THE WAYWARD AND THE FEEBLE-MINDED: Euthenics, Eugenics, and the Provincial Industrial Home for Girls, 1914-1929

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the relationship between British Columbia's first Industrial Home for Girls and the community it served. In particular, it examines the way in which young women were labelled as delinquents, segregated from their peers, and incarcerated in the Provincial Industrial Home for Girls (PIHG) during the early part of the twentieth century. Using records from the PIHG, the Vancouver Juvenile Court, and the provincial government, this thesis points to weaknesses inherent in a dichotomous social control model which focuses on aggressors and victims. In its place, this study attempts to deconstruct the discourses which co-contributed to the identification of young women as deviant using a multi-dimensional analysis based on gender, class, race, and age.

Proponents of the social control model have argued that during times of rapid moral, socio-economic, and political change, the dominant class was able to successfully protect its position of privilege by restricting and regulating the actions of the working classes. However, an analysis of the PIHG and the young women sent there shows that this explanation is incomplete. Although middle class reformers'

attempts to restrict and regulate young working class women and their families were often successful, sometimes they were not.

In addition, parents or other family members frequently initiated contact with the Vancouver Juvenile Court in order to have their daughters committed to the PIHG. Also, some of the young women living at the PIHG seem to have initiated contact with the Home themselves. To suggest that families were victims or were only able to resist efforts at social control at the margin, overlooks the way in which gender and generational conflicts interacted with class conflicts to label young women as delinquents.

Furthermore, this thesis uses a multi-dimensional analysis to explain how two seemingly contradictory discourses, eugenics and euthenics, co-contributed to the identification and segregation of young women labelled as deviant. The inmates of the PIHG were identified as delinquents as part of a complex process in which their gender, age, race, and class were classified as dangerous using a combination of hereditarian (eugenic) and morality (euthenic) arguments. In turn, these arguments were used to justify prolonged incarceration periods and limited contact with the outside community for young women but not for young men.

Therefore, this thesis argues that a multi-dimensional analysis is necessary to explain the impact of control institutions upon the communities they served; the PIHG was only one part of the complex network of power relationships between young women, young men, feminists, middle class reformers, and working class families.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Belief in the so-called "demise of society" is not new. At various times in our past headlines such as "572 Children Appear Before Juvenile Court" and "Immigration Law Must Be Tighter" contributed to the panic and fear of a society convinced of the inevitability of moral decline.[1] Throughout the twentieth century, concern over issues such as increased violence, the break up of the "traditional" family, the rise in youth crime, and increased sexual freedom have fuelled social reform movements and culminated in discriminatory legislation and regulation which marginalized groups and individuals based on their gender, class, and/or race.

Social historians have attempted to describe how these "panics" were constructed in the past by showing the diversity of experiences in Canada. In showing that panics had an historical context which had led to unequal laws and practises, historians and social scientists encountered theoretical problems that were not present in the standard positivistic, empirical political studies that had previously dominated. The shift in focus away from the thoughts and actions of the male-dominated, white, middle-

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[1] *Vancouver Star*, March 4, 1929, p. 9.
Daily Colonist, June 29, 1920, p. 5.

class revealed a power inequality based on gender, race, class, and, most recently, age and ablism, that had been decidedly absent in earlier studies. The problem then became how to explain and account for these inequalities?

This study of young "delinquent" women during the early stages of the first all-female, state-run institution, the Provincial Industrial Home for Girls (PIHG), attempts to analyze such inequalities.[2] Specifically, it uses the case of the PIHG to show how a dichotomous model based on "aggressor" and "victim" ignores the complexities and contradictions which contributed to the formation of so-called "delinquent and deviant" young women. Further, it attempts to show, through a multi-dimensional analysis of the the Vancouver Juvenile Court and the PIHG, how families, feminists, and the state co-contributed to this formation. It looks at how gender, class, age, and race contributed to the construction of two competing yet co-existing discourses, eugenics and euthenics, which influenced

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[2] In both the contemporary and historical literature the Provincial Industrial Home for Girls is occasionally referred to as the Industrial *School* for Girls. This is likely due to the fact that the boys' equivalent, the British Columbia Boys Industrial School, was called a school and not a home. For the purpose of this study the interchanging of names points to the constant debate as to whether the focus of the PIHG should be custodial (Home) or educational (School). The issue became, were young women capable of being reformed and "reissued" as citizens, or was the best solution simply to remove them from society and make them as comfortable as possible in a supervised environment? Clearly, this was not an issue at the Boys Industrial *School*.

definitions of sexuality and delinquency in the early twentieth century.[3]

Eugenics, the "science" of improving populations by controlling inherited qualities, contributed to the construction of delinquency and feeble-mindedness in the PIHG using a variety of symbols and actions. Euthenics had the same desired result as eugenics; however, euthenicists thought populations could be improved by controlling surroundings or environments. Both appear in the analysis of the Home and those associated with it.[4]

An examination of the secondary literature on the history of eugenics and of juvenile reform in Canada shows that these studies are incomplete; they either focus on the intellectual development of a movement or subscribe to a monolithic social control model. As a result, neither of these approaches adequately explains the gendered treatment of youth by the juvenile courts nor how eugenic and euthenic

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[3] The term "discourse" is used here to refer to the relationship between words and the social reality they represent. Therefore, we must look at the context and definitions of female juvenile delinquency using class, race, age, and gender to deconstruct the relationship between the language of eugenics and euthenics and the treatment of young women at the PIHG.

[4] Though the term "eugenics" is well defined in historical literature, the term "euthenics" is seldom used. "Euthenics" was used in the early twentieth century to describe what has often been called the "environmentalist" approach. In the 1990s, the term "environmentalist" has taken on a different meaning; thus, in the interest of clarity, "euthenic" will be used throughout this study.

discourses influenced definitions of delinquency among the inmates of the PIHG and the regulation of their sexuality.

Furthermore, few general histories of youth and criminality in Canada acknowledge the influence of gender, race, and class.[5] Though some admit that these inequalities contributed to the construction of delinquency, they do not include gender analysis. As a result, they are unidimensional and exclusive.

The earliest of these studies, in the 1960s and 1970s, were based on social control theory where the dominant group imposed its will upon the non-dominant group usually via the state. In general, their focus was based on either a positive or negative assessment of social control, where intervention by the state was declared a sign of progress or an infringement on individual autonomy.[6]

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[5] For example, Neil Sutherland, *Children in English Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976, and Susan E. Houston,"The 'Waifs and Strays' of a Late Victorian City: Juvenile Delinquents in Toronto," in Joy Parr, ed., *Childhood and Family in Canadian History*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982. An example of a study which does acknowledge the influence of gender, race, and class is Dorothy Chunn, "Boys Will Be Men, Girls Will Be Mothers: The Legal Regulation of Childhood in Toronto and Vancouver," *Sociological Studies of Child Development*, Vol. III, JAI Press, 1990, pp. 87-110.

[6] For an excellent critique of the social control theory see Linda Gordon, *Heroes of Their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence, Boston 1880 - 1960*, New York: Viking Penguin, 1988, p. 293.

Historians and social scientists have recognized the limitations of social control theory. Some recommend an alternative analysis which, while not ignoring the power of the state, integrates class, gender, and race as the components which generate and give meaning to various discourses. The task was to analyze how these different discourses were constructed and then to deconstruct them.

Michel Foucault is credited with placing discourse analysis at the forefront in recent debates about social theory. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* he chronicles the genealogy of the "new power to judge and punish."[7] His focus on social power (the ability to dominate), and the discourses that follow from it, demonstrates how complex interactions between the "have" and "have nots" intertwine to make up the fabric of society in a way that is very dissimilar to social control theory. "The power to punish is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those that 'do not have it'; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them."[8] In short, his analysis directs us to examine the emergence of

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[7] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1977, p. 23.

[8] Foucault, p. 27.

discourses and the way in which particular apparatuses, such as power, shape them.[9]

Foucault has been criticized for his apparent lack of interest in categorization based on gender, and his view of power as, first and foremost, a process. Some historians, notably Jeffery Weeks, have attempted to integrate discourse analysis and the role of power into studies on the regulation of sexuality.[10] Building on Foucault's analysis of power and taking it one step further (beyond that of the "power as process" dictum) Weeks stresses the relationship of power as key to an analysis of sexuality.

> Power is not unitary. It does not reside in the state, it cannot be reduced to class relations; it is not something to hold or use. Power is, on the contrary, omnipresent, it is the intangible but forceful reality of social existence and of all social relations. Power, that is to say, is not a single thing: it is relational, it is created in the relationships which sustain it. The history of sexuality becomes a history of discourses about sexuality.[11]

Weeks identifies where conflicts and contests are likely to occur, and he implements an approach which recognizes and accounts for conflicts and paradoxes in the negotiation of power and control. He shows how categories

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[9] For a good analysis of the contributions Foucault has made to social theory and its application to history see Jeffery Weeks, *Sex, Politics, and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800*, New York: Longman Incorporated, 1981, pp. 10-14.

[10] Weeks, *Sex, Politics, and Society*.

[11] Weeks, p. 7.

of femininity and masculinity are constructed and reinforced through these points of conflict and power struggles. However, while Weeks discusses the regulation of sexuality and the role of gender analysis at length, he does not attempt to integrate class, race or generational analysis into his study.

Feminist scholars also have criticized Foucault for his lack of gender analysis. Recently, they have countered by releasing many studies which place gender at the forefront of their research. A good example of this is Linda Gordon's *Heroes of Their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence*. In it Gordon does two things. First she rejects any predetermined definitions of family violence based on biological differences or sex roles. Second, she points to evidence from her research which shows the incompleteness of the social control explanation from a feminist perspective.

Like Weeks and Foucault, Gordon credits power inequalities with contributing to the construction of discourses: in this case the discourse of family violence. "Family violence usually arises out of power struggles in which individuals are contesting real resources and benefits. These contests arise not only from personal aspirations but also from changing social norms and conditions."[12] By focusing on family violence as a social

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[12] Gordon, p. 3.

and political construct, Gordon dismisses explanations which view family violence (or any discourse) as an historical given.

Also, Gordon finds evidence which points to two very fundamental weaknesses in the social control theory. First, and perhaps most obvious, is its lack of attention to agency and its insistence that power flows in only one direction: from the top down. Also, she points to cases where the so-called "objects" of social control, the family violence clients, often sought the intervention of the white, middle-class social service workers. In addition, Gordon finds evidence of situations where the controllers failed to act in a given situation thereby forfeiting their right of power. As a result, she insists on a more integrated and inclusive approach.

> The dichotomous argument, between those who applaud the welfare state and those who condemn its oppressiveness is not useful. The very inequalities of power that make the state oppressive create the need for state responsibility for welfare, and these inequalities include gender and age as well as class. Integrating gender and generational conflicts along with class and economic conflicts into our understanding of the welfare state will demonstrate the need for a more complex appraisal.[13]

A weakness in Gordon's analysis is her lack of emphasis on race. And while she is successful in adding generational

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[13] Gordon, p. 299.

analysis to her study, the "complex appraisal" that she calls for is incomplete because of this omission.

Within the Canadian context, the historian who has been most successful in borrowing from literary theory to develop a theoretical framework based on discourse analysis is Mariana Valverde. In her book, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885 - 1925*, she outlines a merging of social theory and history. "In my view, the fundamental insight of twentieth century theories of language, namely that language is not a transparent window giving access to the world but is rather itself a part of that world, a kind of object among objects, eliminates the old dichotomy between idealism and materialism, and hence makes the historian's fear of idealism redundant."[14] The importance of *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water* is that not only does Valverde refuse to become bogged in the quagmire of the social control debate, but she provides a detailed outline of what should be used as a substitute.

Her willingness to accept the complexities of discourses and her refusal to become reductionist are the strengths of the theory she outlines in her study. Also, she acknowledges that discourses should not be viewed as a

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[14] Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885 - 1925*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991, p. 10.

beginning point "but are themselves shaped by pre-existing social relations (mainly of gender, race, and class)."[15] Hence, gender, race and class are, by definition, always at the centre of Valverde's discussion of moral reform.

Valverde deals with the complexities of discourse analysis by using what she refers to as "slippages." A good example of her use of slippages, particularly for this thesis, is her analysis of moral panics, such as that of white slavery in early twentieth-century English Canada. Valverde argues that recognizing the importance of gender, race, and class does not go far enough if the historian chooses one of these as a predetermined category of analysis.

> White slavery, like all other moral panics, can easily be dismissed as merely a cover for the real issue by interpreters who have decided beforehand what the real issue always is: for instance, one might want to prove under the rhetoric of white slavery lay real shifting class relations in an urbanizing Canada, or, alternatively, that the panic was merely a patriarchal ploy to frighten women into staying in the domestic realm. Such unidimensional approaches do not help us to understand the complex ways in which a moral issue that appears to be singular serves as the site for social debate on a number of important and interrelated issues; and they certainly do nothing to further our understanding of what I call back-and-forth 'slippage' among categories such as class, gender, sexuality, and race.[16]

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[15] Valverde, p. 10.

[16] Valverde, p. 90.

Valverde's multi-dimensional approach succeeds in her discussion of moral reform as a whole, but when we turn to specialized studies, such as those on eugenics in Canada or on juvenile delinquency, we find that more traditional, unidimensional approaches prevail.

Some works have been written on the subjects of eugenics and juvenile reform in the North American context. Perhaps the best study of the movement informing the background of this thesis is Angus McLaren's book *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885 - 1945*. In it he traces the origins of eugenics and offers some explanation as to why it gained popularity in Canada. McLaren claims that fears about the denigration of the race and consequently the so-called "decline" of the nation provided a setting well-suited for eugenic solutions.

> The fear of the feeble-minded was based on the assumption by a large number of turn-of-the-century commentators that mental deficiency was the cause of a host of social ills. For the middle class, of course, it was a comforting notion to think that poverty and criminality were best attributed to individual weaknesses rather than to structural flaws in the economy. This explains why so many otherwise intelligent humanitarians supported the labelling, the segregation, and ultimately the sterilization of those they designated subnormal.[17]

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[17] Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885 - 1945*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990, p. 37.

Although McLaren covers the wide range of complex issues which contributed to the eugenics movement in Canada, particularly in the West, he focuses exclusively on the words and thoughts of the middle-class professionals. The result is a very one-sided account which excludes any analysis of how "non-professional", working class, women and men were complicit in popularizing eugenic discourse.

Although the history of criminality and the history of childhood have been popular subjects for social historians in the last two decades, few of these studies discuss young women and the gendering of juvenile delinquency. One exception is Barbara Brenzel's *Daughters of the State: A Social Portrait of the First Reform School for Girls in North America, 1856 - 1905*. In it she uses the School as an index by which to measure the main currents of reform thought during the latter half of the 19th century.

