

By, Susan Treweek.

Date 20/6/03.

Sent 26/7/03.

This submission is to be joined with previous correspondence to the senate.

Closing date for the receipt of submissions is 31 July 2003.

SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REFERENCES COMMITTEE

INQUIRY INTO CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE

The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs References Committee
Suite S1 59
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

My Submission to the senate is

This is a poem I wrote some years ago I think it sums up part of my life.

My poem:

Hell in the name of therapy a child cries;

A child of 13 sits waiting to be judged, two sisters of god sit either side.
A woman in white flanked by two men, approach the child, and lead her to hell.
The lift rises from floor to floor the sound of screams shoots fear to her core.

A child cries.

A woman screams for help no one listens the child listens and wants to help.
A naked woman sees the child looking through the small holes into the cell.
Help me child tell someone. The child tells but no mercy to be found for her.

A woman yells as her delusions take hold you child you are the one,
my children are dead, you the devils child you must be punished.

Punched in the head as another patient act's out her delusions, many more to come, weakest are you.

Confusion sets in.

A child cries.

A woman quenches her thirst, cup of urine in her hand, down it goes no taught of what.
She turns on the child and it starts again more abuse, no escape to be found,
she can't help it she's sick is the reply.

The child protests and is punished, labelled, drugged and isolated now she knows she is in hell.

A child cries

Another day passes in hell assessed and processed yet again no illness found.
Frustration by all at no illness found labels are many. The child is confused,
words slice deep into the child as her soul dies, fear is overcome by rage.

A child cries

This child learns fast the hell she is in.

Punished for differences that make her stand out told she must change she wonders into what.

Caught again banging her head no harm has she done, remove her pillow see if she stops

Taunted and teased by staff, who must make this child conform it is there job.

A child cries

The child fights to change without knowing into what.

Hides her head banging by rocking side to side with care not to be caught.

Not acceptable was this, manipulative is she

Punished again for inappropriate behaviour and dress, back in the cell.

A child cries

Another Doctor out of bed another needle in her leg, Striped naked and left in this cold dark cell,

Drugs take hold too cold to sleep, sat on the floor back to the wall,

rocking front to back the only comfort to be found,

prayed for sleep my only friend or death, either will do.

Awake again in this cold dark hell as the child fights her bodies pain.

Fear of death, her screams are now ignored by those who care.

Her pleas to be let out are dismissed as attention seeking, don't listen or it could reinforce,

teach her a lesson, more time for her in that cold hard hell.

Pain shoots through her body as she holds in the wee, mustn't have an accident no toilet to use.

A puddle in the corner sometimes more to be punished for, shame, shame on you, you dirty girl.

Judgment is made out of ignorance and frustration, trapped in hell.

A child cries as her childhood dies.

The following are the homes I have lived in and the people who had power over me:

(This information has come from my Freedom of Information files and my memories.)

Victorian Welfare Services, including foster care and children's home.

1965 to 1971 ??

1971 Mr (... (...)) Catholic Welfare Officer at the Gold Coast.

Mr and Mrs (. (...)) Life line foster parents

Catholic Family Welfare Bureau Brisbane; Miss (...)

1971 Contact with the department of Children's Services Queensland first admission to St Vincent's Home Nudgee;

1972; (. (...)) Child Care Officer

4/5/73;

Mr (... (...)) Child Care Officer (CCO)

(...) CCO

13/11/73—19/5/74;

St Vincent's Home Nudgee, after admitted to care and protection on 4/5/73.

(...)

Foster Care Mr and Mrs (... (...)) I was physically abused by Sister (... (...)) and Sister (... (...))

17/1/74.

Care and protection order,

St Vincent's Home Nudgee

Sr (... (...)) and Sr (... (...)) were the main contacts that I remember.

And of course the house parents at the cottage I was in. We only knew them as mum and aunty.

During this stay I was attending the Catholic primary school down the road from the home.

During my stays at St Vincent's I attended 3 maybe 4 schools not including the school inside the grounds.

I was placed for the holidays with a couple named Mr. and Mrs (... (...)) close to Christmas during this stay Mr. (... (...)) told me to run a bath, I did and the bath overflowed I was belted and hosed with a high pressure hose by Mr. and Mrs. Blackbirds (... (...)) as I cowered downstairs under the laundry sink.

