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Daughters, Dream Girls and Gymslips:  
British teen femininities in the long 1960s

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Finally, I would like to thank my Mum, Dad, Becky, Carsten, Noah, Saskia and Nana without whom this work would not have been possible.

## Declaration

I declare that this thesis is all my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at another institution. Any information from other sources has been acknowledged and referenced in the text.

## Abstract

This study explores how teenage girls were portrayed on film during the 'long 60s' in British cinema. The 'long 60s' is an existing historical framework which argues the decade of the 1960s were not limited to the decade itself but began in 1957, and the effects of which were still in evidence until 1973. I have also examined how the star image of teenage actresses developed in this period and how social and cultural events and developments may have affected this representation alongside how the genre of the films helped shift this representation over the decade.

My methods consist of the analysis of existing scholarship to explore the current thinking around the teenage girl in British cinema of the long 1960s in the field of film studies. I have textually analysed key British films starring my case studies to explore the representation of the teenage girl on screen during the period. Through archival research, I examine how the star images of my case studies were constructed in publications of the time.

I have approached the material using a star focus, as this allows me to look at sub-genres in British cinema and it has also enabled me to narrow the scope of the work. Hayley Mills, Judy Geeson and Jenny Agutter each enjoyed success as teenage girls at different stages of the 'long 60s'. Hayley Mills was a teen star in the transition of the 50s to the 60s from 1959 to 1965. Judy Geeson embodied the 'swinging' teenage girl and enjoyed film success between 1965 and 1969, and Jenny Agutter closes the study as the teen girl star during the transition of the 60s into the 70s from 1968 to 1974. I demonstrated how each of these stars embodied a kind of teenage femininity which was informed by the specific period of the 'long 60s' they were playing their roles in. Raymond Williams' theory of dominant, emergent and residual trends in culture is used to explain the differences in roles each actress played and the different treatment they received from the media of the time.

This thesis expands scholarly understanding of the construction of the teenage girl's star image and screen presence in British cinema during the 'long 60s' – an area virtually ignored to date in Film Studies. I have complicated existing discourses

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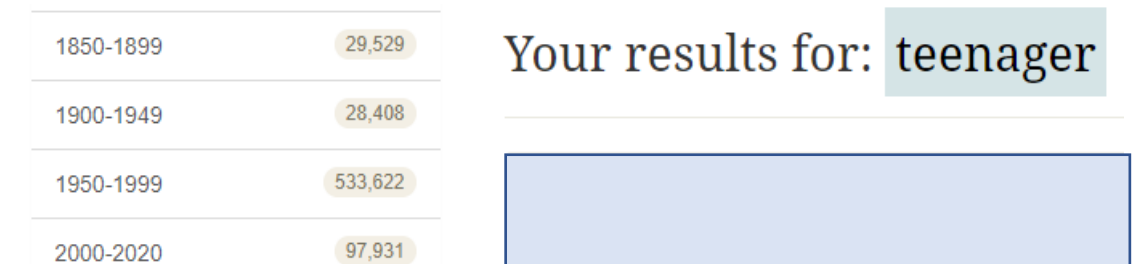
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## Introduction

When teenage culture was establishing itself in the mid-1950s, a number of British films were made featuring teenagers that capitalised on the popularity of this new identity. These films tended to fit within the social problem genre such as *A Taste of Honey* (1961) and *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner* (1962), films which have already been thoroughly investigated in works such as *Sex, Class and Realism* by John Hill and *Sixties British Film* by Robert Murphy. However, despite this boom in teen stardom and teen films, very little has been written about British teen stars and representation outside of this established canon of films. In the work that follows, using textual analysis and archival research, I have expanded scholarly understanding of the role of the teenage girl in British films of the 1960s to address what has not been covered in existing literature and to look in more depth at the question of teen representation and stardom. This thesis examines the star image of three teenage actors over the period of the 'long 1960s' defined as the years between 1958 and 1974, the period when teen culture and teen stars were establishing themselves on screen and in the media. Raymond Williams' concepts of residual, dominant and emergent cultural and social movements will also be used as a framework to map the changes underway. I demonstrate how the social changes of the long 1960s can be read through the star images and representations of the teenage girl in the work of case studies of the actors Hayley Mills, Judy Geeson and Jenny Agutter. In relation to this, it is shown how the teenage girl was presented on screen and in paratexts, and how this presentation changed over the 'long 60s'.

## The British Teenager in the 1950s

Whilst researching the evolution of the teenager in the British newspaper archives, the search results demonstrated a significant increase in usage of the term 'teenager' post 1950. Between 1900 and 1949 the term 'teenager', or 'teen-age' as the research shows was historically more often used, appeared 28,408 times over all the publications in the archive. The description was usually used to record a young person's age, hence teen-age, rather than as a reference to a social group or their specific culture. However, we see the terminology change post 1949, and between 1950 and 1999 the word appears 533,622 times, an increase of almost 2000% in the next 49 years in comparison with the previous 200 years. During the 1950s alone the usage of the term trebled, from 3,365 uses in 1950 to 9,321 in 1959. From this evidence we can see how common the term became in the latter part of the 20th century, and therefore suggests a new understanding of the idea of the 'teenager'.



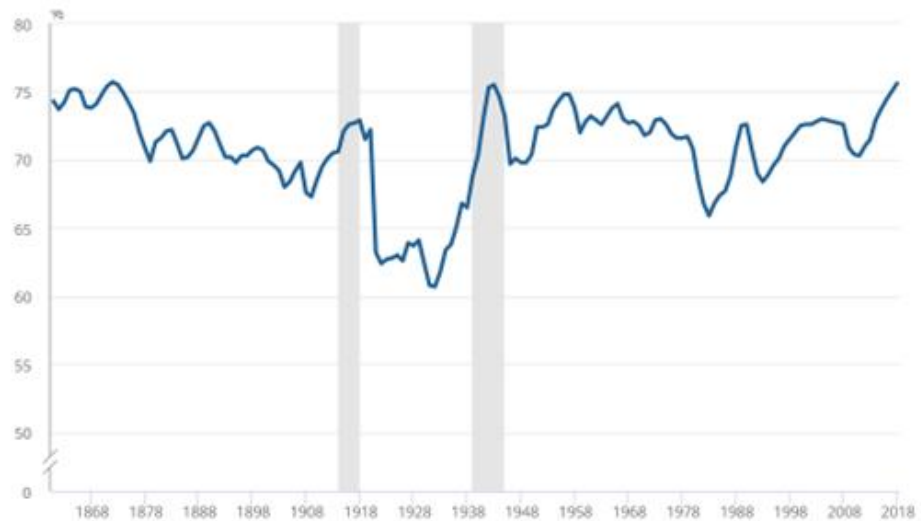
**Fig 1: Results from search for the term 'Teenager' from the National Newspaper Archives.**

This new social group was regarded with suspicion by many in the older population, Hannah Charnock writes in her article 'Teenage Girls, Female Friendship and the Making of a Sexual Revolution in Britain 1950-1980' that much of what was expressed in the media regarding the teenager in the mid-1950s was 'anxieties

surrounding the changing status of young people within British society and the feeling that youth culture was losing touch with the values and experiences of the adult society' (Charnock. 2020, 1038). Newspaper articles from the mid-1950s contain panicked reports of outrageous or criminal behaviour by juveniles, a discourse that eventually reached Parliament for debate. Tory backbenchers in the early 1960s attempted to reinstate physical punishments in reaction to a rise in violent crime and MP Gerald Nabarro was 'strongly in favour of "thwacking the thugs"' unashamedly calling himself 'not an indiscriminate flogger' (Kynaston, D. 2015, 614). This work will explore how this suspicion of teenagers and their culture continued into the long 1960s through my case studies.

This work starts as teen culture is beginning to become more widespread in Britain after its initial appearance in the 1950s. The origins of the teenage revolution can be traced to American market researchers of the 1940s who were looking to create a new market for their consumer goods (Hill. 1986, 10) and this idea expanded beyond the USA to Britain. Adverts began targeting a teen audience for youth-oriented products and analysis began of the new teenage trends, their affluence and their impact on the economy. In 1959 Mark Abrams' wrote *The Teenage Consumer*, where he discussed this new emerging market and found teenagers had a tendency to spend their money on 'dressing up to impress other teenagers' (Abrams. 1959, 9), creating a further divide between teenage and adult culture. For the first time in history, children were not expected to develop directly into an adult from childhood, they could enjoy a transitional period where they could experience some more mature activities but without the responsibilities associated with them. The steady increase in employment through the decade (as shown in the graph below) meant they had

the financial means to supply themselves with the latest fashions and status symbols without relying on parents for money.



**Fig 2: Graph showing the Employment Rate in the UK 1861-2018.<sup>1</sup>**

Musical tastes also evolved as rock and roll emerged and was commodified through the sales of tour tickets, LP's, memorabilia and star fashions, meaning everyone could look like or have a piece of the revolution. The teenage market which had been conceived by market researchers, was now coming to fruition and making a contribution to the economy.

### The British Teenager in Film in the 1950s

To provide some context for my work, in British cinema of the 1950s the dominant genre where teen characters appeared was the social problem film. These films had originated in the 1930s (Landy. 1991, 432) but emerged into the mainstream

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<sup>1</sup> Chiripanhura, Blessing and Nikolas Wolf. 'Long-term trends in UK employment: 1861-2018', *Office for National Statistics*, (29<sup>th</sup> April 2019) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/uksectoraccounts/compendium/economicreview/april2019/longtermtrendsinukemployment1861to2018>, accessed 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020.



in the late 1940s with films that dealt with the re-adjustment of society post-war (Landy. 1991, 438) and the beginning of the exploration of juvenile delinquency (Landy. 1991, 442). John Hill lists the genre's subject matter as 'juvenile delinquency, prostitution, homosexuality and race... the problem of youth was well ahead' (Hill. 1986, 67), acknowledging teen lives were by far the most popular topic for inclusion in the genre. The films often served as a warning to the audience about the potential excesses of teen culture, whether it be financial, violent or sexual, and the melodramatic stories usually ended in the success of the establishment in quieting whatever form of teenage revolt was being played out.

In these social problem films of the 1950s, considering the themes and the promotion they received, one might ask who these films were aimed at. They often used florid or fashionable language in their titles such as *Cosh Boy* (1951), *Beat Girl* (1960) and *Violent Playground* (1958), which suggests they were aimed at a young audience rather than an adult one. Yet, despite this, they were issued adult certificates from the BBFC and in the case of *Cosh Boy* and *Beat Girl* classified as X-rated.<sup>23</sup> Regardless of the attempts at attracting the younger audience, these films had a distinct conservative bias in their stories and displayed disapproving attitudes towards the new youth culture that was emerging, aligning themselves with the dominant hegemonic thinking in British adult society of the 1950s rather than with the teenagers themselves. The teenagers on screen were not being celebrated or

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<sup>2</sup> Unknown, 'Cosh Boy', *BBFC: View what's right for you*, (Unknown) <https://www.bbfc.co.uk/release/cosh-boy-q29sbgvjdgvlbjpwwc00oty5njy>, accessed 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Unknown, 'Beat Girl', *BBFC: View what's right for you*, (Unknown) <https://www.bbfc.co.uk/release/beat-girl-q29sbgvjdgvlbjpwwc0yntqxntj>, accessed 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

having their behaviour glorified, they were invariably rehabilitated through the benevolent actions of their oft wronged elders (*Beat Girl*), the subject of corporal punishment and sent to prison (*Cosh Boy*), or come to a violent end (*Violent Playground*). They embodied 'the anxieties of the parent culture' (Hill. 1986, 16), which is unsurprising, considering the films were being made by production teams in their middle age, whose way of life was being challenged by this new group of young people rather than being made by members of the youth movement themselves. All three of my case studies feature in roles who are experiencing some form of teenage rebellion; I will discuss how this was represented in a more complex fashion than previously seen and how this perceived misbehaviour was tied to the changing social climate of the long 1960s. I will also discuss how this trend continues into the long 1960s, albeit in a more subtle manner than in previous films.