> Several unifying themes run throughout this book. One is the critical influence of class, age, and gender on policies and programs for the reformation of the poor and potentially wayward. Another is the ideological basis for reform; the environmentalist vision of Lancaster's founders and the later hereditarianism that reverberated through the various documents of the commonwealth's [Massachusetts] reform institutions reflect the intellectual history of the nineteenth century.[18]

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[18] Barbara Brenzel, *Daughters of the State: A Social Portrait of the First Reform School for Girls in North America, 1856 - 1905*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1983, p. 5.

She describes the founding of the Industrial School in Lancaster, Massachusetts as an optimistic time period where reformers were positive and convinced of their contribution to the social well-being of the lower classes. The thesis of her book, however, is that this was a brief period, and soon Lancaster became little more than a prison for young women. "The examination of a reform institution during the second half of the nineteenth century reveals the devolution from reformist visions and optimistic goals at mid-century to pessimism and 'scientific' determinism at the century's close."[19] There is little doubt which the author prefers.

Although her work contributes to our understanding of early reform institutions and the policies which governed them, Brenzel falls into the trap of feeling she must choose between the "environmentalist" or the eugenic perspective. As a result, she tends to romanticize the early stages of Lancaster's history and condemns the later ones. The debate about which discourse is more influential misses the point. In fact, Brenzel's study demonstrates how both perspectives were used together at Lancaster and, as such, were allowed to co-exist.

Also, although she claims to incorporate a critical analysis based on class, age, and gender she focuses almost exclusively on class as the most important category. "In

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[19] Brenzel, p. 5.

the final analysis, the crime of most Lancaster girls was poverty."[20] Hence she reduces her study to a description of what the "real" issue was and uses, in this case, gender and age as merely "covers" for the bigger problem.[21] In the end, Brenzel offers only a unidimensional analysis which does little to further our understanding of how juvenile delinquency was constructed in nineteenth century New England.

In the British Columbia context, Indiana Matters has written a series of articles and a thesis on the history of juvenile delinquency. Her M.A. thesis was an examination of the Boys Industrial School at Coquitlam, and she has since published follow-up articles on the subject. For the purpose of this study the most important of these articles is one in which she deals with the juvenile court and the cases of young women committed to PIHG through it.[22]

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[20] Brenzel, p. 81.

[21] For a description on the use of "covers" in historical analysis see Valverde, p. 90.

[22] Indiana Matters, "'A Chance to Make Good': Juvenile Males and the Law in Vancouver, BC, 1910 - 1915", M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1978, and Matters, "The Boys' Industrial School: Education for Juvenile Offenders", in Donald Wilson et. al., eds., *Schooling and Society in Twentieth Century British Columbia*, Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1980, pp. 167-184. For the purpose of this study, Matters, "Sinners or Sinned Against?: Historical Aspects of Female Juvenile Delinquency in British Columbia", in Barbara K. Latham and Roberta J. Pazdro, ed., *Not Just Pin Money*, Victoria: Camosun College, 1984, pp. 265-277, is most useful.

Matters correctly identifies the importance and popularity of "scientific" thought in the early twentieth century and how the reformers' preoccupation with the "child as the future of the nation" meant that the young women admitted to the PIHG would be categorized under this rhetoric.

> More than ever before, 'scientific' thought was playing a role, both in helping to identify problems and in suggesting appropriate mechanisms for dealing with them. The principles of 'scientific management' identified 'social efficiency' as the major factor that would determine whether or not a race would survive and prosper. Social efficiency became one of the main obsessions of the period.[23]

Another strength of Matter's article is that she had access to the case files of the Juvenile Court of Vancouver which are now completely closed to researchers. As a result she has detailed information about the way in which the inmates were admitted to the PIHG and the ways in which the charges against them were administered and carried out. She substantiates the claims of researchers who claim that the majority of the charges made against young women were classified as "morality" charges.[24]

Though the article is admittedly short and could not possibly pursue every issue relating to this subject,

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[23] Matters, "Sinners or Sinned Against?", p. 265.

[24] For a detailed discussion on the gendering of charges brought before the Vancouver Juvenile Court in this period see Dorothy E. Chunn, "Boys Will Be Men, Girls Will Be Mothers," pp. 87-110.

Matters forgoes several opportunities to discuss some important themes. For example, in her section on sexuality she describes the way in which charges were often exaggerated simply to incarcerate those whom the court identified as in need of reform which was often based on the youth's socio-economic class. She gives as an example the case of one young woman who appeared before the juvenile court on the charge of "wandering abroad" when she had done no more than play in a park in her bloomers. Matters claims correctly that many of the charges were applied in this manner.[25]

Matters argues the exaggerated charges were due to the fact that those associated with the Juvenile Court system were from the middle-class and had different definitions of "appropriate" childhood behaviour than did the parents of their working class offenders. Since Matters's study places an emphasis on class over gender and race, like Brenzel, she misses the opportunity for a more complete analysis. Had she examined the way in which other factors, such as gender, co-contribute to the construction of delinquency, she would have been more able to explain how the definitions of respectability *and femininity* contributed to the high rates of morality charges among young women.

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[25] Matters, p.270.

Recently, the analysis and deconstruction of discourses has become more often used by feminist and social historians; though few incorporate a multidimensional approach. By stressing one category of analysis over all others, the result has been a unidimensional and incomplete analysis of the past. This study attempts to take up the theoretical questions and challenges posed by Mariana Valverde, apply them to the deconstruction of eugenics and euthenics, and examine how these two discourses were linked to definitions of deliquency and feeble-mindedness among young women.

The nature - nurture debate has had a long, well-documented history, and the analyses of eugenics have continued to emphasize one over the other. By using the PIHG as a window through which to examine the construction of eugenics and euthenics, this study will abandon the preoccupation with the nature - nurture dichotomy and instead focus on their co-existence and mutual reinforcement. This approach will follow in the footsteps of the new developments in social theory but will not discard entirely all remnants of social control.

The espoused purpose of the PIHG was to reform and "reclaim" the young women sent there. "Under the 1912 Act establishing the Home, it was required to provide 'custody and detention, with a view to [the] education, industrial training, and moral reclamation' of females under the age of

sixteen, who were committed to it for any reason."[26] Therefore, control must be an important part of this study. However, it will not discuss control as a single, unified monolith to which all else is relative. Rather, control is explained as part of an intertwined complex in which feminists, families, and the state co-contribute to the social control of young women.

Several themes inform this thesis. First, it attempts to show that delinquency is not an historical given. Young women were not bound to be found delinquent in the past on the basis that they are found to be so in the present. In other words, definitions of deliquency have an historical context and young women who were labelled as deviant in the early twentieth century may not have been later in the century. Also, though control cannot and should not be ignored, it is seldom absolute or complete and, as shown above, it is not very useful to view it as such. As a result, the "young delinquent woman" is constructed and reconstructed in conflicting and contradictory ways. Finally, this thesis is non-deterministic. Young women are not labelled delinquent solely because they belong to a "weaker" gender, class, and/or race. That is not to say that the power of the dominant group and their attempts (sometimes successful) at social control should be ignored.

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[26] Matters, "Sinners or Sinned Against?", p. 268.

However, a non-deterministic approach does show the importance of time and place and the risks involved when historians choose to pre-identify the dominant discourse and emphasize it at the expense of all other competing and co-existing ones.

Feminist scholars have shied away from studying the institution because of its association with old patriarchal, political studies which were completely void of gender analysis. However, as the PIHG was a state-run institution dedicated to control, it provides a unique opportunity to deconstruct deviance, eugenics, and euthenics.

Another, equally important, reason for looking at an institution is the lack of any records from the young women labelled as "delinquents." Although this thesis cannot attempt to speak on behalf of these young women, because of the detailed records kept by the PIHG, at the very least, they will not be completely silent in this study.

Also, as Carolyn Strange has noted, young women were singled out for the particular attention of reformers and politicians concerned with a wide range of social issues all of which they believed contributed to the "decay" of Canadian society.[27] Reformers argued that women were primarily sexual beings, whose reproduction and sexuality

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[27] Carolyn Strange, "The Perils and Pleasures of the City: Single, Wage-earning Women in Toronto, 1880 - 1930", PhD Dissertation, Rutgers University, 1991, p. 5.

had to be controlled in the interest of social stability and preservation.

> Women did not merely have babies: they reproduced 'the race.' Women did not merely have enough babies or too much sex: through their childbearing they either helped or hindered the forward march of (Anglo-Saxon) civilization.[28]

The belief that the reproduction of one race should be encouraged and the reproduction of others discouraged, meant that *all* women, as either mothers or potential mothers, were a focal point of the social reform movement. In this context, women's sexuality and reproduction were more than individual choices, they represented the social and moral concerns of society as a whole.

Thus, young women were inextricably linked to issues of immorality and social decline in the early twentieth century, and the time period under study parallels the rise in contemporary debates reflecting this tie. In short, their concern stemmed from the fact that the birth rate of the "respectable" was declining while the birth rate of the "unfit" (read "immigrant poor") was increasing.[29]

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[28] Valverde, "'When the Mother of the Race is Free': Race, Reproduction, and Sexuality in First-Wave Feminism," in Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde, eds., *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992, p. 4.

[29] For a detailed discussion of the 1921 Census and its role in popularizing discussions of "social inefficiency", see John Heard Thompson and Allen Seager, *Canada 1922 - 1939: Decades of Discord*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1985, pp. 1-13.

This is not to say that just because politicians and reformers began discussing young women as a "problem" that they became a public issue, but from the historian's perspective long-winded and detailed records left by politicians and bureaucrats provide much needed source material that is otherwise difficult - at times impossible - to find. Also, the period under study parallels the beginning of what Linda Gordon calls the "quiescence of feminism": when feminism was in decline in North America, and, as a result, women, and more specifically, mothers were blamed for most of society's ills.[30]

Unfortunately, the sources used in this thesis come mainly from the administrators and officials involved with the PIHG and not from the young women themselves. The single largest group was the Attorney General Correspondence Records which, though a massive and largely uncatalogued collection, were a very rich source. Correspondence regarding the particular administration and procedures at the PIHG were all found here. As a result of the organized and detailed filing system used by the Attorney General's office staff, letters and other correspondence relating to a particular case or issue may be traced through their full history. This was particularly useful for a discussion of any interaction between the PIHG and a young woman's family.

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[30] Gordon, p. 61.

As a provincial institution, the PIHG was required to produce Annual Reports detailing their operations and expenditures for the preceding year. Both the PIHG and the British Columbia Boys' Industrial School (BIS) produced these reports, but many of the ones for the PIHG are not published and are available only in transcript form in the Attorney General's files. Even so, many years are missing from the PIHG's reports. The *Annual Reports of the Boys Industrial School* are more detailed and may be found in every issue of the *BC Sessional Papers* for all years under study except 1919.

The *Annual Reports* provide detailed statistical data on each inmate in the institutions including the reasons for committal and the length of sentences. In the case of the PIHG, the Superintendent, Margaret Bayne, also produced detailed accounts of any new procedures adopted during the past year. These included dress reform, new training policies, or how many released inmates had "made good." Also, these *Reports* included a detailed section on escapes: what the PIHG was doing to prevent them, and usually, how they had decreased over the past year as a result of the good administration of the Superintendent.

The Juvenile Court of Vancouver was also required to produce annual reports for the same reasons as the Industrial School and Home. These reports give information about judges' work days, charges, Curfew Officers' Reports,

and a detailed history of each case passing through the Court.

The Juvenile Detention Home in Vancouver produced Annual Reports written by the Chief Probation Officer, Herbert Collier. They outlined his duties and how many "visits" he had with the young women and men who had appeared before the Juvenile Court or with whom he had any contact whatsoever. The Detention Home's Report was similar to that of the Industrial School and Home in that it gave detailed biographical information about its residents for the previous year and the charges that had been laid against them.

Margaret Bayne, the Superintendent of the PIHG for the period under study, compiled a scrapbook and autobiography manuscript that were recently donated to the British Columbia Provincial Archives. Her autobiography traces the span of her entire life and has only a small section on her ten year tenure as Superintendent from 1918 to 1929. Her scrapbook, on the other hand, is devoted almost entirely to articles and clippings relating to her time at the PIHG. There are many newspaper articles which praise the job she is doing at the Home, and though there are some which are critical of her administration most of these have been "edited", presumably by Bayne herself, and the critical parts cut out.

The records of the Vancouver Local Council of Women, housed at the University of British Columbia Archives, were also consulted. There were many detailed letters to politicians, public officials and other community groups calling for action regarding the state of juvenile delinquency in Vancouver and the rest of the Province. Most of these referred specifically to young women. Also, many letters and correspondence referring to eugenics and the institutionalization of "unfit" young women were found. These were particularly useful in the chapter on eugenics and euthenics and the complicit role feminists had in perpetuating them.

In 1928, the BC Legislature released the *Final Report of the Royal Commission on Mental Hygiene*. Its purpose was to identify cases of "subnormals" in the province and recommend appropriate treatment and action. The *Report* had a specific focus on children and a large section on so-called "feeble-minded and delinquent" youth. This document was particularly useful in the chapter on the construction of feeble-mindedness and delinquency.

Since young women occupied such a preferred place in the political debates and public discussions of the time, a number of newspaper articles were found which helped to complete the record of what was being said about delinquency at the time. Here the *Vancouver Province*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Daily Colonist*, and *Victoria Times* were useful sources with

which to fill these gaps. Many of the officials and administrators referred to in this study wrote lengthy editorials and gave numerous interviews on subjects ranging from their own political views to their policy recommendations for their profession and the treatment of delinquent youth. These articles form part of the sub-text on delinquency and feeble-mindedness, as well as contributing significantly to the discussion of how eugenic and euthenic discourses overlapped and co-existed.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE YOUNG DELINQUENT WOMAN: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

By all contemporary accounts the opening of the PIHG symbolized a triumph of the marriage of modern reform work and scientific inquiry. An article in the *Toronto Star* called it "the most up-to-date institution of its kind in Canada, in equipment and methods."[1] The Home was not run by religious or private philanthropic organizations as had been the practice in the past, but by a professionally trained staff paid by the state. New techniques involving psycho-analytical and sophisticated medical examinations were all part of the quest for statistical data which formed the "scientific basis of reform work."[2] However, the balance had not shifted entirely in the direction of scientific objectivity; reform arguments which emphasized respectability and moral purity were still used.

> The problem [young delinquent women] that faces us seems to be a social and economic one, but in reality it is a social and spiritual one. We cannot arrive at social and economic justice except by moral and spiritual regeneration.[3]

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[1] *Toronto Star*, October 21, 1920, n.p.

[2] Margaret Bayne, "Fifth Annual Report of the Provincial Industrial Home for Girls," 1919, p.7.

[3] Margaret Bayne, "Roses in Winter: An Autobiography," n.d., p. 187.