The next I remember Sr (... (...)) and Sr (... (...)) were there I was upstairs in the lounge room the sisters were sitting on chairs, in front of where I was standing Mrs. (... (...)) was there hanging back, every time I failed to end a statement with **sister**, my face was slapped hard, both sisters were responsible for this.

To this day I wonder why: overflowing the bath was an accident, I meant no harm nor was I defiant or out of control, disrespectful or evil.

I want to know who the house mum and aunty were who split and broke the small bat across my naked bottom and made me sit in a tub of cold water for long periods of time for wetting the bed, why were they so cruel to me. When I wouldn't take my medication they crushed it and physically forced me to swallow it.

I know who ordered the strappings by the Seminarians (men training to be priests) that was sister (...) and sister (...) these were done by the seminarians. They would take us into another room, put me across their knee or face down on the bed some times we were strapped standing together in a line one at a time to see the others get their's, and one of the house father's I think Mr. (...) dished out this punishment to me.

Bayview was 1979, after my transfer from Warilda Childrens Home;
I was attending Corpus Christi College the housemother's name I also do not know.
I wagged school with some other girls one day.

At the front entrance to Nudgee there was a white stop line I was upset after being yelled at by the sister and was standing near the line she told me if I crossed the line I would be marked down as absconding. She was true to her word I read in my file one reason for being sent to Lowson House, a mental health hospital at the Royal Brisbane Hospital, I was placed in a locked ward with about thirty psychotic women. I was admitted for assessment because I had absconded several times. Now apart from wagging school one day with a group of other girls and when I was about 8yrs old with my sister and some other kids, I crossed that stop line a few times in defiance that's all.

For this I was sent to hell.

(...)

(...) :

St Vincent's **16/9/75—16/5/76**

(...)

29/6/76.

Children Services Department notified by Principal and Guidance Officer of the school I attended at Beaudesert that children were being abused.

(...)

(...)
Oct 76

1977;

(...)

1978

(...)

12/7/78—15/12/78 foster care Mr and Mrs (...) Caboolture-
2/1/79 Warilda—**26/1/79** St Vincent's

Warilda 7/2/78

Warilda childrens home when I was aged 12/13yrs.

First I was processed and put into a section, then medical assessment by Dr F (...) who had been my doctor at Nudgee when I was younger he was quick to medicate even infants.

Next to his office which was on the top floor next to the isolation rooms were I spent many lonely hours sitting on cold floor while I was locked in these small rooms my pleas were ignored and my cries for help unanswered I thought I would die in there as I desperately tried not to soil myself and add to my punishment and the indignity of my situation.

To put this in order is hard. (In most of these homes and institutions there was a book that was to be filled out when these rooms were used stating the incident and staff involved, although this was overlooked at times as a technicality).

I was in Coobah (a section in Warilda) on the bottom floor, Dr (...) put me on medication he said that I had bad nerves, wet the bed too much and had trouble sleeping.

The first time I remember going to isolation was because I refused to take the pills.

There was a big **sister** who was a general nurse (most nurses were not actually nurses I suppose they were nurses aids)

This **sister** was from what I see second in charge after (...) (...)

The **sister** was very big on discipline and liked enforcing it. She was worse in company of other staff.

- I was standing at the kitchen door of Coobah when the sister charged in and began ordering me to take my medication she was mad at me. I crossed my arms and said something like "get fucked". She grabbed me by the hair and the back of my neck. I don't remember what she said we got to the bottom of the stairs I had no idea where I was going.

Once in the room she pushed me against the wall. Then she just walked out and locked the door after about an hour she came back. I still wouldn't take my medication and was very distressed when she turned to walk out again without letting me go to the toilet, I yelled abuse at her she turned and slapped my face. I went off even more and she walked out and locked the door, I banged on the door with my hands but nobody would come. I thought I was going to die in there.

So ashamed and embarrassed I had to wet on the floor.

Sometimes I was locked in these cells all day and night.

This became my treatment and was so unfair, for instance, a number of us were smoking under the stair well we got caught although I had no idea where the cigarette came from, out of all those kids I was the only one who was put in isolation as punishment for my part.

There were a lot of times this sister hurt me in the name of treatment.