The filmmakers of the 1950s also tended towards portraying a simplistic view of teenage life of the time; there were 'good' teenagers and 'bad' teenagers, and the characters were often an embodiment of their 'problem' rather than a character with dimensions. As Michael Brooke of the BFI writes 'the subject at hand was given as much weight as the stars or the story',<sup>4</sup> so the characters' purpose was to deliver the message about their problem meaning the characterisation and depth of the story consequently suffered. The 'good' teenagers were law-abiding and enjoyed wholesome fun, such as the naughty but nice girls in the original *St Trinian's* franchise (1954-2009), or the girls in *Dance Hall* (1950), whose problems focussed on poverty and boy troubles. The *Dance Hall* girls are all engaged by the end of the film and are

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<sup>4</sup>Brooke, Michael, 'Social Problem Films', *BFI: ScreenOnline*, (unknown) <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/1074067/index.html>, accessed 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

seen as fulfilling their potential as they move into a life of adult domesticity. The 'bad' teens were the previously discussed juvenile delinquents; they were involved in criminal misbehaviour like the gang featured in *Violent Playground*, whose very appearance with their Teddy Boy quiffs and jeans suggested subversion.<sup>5</sup> The 'good' teens tended towards being miniature versions of their parents and would go on to become useful, law-abiding members of society. The 'bad' teens were the embodiment of everything adult British society was concerned about.

By the start of the long 1960s there was gradual progression in the representation of the teenager on screen. There were more rounded and complex characters appearing, such as Jo in *A Taste of Honey* (1961), whose situation with her pregnancy and her relationships with her mother and her homosexual best friend Geoffrey enabled actor Rita Tushingham to create a multifaceted characterisation of a Northern teenage girl. *The Leather Boys* (1964) tells the story of heterosexual and homosexual romance between teenage bikers and provided a 'significant moment in queer British cinema for its sympathetic portrayal of a working-class gay man'<sup>6</sup> played by Dudley Sutton. Teens were starting to be shown as complex beings rather than restricted to the binaries of 'good' and 'bad'.

Rock and roll stars also became film stars with Britain's Cliff Richard and Tommy Steele, and the USA's Elvis Presley starring in musical films. Elvis 'virtually

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<sup>5</sup> Staveley-Wadham, Rose, 'Hooligans and Gangsters? A Look at the Teddy Boys of the 1950s', *The British Newspaper Archive*, (7<sup>th</sup> April 2020) <https://blog.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/2020/04/07/a-look-at-the-teddy-boys-of-the-1950s/>, accessed 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Anon, 'The Leather Boys', *BFI*, (unknown) <https://www2.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2b73852281>, accessed 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

abandoned his music career to become a film star' (Lobalzo-Wright. 2018, 49) in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In my case study of Judy Geeson, we see a continuation of this trend with Lulu starring in and soundtracking *To Sir, with Love* (1967) and Stevie Winwood performing in *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* (1968). Film was at the forefront of the teenage revolution and provided a multimedia opportunity for the expression of teenage culture.

The case studies in this work discuss the residual ties we see to a simplistic view of the teenage girl, in particular in the work and image of Hayley Mills. However, we also clearly see how there was an evolution underway in the work and star images of the case studies. I will also demonstrate how these stars created a more complex picture of British teenage femininity than their predecessors.

### **The Long 1960s and the British Teenage Girl**

Arthur Marwick's *The Sixties* (1998) says 'We readily think in decades, but that is only because we count the years as we would on our fingers or our toes. In historical study we do need a concept of periods, or eras, or ages, though such periods do not automatically coincide with decades or centuries' (Marwick. 1998, 5). Marwick suggests the 1960s did not neatly start and finish within its numerical boundaries and were, as historian Christopher Strain says, 'more of an idea than a decade... the beginning and the end marked less by dates than by symbols and turning points' (2017, 10). Marwick's work suggests the long 1960s ran from 1958 to 1973/4. However, other scholars who have utilised the concept in their work have varied the boundaries set by Marwick. The 'long sixties' was a period of time that started at an unspecified date in the mid to late 1950s; Strain's work on America in the long 1960s

starts in 1955<sup>7</sup>, historian Caroline Hoefflerle starts her work on student activism in the long 1960s in November 1956<sup>8</sup> and David Fleming starts in 1957 in his pedagogical study *From Form to Meaning: Freshman Composition and the Long Sixties*.<sup>9</sup> Studies using this framework agree that the period ended around 1974, which allows historians, and subsequently myself, to follow events and their repercussions from their roots to their conclusion.

The significant social and cultural changes underway during the long 1960s would influence the image and embodiment of teenage femininity in British film and this is traced in the case studies in this work. The old-fashioned embodiment of the teenage girl seen in the films of Hayley Mills gives way to the 'swinging' teenager of Judy Geeson's films. These 'swinging' films were made at a time when Britain, and specifically London, was one of the most fashionable places in the world for a short period of time, which ran from approximately 1964 to 1968. During the 'swinging' epoch, films were made which 'heralded a new feminine perspective marked by the importance of sexual expression to self-identity' (Lockett. 2000, 233), key elements of Geeson's work during this time.

The British music scene boomed in the 60s with The Rolling Stones and The Beatles being, arguably, the most successful acts of the decade. Beatlemania saw teen fandom reach new heights and was 'the first mass outburst of the sixties to feature women' (Ehenreich, Hess and Jacobs. 1992, 85). It saw teenage girls very visibly

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<sup>7</sup> Strain, Christopher, *The Long Sixties: America* (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 2016).

<sup>8</sup> Hoefflerle, Caroline, *British Student Activism in the Long Sixties* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> Fleming, David, *From Form to Meaning: Freshman Composition and the Long Sixties* (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011).

'abandon control' (Ehenreich, Hess and Jacobs. 1992, 85) en masse, giving an outlet to an 'active, desiring side of sexual attraction' (Ehenreich, Hess and Jacobs. 1992, 90) which had previously only been glimpsed in teen idol worship of the 40s and 50s. The 'new feminine perspectives' (Lockett. 2000, 233) that Lockett discusses in relation to the 'swinging' films were emerging in the wider teenage community.

Britain's creative boom included the fashion and film worlds. Mary Quant defined the 1960s look with her invention of the mini skirt;<sup>10</sup> and films such as *Darling* (1965), *Georgy Girl* (1966) and *Blow Up* (1966) became canonical 60s films. Many films attempted to capitalise on the new permissive climate that was allegedly growing in society, and often these films featured teenagers and young adults. Despite the media representation of young people of the time, the first and second case studies use contemporary statistics to show that this permissive behaviour was limited to a small, affluent set of people and life beyond this group had not changed significantly in the mid-1960s.

As the case studies were beginning to represent teenage femininity on screen and in the media, life for a teenage girl in Britain in the long 1960s was becoming a significantly different experience compared to that of a teen 10 years previously. According to the Broadcasters Audience Research Board, by 1960 67.48% of households had a television set (double the quantity of 4 years previously) and by 1973 that had risen to 94.59%.<sup>11</sup> Pop culture had become more accessible and the

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<sup>10</sup> Foreman, Katya 'Icons: The Miniskirt', *BBC Culture*, (21<sup>st</sup> October 2014) <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20140523-short-but-sweet-the-miniskirt>, accessed 17<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Broadcasters Audience Research Board, 'Television ownership in private domestic households', *Closer: The Home of Longitudinal Research* (2019), <https://www.closer.ac.uk/data/television-ownership-in-domestic-households/>, accessed 12<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

new teen culture that had appeared had many routes to the young consumer. Programmes such as pop music shows *Ready, Steady, Go!* (1963-1966), *Juke Box Jury* (1959-1967) and *Top of the Pops* (1964-2006) brought pop idols directly into people's homes. Teens could also follow their idols in another way: through the teen magazine. Even though these magazines had been in circulation in the US from the mid-40s, the market did not fully develop in the UK until late 1950s.<sup>12</sup> Titles such as *Honey*, *Jackie*, *Fabulous 208*, *Rave* and *Tiger Beat* provided predominantly teenage girls with information on the latest film and pop stars as well as information on fashion and teenage life in general. Being a teenage star took on an entirely new dimension as they became more accessible to their audience. Teens could read interviews with, win competitions to meet, and decorate their walls with posters of their favourite star. Archival research has been central to my work and teen magazines have been a valuable resource; they have provided a window into the construction of the star images of my case studies and also provided information on the construction of teenage femininities in the media in the long 1960s.

## Conclusion

To demonstrate the progression of the representation of the teenage girl and teen stardom of the 1960s, this work discusses three stars who each started their careers as teenage girls at transitional points of the long 1960s. There were a number of teen actresses working in British cinema during the period. Jane Asher started as a child actress in the 1950s before moving on to teenage roles in the 1960s in films such

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<sup>12</sup> Tinkler, Penny, "Are you really living? If not 'GET WITH IT'" The Teenage Self and Lifestyle in Young Women's Magazines, Britain 1957-1970', *Cultural and Social History Journal* 11:4 (Dec 2014) pp. 598.

as *The Greengage Summer* (1961), where she starred with another star of the 'long sixties', Susannah York. Rita Tushingham played Jo in *A Taste of Honey* before starring in other canonical sixties films such as *The Leather Boys* (1964) and *The Knack....and How to Get It* (1965). Face of the 'swinging' scene, Jane Birkin, had an uncredited role in the latter before featuring in the influential *Blow-Up* (1966). *Blow-Up* also featured Gillian Hills who, at 16, starred in quintessential teenage delinquent film *Beat Girl* in 1960. In the late sixties Olivia Hussey emerged, starring in Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) at 16 and Lynne Frederick was also playing period roles as a teenager in *Nicholas and Alexandra* (1971) and *The Amazing Mr Blunden* (1972). Other teen actors emerging towards the end of the 'long sixties' were Pamela Franklin, who as a child starred in *The Innocents* (1961) before starring in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1969) and Susan George who at 18 had a small part in *Up The Junction* (1968). All of these actresses embodied the teenage girl in British cinema during the 'long sixties'. I chose my case studies based on the variety of roles they played and also the timeframe in which they were playing roles as teenagers. Hayley Mills, Judy Geeson and Jenny Agutter's teenage roles all follow one another consecutively, neatly covering the full period of the 'long sixties'.

It should also be noted that all of the case studies and potential case studies were all white actors who played heteronormative roles and, mostly, came from middle-class backgrounds. There was limited accessibility and representation in cinema for LGBTQ+ or minority ethnic groups during the 1960s, class could also be a barrier for opportunity too. These are issues that have still not been fully addressed



and the British film industry is still trying to address them today.<sup>13</sup> The case studies reflect the limitations which were prevalent in British cinema of the era.