The co-existence of both scientific and morality discourses had a profound effect on the young women held at the PIHG. The process by which they arrived at the Home involved the identification and segregation of these young women from their peers. The media, juvenile reform experts, and community groups all used labels such as "feeble-minded" and "delinquent" to describe the young women identified by the Juvenile Court and its institutions. These reformers and experts believed feeble-mindedness was a scientifically proven mental condition and supported this definition with volumes of statistical data and observations. In addition, they believed delinquency, which was considered one of the symptoms of feeble-mindedness, reflected a state of social decay which was exacerbated by an increasingly immoral population. Most important, these reformers and experts used the hereditarian arguments which formed the basis of the definition of feeble-mindedness to explain how the deficiencies of a few were responsible for an enormous range of social problems. For the purpose of analysis feeble-mindedness and delinquency will be discussed as separate discourses; however, they were so interconnected, and so often used to explain one another, as to have been, at times, indistinguishable.

Together feeble-mindedness and delinquency provided a powerful and persuasive argument for the regulation and

control of young women. The "Report of the British Columbia Royal Commission on Mental Hygiene" released in 1927, and again with additional appendices in 1928, provides an explanation of how feeble-mindedness was defined and the origins of this definition. In addition, the Commission's Report provides the context in which this definition was interpreted by social service professionals, juvenile reformers, and maternal feminists to explain the social "problem" of the young deviant woman, and how this definition was applied to the young women at the PIHG.

The Royal Commission on Mental Hygiene was established by the B.C. Legislature in 1925 to examine the cause of the increase in the number of patients in the province's mental institutions, the Provincial Mental Hospital and its branches, to examine the role insane, mentally deficient, and subnormal immigrants played in these increased numbers, and to report upon and investigate the care and treatment of subnormal children.

The Commission divided insanity into three types, hereditary, acquired, and decadent. These were associated with three age groups, early adult life, middle age, and old age. Hereditary insanity, often referred to as feeble-mindedness or mental deficiency, was a congenital defect passed from parent to child, or acquired at an early age, and had no known medical cure. Acquired insanity was

thought to be caused by syphilis and alcoholism both of which, it was argued, were declining due to increased education and awareness of their potential dangers. This form of insanity could be treated and cured at mental hospitals. Decadent insanity occurred almost exclusively in old age, and the most effective treatment for this condition was to keep those who suffered from it relatively comfortable in an old age home.

The Members of the Commission argued that feeble-mindedness, because of its basis in heredity, posed the greatest challenge to society. The assumption underlying many of the Commission's recommendations was that unless feeble-mindedness was controlled and regulated, there was the potential for a population explosion among mentally deficient families.

> Feeble-minded persons are especially prolific and reproduce their kind with greater frequency than do normal persons, and through such reproduction provide an endless stream of defective progeny which are a serious drain on the resources of the nation.[4]

Therefore, feeble-mindedness was the focus of the Commission's Report.

The Commission was prompted by the growing concern that, since World War One, there had been a drastic increase in the number of inmates housed in the province's mental

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[4] "Final Report," Appendix A, p. G8.

institutions. It was argued that this increase was due to a number of factors. First, the Members of the Commission explained that the increased efficiency of the technology used to diagnose mental disorders meant that more men and women were being treated for them. Second, they argued that the improved system of care delivery available at the hospitals meant that these institutions were no longer regarded as merely insane asylums where, once committed, the likelihood of being released was remote. Instead they had become treatment centres with a high rate of success, and the increased number of patients at the mental institutions reflected a public acknowledgement of this change. However, the two main reasons that were given as the causes of the increased numbers related to feeble-mindedness.

The Members of the Commission argued that feeble-mindedness had posed a two-fold problem. First, it had been the practice to house feeble-minded adults with other inmates in institutions which had not been designed for the purpose of treating this deficiency. In the case of the mental institutions, this meant that feeble-minded young adults were included among the ranks of those who suffered from acquired or decadent insanity, and this accounted for the increase in numbers.

The second component of the problem was the increased numbers of "foreign born" inmates housed in the province's

mental institutions. The members of the Commission argued that, although feeble-mindedness itself was not a recent development, the new, scientific techniques for testing intelligence of populations had revealed that certain immigrant groups had higher rates of feeble-mindedness than did others. Therefore, the waves of inferior immigrants that had been pouring into Canada since the late nineteenth century had, the Commission argued, greatly increased the number of mentally deficient families to the point where feeble-mindedness had become a serious threat to Canadian society.

It is important to note that the Commission distinguished between "inferior immigrants" and "inferior races." It was the individual immigrant, not the country from which he came, that was the source of the problem. For as the Commission itself found in a survey of patients at the Provincial Mental Hospital who had not been born in Canada, the greatest proportion of those classified as feeble-minded were of Anglo-Saxon descent. In fact, the survey found that those born in Britain or its possessions represented a proportion of the feeble-minded population 54.9% greater than their proportion of the total population of B.C. at the time.[5] Thus, based upon this information, the Commission concluded the following.

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[5] Helen P. Davidson, "Report on the Heredity and Place of Origin of the Patients Admitted to the Provincial

> Information and statistics now available are not sufficient to warrant any definite assertion that immigration does or would contribute disproportionately to the total of mental abnormality in this province. We are not prepared to say that there is a greater proportion of mental abnormality in countries from which our immigrants come than in Canada. It may be that prima facie evidence of our Provincial statistics is to be accounted for by the proportion of unfit individuals among our immigrants being larger than their proportion in the whole population of the countries from which they come. There may be ground for this assumption in the fact that individuals of this type are naturally restless; that they move because they are unsuccessful at home owing to their disability; that sometimes they are "shipped away" to a new land by their relatives.[6]

Mental Hospitals of British Columbia," Appendix G, "Report," 1927, p. CC46. Helen Davidson was a resident of New Westminster where she taught classes for subnormal children. She studied psychology at Stanford University in California and was considered an expert in the field of inherited mental deficiency.

[6] "Report," 1927, p. CC30.

Thus, this was simply reflected in the population of the mental hospitals. The higher rates of admittance of feeble-minded immigrants by the federal authorities was blamed for these increased numbers.

Furthermore, studies of the British Columbia population revealed that there were not as many feeble-minded as originally projected. This must have been quite disconcerting to the mental hygienists who, equipped with culturally biased intelligence tests, still were unable to get the desired numbers. However, the Commission used the supposed high rate of mortality among feeble-minded children to account for these low numbers. The lack of the feeble-minded child's ability to care for itself, coupled with the fact that the parents were likely themselves to be deficient and therefore unable to care adequately for their children, meant that many feeble-minded children did not reach adulthood. Therefore, the Commission argued, the low rate of feeble-mindedness among adults did not give a true representation of the extent to which mental deficiency existed among the population. For an accurate figure, children would have to be tested.

The Commission faced an apparent dilemma. The increased number of patients in the province's mental institutions was blamed upon the increase in feeble-mindedness among the general population. In turn, this

general increase was blamed upon the higher rates of feeble-mindedness among immigrants. However, neither the rate of feeble-mindedness among immigrants nor the rate of feeble-mindedness among the population at large was as great as the Commission had anticipated. In their Report, the Members of the Commission provided explanations for these shortfalls, but surely these numbers did not represent a crisis for the province's mental health. Yet, the Commission continued to argue that feeble-mindedness was a problem affecting "all of the citizens of this province."

In fact, the Commission estimated that there were two thousand feeble-minded women and men living in British Columbia in 1927. This figure was based on a survey by the Canadian National Committee on Mental Hygiene of the province, conducted in the mid-1920s, which estimated that 40 out of every 10,000 were deficient. The Commission did not hesitate to point out why these numbers should cause alarm in the community.

> Mental deficients are generally recognized to be the most frequently dependent class in the community. Local proof of this, if such were required, was heard by this Commission in the evidence of an official of the Vancouver City Relief Department that low mentality was undoubtedly at the root of the difficulties of a large proportion of their chronically dependent cases. Generally these people, while unable to provide for themselves or their families, were not in such condition as to require restraint. Mental deficiency is the major factor in producing the habitual criminal, particularly of the petty class which graduates through the Juvenile Court and Industrial Homes and becomes the confirmed

> "repeater" or "recidivist" who, in many cases, spends half his life in gaol.[7]

The Commission argued that the feeble-minded were represented among the "dependent class" out of all proportion to their numbers in the general population. Thus, it was not the actual number of mentally deficient women and men that was seen to be the problem, but the presumed potential for danger and social decay that these few represented.

The Commission was not alone in its concerns and recommendations; in many ways they were simply mirroring a larger national and international trend. By the time the Commission's *Final Report* was released in 1928, concerns over the mental health of the Canadian population were well established. The Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene (CNCMH) was established in 1918 in response to what they termed the inadequate handling of the mental hygiene crisis in Canada.[8] Throughout the 1920s, they lobbied the federal government to introduce systematic testing of both the immigrant and native populations to determine their level of intelligence.

> The CNCMH set as its agenda a campaign against crime, prostitution, and unemployment, which it asserted were all related in one way or another with feeble-mindedness. The underlying argument

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[7] "Mental Deficiency: Care and Treatment of Subnormal Children," Appendix D, "Report," 1927, p. CC22.

[8] McLaren, p. 59.

> of the Committee was that the old methods of dealing with such problems by institutionalization were expensive and ineffective; preventive methods, beginning with examination and testing, were necessary.[9]

In fact, the Commission quoted surveys conducted by the CNCMH to support its findings and called upon the CNCMH's most well-known member, Dr. Clarence M. Hincks, throughout its hearings. Hincks was the Medical Director of the CNCMH and was regarded by many as the foremost authority on mental hygiene in Canada. Among Hincks' accomplishments had been the popularizing of the benefits of intelligence testing.[10]

Hincks and the CNCMH identified mental hygiene "problems" both within the domestic and immigrant populations and argued that only by copying the American policy of examining and testing all immigrants *before* they were granted admission into Canada could the nation's mental health be protected and its integrity preserved. Hincks rejected what he termed the "old" method of dealing with the feeble-mindedness, indefinite institutionalization, as both unscientific and inefficient. The better course, he argued, would be to employ the new scientific techniques already widely used in the United States to test intelligence and

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[9] McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, p. 59.

[10] McLaren, p. 60.

detect mental deficiency.[11] These were the infamous IQ tests.

Carl C. Brigham, a psychiatrist who had been one of the first to use the Binet-Simon IQ tests in North America, had published his monumental work *A Study of American Intelligence* in 1923.[12] For this study Brigham had tested recruits for the United States military and concluded that there were three major groupings of Europeans which indicated intelligence: Nordic, Alpine, and Mediterranean. Brigham argued that as one moved north through these groupings the rate of intelligence increased. This single study was instrumental in both popularizing the notion of racial difference based on intelligence and increasing the prominence of the psychology profession and its methods.

Hincks used Brigham's work as justification for using IQ tests in a system very similar to the one in place in the United States. There potential immigrants were tested at a centre, established specifically for that purpose, to determine their mental fitness. To prove the need for such a scheme in the Canadian context, the CNCMH routinely conducted small surveys of individual provinces in the early 1920s, and then published these findings in the *Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene*. One of these surveys, conducted

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[11] McLaren, pp. 59-67.

[12] McLaren, p. 61.

in 1924, was used as evidence of the number of feeble-minded by the Commission.[13]

The surveys of the Western Provinces, where many of the most recent immigrants had settled, received particular attention. These surveys typically read: "the feeble-minded, insane, and psychopathic of that province [in this case Manitoba] were recruited out of all reasonable proportions from the immigrant class, and it was found that these individuals were playing a major role in such conditions as crime, juvenile delinquency, prostitution, pauperism, certain phases of industrial unrest, and primary school inefficiency."[14] However, to the CNCMH, the feeble-minded, immigrant population represented only half of the problem. With the high numbers of defective immigrants already in Canada, these surveys argued, stemming the wave of immigration was not enough. Scientific tests and prevention measures would be the solution to the already existing domestic problem. And prevention could take one of two forms, segregation or sterilization.

Segregation was considered expensive and inefficient and was largely condemned by experts such as Hincks as "old"

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[13] "Mental Deficiency," Appendix D, "Report," 1927, p. CC22.

[14] "Annual Report of the CNCMH," *Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene*, 2, (1920), p. 266, as quoted in McLaren, p. 60.

and "unscientific."[15] Therefore, the CNCMH focused the majority of its discussion on sterilization. The provincial surveys conducted by the CNCMH had a large impact on the discussion of sterilization. These surveys enabled the CNCMH to draw its conclusions from scientific, clinical evidence which, in turn, was used as the basis for recommending eugenical sterilization legislation. "If we accept the estimate based on the clinical experience of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene that 50 per cent. of all cases of mental deficiency in Canada are of hereditary origin (many authorities put the percentage higher), it becomes plain that a very considerable number of persons are doomed before birth to a misery and helplessness from which there is little, if any, hope for deliverance."[16] On the basis of this information, the Commission recommended that B.C. adopt a sterilization law to restrict and regulate the reproduction of mentally deficient adults and youth.

Sterilization of feeble-minded women and men had support from a variety of sectors. The Commission recommended its use in "certain well-defined cases" and was

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[15] Hincks, "Reasons for the Increase in Numbers of Patients Maintained in the Provincial Mental Hospitals," Appendix A, "Report," 1927, p. CC9.

[16] "Sterilization," Appendix E, "Report," 1927, p. CC25.

impressed with the record in California where eugenical sterilization of the feeble-minded had been practised since 1908.[17] Furthermore, it made specific reference to the overwhelming support of sterilization voiced at its hearings.

> Evidence given at public hearings of this Commission and representations made through other channels lead us to the conclusion that there is a considerable weight of public opinion in British Columbia in favour of eugenical sterilization. Turning to our lay witnesses, it is to be noted that all five who discussed the subject were favourable to sterilization as a eugenical measure. The five mentioned included two police magistrates, the chief probation officer of the Vancouver Juvenile Court, the supervisor of special classes for subnormal children in Vancouver, and a representative of the Child Welfare Association of Vancouver. In addition to this direct evidence, we have learned that the principle of eugenical sterilization for the prevention of mental abnormality has been endorsed at a number of meetings of Local Councils of Women and other women's organizations in different parts of the Province.[18]

Clearly, the prevention and treatment of feeble-mindedness was not restricted to a discussion among a relatively small community of medical experts. Feeble-mindedness represented much more than the unfortunate circumstances of a handful of afflicted who were in need of charity and community support. Fears about the social

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[17] "Sterilization," Appendix E, "Report," 1927, p. CC25.

[18] "Sterilization," Appendix E, "Report," 1927, p. CC26.

"costs" of mental deficiency informed the opinions of many social agencies and women's groups. Therefore, feeble-mindedness became the site for social debate on a variety of inter-related issues, as many who appeared before the Commission complained that the increase in delinquency, crime, prostitution, illegitimacy, vagrancy, and destitution was a result of the unchecked increase in feeble-minded families.[19] In this context, feeble-mindedness was instrumental in informing the discourse on delinquency.

