with this population. The present study is novel as it considers a population that are neither entirely segregated from mainstream nor are they mixed. Therefore, neither of these existing bodies of literature can properly represent the experience of those at HMP Glenochil.

As well as bonding against mainstream, there is a sense of bonding against the community outside of prison. There was a view among participants that the public are hostile towards sex offenders and they are an unwelcome part of the community outside of prison.[25] As with the relationship with mainstream, this perceived negativity of the public towards sex offenders strengthens the sex offender identity and ideas that they are the unwelcome "other". They come to see themselves as a particularly marginalised population that no one wants to interact with. A fear of release from prison was identified among this population because of this perceived negativity from the public. Participants feared how the public may treat them and worried about their ability to reintegrate after a long time spent in prison. These concerns provide another means of bonding for this community. A sense of solidarity can be created in the face of shared fears. Furthermore, being denied meaningful community membership outside of prison (or at least predicting that this will be denied) strengthens the sense of community inside. The sex offender prisoner community is able to provide a safe place where these individuals can get a sense of belonging.

Solidarity is also created through the shared experiences of the prison regime and perceived lack of progression for sex offenders.[26] Issues with the prison regime offer something to bond

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[25] See chapter 6, page 82.
[26] See chapter 4, page 49.

over that is related more to being a prisoner than the stigmatised label of "sex offender". Common complaints about issues such as food, healthcare and access to opportunities can help create solidarity. The more significant issue of lack of progression in prison was raised often by participants and can provide a strong source of bonding as trying to progress is important to many of those in custody so this is a real source of frustration. Complaints were made about long waiting lists for the programmes needed for progression as well as the confusing nature of reports and lack of specificity in risk assessments. Issues with progression were often viewed as sex offender specific. There was a view that as a sex offender progressing was more difficult than for mainstream prisoners. This was a particular source of frustration for those who had previously served sentences as mainstream prisoners. Whether progression is more difficult for sex offenders was not examined in this research, but whether true or not, this perception feeds the view that sex offenders are a mistreated group. This mentality, as discussed above, can bond this community who seek solidarity among those similarly stigmatised. The view that people do not want to help sex offenders reintegrate, do not want to help them progress out of prison, makes this seem like a hopeless goal. This increases the reliance on the sex offender prisoner community as the community outside of prison seems so inaccessible.

The sex offender prisoner community is formed as a result of all of the issues discussed in this section. A sense of solidarity is developed through each of these common experiences. Frustration with the prison system, fears about the community outside and the division between sex offenders and mainstream all therefore contribute to community formation. Each of these issues relate to the shared identity as a sex offender. **The first key finding of this thesis can therefore be summarised as: sex offenders in custody at HMP Glenochil form a community based on a sense of solidarity that stems from their constantly reinforced sex offender identity.** This identity is constantly reinforced while in prison, most significantly by

maintaining segregation between this group and mainstream, fuelling feelings that anyone with this stigmatising label is unwelcome among non-sex offenders. The community formed at HMP Glenochil by the sex offenders in custody can therefore be viewed as an antidote of sorts to this. It provides a place where sex offenders can feel welcome, where they can get a sense of acceptance and belonging that they cannot get elsewhere. The norms that exist to maintain this safe and accepting community is the focus of the next section.

Creating a Community of Peace: Ensuring Safety and Acceptance

The second key finding of this thesis is that the community created by sex offenders in custody at HMP Glenochil is a peaceful one of safety and acceptance. This allows comfort to be found in the difficult prison environment. This community is juxtaposed with the community outside of prison which is often unsafe for and unaccepting of sex offenders (e.g. Willis, Levenson and Ward 2010; Kernsmith, Craun and Foster 2009; King and Roberts 2017). These sources demonstrate that there is hostility towards sex offenders in the community outside of prison and the interviews I conducted demonstrated an awareness of this among participants.[27] This shared awareness is pivotal in community development. Fears over community hostility, or shared views that such hostility is unfair, helps to bond this community and the values and norms of this community are all intended to ensure it provides a peaceful alternative to the hostility faced outside.

Avoiding conflict is the key norm of this community as this is vital to creating the peace desired. Avoiding conflict can be difficult especially in the tense environment of a prison where the low trust makes it difficult to develop positive relationships (Crewe 2011; Liebling and Arnold 2012). It is therefore a valid strategy to avoid conflict by keeping to yourself. This approach was adopted by many in this study to varying degrees. Some kept to themselves so

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[27] See chapter 6, page 82.

much that they could not be considered an active part of the sex offender prisoner community. Avoiding others entirely prevents even the relatively weak interpersonal bonds required within this community from forming. However, as firm friendships are not required to become part of the community, the interpersonal bonds required can still be maintained while adopting a somewhat "keep myself to myself" attitude. Those who kept their distance were not excluded from the community should they try to engage. It is therefore possible for people to have varying degrees of interaction within the sex offender prisoner community. Some find a great deal of comfort from the bonds made with others in the community and are very engaged. Others like having the community available to them when they desire it but largely keep to themselves. These people are still welcome in the community so long as they follow the established norms. It takes very little to be welcome in this community: avoid conflict.[28]