Warilda had a kindergarten and a grass area between the back of a section. I don't remember which, there was a boy named (...) (...) he was an angry ant and would just snap very violent temper we ended up seeing a lot of each other later in life at other institution. The sister told us to both go out and pick out bindies from the grass she was nasty and (...) ended up mad at me for being out there having to do this. She sat back and let him punch into me I got away and asked her to help she laughed? I had a split lip, bruised cheek and sore head from being punched and kicked by (...) (...)

- (...) (...) except for normal canings for misbehaving the main incident was when she pulled the covers off me while I slept and caned up my back and the back off my legs.

When I first went to Warilda I was scared and lost after years of abuse by my mother and the men in her life also the abuse suffered at the institutions I was at. I had had enough "no more please", but instead of compassion I got more abuse. I thought I must be bad.

I was so terrified of being drugged and put in solitary. It was so hopeless, no matter how hard I tried : a word out of place or a swear word any sign of non conformity was met with the same punishment and every time was bad. I could never get used to it I tried counting anything to make time go faster. It was unbearable and to this day those feelings of anguish stick with me.

(...)

(...)

I was sent to see a psych a couple of times.

St Vincent's 26/1/79—6/4/79 Lowson House D floor (Locked Women's Ward)

When I was a baby in my cot **I would bang my head, not hard this settled me and put me to sleep** most babies suck their thumb or dummy. My mother cursed and tried to stop me. Doctors couldn't work me out and said I'd stop when older.

As a child at foster care and children's homes I was teased and punished. One nun would hold a book over my head and hit me with it every time I raised my head. She would loose her temper

and take my pillow and if I then didn't stop she took my bed, told me I must stop and medicated me.

At Warilda medication was given to me to help me sleep and settle such as mogadon, nulactil and melleral plus drugs to stop me wetting the bed.

I was so sick from the drugs I would shake and walk around dribbling unable to speak after a while I could tolerate them a bit better but was dizzy all the time and felt sick my boobs would leek this liquid. I barely had boobs. I was 12 years old and horrified.

Isolation to punish uncooperative behaviour such as inappropriately dressing or hair messy. My choice of dress all my life including now is joggers, jeans and a shirt wearing my hair over my face. Well that faded out.

I have very strait hair and had trouble keeping it out of my face. My clothes were conservative I don't understand what was wrong with the way I dressed or why it really mattered.

At Lawson House the reports relating to my head banging usually insinuated that I was harming myself. After testing me they ruled out retardation or brain damage and moved on to the constant quest of finding out what was wrong with me. As doctors changed every 6 months that is for registrar's consultant sometimes depending on whether I was transferred or not could last years on and off.

Sometimes the new doctor might feel sure that he knows what it might be and commences treatment, almost always drug related or from where I stood punishment in the name of behaviour modification programmes etc.

PUNISHMENT IN THE NAME OF TREATMENT

Well where do I start. Picture this three very large men and two women walking sheepishly around your bed looking at you almost like an animal stalking its prey. You know they are going to do something to you, but you just don't know what. It's amazing how many possibilities go through your head in that couple of minutes before they pounce and pin you down face down as you struggle to breath and get your face turned to the side so you can scream and beg them to stop as your pants are ripped off for all to see.

You know by now what it is. Then they leave you put on your pants as they walk away laughing, or cursing you for wasting their time. Now that's only the beginning. As I had drummed into me there is a reaction for every action only you are not allowed to react to anything that is done to you in the name of treatment. As a prisoner you are given certain rights as a patient you only have the rights you are given. This depends on whether they are seen as part of your treatment. How this is achieved is phone calls, {you must have your own money, **if** a staff member can spare time to escort you to a phone, **if** you have abided by all ward rules and all treatment orders fully, taken medication willingly must be co operative to all staff etc, then you can only **if** the phone call is to a person who is approved by the treatment team. }

Letters. {Well remember all letters are read in and out going, if you have your own stationery. If not you may ask for some paper a pen and envelope, buy your own stamp if you be careful what you write }

Complaints: don't complain about staff they are always right. If they did something then it was either treatment or you must have been doing something you shouldn't. Staff are professionals and know what they are doing. Take it further and watch out. Remember they have a lot of

people there that have been work mates for a long time. Sometimes when I complained I was told that they were having personal problems at home - things I wouldn't understand or straight out your lying: they would never do that. Or a classic, do you have any idea what trouble you are causing saying such things. Their career will be damaged not to mention their reputation. All this after they have worked so hard and been such good workers all these years tirelessly giving there time to people like you, do you really want to complain: think long and hard at the consequences before you do. The hidden message was go further and your time here will be much worse }

Complaints against doctors: forget it they know what they are doing.