Many of these morality issues were not new, however. In the late nineteenth century, middle class reformers' fears coalesced around issues of moral pollution associated with modern urban life. Social purity activists focussed on vices such as prostitution and intemperance to explain a wide range of social ills and used them to justify attempts to clean and purify the cities and, in particular, to purify the slums.[20] By the 1920s, reformers were giving these old fears new life through the use of scientific evidence and explanation.

The Commission's focus on the prevention of feeble-mindedness meant that young women and men would be the targets of these initiatives. If prevention of a hereditary

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[19] "Mental Deficiency," Appendix D, "Report," 1927, p. CC22.

[20] Valverde, p. 78.

defect were to be effective, the Commission argued, feeble-mindedness would have to be detected at the earliest stage possible so that the risk of these feeble-minded youth passing their deficiency to their children could be eliminated.

> Belonging as they do to defective families, the taint is almost certain to be passed on to the children. If the province adopts a policy of sterilization these children should be sterilized. There are on this list, which is conservative, forty-seven children.[21]

Therefore, it recommended psychological testing to detect feeble-mindedness in any institution where young women and men were found. This included public schools, juvenile courts, industrial homes and other social agencies which dealt with youth.

The Commission was not the first to make the links between youth, delinquency, and feeble-mindedness. As the Commission's Report suggests, there were many reformers who believed that there was a close relationship between the problems of youth and the problems of feeble-mindedness. Reformers and experts alike blamed feeble-mindedness for the inability of some young women and men to make responsible decisions and resist immoral temptations. This deficiency, they argued, caused feeble-minded youth to transgress social norms and laws which inevitably led to delinquent behaviour.

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[21] *Final Report*, Appendix A, p. G8.

In a feature newspaper article written in 1918, Miss Bertha Winn, an expert in the field of juvenile reform, listed the leading cause of delinquency among young women and men as feeble-mindedness.[22] The article argued that feeble-mindedness was attributed to 50% of the juvenile delinquency cases, and, when coupled with parental neglect, the figure increased to 75%. "The fact cannot be overstated that every defective is a potential criminal, for the simple reason he lacks balance between thinking and acting, and he is bound by the limitations of his nature to become a ward of the State either as a criminal, lunatic, or pauper."[23]

Those active in the field of juvenile reform appear to have agreed with Winn. This is supported through their interest in the proceedings of the Commission. For reformers active in the field of juvenile delinquency, feeble-mindedness provided scientifically provable evidence of something they had, no doubt, suspected long ago: immorality, poverty, crime, and delinquency were not caused by social, economic, or gender inequalities, but by flaws in individuals. Therefore, many of the older, social purity issues, such as prostitution, illegitimacy, temperance, and child rescue work, could be explained using this new, scientific discourse of feeble-mindedness. Fears about the

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[22] *Daily Colonist*, October 12, 1918, p. 11.

[23] Daily Colonist, October 12, 1918, p. 11.

potential dangers of leaving the mentally deficient unchecked led many reformers to become active in the identification, segregation, and sometimes the sterilization, of feeble-minded adults and their families.

For the women and men who were active in the juvenile courts, explanations for delinquency which focused on feeble-mindedness were particularly important. As an inherited mental defect, young women and men could show signs of feeble-mindedness at an early age. And in the interest of prevention, the earlier these feeble-minded youth were identified, the greater the likelihood that they could be segregated and their reproduction regulated. Furthermore, hereditarian arguments provided agents of the juvenile court with explanations which justified longer terms of incarceration and explained high rates of recidivism among delinquents.

> Young people make mistakes. Sometimes environment and sometimes heredity is to blame for the situation in which their hands are turned against society. The unfortunate fact remains, however, after all this care, that there are some of the girls who really need protection all their lives. They have not been well enough equipped by nature for the struggle in the world; they are easily led and consequently are unable to withstand temptation.[24]

Not all delinquents were labelled as feeble-minded, however. Some were simply "wayward" or the victims of poor

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[24] Bayne, in *Vancouver Sun*, July 20, 1920, p. 8.

home environments. In most cases, parents were blamed for their child's delinquency either as a result of hereditary arguments, where parents passed their mental defect on to their children, or as a result of the inadequate home environment they had provided for their children.

> It is estimated that one out of every one hundred homes is a specific breeding house of crime. There is not a citizen among us who does not know the signs - filth, squalor, disorder, indecency, irregular meals, irregular sleeping hours, irregular personal habits, little or no compassion between mother and child, and, worst of all, not a single feature that would stimulate moral or spiritual activity or inspire honourable and respectable conduct.[25]

This dual role that parents played in contributing to delinquency, justified, in the opinion of reformers, the Court's ability to evaluate and regulate parents and siblings as well as the delinquent herself. By focusing on the family, the Juvenile Court and its agents were able to extend the definition of delinquency beyond hereditarian arguments alone, to include definitions which accounted for suitable environments as well. Thus, the two seemingly conflicting discourses of eugenics (arguments based on heredity) and euthenics (arguments based on environment) were both used to create the definition of the delinquent.

Women, as mothers or potential mothers, were singled out for particular attention under these eugenic and

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[25] *Daily Colonist*, October 12, 1918, p. 11.

euthenic discourses. Mothers, as caretakers of the home, were seen as responsible, in many cases, for the poor home situation which had produced the delinquent child. Furthermore, the fears that mental deficiency represented for reformers, namely increased prostitution, crime, and illegitimacy, were cause for particular concern within the context of women's sexuality and reproduction.

Young women, as potential mothers, were expected to exhibit self-control and to engage in marital sexual relations only.[26] Any perceived transgression of this expectation amounted to delinquent behaviour in the eyes of reformers. If feeble-mindedness was a principal cause of delinquency, reformers argued, then the young delinquent woman, who was by definition, immoral and sexually deviant, was particularly dangerous. Reformers believed her delinquency represented a specific kind of threat to society: the threat of immorality which inevitably led to social decay. Thus, feeble-mindedness and delinquency represented a different set of problems for young women than for young men.

It is not surprising, then, that the Commission's Report claimed a high frequency of feeble-mindedness among women it classified as prostitutes (the highest ratio of any single group) at 49%. "Most subnormal girls are potential

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[26] Valverde, p. 29.

prostitutes, but only because of their inability to say 'no' to the approaches of a normal man or boy, and not because of any overdevelopment of the sex element in their physical or mental make-up."[27] Further, the Report estimated that in the State of Georgia 30% of women arrested for immoral conduct were feebleminded, and while only 17% of the inmates in men's prisons were classified as mentally deficient, 30% of the inmates in women's prisons were labelled as such. The same ratios were observed in the Boys' and Girls' Reformatories in New York State with the young men at 15% and the young women at 27%.[28]

Medical and juvenile delinquency experts were not the only ones to reinforce this gender-specific link between feeble-mindedness, delinquency and sexual immorality. Throughout the early years of the Vancouver Juvenile Court, women's groups used maternal feminist arguments to pressure the Court to recognize young delinquent women as distinct from young delinquent men. Using statistics compiled from

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[27] Earl Fuller, M.D., Superintendent, Penhurst State School, Pennsylvania, "General Role of an Institution for Mental Defectives," Appendix D, *Final Report*, p. G11.

[28] These statistics come from U.S. sources and are cited in the Appendices of the Report. The Commission used these figures because of the absence of any survey of this type done in B.C. at the time. The Commission argued that while the numbers may not be entirely accurate in the B.C. context, nonetheless they proved the sexual danger feeble-minded women posed to society.

police records, newspaper articles, and their own observations, the Vancouver Local Council of Women, along with other groups, petitioned the Chairman of Police Commissioners and the Mayor to appoint a woman judge to the Juvenile Court.[29] They argued that only a woman could fully appreciate and sympathize with the particular needs of young women.

> Society seems to pay far too much attention to the social problem insofar as it concerns the boy. In my opinion, the girl, who has been so unfortunate as to err out of the path of righteousness, deserves a far greater position of importance. Her problem is far more complex, and involves many difficulties and pitfalls, difficult for the ordinary reader of human nature to comprehend.[30]

By 1917, Helen Gregory MacGill had been appointed as the first woman judge of the Vancouver Juvenile Court with the specific task of hearing all female delinquent cases. Thus, maternal feminists, as well as medical and juvenile court experts, contributed to the eugenic and euthenic discourses which argued that young women delinquents were potentially more dangerous than young men. Consequently, the young women who appeared before the Vancouver Juvenile Court were treated differently than their male cohorts.

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[29] Vancouver Local Council of Women, "Correspondence," March 8, 1916; May 7, 1916; September 6, 1916.

[30] Judge King Dykeman, Superior Court, Seattle, "Address," quoted in "Minutes," Annual Meeting of the Vancouver Local Council of Women, 1919.

Since delinquency, feeble-mindedness, *and* immorality were so much a part of the categorization of the young women appearing before the Juvenile Court, the manner by which charges were selected and laid against them differed significantly from those laid against young men for the same act. The charge of "incorrigibility" provides a good example of this, as it was the charge applied most often against both young women and men appearing before the Court.

Though incorrigibility was officially defined as "beyond the control of parents or guardians", this vague and general definition was extended in practice to include a wide range of offenses which included theft, forgery, arson, vagrancy, and being an inmate in a house of ill-fame. When incorrigibility was applied to young men it was likely to represent a property violation; whereas, when the same charge was laid against young women, it was likely to represent a morality infraction.[31] In fact, immorality was so important in labelling young delinquent women that in 1924 the Juvenile Delinquent Act was revised to include "sexual immorality" to the definition of a juvenile delinquent. Judge MacGill was one of the chief proponents of this revised definition arguing that the old one failed

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[31] Dorothy Chunn, "Boys Will Be Men, Girls Will Be Mothers," p. 95.

to address the type of delinquency she most frequently saw in the young women appearing before her: sexual immorality.[32]

An examination of the PIHG and the young women who were sent there points to the important role eugenic and euthenic discourses played in the identification and incarceration of young women who were labelled as delinquents. Anxious reformers were quick to point out the potential threat feeble-minded young women posed to society and argued for their segregation in institutions like the PIHG. Unlike other institutions, the PIHG could protect delinquent young women from harming the community, while at the same time providing an environment that was suited to their particular needs.

The "subnormal" intelligence of the majority of inmates made them inappropriate for the education public schools offered. Using many of the same arguments and recommendations put forward in the *Final Report on Mental Hygiene*, the PIHG focused on manual labour and domestic duties rather than "book learning".

> A great many of these girls are muscularly-minded rather than academically-minded. They acquire knowledge through the use and training of their muscles rather than by the more abstract method of the printed page.[33]

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[32] MacGill, "Judge MacGill's Report,""Report of the Juvenile court and Detention Home, Eighth Year End, 1917," City of Vancouver, 1918, p. 4.

[33] Margaret Bayne, quoted in *Vancouver Province*, February 17, 1921, p. 9.

Thus, both segregation and training, which had been associated with the older unscientific solutions for feeble-mindedness by critics such as Hincks and the CNCMH, were used to treat feeble-minded, delinquent young women at the PIHG. An analysis of the population at the PIHG reveals the importance of both eugenic and euthenic discourses to the identification and incarceration of young women.

A separate Girls' Industrial Home opened in 1914 as a result of the problems associated with housing young women and men in the same quarters. When the PIHG opened, the B.C. Attorney General appointed Thomas Collier, brother of Herbert Collier the Chief Probation Officer, as its Superintendent. However, following the opinion that had led to the appointment of Judge MacGill, a woman superintendent was appointed to the Home four years later. Margaret Bayne, suffragette, ex-school marm, and long-time supporter of the Liberal Party was appointed to the position in 1918 and lasted until shortly after the Liberals were elected out of office, in 1929. Upon her appointment, a *Vancouver Sun* article said of Bayne that "her compassion and high morality will provide an excellent source of inspiration for wayward girls."[34]

The public perceptions of the PIHG supported and reinforced its mandate. The Home was regarded as one of the

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[34] *Vancouver Sun*, December 15, 1917. n.p.

most progressive of its kind on the continent, and Bayne often made speaking tours in Ontario and Alberta on its "successes." Typical headlines in local newspapers read: "A Highly Progressive Supervisor", "A Model Home", "Miss Margaret Bayne, Superintendent Girls' Industrial Home, Who Has Won the Hearts of All Girls Under Her Direction". The Women's Pages in the Vancouver press were quick to note the changes "a woman's hand" brought to the Home and its new emphasis on humanitarianism. "The punitive atmosphere [has] disappeared from these institutions and human kindness and sympathy have taken the place of disciplinary punishment and the rigorous treatment formerly supposed to be due to offenders."[35]

The emphasis on the improvements made at the Home under Bayne referred, in part, to the fact that the system was not as effective under the leadership of the previous, male Superintendent. Women's organizations did not miss the opportunity to point out the importance of "the woman's sphere" in the reform and reclamation of young women. The message was that women, as mothers, were more able to provide maternal kindness to the wayward, and maternal compassion to the feeble-minded, and thus reinforce the image of the domestic ideal. As Bayne herself said, using a gardening metaphor that would have been familiar to many

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[35] *Western Women's Weekly*, p.7.

women, "I find a kernel of good in every girl that can develop into the most marvellous growth."[36]

The inmates of the PIHG were young women ranging in age from nine to eighteen years. Most of the young women arrived at the Home when they were between the ages of eleven and sixteen years old. Under the "Industrial Home for Girls Act" a young woman could be sentenced to an undefined period of not less than two years. However, an analysis of the Annual Reports suggests that most of the inmates served sentences that were much longer than this minimum. For example, the number of young women who were admitted to the Home in 1919 totalled thirty-six. Of those thirty-six only five were given sentences of two years; whereas, thirty-one were given indefinite sentences.[37] These sentences usually ended when an inmate turned eighteen; this was the age at which the PIHG could no longer legally hold an inmate.

However, the records of the PIHG show that not all of the young women held there were released on their eighteenth birthdays. In some cases, in 1919 there were two, Bayne would recommend that an inmate serve an extended sentence at the adult penitentiary, the Oakalla Prison Farm. It is

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[36] Margaret Bayne, as quoted in *Western Women's Weekly*, p. 7.

[37] Margaret Bayne, "Fifth Annual Report," 1919, p. 3.

unclear under what legal authority the Superintendent was able to commit young women sentenced to the Industrial Home to an adult institution. The Annual Reports simply list under the heading "Reason for Release" , "sent to Oakalla Prison Farm."[38]

However, there is evidence that this practice was fairly common. In 1929 Judge MacGill was fired from her position as Judge of the Juvenile Court. Although, MacGill was probably dismissed for political reasons (the Liberals had lost the provincial election to the Conservatives and MacGill's replacement had campaigned for the Tories during the election), the official reason given by the new Attorney General was that MacGill had refused to commit the young women appearing before her to the PIHG.[39] In subsequent interviews, MacGill did not deny this charge claiming that she had been reluctant to send young women to the PIHG because of the frequency with which Bayne sent so many of them to Oakalla.[40]

This hints at the enormous power Bayne was able to exert over inmates, even when this power was beyond that which was legally specified and approved by colleagues. Her interpretation of which inmates were wayward, and hence

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[38] Bayne, "Fifth Annual Report," PIHG, 1919, p. 4.