Hayley Mills found fame at the very end of the 1950s, finding instant success in her role as the plucky Gilly in *Tiger Bay*, and embodied a teen out of step with media representations of the time, a teen more suited to a time before teenage culture began. I examine whether Mills' representation was a dated version of the teenage girl by contextualising her stardom with historical and statistical analysis of events of the early 1960s. In fact, 'teenager' seems an inappropriate label for Mills despite her age, the characters she played were ostensibly children and her stardom created through the marketing of her image perpetuates this persona. The study looks at her films *Tiger Bay* (1959), *Whistle Down the Wind* (1961), *The Chalk Garden* (1964), *Sky West and Crooked* (1965) as well as her first forays into adult roles made whilst she was just out of her teens, *The Family Way* (1966) and *Pretty Polly* (1967) and textually analyse how her version of youth was constructed on screen. Her star image is also explored, discussing how her ties to her famous family and association with Disney affected the development of her image in a UK audience's eyes, and why she was perpetually a daughter figure until she became an adult, when her heavily publicised private life compromised this image.

The thesis explores the mid-1960s through Judy Geeson, who started her career as the 'swinging' period of the 1960s was underway. The alleged permissive climate of the period was portrayed in her films as she represented a very modern

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<sup>13</sup> Anon. 'Diversity and Inclusion: How We Are Doing', *BFI.Org*, (March 2022) <https://www.bfi.org.uk/inclusion-film-industry/diversity-inclusion-how-were-doing>, accessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

version of the 1960s teenager compared with that featured in the work of Hayley Mills. Geeson portrayed characters who were intertwined with the social events of the swinging era, embodying teenage permissiveness and its effects on the portrayal of teenage femininity in film in the middle of the decade. Just as Mills' star image had been one of a child, it will be discussed how the media struggled to ascertain how Geeson should be treated: some portrayed her as a girl, some wrote sexualised articles suggesting they saw her as a person of more maturity. Whereas the media defined Mills as forever in girlhood and struggled with her burgeoning maturity, with Geeson it was a muddled response to how to treat an older teen, with publications disagreeing on categorising the type of star she was. Her teen roles are discussed in films *To Sir, with Love* (1967), *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* (1967), *Prudence and the Pill* (1968) and *Three Into Two Won't Go* (1969) and these are contextualised within the events of the mid-1960s, which were influencing Geeson's personal representation of youth, both on and off screen.

Jenny Agutter is the subject of the last chapter, and much like Geeson before her, Agutter's big break came in the mid-1960s in a television programme *The Newcomers*, after which she embarked on a film career. From 1969 she made a trio of films, starting with family drama/murder mystery *I Start Counting* (1969), continuing with costume drama and perennial favourite *The Railway Children* (1970), Nicolas Roeg's *Walkabout* (1971), *The Snow Goose* (1971), and finally her first adult role in *Logan's Run* (1976). The diverse nature of her work in British cinema contrasts with the roles that Geeson and Mills were playing, both seemingly restricted as the type of teenager they could play compared with the opportunities Agutter could access.

As a result of this research, the discourse around the representation and star image of the teenage girl in 1960s British film have been expanded and complicated. There is currently a limited understanding of this subject, which has been under-represented in existing literature both in the fields of film studies and girlhood studies. The three case studies each present a complex picture of residual, dominant and emerging cultural and social movements of the 1960s which are explored here for the first time through the British teen girl star.

## Literature Review

In this chapter, the ways in which existing literature examines the role of the teenage girl in 1960s British cinema is considered and the gaps which will be addressed in this work are identified. The representation of the teenage girl in the 1960s, or any era in British cinema, has been a neglected topic in the field of film studies, unlike the USA where there have been a number of studies on the teenager and the teen film. Thomas Doherty wrote about the teen film of the 1950s in *Teenagers and Teenpics: The Juvenilization of American movies in the 1950s* (1988). Catherine Driscoll's *Teen Film: A Critical Introduction* (2011) focusses on American teen movies and Timothy Shary's *Generation Multiplex* (2002) and *Refocus: The Films of John Hughes* (2021) explore American teen films of the 1980s. Yet, the same attention has not been applied to films outside of the USA. The British teenager has not been overlooked entirely, there has been some academic interest in the teenager in 21<sup>st</sup> century moving images. Sarah Hill discusses the contemporary, 21<sup>st</sup> century teen girl in British film in *Young Women, Girls and Postfeminism in Contemporary British Film* (2020). Faye Woods *British Teen Television: Transnational Teens, Industry and Genre* (2016) discusses the 21<sup>st</sup> century British teenager in relation to documentary and fictional television. However, when discussion of the British teenager on screen in the sixties does feature in academic works it is as part of a larger study on a different subject; there has never been a study entirely devoted to the topic. There is a canon of film works in the social problem genre, which currently stands as the most extensively studied genre in relation to the teenager of the 50s and

60s, and includes titles such as *The Blue Lamp* (1950), *A Taste of Honey* (1961), *If* (1968) and *Kes* (1969) all of which are repeatedly studied at the expense of lesser-known films and films of other genres, meaning alternative representations of youth have been overlooked. For example, Robert Murphy's overview of the British film industry in the decade, *Sixties British Cinema* (1992), touches upon many key films which feature teenage characters from more commonly recognised works such as *A Taste of Honey* (Murphy, R. 1992, 21) as well as often neglected late 1960s titles such as *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* (Murphy, R. 1992, 146). However, the latter film only merits two paragraphs, whereas the study of *A Taste of Honey* covers six pages, which demonstrates the historic academic opinion of the importance of the social problem films as well as the neglect of the 'swinging London' films. John Hill's *Sex, Class and Realism: British Cinema 1956-1963* (1986) covers the teenager in some depth, yet he rarely strays from the social problem genre and the associated canonical works, and his study predominantly focusses on films from before 1963. There has also been little work with a focus on female teen stars of the time. The films that are studied are generally, though not entirely, dominated by the male teenage experience. As a redress to this existing focus, through three case studies of Hayley Mills, Judy Geeson and Jenny Agutter, this thesis explores the representation of the teenager girl in film as well as the star image of the teenage girl in the 60s, a time of significant social and cultural change.

As well as contributing to the field of film studies, this work also relates to the field of girlhood studies. Since the 1970s, studies on the lives of girls as a specific social and cultural group apart from boys have been written 'in relation to sexuality, identity,

education, popular culture, consumption, and more'<sup>14</sup>. Carol Dyhouse discusses young British women in the 1960s in *Girl Trouble: Panic and Progress in the History of Young Women* and discusses *Beat Girl* (Dyhouse. 2013, 139) and *Sapphire* (Dyhouse. 2013, 141) in relation to vice and delinquency, but she does not focus on cinematic representation in this work. Mel Gibson has written about comics in magazines for teenage girls in “Who’s the girl with the kissin’ lips?’ Constructions of class, popular culture and agentic girlhood in *Girl, Princess, Jackie and Bunty in the 1960s*’.<sup>15</sup> Much like the work in the field of film studies, girlhood in cinema of the 1960s isn’t the focus of the works. This thesis contributes to the discussion of teenage girlhood during the long sixties and how this experience was portrayed on screen.

In order to understand how change is articulated this work uses Raymond Williams theory of residual, dominant and emergent cultural systems from his 1977 book *Marxism and Literature* as a theoretical framework. Williams suggests that there are ‘dynamic interrelations’ (Williams. 1977, 121) within the dominant, hegemonic culture at any moment in time and within culture there is ‘a sense of movement....and complex interrelations between movements’ (Williams. 1977, 121) which merits closer examination. The residual, distinct from the archaic which is considered ‘wholly recognised as an element of the past’ (Williams. 1977, 121), is ‘formed in the past but still active in the cultural process’ (Williams. 1977, 121) of the dominant culture in the present. Within this hegemony, Williams argues we can also observe the emergence of ‘new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of

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<sup>14</sup> Mendes, Kaitlynn, ‘Girls, Boys and Girlhood Studies’, *Feminist Media Studies* 9:1 (23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2009) pp109.

<sup>15</sup> Gibson, Mel, “‘Who’s the girl with the kissin’ lips?’ Constructions of class, popular culture and agentic girlhood in *Girl, Princess, Jackie and Bunty in the 1960s*’, *Film, Fashion and Consumption* 7:2 (2018) pp131-146.

relationships [that] are continually being created' (Williams. 1977, 123). This framework exposes the complex dynamics within the star images and roles of each of the case studies in relation to the cultural movements of the 1960s. Despite the seemingly short period of time of their elevation to teenage film star status, Hayley Mills, Judy Geeson and Jenny Agutter all experienced a fame that was peculiar to and separate from each other and this was informed by the residual, dominant and emergent culture of their specific era. The teenage years are a period where people go through a period of enormous change both physically and mentally. Williams' theory can also be applied to this period of transition, a period where experience from childhood still echoes, experiences which were 'formed in the past but still active in the cultural process' (Williams. 1977, 121) informing the development of the person as they become an adult. It is also a period where 'new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships [that] are continually being created' (Williams. 1977, 123) as the person grows into adulthood. As Williams argues, there is also a 'social basis for elements of the cultural process' (Williams. 1977, 125), the theory permits the consideration of how the changing social aspects of the 1960s may have informed the work and image of these actors.

### **Teen Girls in Histories of Britain in the 1960s**

A specific image endures of Britain of the 1960s and the historical and sociological impact of the 60s have been of academic interest since the decade itself was underway as social, cultural, economic and political change was occurring rapidly on all fronts. Socially, people were being granted more freedoms to live their life as they chose, as laws were relaxed or abolished on a range of subjects from

homosexuality in the Sexual Offences bill (Sandbrook. 2006,470) to the legalisation of abortion (Donnelly. 2005, 120). Economically the country was 'modernising' as a tool to deal with a financial decline (Donnelly. 2005, 67). Politically, Conservative party support plummeted due, in part, to the Profumo scandal (Sandbrook. 2006, 5) and a Labour government took power under Harold Wilson. Culturally the film, music and art worlds flowered with some of the biggest artistic names of the era being from Britain, such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Julie Andrews, Julie Christie, Terrence Stamp, David Hockney and David Bailey to name but a few. This thesis will be examining the careers of three actresses who were embodying the teenage girl through this period of transformation in Britain.

Dominic Sandbrook's *White Heat* (2006), Mark Donnelly's *Sixties Britain* (2005), Arthur Marwick's *The Sixties* (1998) and David Kynaston's *Modernity Britain* (2013) all provide valuable overviews of British history of the 1960s, but discussion of youth is limited as it is not the focus of the works. Subsequently, their discussion of the teenage girl specifically is even more sparse. Marwick dedicates forty pages to discussing youth in Britain. In addition to discussing the student movements of the 60s he covers similar topics to those found in writings about teenagers in the social problem films of the 1950s, teen affluence (Marwick. 1998, 42), the 'Angry Young Men' and the 'Kitchen Sink' era of film and theatre (Marwick. 1998, 55) and teenage sexuality (Marwick. 1998, 74). Of the latter topic, he finds that a promiscuity myth had been perpetuated as contemporary studies suggested that teenagers, especially teenage girls in the 60s, were not as sexually active as the media of the time suggests (Marwick. 1998, 76). Sandbrook agrees that 'the conventional myths of the sexual revolution, when examined closely, turn out to be deeply misleading' (Sandbrook.



2006, 452). This topic is discussed in relation to the teenage girl specifically in all of the case studies in this work.

In addition to Lockett's previously mentioned work on Beatlemania, Hilary Radner and Moya Lockett's *Swinging Single: Representing Sexuality in the 1960s* (1999) contains essays discussing the changing sexual mores of the 60s and includes British as well as North American subjects. Sara Maitland's *Very Heaven: Looking Back at the 1960's* (1988) collects the personal histories of young women living through the 60s, during the emergence of the Women's Liberation Movement. The first section, entitled 'Growing', compiles the stories of four women who experienced their teen years in the 1960s. They discuss lighter topics such as Merseybeat fandom and teenage fashion (Nolan and Singleton. 1988, 19) to more serious considerations such as growing up as a black teenager in 60s London (Quaye. 1988, 26). Star of *Darling*, Julie Christie, is also interviewed in a chapter entitled 'Everybody's Darling' (Christie. 1988, 167). The majority of the book records the reminiscences of the experiences of adult women rather than having a focus on girlhood or teenagers of the time and also encompasses a number of subjects with film only forming a small part of the book.