Avoiding acting on judgement is also a key norm of this community. Not acting on judgement helps eliminate interpersonal conflict that can disrupt the peace that is so valued by this community. However, lack of judgement is valued beyond this. It is not only about avoiding confrontations it is about creating a community of acceptance. The value as expressed by this community is that members do not judge each other. However, despite this claim, it would not be entirely correct to say that judgement is absent in this community. The reality is more complex. Judgement was found to be ever present and unavoidable. It was clear from the accounts of participants that there was judgement in relation to the nature of offences. The presence of this judgement at first seems a substantial barrier to creating a community of acceptance. However, a sense of acceptance is created through the norm that judgement is in no way acted upon. No one is excluded from the community because of their offences

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[28] See chapter 5, page 74.

and no one suffers any form of abuse. Publicly, everyone in the sex offender prisoner community is equal. Internally, individuals may feel differently about this. These internal feelings cannot be subject to community interference, if someone feels internally judgemental this goes unchecked. What is important when it comes to community values, is that judgement is never acted upon. Negative feelings about the offences of others should remain internal; no external consequences should be experienced by those being judged. The nature of offences does not therefore preclude membership of the sex offender prisoner community. Any judgement felt is buried. This may lead to some psychological turmoil for individuals who are suppressing their true emotions (Gross 2002) so the peace created by this community is not without its costs. The comfort that can therefore be obtained from this community can only be considered comfort when juxtaposed with their experiences elsewhere. All the community can really provide is a place of safety, free of any outward displays of judgement. This is acceptance in a very limited sense. While judgement does remain, even if kept internal, a true community of acceptance cannot be created. However, the limited sense acceptance provided by being a welcome member of the community, despite any internal judgement those community members might feel, is sufficient to derive some comfort. It is still significantly more acceptance than that offered when among mainstream prisoners or when among the general public outside of prison. There exists a willing ignorance of judgement within this community. Community members are happy to pretend that judgement is not present. This faux acceptance allows for the peaceful community that this group are so committed to. Tolerance of this superficiality demonstrates the strength of desire these individuals have for the sense of belonging that comes with community membership. When membership of other communities is denied to this population, they must form their own. Any community, even one that perpetuates only superficial acceptance, is preferable to no community at all.

This study resonated with recent research in England by Ievins and Crewe (2015). They studied a population of sex offenders who were entirely segregated from mainstream in a sex offender only establishment, HMP Whatton. Ievins and Crewe suggest that among this population: 'public claims of equality masked an underlying culture of judgement' (Ievins and Crewe 2015: 494). Similarly, there existed both judgement and claims of equality among the population considered in this thesis. Participants frequently made assertions that everyone in Abercrombie hall was equal. However, as with Ievins and Crewe (2015), it was also clear that judgement was not really absent among this population. Some offences were considered worse than others (although there was no readily identifiable accepted hierarchy, rather views on this differed from person to person). The findings of this study therefore correlates with Ievins and Crewe (2015) in providing evidence of the paradox present in the sex offender prisoner community of desiring a community where everyone is equal but being unable to truly let go of judgement towards others.

The bases on which this population internally judge each other was found to be largely in line with previous research by Hudson (2005). She terms the instances of judgement she found "distancing techniques" and views them as a coping mechanism for individuals to feel better about their own offending and are similar to the "techniques of neutralisation" identified by Sykes and Matza (1957). This research was able to identify many of the same distancing techniques identified by Hudson (2005), the age of victim and degree of violence being particularly prominent.[29] The age of the victim was commonly drawn on by those with adult victims who viewed having child victims as worse. However, those with child victims were often able to rely on the claim that they had used no violence. These distancing techniques operated in this way to allow any sex offender some reason to consider himself better than

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[29] See chapter 5, page 65.

others. Even those who used violence against children (therefore being "worse" in terms of both age of victim and degree of violence) were able to draw on matters such as the shame and remorse they felt comparing themselves to others who felt no such shame. Shame is a further technique identified by Hudson (2005). However, one new example found in this study was not putting their victim(s) through further pain by denying their guilt. Those who turned themselves in after offending or pled guilty as soon as caught were able to use this as a distancing technique. This demonstrates that the distancing techniques identified by Hudson (2005) provide a non-exhaustive list and this study has been able to add one further example.

This research is also able to develop Hudson's work by providing a more nuanced understanding of how judgement operates in a sex offender prisoner community. Hudson (2005) examines how these techniques affect a sex offender's view of themselves; this research takes a different approach, in examining the role they play in relationships with others. As discussed, though this judgement is present in the minds of community members, it is not something that is acted on. The practical consequences of judgement are virtually non-existent within this community. Judgement is an antithesis to developing a community of acceptance. Being both judged and accepted simultaneously is a paradox. However, the judgement that does still exist internally within the minds of community members is not externalised into any mistreatment of others. Community members may feel judgement, as this is difficult to avoid, but do not allow this to affect their behaviour towards others. No one is excluded from the community, or mistreated by its members because of their offending. The community does in this sense therefore provide a place of acceptance. However, the lingering presence of judgement can prevent this community from forming close ties. It is therefore a community of comfort at a most basic level. It is a safe, peaceful community but not one of warmth.