[39] *Vancouver Province*, February 26, 1929, p. 6.

[40] *Vancouver Province*, March 1, 1929, p. 1.

redeemable, and which were feeble-minded, and hence should be incarcerated indefinitely, was very important. The consequences of the label "feeble-minded" could be potentially severe.

In any event, prolonged segregation, whether at the PIHG or elsewhere, seems to have been preferred, and this preference becomes clear in the context of Bayne's statement about the role of the PIHG. "Part of the service our Home gives to the community is the ability to keep girls from producing illegitimate babies for at least two or three years."[41] The argument for longer sentences was the longer young women were held at the PIHG the fewer illegitimate children the community would have.

The young women held at the PIHG came from throughout the province. Like the Commission's Report, the Annual Reports of the PIHG distinguished between "nationality" and "place of birth." As the tables below indicate, the single largest nationality represented was Canadian, and over half of the inmates for both of the years 1914 and 1918 were also born in Canada. The next largest nationality represented at the PIHG was English followed by "Indian" and American. Also, the majority of the inmates were born in Canada, England and the United States.

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[41] Bayne, in *Vancouver Sun*, June 1, 1929, p. 12.

TABLE ONE:
NATIONALITY OF INMATES AT THE PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR GIRLS IN 1914 AND 1918[42]

NATIONALITY	1914	% OF TOTAL	1918	% OF TOTAL
American	4	18.3	2	5.6
Canadian	7	31.8	14	38.9
English	4	18.3	10	27.8
French	2	9.1	0	0.0
Half-caste Indian	0	0.0	3	8.3
Indian	0	0.0	2	5.6
Irish	1	4.5	0	0.0
Italian	1	4.5	0	0.0
Newfoundland	1	4.5	0	0.0
Scottish	1	4.5	5	13.8
Swedish	1	4.5	0	0.0
TOTAL	22	100.0	36	100.0

TABLE TWO:
COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF INMATES AT THE PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR GIRLS IN 1914 AND 1918[43]

COUNTRY WHERE BORN	1914	% OF TOTAL	1918	% OF TOTAL
Canada	12	54.6	25	69.5
England	2	9.1	4	11.1
Scotland	1	4.5	3	8.3
Sweden	1	4.5	0	0.0
United States	6	27.3	4	11.1
TOTAL	22	100.0	35	100.0

These figures for the nationality and place of birth of the young women held at the PIHG highlight some important points about the way delinquency and feeble-minded

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[42] These figures are drawn from "First Annual Report," PIHG, 1915 and "Fifth Annual Report," PIHG, 1919.

[43] "First Annual Report," 1915, "Fifth Annual Report," 1919.

discourses affected the treatment of the inmates at the PIHG. The mental hygiene movement's focus on the immigrant was definitely a very important component of eugenic discourse, even though, as the figures from the Commission showed, immigrants may not be as well represented among the feeble-minded as was hoped. The fact that a substantial majority of the inmates of the PIHG were white, Canadian-born young women of British descent suggests that feeble-mindedness and delinquency were considered to be a problem among the non-immigrant classes as well. Furthermore, in the case of young women it was factors other than race alone which qualified a young woman as deviant. These relate to sexuality and danger; the types of discourses more often associated, not with the new scientific explanations, but with the older morality discourses. Juvenile reformers and activists assumed that delinquency was an indication of the social and moral dangers feeble-minded young women represented to the community. Under these assumptions the majority of young women labelled as delinquents were directly responsible for increased illegitimacy, prostitution, and immorality in general.

Unfortunately, the length of sentence, age, and nationality, and place of birth is all that we know of these young women as individuals. Their personal backgrounds and histories were not documented. However, the PIHG records

seem to suggest that they were likely from working class families; certainly this was the target group that the Juvenile Courts professed to regulate. Although there may have been some general similarities between the histories of the inmates, it is important to remember that there was no single, defining characteristic or behaviour that would have resulted in committal to an institution like the PIHG. The reason this group of women was brought together at the PIHG was a result of the fact that they were singled out by middle class reformers, and in some cases by family members, as in need of regulation and control because of their age, class, and gender.

The blending of moral judgements and science has led some historians and social scientists to view moral reformers in the early 20th century as "contradictory" and "confused". But, as Mariana Valverde notes, the discourses of morality and science were far less separate then than they are today, and to compare them with late 20th century standards of scientific inquiry "is to commit the historiographical error of presentism."[44] Furthermore, this comparison tends to underestimate the extent to which the "contradictory and confused" discourses affected young women's lives. The co-existence of moral purity and science discourses provided the context in which young women were

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[44] Valverde, *The Age of Light Soap and Water*, p. 44.

classified as feeble-minded, identified as both immoral and dangerous, and hence fit for incarceration in an institution.

The popularity and wide-spread use of feeble-minded discourse contributed to definitions of delinquency and deviance based on hereditarian arguments. The belief that social problems could be solved using biological arguments, popularized by eugenic groups such as the CNCMH, met a receptive audience in governments, social service professionals, and women's groups alike. Thus, hereditarian explanations were not limited to discussions among a small group of medical or mental health experts; in the early twentieth century, arguments about the potential dangers of feeble-mindedness were used to explain a range of social problems. Often, these social problems were represented by fears about increasing social decay and immorality and, in particular, the increase in sexual immorality.

Although the targets for control had changed over time, fears about social and national decline due to sexual immorality were not new. In the mid-nineteenth century, reformers were alarmed at the perceived increase in masturbation, especially among boys, while by the turn of the century prostitution had replaced it as the most dangerous vice.[45] However, feeble-minded discourse, with its

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[45] Valverde, pp. 28-29.

focus on heredity, transferred these fears onto young delinquent women. Hence, morality and scientific arguments cojoined at the site of the delinquent young woman. This union had a profound effect on who would be identified as deviant, and, therefore, who would be incarcerated at the PIHG.

An analysis of the population of the PIHG reinforces the explanation which argues that young women were incarcerated because they represented fears of increased sexual immorality and social decay. The inmates were identified as deviants as part of a complicated process in which their gender, age, and class were classified as dangerous using a combination of hereditarian and morality arguments. An analysis of this identification process is an important first step in understanding how multiple discourses contributed to the relationship between institutions, the communities they served, and those they attempted to control.

CHAPTER THREE
PARENTS, DAUGHTERS, AND THE STATE: CONTROL AND THE PIHG

It has been argued that the process by which young women were labelled as feeble-minded and identified for social control by the Vancouver Juvenile Court was part of a larger effort to reform the working class by imposing middle class norms and values upon it.[1] It is argued that because bodies such as the Juvenile Court were controlled by the middle class they contributed significantly to the regulation and institutionalization of respectable ideals of childhood and sexuality. This analysis assumes that social control policies were imposed from the top down: from middle class to working class, from white to non-white, and from men to women.

> Both the legislation aimed at upholding the norms of childhood and sexuality associated with the middle class family and enforcement mechanisms like juvenile courts, it is argued, were components of a new, urban policing strategy, orchestrated by the powerful and implemented by their designated agents, which intensified and extended state control over the poor. Marginal

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[1] Veronica Strong-Boag, "Intruders in the Nursery: Childcare Professionals Reshape Years One to Five, 1920 - 1940," in Joy Parr, ed. *Childhood and Family in Canadian History*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982, pp. 160-178.

> families are thus perceived as the victims of arbitrary decisions imposed upon them.[2]

However, this is an oversimplification which, by focusing exclusively on class, assumes that bourgeois ideals of respectability and domesticity were presented as a monolith and that working class parents and children were forced to choose between accepting these ideals or suffering the consequences imposed by the Juvenile Court. In fact, these assumptions only partially reflect the situation at the PIHG.

Although an analysis of the Vancouver Juvenile Court and the PIHG shows that working class parents as well as their children were subjected to surveillance and regulation by the agents and administrators of the Court, and that these same agents advocated different treatments for deviance based on gender assumptions, analyses which argue the dominance of one class over another as the sole relevant discourse of social control obscure the complexity of the triangulated relationship between institutions, parents, and children. These relationships together contributed to the labelling of young women as feeble-minded and delinquent.[3]

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[2] Chunn, p. 106. Here Chunn is referring to Platt, A. *The Child Savers: The Invention of Delinquency*, Chicago: Univeristy of Chicago Press, 1969, and Sutherland, Neil, *Children in English- Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976.

[3] For a detailed discussion on the importance of the relationship between institutions and the communities

Although young women were incarcerated and treated as deviants at the PIHG, they were not considered entirely responsible for their own actions. Many of the experts of the Juvenile Court saw the failings of young women as moral failings of their families. In fact, under the provisions of the Juvenile Delinquents' Act parents could be found guilty of having contributed to their daughter's delinquency simply by not preventing it.

> The penalty [for this charge] could be a $500 fine and one year in jail. They [parents] were also guilty if they actually did anything that would tend to encourage the development of delinquency. This clause was used to successfully break up common-law marriage among parents, since such were immoral by definition.[4]

Therefore, a young woman's family could be classified using the same arguments that were used against young women; by virtue of their relationship to their daughter they too were "delinquent" and hence in need of control.

The case of Allison S. serves as an example of this. Allison escaped from the PIHG shortly after having served one year of her three year sentence for incorrigibility. She immediately went home to her mother in Vancouver. Allison's mother returned to the PIHG a week later and

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they serve see Michael Ignatieff, "Total Institutions and Working Classes: A Review Essay," *History Workshop Journal*, Volume 15, 1983, pp. 167-173.

[4] Indiana Matters, "Sinners or Sinned Against?," p. 267.

requested that Allison be released to her custody. Allison's mother contended that she had procured her daughter's admission to the PIHG with the idea that her daughter was going to a school where she would receive some educational training and that she had no idea that it was a "reformatory." Bayne refused the request stating that she had a policy of not releasing any inmate until they had "made good" after an escape. Bayne felt that to do otherwise would be rewarding meanness and disobedience.[5]

Allison's mother then wrote to the Attorney General (AG) to try to secure her daughter's release. The AG responded in a letter to Bayne stating that he supported her decision and felt that Allison's conduct was principally the fault of the mother, whom the AG described as never having been married.

> I very much regret to say that I am afraid the girl's conduct was in part, at least, accounted for by the conduct of the mother. The language she used on certain occasions was not the kind of language that was calculated to do good to the children. There should be some chance of making something of her, but I am afraid it can only be done by keeping her for a fairly prolonged period.[6]

Upon these recommendations Allison was not released. In fact, her situation worsened. Bayne and AG Manson agreed

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[5] Bayne, letter to Attorney General Manson, February 28, 1924.

[6] A.M. Manson, Attorney General, letter to Bayne, March 1, 1924.

that her mother's influence was highly detrimental to Allison's reclamation, and her mother was forbidden to visit her daughter at the Home for a period of six months. During this time Bayne recommended Allison's transfer to Oakalla Prison Farm, the adult penitentiary. It is not known if her request was fulfilled.

Clearly, Allison was not considered to be the only "delinquent" in this situation. Using the same morality and deviance arguments used to identify and incarcerate young women, namely illegitimacy, Bayne and the Attorney General categorized Allison's mother as unfit. Thus, although the Juvenile Court system's principal focus was youth, its euthenic emphasis on "suitable home environments" justified an extension of its mandate to include the control of the delinquent's family.

Therefore, according to reformers, the role of the Juvenile Court went beyond the identification and segregation of young delinquent women and men. Reformers argued that the Court should attempt to prevent an increase in delinquency by focussing on its causes, and a poor home environment was seen to be a significant factor. Furthermore, as members of the middle class, reformers had a class-specific definition of what constituted a respectable, and hence good, environment. According to this ideal, a good home environment consisted of two parents and children.

The father was expected to be the bread winner, while the mother was expected to focus on her household duties full time. Moreover, the children were not expected to work until they had completed school. Delinquency experts believed that women, as mothers, played a particularly important role in the proper upbringing of their young daughters. "They were to guide their daughters safely through the stormy period of adolescence to respectable womanhood; a delinquent daughter signaled a mother's failure in child-rearing."[7]

The Judges of the Vancouver Juvenile Court echoed this concern. In his "Report of the Juvenile Court," Judge H.C. Shaw expressed his frustration at the extent to which a delinquent youth's parent(s) contributed to her/his child's delinquency; parents, he argued, were causing an increase in the number of cases coming before the Court. He lamented that Industrial Homes were not sufficient to curtail this increase and that what was really needed was a Parent's School which would eliminate the causes of delinquency in the first place.[8] MacGill agreed with Shaw, and in her

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[7] Mary Odem, "Single Mothers, Delinquent Daughters, and the Juvenile Court in Early 20th Century Los Angeles," *Journal of Social History*, 25, Fall 1991, p. 38. For a discussion of the impostition of middle class family values in the Vancouver Juvenile Court see Chunn, pp. 87-89.

[8] H.C. Shaw, "Judge Shaw's Report," in "Report of the Juvenile Court and Detention Home, Eighth Year End, 1917," City of Vancouver, 1917, p. 3.

process. Collier's duties included overseeing and co-ordinating all aspects of the probation process. It was his responsibility to investigate the homes of young delinquent women and men and determine the suitability of these homes for probation. Collier could also lay charges against a parent or guardian of a young woman or man, and the charge books of the Vancouver Police Court indicate these charges were laid.[10] Furthermore, if a parent refused to co-operate with the Chief Probation Officer, or any other official of the Court, she or he might also find themselves charged with contributing to the delinquency of their child. "Parents who actively objected to, or tried to resist, the probation officer's enormous intrusion into their lives, ran into the provisions of the *Juvenile Delinquents Act*."[11]

From the earliest days of the Vancouver Juvenile Court those who were supposed to feel the impact of juvenile courts were not only the *young* delinquents. "The juvenile court was established in Canada to serve as the 'university of the poor', giving them 'aid, encouragement, help, and assistance' to 'check their evil tendencies and to strengthen their better instincts.'"[12] Therefore, the

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[10] Vancouver Police Court, "Charges," as quoted in "Report of the Juvenile Court and Detention Home," 1914 - 1917.

[11] Matters, p. 267.