These sources have chosen to combine all aspects of 60s life to attempt to create a full picture of the decade, each exploring a variety of discourses that emerged through the period and concluding that there are enduring myths about life in the 60s that remain which contrast with the evidence we have of life in the period. They also agree that after the high of the mid-1960s, by the time the era was coming to a close, an air of dissatisfaction and pessimism had set in which established itself in the early 70s. In this work contemporary statistics are explored to analyse the myths

surrounding the generally accepted idea of the 'permissiveness' of teenage girls in the 60s and have found, like Marwick, to view these accounts with some scepticism. I discuss this within my chapters on Hayley Mills and Judy Geeson who each represented the poles of the 'permissive' debate.

### The Social Problem Film

Geoffrey McNab suggests 'between 1953 and 1963, a new genre emerged- the social problem film' (McNab. 2000, 186). Films of this genre certainly enjoyed huge popularity at this time, but they had in fact emerged decades earlier. Marcia Landy's generic study of British cinema pre-1960, *British Genres* (1992), traces their emergence to the 1930s. She says of their popularity in the 50s, 'the British social problem film did not arise in a vacuum... British cinema of the 1930s addressed social issues...and touched on themes of poverty, unemployment and the exploitation of workers and their effect on the individual, the family and the community' (Landy. 1992, 432). They continued to be made during and after the Second World War, a time of profound social, political and cultural developments that changed the face of Britain in the 1940s. Roy Armes writes, 'the war years and the first post war decade have an essential unity' (Armes, R. 1978, 159), suggesting that there was an optimism that society was working together for a better future after years of destruction. Despite this apparent unity, social problems endured and were portrayed on screen to increasing success. The juvenile delinquent character started to appear with more frequency during the late 1940s. Michael Brook of the BFI discusses social problem films in *Screen Online*, mentioning *Good-Time Girl* (1947) as an early example of the

juvenile delinquent in film.<sup>16</sup> It featured a teenage Diana Dors as a tearaway who is deterred from a life of crime after hearing the life story of Gwen (Jean Kent) who is serving time in prison after leading a life of crime. The juvenile delinquent trope would appear more and more in British cinema over the 1950s as panic increased within the adult community about the emergence of the teenager as a social group, and there was extensive coverage of the 'emergence of youth problems' (Street, S. 1997, 74). The social problem film became a very popular genre during the boom of youth culture and as previously mentioned, the youth problems were often used as a source of inspiration for their stories (Hill, J. 1986, 67). We see the clash of generations in discussions about juvenile delinquency in David Kynaston's *Modernity Britain* (2015), he records adults advocating for corporal punishment of unruly teenagers, for example one person suggests when 'catch[ing] a delinquent in the act, cuff his ear...bring the cat in again... bring back the birch' (Kynaston, D. 2015, 69). We can see this attitude reflected in the social problem films of the time, the villainous Roy in *Cosh Boy* (1953), a troubled teenage delinquent, is triumphantly flogged by his new stepfather as punishment for his crimes before being escorted away by the Police. His mother is seen to parent him ineffectively, and poor parenting is also a trope we see repeatedly in social problem films which tackle the subject of youth.

John Hill also argues that the teen represented 'the hazards of affluence' (Hill, J. 1986, 13) as young people had disposable income for the first time after years of post-war austerity. Marcia Landy agrees that 'the new affluence by the mid-1950s

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<sup>16</sup> <sup>16</sup> Brooke, Michael, 'Social Problem Films', *BFI: ScreenOnline*, (unknown) <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/1074067/index.html>, accessed January 15<sup>th</sup> 2019.

was an important factor in eroding a vision of English tradition, continuity and stability' (Landy, M. 1991, 13). This widespread affluence provided teenagers with freedom most had not experienced before. Hill argues that this led to 'dissolution of old class barriers and the construction of a new collective identity based on teenage values' (Hill, J. 1986, 11) as the teenager now had more power through the acquisition of money.

He also states that the ideology of the social problems film was to 'not just provide mere entertainment but to confront real situations and important social issues and, in doing so, make a positive contribution to the good of society' (Hill, J. 1986, 68). This would usually result in the 'benign authority figure' (Hill, J. 1986, 68) who represented the adult society, ultimately saving a wayward teen from a troubled life. Hill uses the example of the 'benign authority' (Hill, J. 1986, 68) of Mr Thackeray taking on a class of troubled youths in *To Sir, with Love* (1967) and moulding them in to respectable citizen; as Landy says 'the narratives seek to assimilate these figures into the community' (Landy.1990, 437). Even this late addition to the juvenile delinquent film subgenre sees the much-discussed permissive aspects of 1960s society give way to the conservative ideals that were still being adhered to according to statistics of the time, for example the number of couples getting married between 1960 and 1969 increased throughout the decade, the decline in this number did not start until the mid-1970s.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Office for National Statistics, 'Marriages in England and Wales: 2016', *Office for National Statistics*, (2017) <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivilpartnerships/bulletins/marriagesinenglandandwalesprovisional/2016>, accessed January 16<sup>th</sup> 2019.

John Hill's *Sex, Class and Realism: British Cinema 1956-1963* is the most thorough discussion of the emergence of the teenager in British cinema of the 50s and early 60s. His writing focuses almost entirely on social realism cinema. Through this work he helped create the canon of films associated with youth in the era such as *The Blue Lamp* (1950), *A Taste of Honey* and *Saturday Night, Sunday Morning* (1960). He argues 'teenagers had become synonymous with sexual immorality and violence' (Hill, J. 1986, 13) out of which emerged the popularity of the juvenile delinquent in British cinema. Hill argues that teenage representation in social problem films was fuelled by a kind of extreme reaction to the new teen culture that was emerging, exacerbating 'the anxieties of the parent's culture' (Hill, J. 1986,13). The focus of the book frequently moves away from youth in order to discuss other social problems that were portrayed in cinema of the 50s and early 60s as youth is not the sole focus of Hill's writing, so the attention paid to teen girls on screen in this work is necessarily limited.

Marcia Landy discusses the social problem film in *British Genres* and considers the position of the teenage girl within it. She says 'The social problem film abounds in the dramas of young women but less often undertakes the portrayal of girls' (Landy. 1990, 458) identifying the propensity of the genre to focus on the experience of the male characters. She does not attempt to extend the conversation to discussions of the girl and focusses on the portrayal of what she refers to as young women, saying "The portrayal of young women as signifiers of destructive social tendencies and the need to contain their disruptiveness can be seen particularly in the films of the late 1940 and the 1950s that focus on female law breakers, setting up an opposition

between law enforcement officials working for the restoration of familial values and young women in the quest of pleasure. Pleasure is stigmatized by being associated with acts of criminality.’ (Landy. 1990, 452). Her discussion of ‘young women’ encompasses the issues that were being tackled on screen by teen characters, she is using the term ‘young women’ in the place of teenage. She identifies the anxiety around the pleasure seeking of teenagers, specifically the sexuality of teenagers (and more specifically around the teenage girl) which the social problem films often associate with criminal behaviour or grave consequences (Landy. 1990, 452), as seen in the previously mentioned *Good Time Girl* and Rene’s (Joan Collins) tragic trajectory in *Cosh Boy* who finds herself pregnant after being coerced into an abusive relationship with James Kenney’s Roy.

Raymond Durnat’s *A Mirror for England* (1970) briefly discusses youth in film and his focus is also mainly on representation in the social problem genre. He compares the British social problem film to their counterparts from the USA and argued that the films from the US had a more thoughtful and measured response to juvenile delinquency, referencing *Rebel Without A Cause* (1955) in particular. He states that British films about youth in comparison represented ‘a little explosion of hysteria’ (Durnat. 1970, 169). It is undeniable that *Rebel Without A Cause* is an influential film but to argue that this response was less hysterical is questionable. The film contains highly melodramatic moments, we see the death of Dean’s teen rival in a drag race and the film ends with a shoot-out culminating with the demise of one of the main characters. And by claiming hysteria, Durnat overlooks the representation of the teenager outside of the social problem genre; hysterics rarely feature in the

work of teen idols such as Cliff Richard or Tommy Steele or in the work of the case studies in this work. Mills specifically was featuring in British films as a teen whilst the social problem film was enjoying its peak in popularity. The work of the case studies rarely display the hysteria Durgnat writes of. As well as discussing the evolution of the teenage girl in social problem cinema of the long 1960s, this work moves beyond the early 60s where Landy, Hills and Geraghty's work ends to explore character of the teenage girl into British cinema of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

### The Teenager beyond the Social Problem Film

While less has been written on the role of youth in films away from the social problem genre; the next most popular subject would be the rock'n'roll or pop music films of the 50s and 60s. Amy Sargeant mentions the emergence of the music film in *British Cinema: A Critical History* (2005) and discusses how the film industry 'sought to capitalise on [pop idols] popularity' (Sargeant. 2005, 224) attempting to attract audiences back into cinemas as attendance figures had waned since the advent of television in the early 50s. Stephen Glynn's *British Pop Music Film* (2013) is an in-depth study of the pop music film, covering their inception in the late 50s to their continuing life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century ending with *Ill Manors* (2012). Its focus is on the zenith of the pop music film in the 50s and 60s covering the films of Cliff Richard and The Beatles to the more experimental output from the mid to late 60s with *Blow Up* (1966) and *Performance* (1970). Despite his discussion of some teen trends, the films featured often focus on stars who are not teenagers and are therefore less relevant to my field of study. Kevin Donnelly also discusses the career of Cliff Richard in *British Film Music and Film Musicals* (2007) and although the work mainly focuses on

Richard's music and the development of rock'n'roll as a musical genre in British film, he does discuss Richards' effect on rejuvenating the representation of the teen of the 50s initiating a 'change from representing Rock'n'Rollers as delinquents...to representing them as 'good kids' (Donnelly. 2007, 139). Nevertheless, this account again limits the representation of the teenager to the problematic youths commonly found in social problem films and overlooking 'good' kids who feature elsewhere in other genres.

Another recent publication, *Sixties British Cinema Reconsidered* (2020) contains a diverse range of essays reconsidering British cinema of the 1960s. Canonical works like *Kes* and *If...* are reconsidered and 60s female adult stardom is discussed in Margherita Sprio's chapter on Carol White. Most relevant to my work is Sophia Satchell-Baeza's essay 'Panic at the Disco: Brainwashing, Alienation and the Discotheque in Swinging London Films' in which she discusses the role of the Discotheque in 'swinging' cinema, psychedelia and its place in youth culture. Like Murphy, she acknowledges the 'disturbing undertones' (Satchell-Baeza. 2020, 241) of the 'swinging' films which is something I will discuss in relation to the character of the teenage girl.