While judgement was found in this study, it provided a contrast from existing literature in terms of prison hierarchy. A lot of literature has discussed a hierarchy of offenders with sex offenders at the bottom (e.g. Ievins and Crewe 2015, Ricciardelli and Moir 2013, Cohen and Taylor 1972). However, Abercrombie Hall at HMP Glenochil is sex offender only and there is very little mixing with mainstream meaning this type of prison hierarchy is not something experienced by the participants in this study. However, there is also some literature discussing a further hierarchy among sex offenders themselves (Evans and Cubellis 2015; Waldram 2007). This is something that has been shown to exist even in sex offender only environments (Ievins and Crewe 2015). While some participants did mention a hierarchy, this term is inaccurate for what was actually described. There were many bases for judgement utilised by participants and no objective hierarchy could be discerned. While many would say that those with child victims who had used violence were at the bottom of the hierarchy, people who had committed offences like these might consider themselves better than others due to the remorse they feel, the effort they have made in prison to change or the lack of trouble they cause in prison. Each individual is able to draw on something that allows them to view themselves as somewhere other than at the bottom of the hierarchy. The hierarchy would therefore differ from person to person, with each ensuring they are not at the bottom. This makes any hierarchy somewhat of a myth. What is actually described is an individual coping strategy that allows each individual to feel better about their own offences by placing them, in their own minds, above those of others in some way (Hudson 2005). There is no objective hierarchy that operates in any meaningful sense to determine who should be included and who excluded from the prisoner community. Existing literature shows prisoners determining who to form relationships with on the basis of hierarchy. The findings of this research could not be more different. Anyone is welcome to be part of the sex offender prisoner community so long as they follow the norms of that community by avoiding conflict

and not acting on judgement. No one is therefore excluded on the basis of a hierarchy inside prison. Such exclusion would go against the very nature of the community which exists to provide a place where this marginalised group can find acceptance.

As well as avoiding conflict with other prisoners, an important norm of this community is to comply with staff. Conflict with staff is also unwelcome in a community that seeks a peaceful existence. Causing trouble for staff is considered a valid basis for judgement in this community. The norm of not judging others applies only to their offending behaviour. Everyone is viewed as equal (or so it is claimed, see discussion below) on the basis of their offending. Rebelling against the prison system, however, is something that can cause you to become excluded from the sex offender prisoner community. When peace is the primary goal of this community, those who are viewed as creating antagonistic relationships with staff are not viewed favourably. This is viewed as making everyone in the hall look bad and potentially damaging relationships between staff and all prisoners (not just those who are defiant). However, while rebelling against the system is not viewed favourably, this does not mean community members cannot complain about the system. In fact, common sources of complaint are part of what binds this community. What is essential is that all complaining must be done within the parameters of the prison rules. Conversational complaining to other prisoners or making formal complaints through official channels are both acceptable. Rebelling against rules (even those viewed as unfair) and refusing to do what staff ask is not acceptable. This would lead to judgement from community members.

The sex offender prisoner community at HMP Glenochil centred on creating a peaceful environment. It does this through norms which ensure conflict is avoided. This means complying with staff, and getting on with other prisoners. Having a place where they feel safe and accepted is what is desired by this population and is what this community can offer.

However, this is not without its challenges. Feelings of judgement remain in community members which make it impossible for the community to grant true acceptance. However, these feelings of judgement are never externalised. No one suffers exclusion or abuse because of their offending. They are still welcome members of the community so long as they avoid conflict with others. This limited form of acceptance is still far greater than sex offenders experience from mainstream prisoners or from the community outside of prison. The peace that this population are able to experience in prison can, however, lead individuals to lose motivation to reintegrate. When life outside prison seems so difficult, and the public so hostile to sex offenders, they can come to view their prison lives as preferable, despite its challenges, to the pains they will experience on release. This will be the focus of the next section.

The Comfort of Community vs The Pains of Reintegration

Existing research focusses on the hardships sex offenders face in custody (e.g. Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012) and the hardships of prison more generally (e.g. Sykes 1958; Cohen and Taylor 1972; Crewe 2011; Liebling 2013). This research offers a new perspective by examining the comfort that can be derived in prison through this sex offender prisoner community. This community can alleviate some of the pains of imprisonment but does nothing to dispel the fear of release. In fact these fears are only exacerbated by the stories shared between community members of hardships sex offenders have faced on release. The community outside of prison into which these individuals are expected to reintegrate was perceived by participants as unaccepting and unsafe – where sex offenders have to watch their backs and be prepared to experience abuse. This, when juxtaposed with the safe and accepting community formed inside, is very unappealing and this juxtaposition is what can lead this group to prefer the idea of prison to the idea of release. **This encapsulates the third key finding of this research – the comfort of**

the sex offender prisoner community can come to be viewed as preferable to the challenges of reintegration. Even for those who did wish to reintegrate there was often still a perception that prison was easier than outside, even if not preferable. The anticipation of hardships after release, and its contrast with the comfort that can be derived from finding acceptance in the sex offender prisoner community, does nothing to encourage positivity about reintegration.