Complaints against other patients: well that's a waste of time. They are sick and can't help it or they are given medication and placed back with you with you at there mercy.

Complaints about the system: what a joke, {You just don't understand how these things must be, a quick explanation and you are sent off, nothing changed or understood, we cant help it it's policy you know, and people like you well we don't have the resources or facilities to accommodate you, or its unfortunate but you are a catch 22, you are bound by two systems you are too young to let out.

Finally my immaturity, head banging, inappropriate dress sense, swearing and aggressive behaviour were to blame. }

Toilet if out of cell these were usually freely accessible.
shower must be at specified times no exception.

I only became aggressive after my treatment at Lawson House. This was my only line of defence due to my size, being that of an average ten year old.

Food at specified times as long as you weren't in a cell then it depended on the staff whether you got anything at all.

Assaults by staff,

This largely depends on what assault is?,

Reasonable force what is that, in an environment where there are dangerous and very sick people including criminally insane men and women, those who had committed murder or crimes against children where physical force is not only accepted it's routine for any signs of non conformity to the rules or treatment plan.

medication was a big one if you refused then you were either held down, mouth forced open medicine or tablets in mouth, shut nose held until swallowed or an injection.

For me injections were the worst once that kidney tray arrived I'd beg to take my medication, to late the staff by this stage were past reasoning with they became very angry like how dare you question what's been prescribed, **most of the time i was only asking what it was because of my fear of serenace(hyloperidol)** and how many times did this occur all I can say is lots my memories aren't always of each time, my memory except for times that stand out such as when I remember an actual person like (...) (...) she used to work on night shift on d floor Lawson house when she came on shift if I was in a cell she would give me a blanket and pillow she also

sometimes made me some toast and milow she told me that she would get into trouble if the others found out.

I do remember my rage and that this treatment happened enough for me to be on constant alert ironic as it is i thought i could stop them. But no matter how much i tried they allways had more numbers to force submission.

Injurers varied from being pined to the floor by more than one,bruises sprains a lot of pain all over.

When I was 13yrs old I was sexually assaulted by male patients.

The men called me jail bait, and the women beat me.

(...)

Lowson House Royal Brisbane Hospital; **6/4/79—2/7/79**

(...)

Wilson youth hospital; **2/7/79—26/8/79** (absc)

(...)

(...) Therapist

16/1/1980

Advice of movement of child in care

10/1/1980.

Placed at Wilson **9/1/1980.**

Advice of movement of child in care

15/1/1980.

Placed at Wilson

14/1/1980.

Inter-office memo

17/1/1980

from (...)

to supervising child care officer (...)

Inter-office memo

21/1/1980;

(...)

Supervising child care officer.

12/3/1980- transferred from Wilson to Lawson House D;
signed (...) **28/3/1980.**

12/3/1980.

Transferred from Wilson to Lawson House

10/4/1980.

Mother.

22/4/1980.

Emergency shelter Gold Coast (Irwin Blowers Hostel)

10/4/1980 home to **22/4/80** hostel after dv, **22/4/80—2/5/80**

Lawson House **2/5/80—9/10/80**

14/5/80.

Transferred from Wilson to Lawson House

(...)

(...)

Wolson Park Osler House, **9/10/80** under section 21.3

Transfer signed by (...) . (...) **29/10/80.**

1980 – 1981:

haloperidol **16/5/80**

31/1/81 – 26/2/81 to aunt in Lismore.

6/3/81 Wolson Park Noble House B.

10/3/81 – Osler House – 23/3/81 N.H.B.

(...)

10/3/81 – 25/3/82 Osler House

N.H.B. **25/3/81**

(...)

8/4/1981 Osler House

Wilson Youth Hospital **15/5/81 – 9/6/81**

22/5/81 care and control

(...)

9/6/81 transferred back to Wolson Park

3/7/81 Osler House
(...)

13/7/81 Osler House
14/7/81 seen by Dr (...) re court on **15/7/81** (...) (...)
Ready but Not collected.

21/8/81 – 23/8/81 Osler House
(...)

10/9/81--? Osler House
.Dr (...)

15/9/81—30/9/81—82 Noble House B
(...)