Marcia Landy discusses youth in relation to alternative genres in *British Genres* (1992), a book which looks at the dominant genres in British films made before 1960, ending where the study begins and does not cover youth or the teenager in depth. The majority of this work discusses films of the 30s and 40s. Her discussion of films from the 50s concentrate on adult representation and relationships, youth is not discussed at length which is surprising considering the effect of the emergence of the



teenager and the new social groups in British film of the mid to late 50s. She mentions youth in relation to social problem films but also in family melodramas, saying 'the narratives will focus on the struggle of patriarchal figures to maintain their positions and, correspondingly, women and young people who are torn between rebellion and submission' (Landy. 1992, 288) which suggests that youth in rebellion is a trope that transcends genres that could be dealt with outside a social problem or juvenile delinquent context. She also makes a statement about family melodramas that indicates commonality between the genre and the social problem film, 'the opposition between generations, classes and sexes is central to the family melodrama. Especially in the domestic melodramas that feature generation conflict, the point of contention will involve traditional values against emergent ones, a conflict between old and new' (Landy. 1992, 288). The family melodrama will be discussed in relation to Mills and Agutter's work in the 60s, the domestic setting gives the opportunity to reveal how the expectations of the British teenage girl progressed in the era. This thesis will also go beyond Landy's work, both in historical period and in the range of genres the teenage girl appears in.

In *British Film* (2004) Jim Leach briefly discusses the typical form the school film of the 1950s, he says:

the school movie typically raises problems whose origin is variously located in the teachers, the student or the system, but the ending brings about some form of reconciliation and a sense that the system will survive the test... the school readily functions as a microcosm of the nation, the films can be viewed

as allegories about the relevance of national traditions in the modern world’ (Leach. 2004, 185).

As with the social problem genre, Leach suggests the teenager is being used as a warning about subversion and used as a tool to challenge the old system, which in turn troubles the older generation, but the traditional values ultimately emerge victorious. Unlike the social problem film, the school movies of the 1950s provided a version rebellious youth that was treated comedically rather than as an attempt at making a serious statement about the state of society. Delinquency was replaced by misbehaviour or naughtiness and was employed to provide a gentle mockery of the system. This represented a change in the way that the teenager was being represented and this lighter attitude towards teenage rebellion is considered in the case studies of Hayley Mills and Judy Geeson.

By the mid-60s the popularity of the teenage delinquent in the social problem film was in decline. The teenager in film was now finding representation outside of this genre although little scholarship has been produced about the topic in this period. A brief exploration of the teenager in British film is found in Robert Murphy’s *Sixties British Cinema* (1992), which provides a full overview of British cinema of the 1960s. He discusses the canonical kitchen sink era films, the swinging era and the cinema of the late 60s. The films of Woodfall studios and the Angry Young Men of the late 50s and early 60s are covered in more depth than most other films that feature teenage characters. He devotes a chapter to ‘Swinging London’ and discusses how films of this period had an ability to ‘look un-patronisingly at young people and their attitude to sex’ (Murphy. 1992, 146) but even this is a brief discussion of the matter and his focus

on these films is often on young people in their 20s and therefore too old for inclusion in this study.

Jeffrey Richards and Anthony Aldgate write about 60s film in *Best of British* (1983), and Richards alone wrote *Films and British National Identity* (1997). These books discuss the Kitchen Sink and British New Wave era films, and they argue their look at British life is 'fresh, un-patronising' (Richards. 1997, 159). The films of later in the decade are described as lacking in depth: 'their most prized characteristic of the new era...[was] coolness' (Richards. 1997, 159); this is a position challenged in this thesis. Both Murphy and Richards follow the established tradition of identifying the films of earlier in the decade as the worthiest of analysis and the films of later in the decade have been neglected in their favour. Murphy and Richards both discuss the swinging era, Richards dismissive of their importance saying, 'films became locked in a heady spiral of mounting extravagance, febrile excitement and faddish innovation' (Richards. 1983, 159) choosing instead to write a chapter on Lindsay Anderson's *If...* (1969), a social commentary on the public school system and not considered part of the 'swinging' canon of films. Murphy devotes a chapter to the period and acknowledges that:

'the realist cinema of the late 50s and early 60s is at least critically acknowledged as an important movement. Most of the rest of the 60s British cinema.... Have received such cursory treatment that it is less a matter of arguing against established critical positions than of dispersing clouds of ignorance and prejudice. 'Swinging London' films, for example, have fared particularly badly' (Murphy. 1992, 2)

He also recognises that there was more substance to the swinging films than they had previously been credited for. He acknowledges they often have 'disturbing undertones' (Murphy. 1992, 4) and he also detects 'contradictions [that] manifested themselves in films which attempted to deal with Swinging London and its supposedly permissive morality' (Murphy. 1992, 143). He notes their representation of sexuality as liberation, but this liberation is also to still only be enjoyed within established societal boundaries such as marriage (Murphy. 1992, 143). The films Murphy covers are almost all films with adults as the protagonists, such as *Alfie* (1966) or *Blow Up* (1966); in contrast, this thesis considers this position in relation to the teenage girl. As previously mentioned, he does discuss *HWGRTMB*, but his analysis is brief. The expectations of teenage girls, considering the historical context of the second wave of feminism occurring and the alleged sexual liberation of society, is something that Murphy does not fully explore and it will be a main consideration in this work. We also see an absence of the 'liberated' teenage girl in some films that will feature in this work, particularly in Mills work such her role in *The Family Way* (1966) which sees the 19-year-old Mills' play a young bride. Richards and Murphy's work covers familiar ground, spending time exploring the kitchen sink era films at length, and both look at *If...* when considering late 60s British cinema, neither spending a significant amount of time exploring the role of the teenage girl in 60s film. When Murphy looks at *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* (hereafter *HWGRTMB*) his analysis is focussed on the experience of Jamie, a teenage boy, and his view of the world. Alleged liberation but within conservative boundaries regarding the behaviour of the teenage girl is something that is a dominant feature in *HWGRTMB* and is overlooked by Murphy. This is discussed at length in the case study of Judy Geeson. Murphy is critical of the girls

in Jamie's world who he briefly mentions and describes as 'in turn, dumb, manipulative, artificial, silly and unscrupulous' (Murphy. 1992, 147). This work looks beyond his analysis of this film and exploring the role of the teenage girl using the character of Mary played by Judy Geeson which sheds a different light on the representation of the teenager in British cinema of the 60s.

Articles have been written on different aspects of the swinging period ranging from the view of London through the swinging lens to the representation of women in the sub-genre. One of the most popular subjects is the association of 'Swinging' London and consumption. David Gilbert wrote 'The Youngest Legend in History: Cultures of Consumption and the Mythologies of Swinging London'<sup>18</sup> which is devoted to the construction of fashion and retail and how the era still effects the image of London in contemporary Britain. Pamela Church-Gibson's *From Up North to Up West. London on Screen 1965-1967* (2006) introduces itself as an essay which challenges existing ideas about the 60s being a time of true liberation and that the 'swinging 1960s' were responsible for introducing a new consumerist age. The aim of the article in part is to 'challenge...generalisations [around discourse on teenage liberation] and argues that while such films may have spoken directly to their teenage audiences there were accompanying moralistic subtexts around issues of gender, sexuality, class and power'.<sup>19</sup> Yet despite these aims, there is less discourse about the teenager and the article mainly concerns itself with fashion and consumerism in non-teen films such as *The Knack* (1965), *Darling* (1964), *Georgy Girl* (1966) and *Blow Up* (1966). She

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<sup>18</sup> Gilbert, David, 'The Youngest Legend in History: Cultures of Consumption and Mythologies of Swinging London', *The London Journal* 31:1 (June 2006) pp. 1-14.

<sup>19</sup> Church-Gibson, Pamela, 'From Up North to Up West: London on Screen 1965-1967', *The London Journal*, 31:1 (June 2006) pp. 85-89.

acknowledges the darker, moralistic side of the swinging films, viewing some additions to the sub-genre as misogynistic, and suggests they are a continuation of the British New Wave films, the only difference being they had been transported from the north to the south.<sup>20</sup> This work argues that themes in the films of the swinging era can actually be traced further back to the social problem films of earlier in the 1950s.

### The Teenage Girl of the 1960s in Film Studies

Melanie Bell wrote 'Young, Single and Disillusioned' (2012) about the representation of the young British woman and, alongside 60s contemporary literature about the modern woman, notes how 'certain filmmakers questioned the dominant image of the mobile, free young woman empowered through sexual liberation'.<sup>21</sup> She looks outside the usual canonical films at lesser-known films such as *The Beauty Jungle* (1963) and *The World Ten Times Over* (1963), although there is also mention of more popular titles featuring Julie Christie, *Darling* (1964) and *Billy Liar* (1965). Although she discusses the female in 60s film this article discusses young adult women and their opportunities and lives single and married, teenage girls are not the focus. The 'young, single and disillusioned' girl could be applied to Hayley Mills later work and all of Judy Geeson's teenage work. This thesis extends Williams' attention to the young British femininity on screen through a focus on stardom, which enables a full consideration of the social and cultural changes teenage girls experienced in the 60s and how this informed the stardom of my case studies.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Bell, Melanie, 'Young, Single and Disillusioned', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol 42: Literature of the 1950s and 1960s (2012) pp 80-96.

There has been much less attention to British cinematic work concerning the teenage girl and no books that solely focus on the teenage girl in the 60s. When the subject is broached, it is usually part of a discussion of films of the social problem genre. 'Teetering on the edge: Portraits of innocence, risk and young female sexualities in 1950s and 1960s British cinema' (2017) by Janet Fink and Penny Tinkler explores sexuality in the representation of teenage girls and the associated 'risks' that were played out in the narratives of their chosen films in the already much discussed social problem films, looking at lesser debated films *Rag Doll* (1960), *Girl on Approval* (1961) and *Don't Talk to Strange Men* (1962) alongside more popularly discussed film *Beat Girl* (1959). Again, this article confines discourse on the teenager, and specifically the teenage girl, to a genre that has already been thoroughly discussed. This thesis looks at the careers of Hayley Mills, Judy Geeson and Jenny Agutter, all of the actors embodied the teenage girl at different points of the long 60s. Alongside their work on screen, their star images are analysed through existing literature and archive study to discover how their star personas were built around them. This work also examines the ways in which teenage femininity was constructed beyond the social problem genre. In the last decade there has been an increasing amount of attention to the star image in British cinema, but as yet little attention has been paid to the teenage star image. So, how can we approach an investigation of teen girl stardom in the long 1960s?

### **British Stardom in Film Studies**

Richard Dyer writes in his seminal work, *Stars*, that he aims to discuss 'stardom in terms of sociological implications and as an exploration of the semiotics of stardom' (Dyer 1979, 1). He identifies the link between stars and their 'functions which serve

to preserve the status quo' (Dyer. 1979, 23). The three stars explored in this work not only embody the rapid social change of the 60s but also work against the prevailing ethos of the 60s that was created through the media-created idea of permissiveness. Stars, at times, help preserve the 'status quo' (Dyer. 1979, 23); Mills for example was the antithesis of the teenage delinquent, who at the time was seen to be threatening the established way of life. Dyer also says that 'stars embody social values that are to some degree in crisis' (Dyer. 1979, 24) which also encapsulates the type of character Hayley Mills was playing, a version of youthful femininity that was fast disappearing, or Judy Geeson's work as the teenage girl, embracing the morally permissive lifestyle as conservative members of society felt their more traditional way of life was under attack from the new morality. Dyer's work in *Heavenly Bodies* (2004) explores the careers of Hollywood stars and, most importantly for this work, that of Marilyn Monroe. He says she 'embodies what the discourses designate as the important-at-the-time central features of the human existence' (Dyer. 2004, 18), something that my case studies also do as youth culture and the teen experience became a central feature of discourse in the 1960s.