Other research has considered community reintegration of sex offenders. It has found that sex offenders experience many difficulties trying to reintegrate. Tewksbury and Copes (2012) found that 'common collateral consequences experienced by registered sex offenders are difficulties in finding housing and employment and maintaining social and familial relationships' (Tewksbury and Copes 2012: 117). Rydberg (2017) considered the particular difficulties sex offenders experience in obtaining housing and employment as a result of their stigmatised status. These are issues that sex offenders themselves have been shown to be particularly concerned about, as well as 'maintaining and establishing social relationships, living with or overcoming the sex offender label, combating the assumption that they are dangerous to others, and being vulnerable to attacks' (Tewksbury and Copes 2012: 107). This research confirms that these are significant concerns for sex offenders in custody. However, participants in Tewksbury and Copes (2012) were found to be 'remarkably optimistic' (Tewksbury and Copes 2012: 112). Optimism was felt by some participants in this study but many more felt very pessimistic about reintegration. Those who did feel optimistic had the support of friends and family outside. Tewksbury and Copes (2012) support the idea that this is a significant factor in maintaining optimism. They found that 'the most commonly cited determinant of a smooth, positive return to the community was the offender's family' (Tewksbury and Copes 2012: 113). Those without these support networks find the thought of facing an unaccepting public much more daunting. Willis, Levenson and Ward (2010)

considered social acceptance to be crucial to reintegration. Those with family support already have some social acceptance to build on. Those with no one outside feel that this acceptance might be impossible to achieve. This made some sex offenders in this study reluctant to try to reintegrate when acceptance is something that they are already granted within the sex offender prisoner community. The desistance literature tends to focus on the success of various interventions at promoting desistance, the impact of perceptions about reintegration is underexplored. This is a gap in knowledge as attitudes prior to reintegration could impact on its success. Further research would be needed to explore this but this thesis establishes that there is a great deal of anxiety around reintegration and negativity about the likelihood of this being successful. It also indicates that having a support network outside of prison makes a difference to how optimistic people felt about their chances of successful reintegration. Desistance literature has shown that pro-social relationships are key in maintaining desistance (e.g. Weaver and McNeill 2015) so the support participants drew from friends and family has positive indications for maintaining desistance after release.

As well as experiencing stigmatisation outside of prison, there is a significant body of literature that suggests sex offenders can experience serious stigmatisation inside prison. Examples abound in this literature of name-calling, isolation, and even violence (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012). However, these studies relate to populations which are housed alongside mainstream offenders. The contrast between this study and existing literature is therefore quite sharp. While examples of stigmatisation in prison were still found in this study these were minimal due to the sex offender population studied being segregated from mainstream prisoners. This study was therefore of a very different nature. The relationship between sex offenders and other prisoners could not be a significant focus as it was in other studies due to the limited interaction these populations have. Rather, this study examined how sex offenders interact

among themselves. The sex offender prisoner community that was formed among these participants precluded stigmatising other sex offenders because of their crimes. This means that the results of stigmatisation when populations are mixed (name calling, violence, etc.) were largely absent from this study. This sort of stigmatisation was primarily discussed in relation to what participants expected to find outside of prison. This experience of stigmatisation outside of prison contrasts with the in-prison community which offers safety and acceptance.

Literature on prison life in general tends to focus on the pains of imprisonment (e.g. Sykes 1958; Cohen and Taylor 1972; Crewe 2011; Liebling 2013). Prison is certainly a challenging environment and the present study does not in any sense contradict this literature. In fact, it has found supporting evidence for the presence of pains of imprisonment among the population interviewed. However, this study also identified pains that can be considered counterparts to pains of imprisonment – the pains of release from imprisonment. These pains operate when the pains of imprisonment cease. The findings of this study suggest that this pain can be considered more unbearable than the pains of imprisonment. That prison and its associated pains is preferable to life outside is a new idea in the prison sociology literature. The specific pains of release that participants perceived were: the pain of abuse and the pain of isolation. The pain of abuse related to both physical abuse and verbal abuse as well as property damage that a sex offender may suffer when being reintegrated into the community. The pain of isolation results from either the unwillingness of the public to engage with sex offenders, or the unwillingness of sex offenders to engage with the public (out of fear that they would suffer abuse if their sex offender status was known) or from the restrictiveness of licence conditions making meaningful engagement with others very difficult. Existing literature has shown that the public does hold negative views about sex offenders and their re-entry into the community outside prison (Willis, Levenson and Ward

2010; Kernsmith, Craun and Foster 2009; King and Roberts 2017) so these fears are not without basis. Furthermore, the experiences of participants such as Jon, Vince and Brett who had previously experienced release from prison were very negative. These participants perceived stigma outside prison, felt that they were given no trust by those working with them, and felt that their licence conditions were restrictively strict and made them unable to build a meaningful life outside.

However, in many cases, participants had no experience of having been released from custody, this being their first sentence. They therefore had no first-hand knowledge of the pains of release. Nevertheless, on the basis of hearsay from others and media influence, they feared these pains of release. This fear of release came through strongly throughout the interviews conducted. While the *pains* of release might be considered a counterpart to the pains of imprisonment, this *fear* of release could be conceptualised as a pain of imprisonment. While abuse and isolation are real pains of release that can be suffered, and participants did fear these[30], their worries often seemed more general in nature – they feared the unknown of release.[31] They did not know what to expect, did not know where they would live, work, who they would socialise with, and they did not know if they would experience abuse or isolation. The fear of the unknown of release can only be experienced in anticipation of release, so while still in prison. For many of those interviewed, this became a big part of their prison experience and the longer they spent in prison the more time they had to dwell on what they might suffer outside and to grow afraid.