Files are incomplete some names can't be read, the number of Doctors, Psychologists, Therapists, Social Workers etc could be much higher not to mention students and nursing staff.

Shit Kickers

(13yrs-22yrs)

This I learnt from the police and staff.

“Don't blame us we don't make the rules, we're just the shit kickers”

It was true, I guess, they were following orders or **their interpretations** of them.

Drs would give treatment orders over the phone, such as medication, isolation, transfer to locked ward.

Then they would sign later (**maybe**), by the time Dr got to see me, the incident that was being treated was second to my present state; nothing I could say would save me now.

I was already being punished, but now a new incident to answer for as a result. I may have beaten the locked door with my head and fists or be in a state of distress when the Dr came to see me.

"Well you were right, she is out of control, leave here in there until she calms down, if she doesn't conform, give an injection of this!!"

WHY DIDN'T THE DRS LOOK AT MY FILES OR LISTEN TO MY PLEAS, THEY JUST HAD TO CHECK WHAT I WAS SAYING, INSTEAD THEY IGNORED ME OR SAID, "THERE ARE DRUGS WHICH COUNTERACT THE SIDE EFFECTS" AND DISMISSED MY FEARS.

(What drugs counteract the side effects **of the side effect drugs**???)

Cojentin (Counteracts reaction to Serenace).

There was relief for a while, but that was short lived, then the fight starts again and the pleas for help are met with criticism, "You should have thought of this before you misbehaved", I had to wait for them to find time to ring the Dr, hope it wasn't around change of shift or to bad. (As I was given the injection, which was always the way given to me, the fear was so bad I didn't want to wake up, just a matter of time that's all).

There is no escape, this was probably the only time the staff etc had total control over me, I would do whatever I was told, no protest just like a beaten dog and that's how I felt. I believe if they could have kept that up I would never have survived to be here now, emotionally or mentally physically maybe the no hoper's ward, where the old people and the ones who were brain dead, lived out there lives, either tied to a chair or unable to move, there will was gone, there was a lady, she would have been in her 30s to 40yrs, This lady was in Osler house, I'm not sure if she was criminal section or not she was in open wards too and used to teach me how to write and stuff, she was smart and ok, except she'd get down, I never saw her ever show psychosis.

Then the next time I saw her she was down near where the admin is she was with the ones from the oldies ward (maybe Anderson house) she was sitting in a chair, I talked to her, she didn't recognize me or something, she looked up, the saliva was running out her mouth, she said gota cupa coffee gota cigarette then looked down at her feet, she was like a retard, what happened to her in such a short time and why was she in that ward waiting to die.

I saw a lot of people whose eyes would roll back in their head and they would drool. But some peoples whole bodies twisted and distorted like mine, it was distressing to watch, I felt for them as others did for me but could do nothing but look away even the doctors had little they could do, "We're on our break or we're busy", no urgency, the patient wasn't going anywhere, were they.

(14yrs>>)

The (...) at Wilson youth hospital QLD was the most obvious, she said that the only reason I didn't want this drug, was because it wasn't my drug of choice.

She was responsible for me being given Serenace, I think she got off on the power this gave her over me.

She was intent on making me conform; the only problem was what was conforming????!!

Doing as you are told no matter what was ordered,

Take your medication no complaints,

Go to the Gynecologist and let him examine you with his tools,

Don't swear or be loud,

Get out of bed on time,

Make your bed properly??,

Co-operate with the Drs, the Psychologist, the Occupational Therapist, the tests, reports and assessments, staff Counselors??, police, social workers and anybody else told,

Take a shower when told,

Wear the clothes told to,

Fix your hair it's not neat enough,

Eat when told,

Drink only at set times,

Use the toilet at acceptable times,

Sleep when told,

Stay awake unless told you can sleep,

Don't be sad,

Don't be depressed,

Don't show anger or excitement, these emotions are not acceptable here,

Don't be board,

Take the isolation,

Take the abuse and the pain and Don't complain

Take the changing rules and hypocrisies,

Take the confusion,

Take it all and don't react.

Accept there is no hope until you change?.

(13yrs)

Self-mutilation started at Lawson House up till then, I once scratched my wrist with a staple along with other girls at Nudgee.

(12yrs)

In Warilda I banged on the door with my hands, wanting to be let out or go to the toilet, nobody came.