[12] *Canada Statues*, 1908, Ch.40, as quoted in Matters, p. 267.

importance of the family in the functioning of the Court cannot be overstated. Bertha Winn, a juvenile delinquency expert of the day, makes this point clear. "There are hundreds of parents who are in no way fitted to assume the responsibility of directing the lives of children, and that so many of our youth turn out well is a more astounding fact than that so many are failures."[13]

Collier's authority to invade and question a suspected delinquent's home was immense. In the "Reports of the Chief Probation Officer", Collier lists between 900 and 1200 visits made to delinquents' homes in any given year; up to one quarter of those were made to young women and men's homes who did not even appear before the Court.[14] Complaints made to the Chief Probation Officer not only came through the Court, however. Police and curfew officers, school teachers and officials, relatives, or the general public could report a young woman to Collier. And he claims to have investigated every complaint; although he admitted he would occasionally "patrol" the streets of Vancouver looking for potential offenders.[15]

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[13] Bertha Winn, *The Daily Colonist*, October 12, 1918, p. 11.

[14] Herbert Collier, "Chief Probation Officer's Report," in "Report of the Juvenile Court and Detention Home," 1914-1917.

[15] Collier, "Report of the Chief Probation Officer," 1917, p. 6.

In a lengthy newspaper feature Collier stated what he believed to be the principal cause of delinquency and his role in correcting it.

> The hardest task I face is correcting the home. A great many people can't think. If they could they wouldn't go wrong, they wouldn't be failures and wasters and criminals. They need someone to think for them, someone at the steering wheel."[16]

Furthermore, Collier, like many of his contemporaries, invoked the use of morality discourses to classify young women as more immoral than young men. "The wayward girl offers a harder problem than the erring boy. The girl is less amenable to discipline, is more determined to pursue her own course and is prone to run away from her protectors."[17] This claim is made though Collier acknowledges that a very low percentage of the cases he dealt with concerned young women. Assumptions about what constituted delinquent behaviour by a young woman had an impact on the classification of her family, and, in the opinion of juvenile reformers, justified the prolonged and invasive interference of the Court in their lives.

Collier acted in conjunction with other Court officials in his surveillance of young women and men and their homes. In Vancouver, the Curfew Officer was responsible for

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[16] Collier as quoted in *Vancouver Sun*, September 14, 1929, p. 8.

[17] Collier, *Vancouver Sun*, p. 8.

ensuring that no youth were out on the streets, unless they were under the supervision of a "suitable" adult, after nine o'clock in the evening in accordance with a Vancouver City Curfew By-law. Often a young woman found out past the curfew hour was simply escorted home, but many times the officer took it upon himself to meet with the parent(s) in their home to "caution them." The Curfew Officer then recorded the names of both the offender and her parent(s). It was well within the Curfew Officer's jurisdiction to charge a parent with contributing to the delinquency of a minor if he felt she/he was unreceptive to his "cautioning."

The consequences of resisting the Court and its agents were potentially severe. As in the case of Allison S., often resistance drew unwanted attention to families and homes; once the Court intervened it was difficult to get it to leave. However, this intervention was not always unsolicited. Allison's mother committed her daughter to the PIHG, she was not sent there via the Juvenile Court. Though it may be argued that Allison's mother, as a single parent, probably had limited strategies available to her, probably sent her daughter to the PIHG as a last resort, and definitely did not benefit from the decision to do so; nonetheless, she actively sought out the PIHG and its services. Parents' willingness to initiate contact with the Juvenile Court hints at some significant features of the

relationship between families and the Court that simple social control analyses do not adequately address.

The extent to which families exerted their power and actively sought the help of the Juvenile Court, and in particular the PIHG, makes it clear that a dichotomous analysis based on the absolute domination of one group over another fails to include the complexity of the relationship between control institutions and the community these institutions served. Furthermore, it does not account for the triangulated relationship between a young woman, the Juvenile Court, and her parent(s) all of whom were involved in a constant struggle for control.

An examination of the Vancouver Juvenile Court Reports and the Annual Reports of the PIHG reveals some important features of these relationships. Since the Judges of the Juvenile Court performed only the judiciary function of sentencing, it was the role of the Chief Probation Officer, Collier, to identify delinquents and bring them before the Court. Therefore, it was Collier's responsibility to keep a record of all the cases he sent to either the PIHG or the Boys' Industrial School (BIS) through the Juvenile Court. In addition, these institutions were also required to list the number of new inmates admitted in any given year. When these figures are compared to the ones given by the Chief Probation Officer we find that a sustantial number of the

inmates at the PIHG were not sent there through this normal Court procedure. Furthermore, if approximately half of the young women admitted to the PIHG were not sent there upon Collier's initiation and the Court's recommendation, then how did they get there?

TABLE THREE:

NEW INMATES ADMITTED TO THE PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR GIRLS, 1914 AND 1918[18]

NEW INMATES ADMITTED TO PIHG	1915	% OF TOTAL	1919	% OF TOTAL
Total number of new inmates admitted to PIHG	22	100.0	22	100.0
Number of young women sent from Juvenile Court to PIHG	13	59.1	11	50.0
Number of PIHG inmates not admitted through the Juvenile Court	9	40.9	11	50.0

Complaints from Bayne suggested it was the parent(s) who frequently committed their daughters to the PIHG.

> Many of our girls are sent to us without even the formality of a trial and merely because of statements made by the parents. In most cases it is the parents themselves who are responsible for

[18] These figures were obtained from "First Annual Report," PIHG, 1915, "Report of the Juvenile Court: 1914," City of Vancouver, 1915, "Fifth Annual Report," PIHG, 1919, and "Report of the Juvenile Court: 1918," City of Vancouver, 1919.

> the delinquency of their children and should be in the Home in their place.[19]

Furthermore, the practice of committing one's own daughter to an institution like the PIHG was not unique to the Juvenile Court system. In her study of the Alexandra Orphanage in Vancouver, Diane Purvey argues that many families, faced with the stress caused by sickness, death, desertion, or loss of work, temporarily placed their children in the orphanage. When the parents overcame their particular crisis, the children were then removed from the Orphanage.[20] Parents played an important role in the identification of delinquency among young women. By presenting their daughters to the Court and the PIHG as incorrigible, parents reinforced definitions of deviance.

As Mary Odem suggests in her study of single mothers and the Juvenile Court in Los Angeles, the early twentieth century saw an increase in the number of young working class women who were employed in wage labour outside of the home.[21] Although her earnings contributed to her family's survival and were, in many cases, an important economic necessity, they had the potential to be a source of tension. As a

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[19] Bayne, "Seventh Annual Report," 1921, p. 11.

[20] Diane Purvey, "Alexandra Orphanage and Families in Crisis in Vancouver, 1892-1938," M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 1990, pp. ii-iv.

[21] Odem, p. 32.

significant contributor to her family's income, a young wage earning woman was in a stronger position to make certain demands and to challenge parental power. Thus, young working women were in a better position to challnge patriarchal family roles and expectations.

Therefore, parents often described their daughter's incorrigibility in terms of her failure to fulfill her family obligations. As one mother complained to the Vancouver Juvenile Court of her sixteen-year-old daughter, "she stays out at all hours spending her money in dance halls instead of staying at home and caring for her younger brother and sisters."[22] While parents defined their daughters' delinquency in terms of her failure to contribute satisfactorily to the family economy, the Juvenile Court defined delinquency in terms of sexual immorality.

These different definitions of incorrigibility meant that parents who initiated contact with the PIHG and the Juvenile Court seldom got what they wanted. However, by inviting the Court and the PIHG to assist in the control of their daughters, working class parents were using the Juvenile Court system, as others had used the Alexandra Orphanage, to suit their own needs. Families were both agents and victims of the Court system; they were controlled

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[22] Copy of Vancouver Juvenile Court transcript, June 9, 1924, Attorney General Correspondence Files, PABC.

by the agents of the Court while simultaneously using those same agents in attempts to control their daughters.

In some cases, the PIHG fulfilled the needs of parents and helped them control their daughters. Bertha F.'s mother committed her to the PIHG on the charge of incorrigibility in March, 1923. Mrs. F. argued that Bertha refused to assist in the care of her invalid grandmother with whom they lived. Bertha was released from the PIHG eight months later at her mother's request. In a letter written to Bayne in July, 1924, Mrs. F. thanked her for "steering Bertha back onto the path," and reported that she had had no trouble from Bertha since her return from the PIHG.[23]

Other cases, of course, were not so straightforward. The case of Betty S. highlights the complex, triangulated relationship in which families were regulated by the Juvenile Court and its institutions, and, in turn, families regulated their daughters and sought the state's intervention to assist them in doing so. Betty S.'s case describes the role of both class and age in this process and points to parents' complicity in the identification and incarceration of their daughters.

Betty S. was first brought to the attention of the Juvenile Court at the request of her mother in January, 1923. Mrs. S. contacted Herbert Collier to advise him that

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[23] Bayne, "PIHG Scrapbook," 1918-1929, PABC.

she did not know the whereabouts of her daughter and that Betty was beyond her control. Mrs. S. further suggested that possibly the best place for Betty would be the PIHG.

Collier notified the police in New Westminster where Mrs. S. claimed Betty was staying with "known prostitute" Rosie R. Betty was apprehended by the police and appeared before MacGill at the Juvenile Court. However, Mrs. S. had apparently had a change of heart and requested that Betty be returned to her custody. Probably due to the fact that Betty was alleged to be the company of a prostitute, the Court denied this request and continued with its investigation.

The Court proceedings revealed that, contrary to her mother's claim, Betty had been away from her parents' home for days at a time in the past, often staying in downtown Vancouver with "friends." Although the Court was reluctant to release her, Mrs. S. argued that her daughter's help was desperately needed to help run their small store. MacGill put Betty in her parents' charge on probation but insisted that a "field worker", Miss LeSeur, visit Betty and her parents twice a week.

Five days later, Betty appeared before the Court again. Her parents charged that she had been away for three nights. When the Court questioned whether or not Betty had their permission to be away from home, they replied that

they had promised her a vacation at some time in the future but had not thought that she would leave immediately. MacGill ordered a psychological assessment of Betty, and she was detained in the Juvenile Detention Home for three days while she was examined.

The Clinician's Report found that Betty was a victim of a "poor home environment."

> [Betty's] level of intelligence is below the average but not sufficiently so to consider her on the border line of feeble-mindedness. She understands ordinary situations and has ethical discrimination to a normal degree. There is nothing of a pathological nature in her attitude toward life or people. The cause of [Betty's] propensity for leaving home is doubtless the condition of that home. There appears to be an attempt at severe restraint that is often common when parents themselves are resisting authority. I believe [Betty] should not live at home.[24]

The recommendation that Betty not live with her parents speaks to the underlying purpose of the psychological assessment; it was not only Betty that was being analyzed.

The psychological report stated Betty was clever in "all hand work." And on this basis MacGill recommended that Betty be given parole at a textile company in Vancouver. Again, when Mrs. S. replied that Betty was needed in their store, MacGill pointed to the "evidence" given in Court which suggested that Betty was beyond the control of her parents and reminded Mrs. S. that it was she that had

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[24] Ruby A. Kerr, Clinician, Board of School Trustees, Vancouver, June 21, 1923.

initially brought Betty to the Court's attention with the suggestion that she had been staying with a known prostitute.

Betty, herself, pointed out that she already had a job, which she enjoyed, at the White Lunch Restaurant where she made a good wage as a waitress. Though MacGill acknowledged that the White Lunch was generally considered a respectable establishment it was open in the evening, and young women often got off shift quite late at night. When Betty further complained that she would not make as much money at the textile company, MacGill responded that it was the textile company or the Industrial Home. Betty chose the textile company.

For the next three months Betty did not appear before the Court though her parents continued to request that Betty be released into their custody so she could help in their store. Betty appeared in Juvenile Court again in July as a result of a complaint by Leseur that she had twice in the past week visited Betty's home and the textile company and found her to be in neither location. Furthermore, it appeared that her parents did not know her whereabouts. As a result, Betty was sentenced to a term of not less than two years at the PIHG.

However, Betty's mother continued to petition for her daughter's release. She argued that the family was planning

to move to Australia and would like to take Betty with them. There had been a widely publicized case two years earlier where a young man was granted an early release from the Boys' Industrial School because his parents were moving to England. Therefore, neither MacGill nor Bayne believed Mrs. S., and they advised the Attorney General not to grant Betty's release unless he witnessed her boarding the ship with his own eyes. Furthermore, the Court had been gathering information on both Mr. and Mrs. S. that suggested they were not fit parents.

A neighbour wrote to MacGill to tell her that Mr. S. beat his daughters "too severely." And Betty's younger sister Hazel, had since been committed to the Detention Home on a charge of theft. Also, there were reports that Mrs. S. had been "under the influence of liquor" when Collier made a routine house-call to their home. Also, Mr, S. "was alleged to have been convicted for selling liquor illegally, the mother to have been acquitted on a similar charge, and that later the father is alleged to have been apprehended for having drugs in his possession." Betty's own conduct aside, these allegations made certain that she would not be released into her parents' custody and would remain a ward of the state until the end of her sentence.[25]

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[25] The Attorney General briefly considered releasing Betty into her father's custody after he had received a letter from the Vancouver City Prosecutor referencing the indisputable good character of Mr. Frank S. When

Betty's case points to several important aspects of the relationship between class and age in the context of the PIHG and the Juvenile Court. Outside the confines of the PIHG's walls, power conflicts and negotiations were taking place both within the Juvenile Court system and within the context of the family. However, the different definitions of delinquency articulated by the Court and Betty's parents led to the different solutions proposed by each. Her parents hoped that the assistance of the Court and the threat of a term in the PIHG would make Betty reassess her decision to stay away from home and return to work in the family store. The Court, however, was concerned about the potential moral danger posed by Betty's unsupervised nights away from home, especially when some of them were spent with "a known prostitute." When parole to her parents' custody did not prevent these outings from occurring, the Court blamed her parents. As in the case of Allison S., a closer examination of the causes of Betty's delinquency pointed to her parents' moral failings. These failings were then used as the justification for incarcerating Betty at the PIHG.

But what about Betty, was she simply a victim of both parental and state attempts at control? Her behaviour

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it was discovered that there had been a mistake made and Betty's father was not the Mr. Frank S., Justice of the Police Court, as the Prosecutor had thought, the consideration was immediately dropped.

suggests that she was among the group of wage-earning young women that Odem describes. She used her wages from employment outside the home to exert her independence from her parents. Furthermore, it was possible that Betty was attempting to escape an abusive father, as the testimony of the neighbour alleged. Although Betty did not refer to this in her testimony before the Court, this could be because her father and mother were both present throughout all of the hearings.

However, the number of times Judge MacGill and her parents threatened Betty with a term at the PIHG, if she did not stay at home, suggests that Betty was probably aware of her alternatives. Although it would be misleading to claim that Betty *freely* chose to go to the Industrial Home rather than return home, her actions suggest that the PIHG was preferred to staying with her parents. Betty's actions point to some important aspects of the relationship between the PIHG and the young women held there. Her case suggests that the PIHG presented an option for young women trying to leave abusive home situations.