The fear of release can stem from hearing stories from others in prison who have had negative experiences of release, or can be a result of exposure to news stories of released sex offenders and the hardships they faced. Stories of sex offenders being victimised on

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[30] See chapter 6, page 82.
[31] See chapter 6, page 89.

release from prison and made to feel unwelcome in their new community are frequently reported in the media.[32] These messages do not escape those in custody. These stories and the vast quantities of time in prison with little to do but be alone with your thoughts fuel their fears. The isolation from the community outside experienced while in prison can lead to a feeling that they will never be part of this community again. They feel that they will never be able to shake off the stigma of their conviction and be an accepted member of society. For some, however, their fears did not relate to stigma they feared they would face in relation to their offending, but simply to how long they had spent in prison and therefore how unfamiliar life outside would be to them. The importance of friends and family outside of prison cannot be overstated when it comes to the experience of the fear of release. Having a support network outside of prison seemed pivotal to maintaining a positive outlook about release. However, many lose touch with friends and family and have no one outside to turn to, to help them reintegrate, or just to keep them somewhat in touch with the concept of a life outside of prison. All of this can make a life outside seem impossible as fears grow and there is nothing and no one to alleviate them. This can make prison even harder as, while already coping with the well-established pains of imprisonment, people are living in fear that there is worse awaiting them outside. This can make life in prison seem entirely without hope.

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[32] For example, The Scotsman (2012) 'Police close road as hundreds lay siege to Da Vinci rapist's house', *The Scotsman*, 10 July 2012, <https://www.scotsman.com/news/police-close-road-as-hundreds-lay-siege-to-da-vinci-rapist-s-house-1-2402125>; Neal Baker (2017) 'YOB JUSTICE: Shocking moment gang of kids smash up car belonging to suspected paedophile after he was confronted by vigilantes', *The Sun*, 28 April 2017 <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/3440497/gang-of-kids-suspected-paedophile-smash-car-vigilantes/>; Rachael Burford (2017) 'Angry 200-strong mob shouting 'paedo' and 'nonce' riot in quiet country village as they hurl stones at house of suspected female sex offender', *Mail Online*, 12 July 2017, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4688426/Vigilantes-Pembrokeshire-attack-female-sex-offender.html>.

Implications and Possible Future Research

The findings of this research suggest that sex offenders are not feeling prepared for release from prison. The problems they anticipate in the community leave many with very negative feelings about potential reintegration. If sex offenders feel unprepared for release and re-enter the community shrouded in negativity about the potential for successful reintegration, this could make the actual experience outside more difficult and potentially impact on desistance. It could lead to individuals getting themselves intentionally recalled, or reoffending, just to return to custody. As desistance is a fundamental aspect of SPS policy, this has implications. Readiness for release may be something that needs to be more directly targeted through interventions while in custody. This could be addressed more effectively as part of the programmes already offered, or through increased engagement with the community while in prison. This could serve the dual benefit of making this group feel more prepared for community reintegration and could improve the views community members hold about this population and their capacity for change.

The desire of this population to reintegrate outside of prison could be increased if the sense of peace drawn from the sex offender prisoner community was reduced. This would be achieved if this population was reintegrated with mainstream. This would make the stigmatisation experienced inside prison worse, no longer leaving prison in a positive juxtaposition with the community outside. This is not an advocated approach for both practical and ethical reasons. These populations are segregated for a reason. The potential for violence when these groups are mixed means a great deal more resources must go into security. When the need to maintain security and control is heightened there are fewer resources available to dedicate to meaningful prison activities such as work opportunities, programming, time spent with a personal officer. These activities are as vital a component to a successful prison service as maintaining security and control. Furthermore, simply from an

ethical standpoint it seems an inhumane approach to worsen the prison experience, which is already extremely painful, simply to make it the worse of two evils. Rather than making prison worse, we must focus on making the outside better. This comes in two parts, neither an easy task. Firstly, sex offenders in custody need to be more prepared for release, the hardships they might face outside and how to combat these challenges. Having a support network outside seems to have been a key factor in maintaining a positive outlook on release. These networks need to be encouraged. Where present already they should be steadfastly maintained throughout their time in custody and efforts taken to expand these networks in cases where individuals do not have existing support. Having something positive outside of prison for an ex sex offender to build their new lives around should aid with this transition. Secondly, work needs to be done on the other side of the divide – with the general public. This is a challenging task but some reduction in the stigmatisation experienced from those outside prison would reduce the hopelessness felt about reintegration. It is this hopelessness that leads to resignation to a life spent in prison. To truly reintegrate these individuals we need to facilitate hope. We need to make a real life outside of prison seem possible. More engagement with members of the public while in prison would aid this. While these members of the public would be self-selecting and therefore not necessarily representative of the whole community outside, this could still help combat the hopeless view that reintegration will never be possible. It would demonstrate to this group of particularly stigmatised offenders that not everyone outside of prison would treat them with hostility, that there will exist opportunities for them outside.