(13/14yrs)

In Lawson House, I met many people who mutilated themselves in different ways, a couple of people wanted me to see, I watched a lady in the toilets cut her wrist, it freaked me at first, I wanted to fit in.

(14yrs)

(...) showed me how to draw blood out with a needle, I wasn't very brave, it took ages to put the needle in my hand, and we were on E floor, outside the lift, before I met

(...) (...) and (...) made a suicide pact and carried it out, only (...) survived, (...) didn't. All (...) had left was the scars on her wrist and the voices in her head, (...) would punish (...) for surviving).

I didn't understand (...) was sick, she seemed OK to me, I was 13/14 she was about 24+ and I thought she was cool, she came from the Gold Coast, not far from where I came from, (...) was anorexic and diagnosed with chronic schizophrenia and to top it off was a bad epileptic, talk about being behind the eight ball.

I first saw her vomiting and ran to get her help, she got into so much trouble, she was isolated and injected, what had I done, why was she being punished.

(...) wasn't mad at me, she accepted she'd been bad I still don't understand, I used to keep look out for her whatever she wanted to do to herself, no matter how much trouble I got into,

(Guess I was helping her try and die, I spent my whole time being different from (...))

Then she wanted me to cut myself with her, I couldn't be like Joy, I hated seeing Miriam hurt, and I didn't want her to die.

Then there was (...) she set herself on fire; WOW incredible burns all over her.

I'm glad I didn't see her do it.

Others burnt themselves all over with cigarettes even their private parts.

(14-15yrs)

The first time I cut myself, I was so scared, my whole body shook, then I liked it, the release was so good, but short lived and weird, the staff jumped on me and I was punished, (...) (...) said I was a danger to myself now, and everything changed, I was reclassified.

(12yrs)

Before Warilda, I was in Lismore, with mum's friends, they rang the police and Children Services, mum's friend (...) had known us for years, and we were neighbors at Main Beach. (...) knew what mum was like and refused to let her take me home after a phone call from mum.

Mum and (...) came to Lismore with grandma to get me, the police came and made me talk to mum at the Lismore station, the police put me in the North Coast Children's Home, the (...) there asked me why I wouldn't go home

"If you tell us what is happening we can make it stop"

Mr. (...) told me to go to the car. My shirt barely covered my bottom and that's how I walked from the flats, across the road and into the car, people were staring at me, Mr. Grant took me home to his house overnight, then to Warilda the next day.

(12yrs) Warilda.

I was good at first; I tried hard at school, then the drugs (Largactil +) that's when it all changed. I was tired and angry all the time, couldn't stay still, but was too tired to move, I wanted to play with the others, but had no energy and would get dizzy, the nurses said there was nothing wrong with me, but I didn't feel right, the sun hurt my eyes, I felt sick, confused and although my mind said perform my body wouldn't.

I had no idea about side effects and it seemed neither did anybody else not even Dr

(...) I believed I was very sick, must be, why else would I feel so bad.

I was told to stop banging my head, stop wetting the bed, I wanted to, take your medication I hated it, they crushed them in jam and still had to fight to make me swallow them.

The isolation was too much; I couldn't stand it anymore and snapped.

Something happened to me I had always been quiet and pretty much a conformist, I guess I was timid, I liked routine, having regular food, a clean bed that was mine every night, lunch to take to school, the right uniform, I was trusted to work in the infants section up until I left, I liked the babies and looking after them.

Nurses are different in a way they still cover each other no matter what, but it is another world, when they walk into a ward depending on who they are working with at the time and how **they feel** on that particular day, what ward, what patients, lots of what's to many to list, I guess it comes down to personalities and whether they have burnt out yet or not.

You could have a caring charge nurse and a deputy, the charge nurse is only a figure head, the deputy has more contact with the patients, there were nurses who as nurses aids had no real power over the other staff on paper, but on the floor that was different, if there was a new sister or ward staff, then the nurses aid would run the show, sometimes they were just too powerful.

Depending on a number of things to who was actually in charge, who was there the longest, who could use their mouth the best, who could stand over who, who owed who, but the staff had more power to affect patients lives directly than anybody else in the system,

Why, because they knew us the longest and the best???!?, had daily nurses notes to write whatever they pleased unchecked, eventually through the course of things they would get their way, Drs, psyches etc were their puppets.

Wolston park hospital wacol Brisbane qld.