Shingler's *Star Studies: A Critical Guide* builds on Dyer's work. His intention is to 'organise the field of star studies... into a number of discreet areas to make it more manageable and comprehensible' (Shingler. 2012, 5). The focus of the work is mainly on Hollywood stardom. He says 'stars represent specific types of people, reflecting psychological, cultural, national, racial and sexual characteristics' (Shingler. 2012, 3). This work examines the representation of types of British teenage girlhood that each of these stars embodied considering many of these characteristics outlined. Shingler also says 'the relationship between private person and public persona is complex and



confusing' (Shingler. 2012, 122). This confusion is seen in all of my case studies whose star persona's and private lives are complexly interrelated. For example, I examine the role Hayley Mill's famous parents played in her career and the effect they had on the construction of her persona. I also consider the muddled progressive/retrogressive image constructed around Judy Geeson when interviewed about her private life, and also Jenny Agutter's apparent lack of star persona and the seemingly strict policing of her private life.

There have been a limited number of books written with a focus on British stardom. Geoffrey Macnab's *Searching for the Stars* (2000) discusses the British star system until the early 1960s, focussing is mainly on adult stars of the period it covers. Charles Barr's *All Our Yesterdays* (1986) compiles essays on British stars of the period, including a piece on Diana Dors who started out as a teen actor, but her study focusses on her career as an adult actor and sex symbol, Bruce Babbington's *British Stars and Stardom: Alma Taylor to Sean Connery* (2002) similarly compiles a number of essays discussing a variety of British stars (again including Diana Dors) but again teen stars are overlooked in favour of their adult counterparts. Christine Geraghty discusses the stardom of three actors in her essay 'Women and 60s British cinema: The development of the 'Darling' girl' in *The British Cinema Book* (2001). She explores the stardom of Julie Christie and the affect her character in *Darling* (1965) had on the representation of women in 60s British film. She discusses the teenage girl, the middle-classes and Rita Tushingham, Judy Geeson and Julie Christie's key roles which created the 'Darling' girl image. Her discussion of Geeson is limited to her role in *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* (1967) and states that Geeson's stardom was 'inauthentic' (Geraghty. 2009, 319) and she 'apes Christie' (Geraghty. 2009, 319); the

chapter on Geeson provides a significant redress to Geraghty's position, arguing that we must understand Geeson's image and work are very different to that of Christie.

The importance of paratextual material has been demonstrated in a number of works on stardom and is a main tool of research in this thesis. Dyer says 'a film star's image is not just his or her films, but the promotion of those films and the star through pin-ups, public appearances, studio hand-outs and so on, as well as interviews, biographies, and coverage in the press of the star's doings and 'private life'' (Dyer, R. 1986, 2) and goes on to use Playboy as a central part of his work on Monroe in *Heavenly Bodies*. This emphasis on the importance of archival research in relation to the study of stardom has helped form the methodology of this work. It has enabled the examination of the created star images of the case studies and established their place, and the contradictions, within the cultural and social sphere of the long 1960s. Archival and paratextual material provides a window into the construction of the star and the times in which they were living. *Reframing Vivien Leigh* focusses on archival material offering a 'new interpretation' (Stead. 2021, 1) of the star who had been the subject of numerous autobiographies but fewer academic works (Stead. 2021, 2). Stead says archival material has 'the potential to reconfigure existing narratives...and to produce new knowledge' (Stead. 2021, 2), which is what this thesis also does in relation to British stardom and girlhood on screen in the 60s. Melanie Williams *Female Stars of British Cinema* (2017) selects a female star from each decade from the 1940s to the 2000's and analyses their star image for the period they were selected to represent. In her case study for the 1960s, Williams' explores the stardom of Rita Tushingham, star of the canonical *A Taste of Honey*, and primarily focusses on the construction of her star image using archival material and critical

sources from the time and some textual analysis of the films she starred in. She does discuss teen stardom in her chapter on the careers of Helena Bonham-Carter and Emily Lloyd, but this is in relation to their stardom in the 1980s. However, there is less discussion of the teenage girl in the Tushingham chapter which covers the period of time that will be discussed. Rachel Moseley's *Growing Up with Audrey Hepburn* (2002) examines Hepburn's stardom through researching star ephemera such as 'Audrey-style paper patterns for Pyjamas' (Moseley. 2002, 103) or studying pages of *Vogue* for the effect Hepburn's role in *Sabrina* (1954) had on high street fashion (Moseley. 2002, 40). Although her work is on stars in the US star system, Sumiko Higashi's work has an emphasis on archival research and presents a compelling argument for the importance of magazines specifically in the construction of the female star image. She also considers female teen stardom in the US in *Stars, Fans and Consumption in the 1950s* which uses popular 50s magazine *Photoplay* to explore how fan magazines 'constructed female gender in post war America' (Higashi. 2014, 2) and how *Photoplay*, amongst others, 'represented feminine social types in relation to domestic ideology in an expanding consumer culture' (Higashi. 2014, 2). Higashi dedicates each chapter to the examination of the representation of a female star of the era including adolescent female representation, the two chapters most relevant to this study are the chapters entitled 'Debbie Reynolds: The Suburban Teenager as Girl Next Door' and 'Natalie Wood: The Rebellious Teenager as the Junior Femme Fatale'. The Reynolds chapter explores how she was marketed in the pages of *Photoplay* 'as a pal rather than a sex symbol...who resembled the enthusiastic fans who bought and read fan magazines' (Higashi. 2014, 47). Conversely, Higashi explores how Natalie Wood was marketed as 'a precocious adolescent whose sexual maturity became the subject of

several fan magazine stories... unlike wholesome Debbie Reynolds' (Higashi. 2014, 107). Higashi addresses the 'blurred but perceptible line' (Higashi. 2014, 107) between girlhood and womanhood in *Photoplay's* coverage of Wood as they discuss her life as an American teen and her career as a movie star.

Frances Smith's essay also explores teen stardom in an American context. "Don't You Forget about Me' Molly Ringwald, Nostalgia and Teen Stardom' discusses Ringwald's teen stardom which was seen as an 'embodiment of the mid-1980's' (Smith. 2016, 232) and how the 'nostalgic pull of girlhood' (Smith. 2016, 232) can limit the scope of an actors careers, a problem I discuss further in the case study of Hayley Mills and her own embodiment of the teenager of the long 1960s. Smith discusses Ringwald's perceived 'authenticity' (Smith. 2016, 235) and examines her costumes in relation to this, the importance of contemporary fashion is something I discuss in the case study of Judy Geeson.

*Star Attractions: Twentieth-Century Movie Magazines and Global Fandom* (2019) also discusses various aspects of the popular movie magazines of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which had previously been 'neglected and regarded with suspicion' (Jeffers-McDonald and Lanckman. 2019, 2). The articles within discuss both the form and various aspects of the magazines across the world, from individual case studies of particular stars to close examination of particular titles. The editors state they are not looking for 'truth' (Jeffers-McDonald and Lanckman. 2019, 3) within the pages of the movie magazines due to their commercial nature, but instead are interested in the 'discourse' (Jeffers-McDonald and Lanckman. 2019, 3) generated by them. This work is also interested in this discourse created by magazines and newspapers. For

example, during my research I have found contradicting stories on how Hayley Mills was discovered by Walt Disney, fan magazines contradicting the more reliably reported story of Disney's wife seeing *Tiger Bay* by having Disney discover her himself.<sup>22</sup> This work also does not look for factual accuracy in magazine and newspaper articles but rather examines what they can tell us about the star image and the time in which they were written.

### Methodology

A key consideration for this thesis was finding an effective way into the field and how to address the gaps in scholarly understanding of the teenage girl in the 1960s. Using the three case studies has narrowed the scope of the thesis. I selected the three actors by creating a spreadsheet of British films of the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s which featured teenage characters. The spreadsheet covers a longer period of time than the 'long 60s' and considers all teen characters as, initially, I intended to write about both teenage boys and girls over the period of two decades. I decided to narrow the field by focussing on teenage girls in a shorter period of time because there was less work on the teenage girl, especially in 1960s cinema. I chose the three case studies who each starred in a diverse set of British films at successive points of the long 1960s, whose work followed consecutively within the chosen timeframe. Hayley Mills first appeared as a 13-year-old in *Tiger Bay* (1959) at the start of the long 1960s and played 'teenage' roles until 1966, Judy Geeson then follows with a number of films in which she features as a teenage girl between 1967 and 1969 and lastly Jenny Agutter's teenage work covers the period 1969 to 1974. They also provide

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<sup>22</sup> Linet, Beverley, 'Hayley!', *Modern Screen* 34:12 (December 1960), pp. 74.

evidence of the rapid progression in the representation of the teenage girl in film and in star image over the relatively short period the study covers. These stars feature in films that contain elements of the social problem film but are not typical additions to the genre, such as Geeson's *To Sir, with Love* (1967) and Agutter's *I Start Counting* (1969), but they are later versions of the genre which have garnered less attention academically. The case studies provided an opportunity to explore the role of the teenage girl in range of genres, from the comedy of Geeson's films in *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* (1967) and *Prudence and the Pill* (1968), to the family melodrama in Mills *The Chalk Garden* (1964) and the costume drama in Agutter's *The Railway Children* (1970) and *The Snow Goose* (1971).

Alongside academic texts, the thesis makes significant use of archival and paratextual resources such as fan and film magazines, girls annuals and newspaper articles, which provided a valuable insight into the construction of the image of female teenage stars of the 1960s. The archival material establishes the link between the star, their work and how it was consumed, providing contextualisation of the era relating to the star and the period in which they were representing the teenage girl. As Dyer wrote how discourse around the stardom of Monroe and its link to 50s society can be revealed in the collective 'clusters of ideas, notions, feelings, images, attitudes and assumptions' (Dyer. 2004, 17), which contemporary paratextual material can help reveal. As discussed, this approach has been used in other writing, such as in the works of scholars of stardom such as Rachel Moseley, Sumiko Higashi and Melanie Williams who have all used archival paratextual materials. Alongside this, surveys and

statistics from the time will be utilised to explore the accuracy of the claims made in the films and literature.

Textual analysis is used to explore and address how the role of the teenage girl is constructed on screen in the films of the case studies. This analysis links these films with their historical and sociological moments in time, in particular the evolution of the teenager in the period. There has been little or no discourse around the chosen films due to the subject matter which mainly concerns the British teenager. I suggest that they provide valuable evidence of the changing attitudes towards teenage culture in its earliest form. They also document how teenage girls were presented and how this teen lifestyle and culture was sold to real teens through the marketing of the stars who featured in them. This work creates a deeper and more nuanced understanding around the representation of the teenage girl in British film of the 1960s.

## Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is to develop and expand the existing work on existing the screen representation of the teenage girl during the 1960s. This chapter has demonstrated there is little attention to the representation of the teenager and their star image in existing literature and that there is a limited understanding of and attention to the socio-cultural significance of the teenage girl on screen in the period. By using established theoretical frameworks on stardom in dialogue with Williams' theory of cultural change, this work examines the careers of three of the decade's more successful stars in British cinema whose diverse careers are not limited to films of the social problem genre which has previously dominated the field of study. Paratextual sources are examined to provide a comprehensive study of the

star image of the teenage girl of the period, allowing a more comprehensive view of the construction of teen femininity in British cinema of the long 1960s, a representation which had previously been dominated by the juvenile delinquents or the good teen/ bad teen simplicity of the 1950s.