This project has also indicated other areas worth exploring in future research. There is a general lack of research into sexual offenders in Scotland. Their prison experience differs from that of mainstream prisoners and as this experience impacts on rehabilitation this is a population that requires attention. Any research which highlights issues that could help with

the management of this population or shed light on factors associated with their reintegration, would be timely as this population are becoming increasingly significant in Scottish prisons. One specific recommendation for future research would be to build on this project directly, examining the sex offender prisoner community in other establishments. Do these exist elsewhere? Are they formed the same way? Do they have the same criteria for membership? The biggest limitation of this research is its lack of generalisability; further research into this community could address this. Given that other Scottish prisons which house sex offenders do so in a similar way to HMP Glenochil (i.e. keeping them segregated as much as possible but with mainstream prisoners also housed within the establishment) it would be surprising to find substantial differences in how communities form given the significant role this quasi-segregation has been shown to have in this study.

A further area for future research which would build on this project relates to the fear of release that was found to be so prominent. Research should engage with mainstream prisoners to see if they share this fear of release and to what extent. This would be best explored through a similar methodology to that utilised in this study, in-depth, semi-structured interviews. This get the fullest picture of the experience of participants and allows them to focus on the issues of greatest importance to them. It seems likely that certainly some fears surrounding release would exist for all in custody. However, the extent of this fear among the population interviewed was surprising as it led to such a positive view of prison as a place of safety and acceptance (because of the sex offender prisoner community there). Among mainstream populations is prison ever viewed in this way, as a place of comfort, a place preferable to life outside? This is almost certainly going to be the case in some individual cases but research could identify why this is the case and if there are any sub-groups within a mainstream population that tend to feel this way. Perhaps differences exist depending on length of sentence, perceived seriousness of the offence or the presence

of support outside prison. This topic provides many avenues for future research to help better understand life in prison and its relationship with reintegration.

This research is able to offer some evidence to support the claim that sex offenders struggle to find the "social goods" that aid desistance (Harris 2015). Participants who had spent time in the community after a conviction for a sexual offence dwelt at length on the difficulties associated with this. Employment opportunities are limited and, particularly while on licence, developing relationships can be very difficult. Internal desistance factors therefore become even more significant for this population. As discussed, one particular aspect of the desistance literature this research can contribute to is that relating to hope. McNeill (2009) viewed hope as essential for desistance which is why he considered having someone who believes in an offender to be so important. However, many participants in this study did not have any such person to believe in them. Farmer, McAlinden and Maruna (2015) also found hope to be important. The desisters in their study were characterised as having set themselves goals and being optimistic and hopeful. Hope was also found to be an important factor in desistance by LeBel et al. (2008) who found this to be a significant predictor of reconviction. When hope seems so significant in maintaining desistance, this study offers a pessimistic view. Participants in this study were often characterised by hopelessness. Many felt particularly hopeless about reintegration, believing a meaningful life for them outside of prison to be impossible. If there is no hope for reintegration, the motivation to desist can suffer. The literature above did not look at the relationship between desistance and hope for sex offenders specifically. Some exploration of this is warranted to determine if hope remains so significant among this population, and if so, what could be done to increase feelings of hope within this group.

Researcher Experience of the Process

Despite the crimes participants had been convicted of, sympathetic feelings towards participants still arose. When participants discussed their own victimisation it would have been difficult not to feel sympathy and even witnessing their distress at their own offending (which was particularly present in Gareth and Ned) invoked some sympathy as did the sense of hopelessness or despair some participants presented (Jake, Jon, Ron and Will). The people who committed the offences we were discussing often seemed very far removed from the people who sat across from me in a small interview room and told me about their lives. Throughout, although we were discussing the participants' experiences of being a sex offender, my engagement with them was as human beings rather than as just as "sex offenders".

However, this is not to say that negative feelings about sex offenders were completely avoided throughout the process. Foremost of these negative feelings was a mistrust in the veracity of their accounts. The idea that sex offenders always lie or manipulate is a common view and I did from time to time worry if participants would try to manipulate me. This view of sex offenders is something that has been considered to contribute to researchers failing to engage with this group to the same degree as other offenders (Digard 2014: 429). However, it was made clear to participants that I do not work for the Scottish Prison Service and would have no impact on their life in prison or potential parole. As well as this information being essential ethically to ensure participants to not feel pressured into taking part, I feel it served a second purpose of reducing the chance of being told a manipulated version of their experience.

Some researchers have described the impact on their own lives of conducting similar studies with sex offenders. Hudson (2005) discussed becoming uncomfortable in everyday

interactions with her own family members, for example, when her father hugged her. I found I experienced little impact of this kind and was able to shut off the experience of conducting the fieldwork from the rest of my life. I was able to maintain normal relationships with those in my life, including close male relationships such as with my partner, my father and my brother. However, there were occasional incidents that triggered a response that was no doubt influenced by the fieldwork process. For example, a feeling of suspicion emerging from seeing elderly men looking after children in play-parks. This was during my time conducting interviews on the third floor of Abercrombie where almost everyone was elderly. There was no rational basis for the feeling of suspicion but the experience in the field warped my thinking. One conversation with a prison officer led me to believe this was not uncommon as they described similar experiences of innocent exchanges between men and children seeming suspicious. On another occasion, on hearing a neighbour's child screaming the first thing in my head was that the screams could be the result of abuse being inflicted. Again, this was not a rational response (especially given these screams were during the summer holidays when this noise from excitable children is not uncommon!). One last experience that comes to mind is being on a night out with friends and struggling to stop Ned's detailed description of his offence (which was committed in a similar context) repeatedly coming to mind. This did cause some distress. Other than these isolated incidents I felt I was able to keep my experience during the interviews separate from my personal life.