Was hell I suffered in this place and will never get over it the suffering of others and their screams still haunt me to this day.

There is so much to be told.

Being confined with the criminally insane as a child when some of these people were there for crimes against children I was at their mercy as were many others including a 12 year old autistic girl my god she suffered.

Beatings, rape, torture, isolation, punishment, indignity, depravation etc.

Then they took my sone after trying to force me to abort at about 5 months realizing it was too late.

I was given ect shock treatment up to five and a half months pregnant then the horror got much worce the poem below (a mothers cry).

A mothers cry

A moment of madness not smart was she to slow to act now traped is she

fear and pain now there gone only fragments remain
pill's to forget, rage sets in, run will she,

Deluded is she that this is the end, this time there is no escape from violence indured,
slowly the body changes to make ready, soon all will see, mother to be,
detection is near
fear hits hard to those, who fear there guilt of knowledge,
who is the one not one of us, please, someone else, questioned and tested,
she does not tell, they insist, she tells them anything.

only the begining, now she must pay, not to be trusted is she, put in a cold dark cell,
no comforts has she only the child she can not see,
soon she will feel the child growing, moving is he,
feelings of love replace ones of hate, no blame does she place.

Now she knows as she is told, no mother can you be, here you will stay, adopt you must,
no choice have you, told why, unill she can hear no more,
time is up, this child wants out, no care for the mother, a mental patient is she
fill her full of soap and hot water, contract will she, injected and abused
for this must be, before the end of their shift.

Forsed out was he, torn apart was she, still she begs to see, this child is hers
she holds him close, quick are they to take what is hers, no bonding for her,
his eye's of blue look strait up at her, as if to recognise this mother is his,
torn away is he no mothers milk for him a bottle to replce his hunger for her,
she cries for him
druged and decieved is she, sent back to hell, alone again, no mercy to find, forget him
now, better off is he,
your pain will pass in a week or two, no comfort is found, in words without sense
things to endure for photoes of him, from those with the power, only now they realise a
weapon has he,
a final letter from a mother to be, thanked for her sacrifice made.
mourn her loss I think not, punished is she for sins of her past.

Now broken is she, no hope for her now, as all give up.
years pass as she sucumbs to her hate, injustes ignight the fire long burnt out,
the fight in her returns, tired is she, enough energy for one last try, told is she there will
be no more.
gone from this hell endured,

into the alien world out there death is near for her.
all that remains is pains of her past, she forgets not the ones left behind,

she remembers him and wonders. **A mother cries**

I haven't said much about Wilson to date because my treatment there was so uniform.

Walking through my mind, in through the entrance, wait for the electronic roller door.

To the left was a door to privilege section, to the right was the gatekeeper's office. Then another door leading to the stairs, upstairs to the left was a bathroom, to the right was remand, looking down from remand to the left was a room where sickies were put, opposite that was open tantrum, at the end of the hall was treatment, looking from treatment directly to the left, was a room with a small pool table which I only once saw anyone use, to the right was the nurses station where the examination room clinic and doctors room, to the left was matrons office and the entrance to the boys section and occupational therapy. Opposite matrons office was the internal steps going down to privilege and further downstairs was where the priv day rooms were. Out through the Perspex doors was the exercise yard; the sun didn't reach most of it so there was very little grass. The exercise yard was surrounded by a huge brick wall, there was a trampoline that's all, then to the right was a metal fence, inside was a pool, the pool area was the only place where it was possible to reach the top of the wall without help.

I first went to remand, although I had committed no crime, after a while I was sent to treatment and rarely got to go to remand. Once my friend (...) (...) got there from Nudgee (she committed no crime either) we were close, I guess because we had history, she didn't know where the nuns had sent me. (Lowson House).

We couldn't stand to see each other hurt or treated badly

Gyno Dr (...) (...) would come to Wilson, now if you refused to be examined by him at any time then you lost privileges, like being able to swim in the pool or jump on the tram, no bus trips, the pressure to conform to this was huge, anything that was a privilege was taken and then you were counseled and counseled some more as to the importance of these examinations, to bad if you have already been if he wanted to do it again, you had to otherwise punished, why so many, we were not in contact with males except for training officers and doctors.