## Hayley Mills

Richard Dyer says of creating star images: 'a film star's image is not just his or her films, but the promotion of those films and the star through pin-ups, public appearances, studio hand-outs and so on, as well as interviews, biographies, and coverage in the press of the star's doings and "private life"' (Dyer, R. 1986, 2). Taking this into consideration, in a *Silver Screen* interview with Hayley Mills in 1963 entitled 'The Importance of being 17' she discusses her growing maturity as she passes her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.<sup>23</sup> The article purports to focus on her being 'on the threshold of maturity' (Lewin, D. 1963, 17), yet the photo chosen to illustrate the piece shows a smiling Hayley with a large teddy bear on her back and the accompanying caption reads 'Despite teddy bear, a vestige of childhood, Hayley feels quite grown up at 17'. Whilst the subject matter of the interview is her growing up, the photo chosen does not represent an older teenager of 17, but a child. This paradoxical choice of illustration and subject displays a conflict between girlhood and womanhood with girlhood ultimately triumphing, and it perfectly encapsulates the confused approach filmmakers and the media had to Hayley Mills' particular brand of stardom. Whilst her contemporaries, such as Rita Tushingham or next chapter's subject, Judy Geeson, were tackling more age appropriate and complex roles as they hit their late teens, Hayley was still performing images of childhood, playing the 'loveable moppet' (Murphy, R. 1992, 93) for much longer than most young actors. I will be looking at the British films she made between the ages of 13 and 21 *Tiger Bay* (1959), *Whistle Down*

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<sup>23</sup> Lewin, David, 'Hayley Mills: The Importance of Being 17', *Silver Screen* (Summer 1963) pp. 17.

*the Wind* (1961), *The Chalk Garden* (1963), *Sky West and Crooked* (1965), *The Family Way* (1966) and *Pretty Polly* (1967); and I will be discussing Mills' star image and how the teenage girl was represented in her films through historiographical investigation, textual analysis and generic study. I will be exploring the role of the teenager in Mills' British films, and how themes such as friendship, love, parental relationships and coming of age were depicted. Using Raymond Williams' framework of residual, dominant and emergent cultural movements from *Marxism and Literature* (1977) I will discuss how Mills' image and roles seem to be from a residual, bygone era, but there are signs of the dominant and emergent culture hidden within. Williams says, 'definitions of the emergent, as of the residual, can only be made in relation to the full sense of the dominant' (Williams. 1977, 123) so the understanding of Mills' seemingly old-fashioned type of stardom has to be considered within the context of wider emerging and dominating movements.

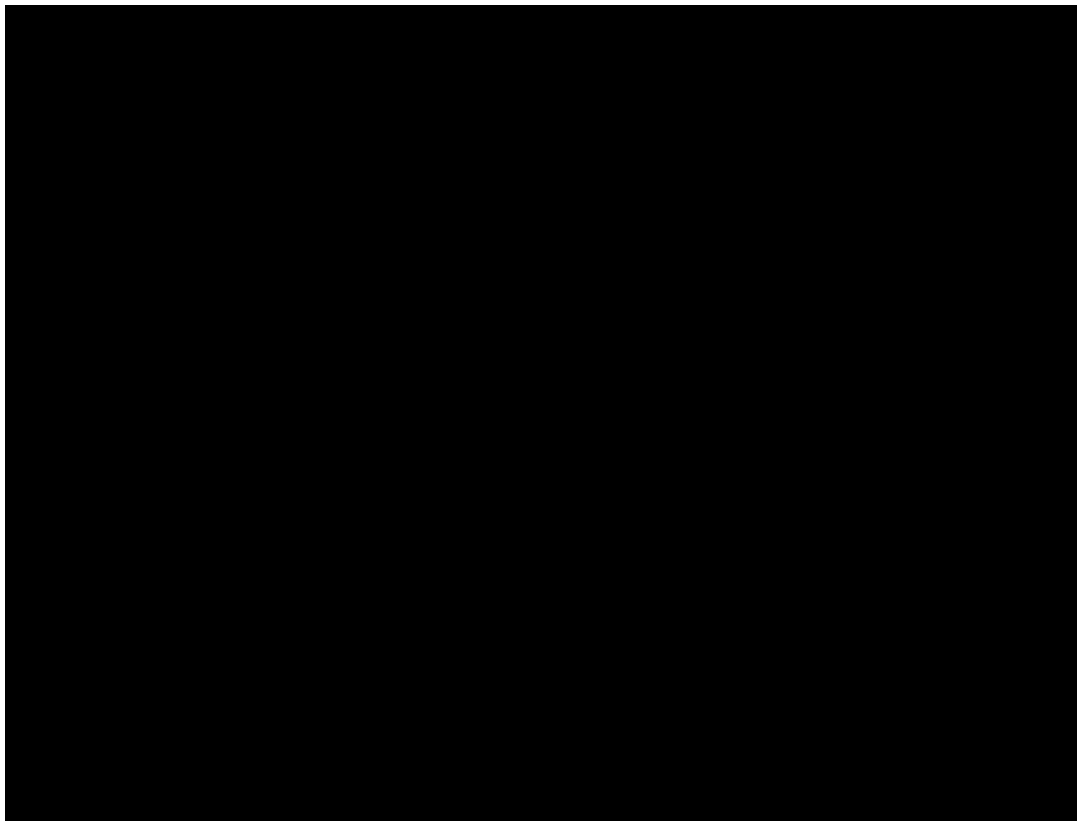


Fig 1: *Photoplay* article with illustration celebrating Mills' 17<sup>th</sup> Birthday.<sup>24</sup>

Hayley Catherine Rose Vivien Mills was born into showbusiness. Her father was actor John Mills and her mother was actor and screenwriter Mary Hayley Bell; her middle name 'Vivien' was a tribute to friend of the family Vivien Leigh (Mills. 2021, 42). Mills' family would remain a looming presence in Hayley's films; her father in particular often co-starred with her (*Tiger Bay*, *The Chalk Garden*, *The Family Way*) and even directed her in *Sky West and Crooked* (1965). Her mother would write *Whistle Down the Wind* and *Sky West and Crooked* for her as well. It was in her parent's garden that she was spotted at play by a producer leading to her big break. Her first film was *Tiger Bay* (1959) which, at only 13 years old, found her immediate fame and success and earned her the Bafta award for most promising newcomer.<sup>25</sup> She was swiftly given a contract with Disney Studios (Mills. 2021, 60) and in the first decade of her career she would perform in films which are still shown frequently on television in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For example, between 1998 and 2002 the BBC showed her version of *The Parent Trap* on five separate occasions, and *Whistle Down the Wind* was screened six times between 2002 and 2010.<sup>26,27</sup> For the next seven years she performed in Disney classics such as previously mentioned *The Parent Trap* (1961) and *Summer Magic* (1963), and she enjoyed success playing quintessential American

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> BAFTA, 'Most Promising Newcomer to Film 1960' BAFTA, (unknown) <http://awards.bafta.org/award/1960/film/most-promising-newcomer-to-film>, accessed January 20<sup>th</sup> 2019.

<sup>26</sup> BBC Genome Project, 'Programme Index: The Parent Trap', *BBC Genome Project* (unknown) <https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/search/0/20?q=the+parent+trap#top>, accessed January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019.

<sup>27</sup> BBC Genome Project, 'Programme Index: Whistle Down the Wind', *BBC Genome Project* (unknown) <https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/search/0/20?q=hayley+mills+whistle+down+the+wind#search>, accessed January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019.

heroine *Pollyanna* (1960), winning a special juvenile Oscar in 1961 for the role (Kinn, G and J. Piazza. 2002, 140); her British accent in the American role explained away as the effect of spending time in the 'British West Indies'. During the early 60s she was a big box office draw, and in an announcement for her new film, *Search for the Castaways* (1963) - which once again co-starred her father - her popularity and bankability led her to be described as a 'Marquee Sizzler'<sup>28</sup> in the USA. In December 1961 *Kine Weekly* reported that she was the biggest box office draw of the year in the UK.<sup>29</sup> Despite her contract with Disney, she was permitted to work elsewhere and took roles in a number of British films of the early 1960s, although her Disney contract exerted a certain amount of control over what she could do and which roles she could pick.<sup>30</sup>

There has been a small amount of scholarship on Mills' career, though the writing mainly focuses on her work for Disney. Melanie Williams discusses the representation of 50s girlhood in her role as Gilly in *Tiger Bay* in her article 'I am not a lady!', arguing that it has radical emergent elements which act as signifiers for the future representation of girls during the 60s and beyond.<sup>31</sup> David Buckingham has also written an article on the star entitled 'Hayley Mills and the Disneyfication of Childhood' in which he explores the child stardom Mills experienced as well as the stardom of others, and looks at both Mill's films with Disney and her films made in the

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<sup>28</sup> Anon, 'Summer Product Survey', *Independent Film Exhibitors Bulletin* (11<sup>th</sup> June 1962), 30:12, pp. 19.

<sup>29</sup> Anon, 'Pollyanna beats grown-up glamour for top award: Hayley Mills is Star of the Year', *Aberdeen Evening Express*, No. 26,110 (December 13<sup>th</sup> 1961), pp 1.

<sup>30</sup> Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', [DavidBuckingham.net](http://DavidBuckingham.net), (2018)

<https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

<sup>31</sup> Williams, Melanie, 'I am not a lady!', *Screen* (Autumn 2005), 46:3, pp. 368.

UK.<sup>32</sup> He also discusses a familiar career trajectory of child actors, their unsuccessful transition from child to adult star and Mills' experience of this path. My work will focus specifically on her work in her British film roles and will also engage with external influences on her stardom, such as the influence of her parents on her career, which Buckingham's piece does not. She is also discussed briefly in Marianne Sinclair's *Hollywood Lolita* (1988) which explores the role of sexuality in the careers of young Hollywood stars from the 1920s to the 70s. She asks, 'was Hayley Mills a movie nymphet or a Hollywood Lolita?' (Sinclair. 1988, 119). I will argue that neither of these labels fit with the peculiarity of Mills' stardom.

### A New Decade

Even though *Tiger Bay* was released as the 1950s were coming to a close, the 'long 1960s' were already underway and the emergent grassroots of widespread changes to lifestyle were already beginning to appear. Historian Christopher Booker wrote at the time '1955-1966 could be looked back on as a distinct episode in England's social and political history... a shattering experience'. The latter half of the decade was filled with 'aftermath, disillusionment, exhaustion' (Booker. 1969, 292) as scandals such as the Profumo Affair dominated the headlines and poverty increased 'from 7.8% in 1953-4 to 14.2 % in 1960' (Donnelly. 2005, 112). Mills achieved stardom during the transition of the 1950s into the 1960s, as the seeds were being sewn for the social revolutions in the long decade to come. The most successful period of her career came between 1959 and 1966 and coincided with the foundations being made

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32 Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018)

<https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

for changes in legislation. New freedoms and civil liberties during this epoch would eventually change how residents of Great Britain were able to live their lives. Jeffrey Richards lists them: 'in 1960 gambling was legalised... capital punishment was abolished in 1965 and theatrical censorship in 1968. Abortion and homosexuality were legalised in 1967. Divorce was made easier by the 1969 Divorce Reform Act' (Richards. 1997, 2003); all of these changes had an impact on society and how British citizens led their lives. Sarah Street, however, argues for the 'the myth of the permissive society' (Street. 1997, 85) as freedoms, such as the creation and distribution of the contraceptive pill for women, didn't affect the widespread behaviour of society until after the long 60s had ended. The effects were far more localised and more permissive behaviour was more likely to be found in a relatively small set of metropolitan elites in London than further afield, and the media disproportionately reported permissive behaviour by focussing on this small unit of people. For example, Street says the liberation the use of the pill was supposed to have provided women actually had a smaller impact than was initially reported. It was far more commonly used by married women rather than young, single ones and even then, it was not taken up in huge numbers (Street. 1997, 85). Mills' initial stardom represented the more prevalent residual conservative attitudes towards young females that still endured in the wider society throughout the 60s.