I did feel that during interviews I was able to avoid being judgemental about participants' offences. There were those I interviewed who I did not like but I felt this was generally unrelated to their offending behaviour. If I interviewed 25 students, 25 police officers, 25 nurses, or whomever, there would probably also be some I did not like. The ones I felt more negatively towards were not necessarily those with the most serious offences, so any dislike seems to be based more on a general feeling about their personality. When there was a

degree of dislike present I did not feel that this prejudiced the interview and I had some particularly successful interviews with those in this category. However, this is something that seemed necessary to acknowledge and remain conscious of in analysing transcripts to ensure my feelings about the individuals did not bias results. If anything, I tended to find the interviews harder with those I did like. This was due to the internal conflict that was created as I knew something of their offences and how serious these were, but still felt something positive towards them. It would almost have been easier to conduct the interviews if all sex offenders were the stereotypical, unfeeling, uncaring "monsters" that the media paints.

Tom stated during his interview 'men are neither good nor bad, it's the deeds that have the goodness and the badness in them, men are just men'. This is a view I share. It struck me at the time as related to a view expressed by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1973) which had always resonated with me:

> the line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either - but right through every human heart - and through all human hearts. This line shifts. Inside us, it oscillates with the years. And even within hearts overwhelmed by evil, one small bridgehead of good is retained.

Having sat for some time speaking to 25 people convicted of some of the most serious offences that exist, I still believe that. I do not believe that people can be all good, or all bad. I do not believe that anyone is entirely irredeemable. I do feel therefore, that I have not left the fieldsite jaded by the experience or despairing of our ability to rehabilitate and reintegrate these most serious offenders. At an SPS symposium I attended not long before conducting this fieldwork, one participant stated that she believed the focus of the prison service should be preventing the next victim. If we are to prevent future victims then we need

to start from a place of optimism about the ability of this group to change and become contributing members of society.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to understand the experience of imprisonment for those convicted of sexual offences, particularly exploring how stigmatisation operates in this context. What the research has been able to demonstrate is that stigmatisation is a hugely significant concept that operates in heretofore unexamined ways. In this study it is not a case of sex offenders experiencing daily abuse or exclusion because of their stigmatised status as has been found elsewhere (Schwaebe 2005; Ricciardelli and Moir 2013; Waldram 2007; Tewksbury 2012). Due to the segregation of sex offenders from the mainstream population, this group at HMP Glenochil experience little stigmatisation in this sense. However, despite being kept away from manifestations of it, this population are still aware of their stigmatised status. In fact, segregation itself, while protecting the population from abuse, serves only to highlight this further. Sex offenders in custody are the unwanted "other" who must be housed separately as even other prisoners will not accept them. This segregation, which is the result of their stigmatised status, becomes a fundamental aspect of the experience of imprisonment for this group. This research is therefore an interesting study in segregation. Segregation by nature divides but in this study it has also been shown to bring people together. Segregation can be seen here as both splitting a community (prisoners) and generating a new one (sex offender prisoners).

The physical separation of these two groups within the prison has several deep and unintended consequences. This spatial experience comes to impact directly on other areas. Firstly, in feeding the sense of 'otherness' that sex offenders are already aware of it strengthens the power of the sex offender label. This draws this group into each other. Their

221

heightened awareness of their lack of acceptance from others develops a need to find acceptance elsewhere. This can be found amongst themselves. A group of similarly stigmatised individuals can offer each other a sense of belonging. This is the basis for the formation of the sex offender prisoner community that offers a place of safety and acceptance to its members. Segregation, in highlighting the lack of acceptance of sex offenders generally, is also responsible for determining the norms of this community. The norms of the sex offender prisoner community all relate to ensuring safety and acceptance for these individuals. This is to create an environment free of the hostilities their stigmatised status would normally result in.

The safety and acceptance this population experience inside prison walls as a result of the community they form is juxtaposed with their difficult experiences trying to reintegrate outside of prison. Prison, where these individuals are sent as punishment, can become the only place they can feel any sense of comfort. The pains suffered on release from prison in many cases exceed the pains suffered inside. We are left then with the irony that this place of punishment is preferable to the informal, unintentional, punishment that stigmatisation outside prison results in. This place that aims to encourage reintegration actually serves to discourage this by providing a preferable alternative. In a sense then, for sex offenders, prison serves neither to punish nor to help in rebuilding their lives outside. It operates instead as a place of freedom from stigmatisation which offers a peace not experienced elsewhere. While participants may in a sense feel free they are nevertheless subject to strict control and rigid rules yet it is in this challenging environment, more than anywhere else, that they feel a sense of peace.