It has been suggested in other, similar, contexts that young women committed to industrial homes were often victims of abuse and violence.[26] Certainly Bayne commented on how

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[26] For an example of this in the American context see Brenzel, pp. 117-126.

reluctant she was to send some of the young women back to their homes knowing that "her own father had knowledge of her in the past."[27] Moreover, evidence from the PIHG's Annual Reports suggests that some of the inmates may have been victims of sexual abuse and violence.

When a young woman was admitted to the PIHG she was quarantined in a "holding cell" designed especially for that purpose. An inmate remained there until she had been examined by both a medical and psychological practitioner and pronounced "free of contagion."[28] If these experts were not immediately available, a young woman could remain in this cell for several days at a time. Under no circumstances would Bayne allow a new inmate to be in contact with other inmates until she had been examined. Thus, every young woman at the PIHG was examined.

Dr. Mary Campbell, a physician employed by the Juvenile Court, conducted these medical examinations. For the most part they were routine physical examinations; height, weight, blood pressure, respiratory rate, and pulse were measured. However, each new inmate, no matter what she had been charged with, was subjected to a pelvic examination as well. Each young woman was tested for venereal disease, and the number reported infected was often quite high. For

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[27] Bayne, letter to AG Manson, 1920.

[28] Bayne, "Fifth Annual Report," PIHG, 1919, p. 6.

TABLE FOUR:

AGE OF NEW INMATES AT TIME OF COMMITMENT TO THE PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR GIRLS, 1914 AND 1918[31]

AGE AT COMMITMENT	1914	% OF TOTAL	1918	%OF TOTAL
10 years	0	0.0	1	2.8
11 years	0	0.0	1	2.8
12 years	2	9.1	7	19.4
13 years	1	4.5	2	5.6
14 years	7	31.8	6	16.7
15 years	10	45.5	8	22.2
16 years	2	9.1	11	30.5
TOTAL	22	100.0	36	100.0

Thus, the issue of abuse is a complex one in the context of the PIHG. Evidence of abuse served to reinforce the image of the young woman delinquent as a sexual delinquent. Furthermore, this evidence also justified reformers' euthenic arguments which focussed on the poor home environments of delinquent women; if a young women had been involved in sexual activity, for any reason, the parent(s) were blamed for not providing a suitable home environment. However, reformers' arguments about the extent of parental resonsibility for the abuse of their daughters did not go beyond this euthenic explanation. The Court does not appear to have been interested in determining

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[31] These figures are from "First Annual Report," 1915, and "Fifth Annual Report," 1919.

if the young women appearing before it were victims of incest. In fact, this would have been an impossibility given the system of interrogation preferred by the Vancouver Juvenile Court where the parent(s) and daughter were both present throughout all of the proceedings. Linda Gordon offers a possible explanation as to why the Court focussed on victims of abuse rather than the offenders.

> The old feminist diatribes against drunken, brutal men came to be seem moralistic and unscientific. In the decades 1910-1930 sexual assault by strangers was emphasized and incest - that is, sexual assault within the family - deemphasized. Sexual abuse of children was increasingly blamed on 'dirty old men,' who were considered sick or 'perverted.' Incest and sexual abuse were fit into a new category, sexual delinquency. In this new understanding, the victims, almost always girls, were labelled as sexually deviant and criminal, even when they had been raped or mistreated at young ages, and were often incarcerated in industrial schools.[32]

Thus, young women, instead of their abusers, were identified as deviant and incarcerated at the PIHG.

However, evidence suggests that the PIHG did more than simply misplace blame for abuse and violence and then penalize victims of them. By separating young women from their families, it provided a reprieve, however imperfect, from abusive family members. Furthermore, some young women appear to have chosen a term in the PIHG rather than return

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[32] Gordon, p. 22-23.

to an abusive home situation. Betty S. did; others may have as well.

And cases from the PIHG seem to support this. Eliza A. was committed to the PIHG on December 25, 1922 at the request of her father, on the charge that she was incorrigible. Bayne's records state that "as usual a man was involved," and imply that Eliza had been seduced by a stranger.[33] However, shortly after she had been committed, the Attorney General received a petition with thirty-four signatures from Penticton, B.C. (where Eliza was from) stating that she had been unjustly committed to the PIHG by her father and requested her release. The petition stated that Eliza refused to live at home because she was subjected to sexual abuse by her older brother, and her father gave her no support in her attempts to resist him.

Shortly after the petition had been received, the Attorney General wrote to Bayne to inquire as to whether or not she thought Eliza should be released. Bayne responded by stating that Eliza herself requested not to be sent back to her father and asked if she could remain at the PIHG and enroll in its Commercial Course.[34] It is not known whether or not Bayne recommended her release.

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[33] Bayne, letter to Attorney General, December 28, 1922, Attorney General Correspondence Files, PABC.

[34] Bayne in letter to AG, February 11, 1923, Attorney General Correspondence Files, PABC.

The construction of deviance in the context of the young women inmates at the PIHG was complex. A multi-dimensional analysis which includes gender, class, race, and age reveals the inability of a deterministic approach (which argues women were bound to be labelled deviant simply because they belonged to a "weaker" sex, class, age-group, or race) to fully explain the treatment of young women by the Juvenile court and the PIHG. Though an analysis of the Juvenile Court and the PIHG shows that working class families, as well as their children, were targets of middle class social control initiatives, their relationship with the state and its institutions was not always in the form of attempts at resistance. Parents initiated the intervention of the Juvenile court and the PIHG in their own lives and the lives of their daughters. Furthermore, the power conflicts within families meant that the young women also used the PIHG for their own needs.

Though the PIHG represented one of the ultimate mechanisms for state control of deviant young women and their families, often parents actively sought this control over their daughters. Within the context of feeble-mindedness and delinquency Betty and her family were deviants. Further, Betty's parents were complicit in the identification, segregation and incarceration of their

daughter. To suggest, as some historians have done, that families were victims or were only able to resist efforts at social control at the margin, overlooks the way in which generational conflicts interacted with class conflicts to label young women as delinquents.

CHAPTER FOUR

EUGENICS, EUTHENICS AND THE REGULATION OF SEXUALITY: THE PIHG AND ITS IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF YOUNG WOMEN

The previous chapter argued that the ability of the Juvenile Court to control the young women it identified as delinquent was neither absolute nor complete. The complex relationship between the Court, families, and young delinquent women meant that the court system, and in particular the PIHG, was used by parents, and in some cases, by the young women themselves, to serve their particular needs. However, to the middle class women and men who comprised the Vancouver Juvenile Court, the young women had been sent to the Industrial Home as a result of their immoral, delinquent behaviour.

Using both eugenic and euthenic arguments, juvenile reformers identified delinquency among young women as a product of sexual immorality and low level intelligence. Whether it was a juvenile reform activist who argued that moral regeneration was essential to the reclamation of young women, or a Juvenile Court Judge who applied the term "sexually incorrigible" only to young women, by the time a young woman reached the PIHG the label of sexual delinquent was firmly in place.

However, eugenics and euthenics were not used simply as rhetoric with which to justify the segregation of young women as sexual delinquents. Juvenile reformers believed that segregating young women from their families and the community was only the first half of the reclamation process; in addition, they argued, young women should be treated for their delinquency in institutions designed specifically for this purpose. Furthermore, they argued, the treatment young women received at the PIHG should address their specific needs as sexual delinquents. Thus, the process by which young women were identified as deviant did not end with their committal to the PIHG; it continued throughout their terms at the Home and had a profound impact on their lives.

Bayne implemented a programme for juvenile reform which was based on the assumption that all women, regardless of age, race, or class were potential mothers; therefore, most of the activities and training offered at the Home focused on the domestic sphere. The inmates were instructed in the details of housework including cleaning, ironing, bread making, washing, cooking, and making and mending clothing.[1] These skills, Bayne argued, were essential to the successful management of any household. In addition, upon

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[1] Bayne in, *Vancouver Sun*, July 25, 1919, p. 11.

her appointment as Superintendent in 1918, Bayne amended the dress code to reflect a more feminine ideal.

> The policy pursued is to have the girls realize that this is not so much a place of punishment, but rather that here they are given another chance to make good. Believing that girls would prefer to be good girls and to be held in esteem by good people, no effort has been spared to achieve this purpose. The prison style of wearing hair was abolished the first day. The unbecoming uniform has been replaced by one more girlish and pleasing.[2]

Bayne insisted that the inmates wore ribbons in their hair and wore dresses that reflected the latest fashions. Furthermore, each inmate was instructed on how to make "pretty little coverlets of either pink or blue satin" for her bed.[3] Bayne argued that these improvements were essential in the reclamation of young delinquent women.

> The girls find that the world is anything but kind and they rebel. Therefore, they want to snatch all the fleeting amusement they can. Owing to their surroundings, they find nothing but pastimes of a vicious nature, and they come to the Home after the ordeal of the criminal court, sullen and unhappy, without faith in any person, and with the determination to "get even." Psychological tests have shown that most of them are subnormal mentally, and there has been no proper home influence to counteract nature's defects.[4]

Also, Bayne used her connections in the women's community to establish a Little Mothers' League. The

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[2] Bayne, excerpt from "Fifth Annual Report," 1919, p. 2.

[3] Bayne, "Fifth Annual Report," 1919, p. 6.

[4] Bayne in *Vancouver Sun*, July 20, 1920, p. 11.

University Women's Auxiliary gave lectures to the inmates on the how to bathe, feed, and clothe a child properly, while spending modest amounts of money. These Leagues were common throughout North America at the time. The focus of the instruction at the League was not so much to educate prospective mothers on how to tend for her own child, but for the daughters of working class parents so that they may be better able to adequately assist their mothers in the child care duties of the household.

In many ways the programs in place at the PIHG and BIS simply reflected middle class definitions of adolescence as a period of pre-adulthood. Following from the middle-class ideal of young men as future breadwinners and fathers, and young women as future homemakers and mothers, the BIS and PIHG were preparing inmates for their appropriate adult roles. Training which focused on food preparation and the care of children instead of on carpentry and shoe-making would have been seen as entirely appropriate for young women at this time. However, a comparison of the policies and procedures regarding the committal, parole, and release of inmates at these two institutions suggests the need for explanations which extend beyond arguments that emphasize middle class conceptions of adolescence and which include an analysis based on gender.

The treatment a new inmate received when he was first committed to the BIS differed from that which a young woman received at the PIHG. While new inmates at the BIS usually underwent a physical examination, the Annual Reports of the BIS indicate that these inmates were permitted contact with other inmates until the examination could be scheduled. They were not quarantined in a solitary holding cell as was the practice at the PIHG.[5]

Furthermore, unlike those given at the PIHG, the physical examinations given at the BIS make no mention of sexual histories. This could be explained, in part, by the fact that it was medically more difficult to determine this from an examination of a young man than it was for a young woman. However, the preoccupation with this information at the PIHG and the total absence of discussion about it at the BIS suggests that it simply was not considered relevant to the reclamation and rehabilitation of young men. Of course, this is not surprising if we recall that the majority of charges laid against young women at the Juvenile Court referred to sexual immorality, while the majority of those laid against young men were property crimes.[6] However, it

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[5] Superintendent Brankin, "Nineteenth Annual Report of the Provincial Industrial School for Boys," *B.C. Sessional Papers*, Victoria, King's Printer, 1924, p. J9.

[6] Chunn, p. 97.

is significant that *all* of the new inmates committed to the PIHG were subjected to pelvic examinations regardless of whether or not they were sentenced to the Home on charges of sexual immorality. Furthermore, the BIS Annual Reports suggest that very few, if any, of the young men's sexual histories were recorded upon their committal. This appears to be the case, despite the fact that some of the inmates at the BIS would have been sentenced there on indecent assault or other sex-related charges.[7] The importance of the belief that most, if not all, of the young women sent to the Home were potential, if not actual, sexual delinquents cannot be overstated.

In addition, the new inmates to the BIS and the PIHG were subjected to other tests upon committal. At the BIS, new inmates were given reading tests to determine their relative school grade and were assigned to a class which was most suited to their individual education level. The educational program at the BIS focused on a balance of school work, physical exercise, and manual training which was very similar to what was being offered by public school curriculums at the time.[8] Furthermore, though some of the

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[7] Brankin, "Nineteenth Annual Report," 1924, p. J6.

[8] Marta Danylewycz and Alison Prentice, "Teachers' Work: Changing Patterns and Perceptions in the Emerging School Systems of Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Central Canada," Alison Prentice, ed. *Women Who Taught: Perspectives on the History of Women and*

older inmates were given the opportunity to learn trades instead of attending regular school classes, most of the inmates were required to attend school lessons every weekday so that they could return to their public schools upon release.[9]

There is no evidence from the records of the PIHG that would indicate tests to determine a new inmate's reading level or mathematical ability were administered at the Home. In fact, the only tests, besides the physical examination, that were given to new inmates were psychological assessments. Bayne reports that each new inmate was assessed upon her arrival by Martha Lindley, a psychiatrist employed by the Vancouver School District. Lindley had previously been with the Vineland Training School for Feeble-minded Girls and Boys in New Jersey. This institution had been the first in North America to use IQ tests to detect mental deficiencies among its inmates.[10] Bayne explained why these reports were essential to her work in the reclamation of young women.

> The reports of the schools most successful with delinquents show that the psychological tests are

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Teaching, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991, p. 140.

[9] Superintendent Brankin, "Nineteenth Annual Report of the Provincial Industrial School for Boys, *B.C. Sessional Papers*, Victoria, King's Printer, 1924, p. J10.

[10] Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, p. 92.

> used as a scientific basis for reform work. The inability to resist temptation owing to subnormal mentality is the cause of most failures in the work of moral reclamation. There is a large percentage of subnormals at the Home. It is worthy of serious thought and points to the very urgent need of providing constant custodial care for many of the inmates, so that society may be relieved of a serious menace and the perpetuation of feeble-mindedness.[11]

Bayne estimated that between 50% and 75% of the inmates at the PIHG were feeble-minded; however, experts estimated the percentage of mentally deficient inmates at the BIS to be between 30% and 40%.[12]

The estimates for the number of feeble-minded young women at the PIHG closely parallel those given for the number of inmates who had had sexual relations prior to their committal. For the year 1920, for example, Dr. Mary Campbell reported that 70% of the inmates she examined showed evidence of having had sexual intercourse. For that same year Martha Lindley estimated that 75% of the inmates at the PIHG were feeble-minded.[13]

Furthermore, although figures quoting the number of feeble-minded inmates held at the BIS appeared in the Vancouver newspapers from time to time, they appear to have had little effect on the treatment of the young men

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[11] Bayne, notes.

[12] *Vancouver Sun*, March 23, 1920, p. 1.

[13] Bayne, "Seventh Annual Report, " 1921, n.p.

incarcerated at the BIS. Explanations which argued that poor home environment was the major factor causing delinquency among young men prevailed at the BIS.