The women were worse; they did sneaky shit to make themselves look good, the women had bigger egos than the men. If the men were pissed off, you knew pretty much straight away, unless they took a set on you, it was over and done with, instant brutal but over, if the females were pissed off, they were sneaky, they got you in other ways, either by instructing the males to do their bidding or dishing it out themselves, pulling hair, pinching, degrading shit in front of others, I guess as women they knew how to best degrade a girl, then it would not be over, they would carry it on even to the point of sitting in the chair watching through the Perspex, while you were in open tantrum sometimes naked. There was a table too so they could watch and write about us, there was I think only one point where you could be pretty much out of vision, now the thing was you were not only visible to the staff, the girls in remand would have to walk past you and could not help but see.

Fair enough the nurses would be bored having to sit for hours while you were in there, depended on who they were and what the seniors thought of them whether they were relieved or not. Many times I would be in there through the shifts, so my time in would be at least 8/10 hours sometimes after given injections I would eventually pass out, it

would be another day, I'd missed breakfast, lunch and dinner the night before now had to wait for dinner again, no drinks till the right time.

Sometimes I handled it other times I went off again yelling and swearing, I wanted to go to the toilet, I was thirsty, couldn't stand being in isolation, was made to wait long past when they said they would come.

I think they just forgot occasionally, I know this was true, a new shift would start and they'd ask me how long I'd been in there not realizing I hadn't been let out yet from the day before.

I don't believe that the isolation book was always written in, there was as in all institutions a lot of loop holes, I would listen to them as they held me down, how will we write this up she's spent a lot of time in hear "just write it up this way"???

"We need a doctors signature to give this injection" "we will get it later"????

"Shouldn't she be seen by the doctor?" "Is that necessary" "She brought it on herself"

"That was a bit rough" "so she pushed me to do it"

"Shouldn't you fill in an incident report" "forget it I'll do it tomorrow"

(haloperidol) Serenace was always a threat to me, they knew how scared I was and I begged them, promised to be good, but it didn't matter what I said.

I was given Serenace on a number of occasions and with the same reaction, because as the pain would start and my body distorted I would panic knowing what was to come, then I'd beg to see the doctor hoping he could stop it, but instead was locked up in a dark cell where the others wouldn't be distressed by my distressed state and the distortion of my body.

In these cells I was usually naked and left there, I don't know how long it would take for them to take pity, but if it was a weekend then it was much longer, doctor was busy So I suffered the pain, feared I was going to die, anguish, hopelessness, it felt like nobody would help me make it stop. (servier distonic reaction to haloperidol injection).

I can see why they thought this was good treatment and their best weapon, because after relief I was a model patient for a couple of days, eager to please, did what ever told and would conform to **anything** ordered it was the same in all institutions including,

(Wilson youth hospital – detention center, lowson house royal Brisbane hospital, wolston park hospital).

I do know and remember that I was not much different from others there, only I had the label of coming from a mental hospital, I must be made to conform no matter what, I

didn't fit into what Wilson was, I didn't commit a crime so wasn't there for punishment, I wasn't in immoral danger from wandering the streets etc, and wasn't there to be rehabilitated, I was there because for someone my age there was nowhere else since I had no mental illness and did not respond well or quick enough to treatment plans, behavioral modification, wouldn't talk openly with treatment staff and rebelled the drugs, isolation and treatment by both staff and patients.

They thought I would now be better off with my peers, only they weren't my peers, maybe age wise but I was not a criminal, I wanted to join the army not end up in jail.

I didn't understand what was happening sometimes my child care officer would explain processes to me but their words were over my head, they would ask if I understood I'd say yeas just to shut them up and if I said I didn't understand then was told never mind you will.

I should be thankful I guess if it wasn't for the threat of children services arriving at various institutions other than Wilson, my treatment would have been a lot worse, they were like watchdogs, if my bones got broke they would want to know why. They would usually give notice at Wolston Park as to when they were coming to see me, never did they ask how I was being treated, if I tried to tell them I was being manipulative and it was not acceptable to complain about people doing a difficult job like psychiatry, I was in a way protected by the fact that within a days notice a child care officer would be there and see me that only protected me to 18yrs when I was off their books.

The (...) and her offside a registered nurse they were, well heavy disciplinarians the RN once made me scrub the two flights of stairs leading to priv with my toothbrush, it took ages.

(...) had me in her office one day and she was on the other side of the desk, I don't remember why she launched herself at me slapped my face and I was on the ground asking what I did wrong.