The alternative constructions that would serve more effectively to punish and encourage reintegration are not palatable. Prison would be made worse than the community outside if

the stigmatisation experienced there was equal to that outside of prison. If sex offenders were mixed with mainstream they would experience stigmatisation to at least an equal degree as they do outside of prison. However, this would result in a wealth of problems in terms of security and control due to the increased likelihood of violence. It also seems both unethical and overly pessimistic to resort to mixing the population as a means of encouraging the desire to reintegrate. Prison becoming worse should not be the driving force behind people making positive changes, making the outside seem better is a less cynical approach. We do not need to accept that life outside of prison cannot improve for this population. With work done in prison to prepare more effectively for release, building up support networks in advance, a sense of hope about successful reintegration can be maintained. This sense of hope can motivate an ex sex offender to make real positive changes towards creating a new life for themselves outside of prison.

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Appendix: Participant Summary

Pseudonym	Age[i]	Offence[ii]	Victim Type	Admit/Deny	Time in Prison on this Sentence	Time Left	Previous Prison Sentences
Andy	30s	Rape	Child	Admit	8.5 years then released and recalled.	OLR. Now finished rest of 10 year tariff.	None
Brett	30s	Attempted murder Attempted abduction	Adult Child	Admit Admit	7 years	OLR. Eligible for parole in 3 years. Not expecting release ever.	4 – sexual
Charlie	70s	Sexual offences	Child	Mixed – admit one charge	6 years	<5 months	At least one, sexual
David	70s	Voyeurism Possessing child pornography Historic offences	Adult Child Unknown	Admit Admit (denies knowledge of content) Deny	6 years	Unknown as appeal pending.	None
Dennis	80s	Rape	Unknown	Unclear but stated his offence was "supposed to be rape"	Nearly 12 years	1.5 years	None
Elliot	50s	Lewd and libidinous	Child	Admit	13 years	Life.	2 – non-sexual
Frank	40s	Rape	Adult	Deny	3 years	2 years	1 – non-sexual
Gareth	40s	Attempted murder Lewd and libidinous	Adult Child	Admit Admit	5.5 years	6.5 years (then on license for 6 years)	None

Pseudonym	Age	Offence	Victim Type	Admit/Deny	Time in Prison on this Sentence	Time Left	Previous Prison Sentences
Glen	80s	Sexual assault	Unclear	Admit	10 years	OLR. 7 years past tariff.	None
Hal	80s	Sex	Child	Unclear (pled guilty)	21 years	Life. Potential parole this year.	1 – non-sexual
Jake	50s	Rape	Child	Deny	1 year	5 years	1 – non-sexual
Jon	50s	Abduction Serious Assault Endangering life	Adult (same victim)	Admit	24 years	Life. No longer attending parole hearings. Not expecting release ever.	More than one very short sentence for non-payment of fines.
Kevin	40s	Murder	Child	Admit	12 years	Life. Potential parole in 8 years. Not expected.	2 – sexual
Lee	20s	Assault with intent	Adult	Admit	Recalled in 2015	34 months	Many – non-sexual
Michael	50s	Murder	Child	Admit	19 years	Life. Eligible for parole in 1 year. Not expected.	1 – sexual
Ned	50s	Rape	Adult	Admit	4 years	3.5 years	3 – one sexual, two non-sexual
Ollie	20s	Rape	Adult	Deny	13 months	19 months	None
Peter	30s	Rape	Adult	Deny	2 years	2 years of sentence left. Could be paroled in 1 year.	None

Pseudonym	Age	Offence	Victim Type	Admit/Deny	Time in Prison on this Sentence	Time Left	Previous Prison Sentences
Ray	20s	Murder with "a sexual element"	Child (same age as Ray at the time)	Admit	12 years	Life. 3 years until parole date. Expects to do minimum 7 years after tariff.	None
Ron	50s	Rape	Adult	Deny	2 years	5.5 years	None
Stanley	60s	Abduction Sexual Assault	Adult	Admit Admit	19 years	Life. Tariff was up in 2012.	2 – one sexual, one non-sexual
Tom	40s	Murder Rape (separate occasion than the murder)	Adult Adult	Admit Unclear (described as a "peculiar case" "complicated situation")	12.5	Life. Tariff up in 2021. Not expecting release then. Thinks "highly unlikely" will ever be released.	Number unclear. Non-sexual "silly things".
Vince	40s	Rape	Adult	Admit	7 years	3 years. Could get parole this year. Been released on parole previously but recalled.	2 – non-sexual
Will	30s	Rape	Adult	Deny	7 years	2 years	None

Pseudonym	Age	Offence	Victim Type	Admit/Deny	Time in Prison on this Sentence	Time Left	Previous Prison Sentences
Winston	30s	Rape Assault to severe injury Permanent disfigurement and damage beyond repair Endangering of life	Adult (same victim)	Admit	13-14 years.	Life. Past qualifying date for parole. Not expecting release for at least 4 years.	Multiple – one sexual and numerous driving offences and "things like that".

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i Ages are approximations, even when exact age volunteered by participants, in order to protect anonymity.

ii The offence as described by the participants.