> Our experience has been that a change of environment is the first essential step towards the cure, but there are others, and unless a school has a well-organized system that will cover the whole twenty-four hours of the day success will not follow. An industrial school should be a combination of home, public school, place of industry, and have hospital facilities for the treatment of physical ailments that are contributory factors to boys' delinquencies. Of these may be named diseased tonsils, adenoids, decayed teeth, defective eyes and ears.[14]

Psychological testing was not part of the committal procedure at the BIS.

At the PIHG, Bayne reconfirmed the importance of hereditary and morality discourses to the labelling of the young women sent there as sexual delinquents. She extended the definition of female delinquency, established by the Vancouver Court and juvenile experts, and applied it directly to her reclamation practices at the Home. The physical and psychological examinations conducted at the PIHG reinforced the image of the young delinquent woman as sexually immoral and therefore dangerous. The perception that young delinquent women posed a moral threat to the community ensured that they would be incarcerated for as long as possible.

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[14] Brankin, "Nineteenth Annual Report," p. J5.

Both the *Industrial School for Boys Act* and *Industrial Home for Girls Act* specified two alternatives for the length of sentence young women and men could receive. The judges of the Vancouver Juvenile Court could sentence a delinquent to a specified term of two years or more or an unspecified term of a minimum two years.[15] Though fixed sentences in excess of two years were permitted under the *Acts*, the Reports of the Juvenile Court indicate that fixed sentences were given for two year terms only, otherwise, if a longer sentence was preferable an unfixed sentence was issued.[16] In addition, the Attorney General could authorize an early release upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. Thus, an unspecified sentence allowed the individual most familiar with the progress of an inmate, the Superintendent, the authority to control the length of time young women and men spent in the PIHG and BIS.

An analysis of the Annual Reports for both the BIS and the PIHG shows that a greater proportion of the inmates at the BIS were given fixed sentences than was the case at the PIHG.

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[15] Section 6, *Industrial Home for Girls Act, B.C. Statutes*, 1912.

[16] "Length of Sentences," "Report of the Juvenile Court and Detention Home," 1915-1917.

TABLE FIVE:
TYPE OF SENTENCE GIVEN TO INMATES OF THE BOYS INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, 1914 AND 1923[17]

TYPE OF SENTENCE	1914	% OF TOTAL	1923	% OF TOTAL
Fixed	38	74.5	55	47.0
Unfixed	13	25.5	62	53.0
TOTAL	51	100.0	117	100.0

TABLE SIX:
TYPE OF SENTENCE GIVEN TO INMATES OF THE PROVINCIAL INDUSTRIAL HOME FOR GIRLS, 1914 AND 1918[18]

TYPE OF SENTENCE	1914	% OF TOTAL	1918	% OF TOTAL
Fixed	minority	< 50.0	5	13.8
Unfixed	majority	> 50.0	31	86.2
TOTAL	22	100.0	36	100.0

In the year 1914, for example, only 25.5% of the inmates at the BIS were given unfixed sentences greater than two years, while at the PIHG over 50% were given unfixed sentences.

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[17] These figures were obtained from "Tenth Annual Report," 1915, p. S13, and "Nineteenth Annual Report," 1924, p. J6.

[18] These figures were obtained from "First Annual Report," 1915, p. S5, "Fifth Annual Report," 1919, p. 7. The specific numbers for 1914 are unavailable as the length of the sentences listed in the "Report" state only that a majority were given unfixed sentences.

improvement in the opinion of the Superintendent. Inmates at the BIS were granted permission to leave the institution on weekends to visit their families. If they continued to improve and did not violate the conditions of parole by returning late after a visit, then the period of leave was extended for a period of up to two weeks.[20] The Attorney General had asked Bayne if she would consider implementing a similar program at the PIHG, and Bayne responded by saying that she did not see the point in undoing all the work that had been accomplished at the PIHG by allowing an inmate a weekend of staying out all night and frequenting dance halls.[21] Clearly, Bayne believed the best treatment for young delinquent women was to keep them segregated from the community for as long as possible. Bayne's fear that an unsupervised inmate would succumb to immoral temptations becomes particularly clear in an analysis of her position on the issue of escapes.

At the PIHG, Bayne instituted programs premised on euthenic arguments which focussed on the importance of "suitable environments." Bayne called this program the "honour system." It gave marks to young women for good behaviour while they were in the Home, and for every week of

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[20] Brankin, "Nineteenth Annual Report," 1924, p. J6.

[21] Bayne, Letter to Attorney General, "AG Correspondence Files, " October 1, 1924, PABC.

a perfect score they were placed on the honour roll and given one day off their total sentence. In addition, if they were on the honour roll for three months, they got a red stripe on their sleeve with the maximum number of stripes being four. When this status was achieved for a period of three consecutive months the inmate was given a different style of dress known as the trusty uniform. An additional three months wearing the trusty uniform meant that the inmate could wear a White collar on that uniform. Although, Bayne claimed the honour system was a huge success, the most an inmate appears to have earned off her sentence was one week.[22]

Inmates earned one point for exhibiting each of the following: honesty, punctuality, orderliness, courtesy, spirit toward work and institution generally, and effort, for a total of six marks. Efficiency and good influence are awarded five marks each for a total of ten. The emphasis was clear: an inmate must be an effective and positive member of her community. The creation of an honourable and moral environment was very important. However, there was another equally powerful element to the honour system. Any points earned through adherence to the honour system were

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[22] Bayne, Letter to Attorney General asking for permission to release Annie C., "AG Correspondence Files," December 29, 1924, PABC.

automatically void if an escape or even an attempt were made.

Although escapes were definitely an issue at the BIS, the Superintendent claimed that most of the escapees were gone for only a few hours and usually returned to the BIS on their own.[23] However, the Superintendent admitted that some of the young men at the BIS who escaped were away for a long period of time before they were apprehended by the authorities. The Superintendent claimed that these were infrequent occurrences and that for the most part escapes were not a factor at the BIS. This was not the case at the Industrial Home.

Escapes were a frequent, and occasionally, violent occurrence at the PIHG. And unlike the BIS, when a young woman escaped from the PIHG she did not return of her own accord after a few hours. Although Bayne appears to have tried to down play the frequency of escapes from the PIHG, there are several letters in the Attorney General Correspondence Files alluding to the problem of escapes at the PIHG. In one such letter, Bayne justified the number of escapes (twenty-two in the past three months) using the following overstated explanation.

> The transition to the honour system has met with the usual problem of more runaways. The new liberty had much the same effect as that of

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[23] Brankin, "Nineteenth Annual Report," 1024, p. J6.

The severity with which Bayne dealt with returned escapees suggests that she was determined to reduce their frequency. An example of the way in which escapes were handled was the case of Verna W. Verna escaped from the PIHG on May 24, 1918 with four other inmates; however, Bayne described Verna as the "ring leader."[27] The police were called as soon as it was learned that an escape had been made. Verna was apprehended first as she was badly injured as a result of several cuts she sustained while exiting the window she had broken with a hammer in her escape. Furthermore, she was not wearing street clothes and was no doubt conspicuous in her blood-stained white nightshirt. Once caught, confined to a term in the solitary cell, and treated for her injuries Verna was sent to Oakalla Prison Farm even though she was not considered an adult under the law and could therefore not be sentenced to an adult prison. Bayne argued to the Attorney General, however, that she was "too far gone" to be housed at the PIHG, and she had provided a poor example to the other inmates.[28]

Her parents responded by hiring a lawyer to arrange for the release of their daughter to their own custody or at the very least to be returned to the PIHG. The justice of the

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[27] *The Vancouver Province*, May 26, 1918, p. 1.

[28] Bayne, Letter to the Attorney General, "AG Correspondence Files," May 29, 1920, PABC.

Police Court, Magistrate Morrison, ruled that a young woman of Verna's age could not be held at Oakalla and she was returned to her parents' custody. In a follow-up letter to the Attorney General Bayne expressed her regret that Verna had not been held at Oakalla but was glad she had not been returned to the PIHG.

Bayne's belief that the majority of the inmates at the PIHG were feeble-minded fuelled her fears surrounding the potential dangers posed by escapes. Euthenic arguments which focused on a young woman's family explained delinquency among young women as the result of the moral failing within her home environment. Thus, incarceration at the PIHG was justified in the context of the belief that an improved environment was an important factor in the reclamation of young women. In addition, eugenic arguments which explained delinquency among young women as the result of inherited deficiencies, justified the inmates' prolonged segregation from the community. Furthermore, the medical examination of new inmates at the PIHG provided Bayne with the hard evidence that a poor environment and a subnormal intelligence were only able to suggest.

In fact, the unfortunate fact remains that many of the inmates still felt the impact of the PIHG after they had been released. In many cases the conditions of release related to whether a good position could be found for a

young woman, in an office, as a domestic servant, or in the country doing poultry or dairy work. Bayne thought it was helpful to include a psychological profile of each inmate for the information of potential employers, so that they could better determine whether the young woman in question would be able to perform the duties required of her. The case of Helen C. serves as an example of this.

Helen C. was to be released into "respectable home" to be employed as a domestic servant.[29] The report of her ability which was provided for her future employer read as follows.

> Helen is a good worker under supervision but won't be able to take charge of responsibility. Psychological tests show her to be a middle-grade moron having a mental age of ten years. Therefore, Helen can do her share but should not carry a very heavy responsibility.[30]

As the only possible work reference a former inmate could receive, the PIHG could extend its control over a young woman long after she had left the institution.

So far as it is possible to compare the PIHG and the BIS through their Annual Reports alone, an analysis of the operation of the PIHG shows that the treatment young women received at the Industrial Home differed significantly from

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[29] Bayne, Letter Requesting Permission to Release Helen C., March 30, 1925, PABC.

[30] Copy of Bayne's Report sent to Attorney General, June, 1925.

that which young men received at the BIS. Differences in school curricula and the types of manual training offered to inmates of each institution were representative of middle class family roles and expectations that were part of many social reform movements in the early twentieth century. However, other differences require a more complex assessment.

Evidence from the Annual Reports suggests that young women were in contact with the PIHG for longer periods than young men were in contact with the BIS. Many of the same arguments that the Juvenile Court had used to identify young women as moral deviants informed the treatment of the inmates at the PIHG. Using hereditary explanations to justify the prolonged incarceration of young delinquent women, Bayne implemented measures and procedures at the Home which were intended to regulate and control young women and their bodies. For Bayne and other juvenile reformers, the medical examinations of the young women sent to the PIHG offered hard evidence of the inmates' sexually immoral histories. Further, this evidence was used in combination with the "scientific proof" of the widespread existence of mental deficiency provided by the psychological assessments. By using hereditarian and environmental arguments to explain and account for delinquency among young women, Bayne

focused her efforts at the PIHG on policies and practices which prolonged the inmates' contact with the institution.

Therefore, the treatment young women received at the PIHG focused on the regulation and control of inmates' sexuality and reproduction. The result of this focus was prolonged contact with the PIHG and limited contact with the outside community including the inmates' families. This treatment differed significantly from that which the young men at the BIS received. Therefore, studies of delinquency which do not include an analysis based on gender as well as class, race, and age, may overlook the significant differences in treatment young women and young men received at the hands of the Juvenile Court.

CONCLUSIONS

Some of the most influential historical writing on the early 20th century is premised on a social control model where it is argued that state control was extended over marginalized groups who were victims of the policy imposed upon them. This perspective argues that during times of rapid moral, socio-economic, and political change, the dominant class was able to successfully protect the status quo by restricting and regulating the actions of the working poor. Institutions like the Juvenile Courts simply acted as mechanisms for the regulation and control of these marginalized groups.

Similar conclusions would be drawn from an analysis of the Provincial Industrial Home for Girls between 1914 and 1929 if a unidimensional class analysis were used. This period would appear to have been one of unprecedented progress in the care of youth in British Columbia. From this point of view, the new professions of psychiatry and social work emerged as the new guardians of the welfare state. Therefore, depending upon one's point of view, the Juvenile Court and its institutions would either represent the triumph of professional, progressive reform work or the complete eradication of individual rights and autonomy.

While this description of the PIHG would accurately reflect what middle class reformers and some social control theorists have said about the regulation of youth in Canada, it is incomplete. It does not tell us very much about the way in which young women were labelled as delinquents. Further, this uni-dimensional approach does not adequately explain why parents and family members committed their own daughters to institutions that were established to regulate and control the non-elite. And finally, by presenting delinquent young women and men together under the labels "youth" or "juveniles" they do not adequately explain why young women were treated differently than young men by the Juvenile Courts and the industrial homes.

The answer to these questions is possible using a multi-dimensional approach which extends beyond the dichotomous aggressor and victim model. Using an analysis which includes age, class, race, and gender to deconstruct the two discourses which contributed to the labelling of young women as delinquents, namely eugenics and euthenics, we are able to explain the complexities of the relationship between control institutions and the communities they served.

By the 1920s, fears surrounding the perceived social and national decline due to sexual immorality were well established. However, the increasing prominence and

popularity of biological explanations for social problems put forward by the mental hygiene movement reinforced explanations for delinquency which focused on heredity. Young women were incarcerated at the PIHG because they represented fears of increased sexual immorality and social decay. The inmates were identified as deviants as part of a complicated process in which their gender, age, and class were classified as dangerous using a combination of hereditarian and morality arguments. These labels often led to incarceration for the young women identified as deviants.

However, an analysis of the PIHG showed that families also committed their daughters to the PIHG. Although the PIHG represented one of the ultimate mechanisms for state control of deviant young women and their families, often parents actively sought this control over their daughters. To suggest, as some historians have done, that families were victims or were only able to resist efforts at social control at the margin, overlooks the way in which generational conflicts interacted with class conflicts to label young women as delinquents. Furthermore, the power conflicts within families meant that the young women also used the PIHG for their own needs.

However, these needs were not always meted out by the treatment young women endured at the PIHG. Using eugenic and euthenic explanations to justify the prolonged

incarceration of young delinquent women, Bayne implemented measures and procedures at the Home which prolonged the inmates' contact with the institution and limited their contact with the outside community. An analysis of the Annual Reports from the BIS reveals that this treatment differed significantly from that which the young men at the BIS received. Therefore, studies of delinquency which do not include an analysis based on gender as well as class, race, and age, may overlook the significant differences in treatment young women and young men received at the hands of the Juvenile Court and its institutions.

Therefore, a multi-dimensional approach forces historians to reassess the way in which we explain the impact of control institutions upon the communities they were established to serve. Institutions like the PIHG were not monolithic power brokers for the state, they were but one part of the complex network of relationships between young women, young men, social service professionals, feminists, middle class reformers, and working class families. Thus, through focusing on these relationships we are better able to understand the impact the PIHG had on young women, their families, and the communities in which they lived.

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