The emerging role of the teenager in society was becoming more established and they found themselves 'subject to scrutiny like no other generation' (Donnelly. 2005, 26). Hills argues 'it seemed to many that the 1950s was not only the "age of affluence" but also the "age of youth"' (Hill. 1986, 10) as young people became more visible through their newfound wealth and their conspicuous fashion choices

compared with their elders. Williams talks of the emergent as creating 'new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships' (Williams. 1977, 123), and these changes in the fabric of society were causing some consternation in followers of residual values and lifestyles. Their representation in the media of the 'bad' teen increased as the older generation panicked about the perceived corruption of the new generation and the 'association of the teenager with sexual immorality and violence' (Hill. 1986, 13) was widespread and was discussed in the newspapers and by Parliament. By 1959, Mills' debut year, some icons of the 60s were emerging: the Red Routemaster bus was put into full circulation after the success of prototypes,<sup>33</sup> and the Mini which would feature prominently in British cinema was introduced onto British roads in August of the same year.<sup>34</sup> Alan Sillitoe's *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner* and Keith Waterhouse's *Billy Liar* were published, both of which were made into two of the most influential British films of the 60s. Despite these signs of emerging change appearing as Britain entered the 60s, they were at this point only indicators of what was to come, as the residual ways of life from the 1950s continued. In 1959 the Conservatives won a decisive victory in the general election which saw Harold Macmillan re-elected as Prime Minister into the new decade<sup>35</sup>. 'Bad' teens were seen on screen in films such as out-of-control Jennifer in *Beat Girl* (1960) and the British-made, American-set *Too Young to Love* (1960), in which Pauline Hahn plays a 15-year-old who finds herself in court after a series of

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<sup>33</sup> Kehoe, Mark, 'The Routemaster in its standard form (built 1958-1965)', *Routemaster Association*, (2019) <http://routemaster.org.uk/pages/history-2120-RM>, accessed 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019.

<sup>34</sup> Anon. 'The History of Mini', *Mini*, (unknown) [https://www.mini.co.uk/en\\_GB/home/why-mini/history-of-mini.html](https://www.mini.co.uk/en_GB/home/why-mini/history-of-mini.html) accessed 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Anon. 'BBC 8<sup>th</sup> October 1959: Election Results', *BBC Politics 97 Project*, (Aug 1997) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/politics97/background/pastelec/ge59.shtml>, accessed 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019.

misfortunes led to a life of crime. This film saw the British film industry try and capitalise on the popularity of US cinema through the American setting and the casting American actors. 'Good' teenagers were also still visible: Cliff Richard would transition from bad boy in *Serious Charge* (1959) to clean cut star of *The Young Ones* (1960); and Helen Shapiro (five months younger than Mills) was starring in music themed films such as *Play It Cool* (1961) and *It's Trad Dad* (1962). Shapiro, born in 1946, thus making her an exact contemporary of Mills, embodied an image of a 'good' teen, yet, unlike Mills, she was able to embrace the modern youth culture. Perhaps this was because her music career ran parallel to (and dominated) her career in film, but it meant she was able to be a part of the current dominant trends - whilst Mills' child-like image meant she was viewed as too young to join in those trends despite being the same age as Shapiro. Mills was a teenager, but her persona was tied to the image of the teenager of the early 50s rather than the 60s, embodying an image of youth untroubled by the new emerging youth culture movements of the era. Hill states during the 50s and early 60s 'the teenage group is rendered homogenous, bound together in the communality of either habits or consumption or a perplexing proclivity for anti-social behaviour. On inspection, however, the reality proves more complex' and suggests this new teen image is overwhelmingly represented by working class teens (Hill, 1986, 14). It is true that Mills came from an affluent, show business family whose connections meant that she was able to establish a career as an actor with more ease than most, yet the parts she played were often characters from impoverished backgrounds, for example Gilly in *Tiger Bay* or Brydie in *Sky West and Crooked*. They did not fit into the 'homogenous' group of teens despite their working-class backgrounds.



## Disney

Although my focus will be on her work in British film, it would be impossible to write about Mills without acknowledging how being a product of the Disney star system affected her casting and star image. During a visit to London in 1960, Walt Disney's wife saw *Tiger Bay* (1959) and encouraged her husband to offer Mills a contract.<sup>36</sup> In *Understanding Disney: The Manufacture of Fantasy* Janet Wasko states that 'by the 1960s, the market for short cartoons had diminished, and the company moved much more aggressively into live-action films [and] Disney established a regular cast of stars' (Wasko. 2020, 36). Mills would become one of this stable of performers. The Disney brand was well established by the 60s as family-friendly, high-quality productions, which shied away from controversy wherever possible. It has been revealed in modern Disney contracts that though 'stars appear in projects for other studios, the visibility of roles is relatively low and they often stay within the range of a wholesome, kid friendly Disney brand' (Gray. 2013). This is true for Mills of her work outside of her Disney contract, where the roles she played were not controversial and would not compromise the Disney brand in any way. This contract would have an effect on her work in British film as it put constraints on the type of roles she could perform elsewhere. These constraints meant she turned down a role in Kubrick's *Lolita* (1962), something she would go on to regret (Sinclair, M. 1988, 122). Over the next five years she would make six films for the Disney studios. David Buckingham's 'Hayley Mills and the Disneyfication of Childhood' suggests that Mills had a 'spontaneity' in her British films that Disney 'transformed into something merely

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<sup>36</sup> Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018) <https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

cute'.<sup>37</sup> This was true of her work in *Pollyanna* (1961) where she played the eponymous heroine, adapted from Eleanor H Porter's 1913 popular novel of the same name, and whose name had entered the general lexicon meaning 'an excessively cheerful or optimistic person'.<sup>38</sup> As Pollyanna, Mills was not called upon to exhibit much more than cuteness as she charms the townsfolk of Harrington and transforms their lives through her good deeds and unstinting optimism. After a fall from a tree when trying to retrieve her doll, Pollyanna finds herself unable to walk and, for the first time in the film, she is desolate and silent. As she is carried through her aunt's house to be taken to a hospital in Baltimore, all the townspeople whom Pollyanna had befriended come to see her off, lining the hallway and garden, giving words of encouragement as Pollyanna passes by. She has managed to lure the perpetually sickly Mrs Snow (Agnes Moorhead) out of bed to send her best wishes and convinced grouchy Mr Pendergast (Adolphe Menjou) to change his ways and adopt her friend Jimmy (Kevin Corcoran). Pollyanna wears a white nightgown with white bib and large pink ribbons holding back her pigtails; she looks delicate and childlike, even younger than Pollyanna's 12 years. There is also something saintly about the presentation of Pollyanna to the town: the perfect girl, dressed in white is presented to the congregation. This magical character is one that is seen time and again in Mills films.

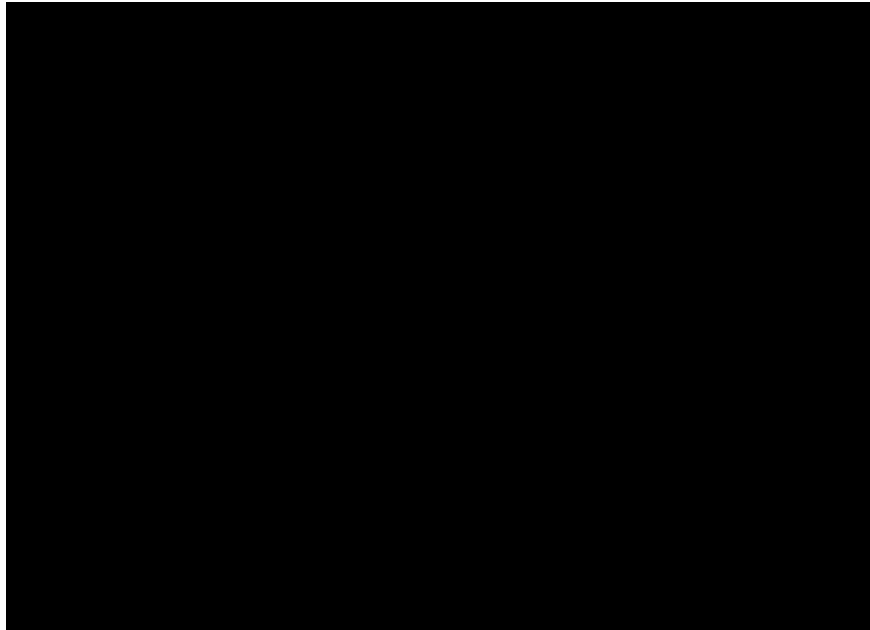
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<sup>37</sup> Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018)

<https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

<sup>38</sup> Anon, 'Pollyanna: Definition', *The Oxford English Dictionary*, (unknown)

<https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/pollyanna>, accessed February 1<sup>st</sup> 2019.



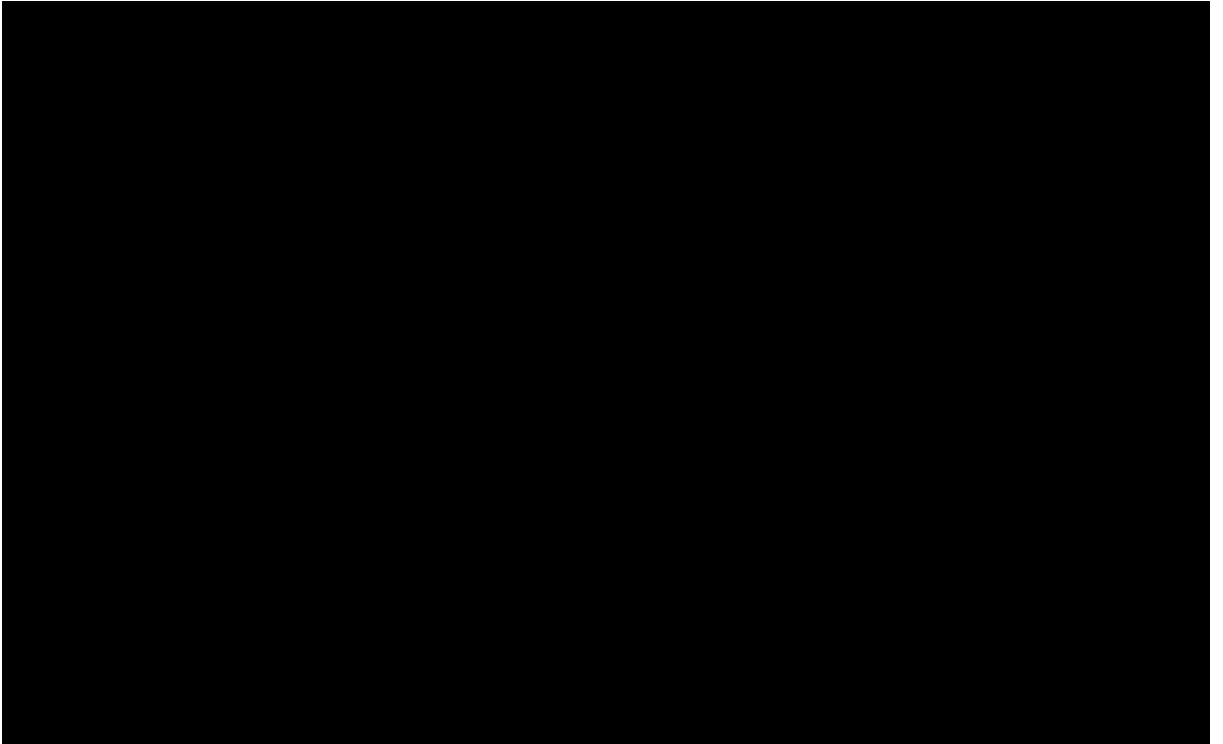
**Fig 2: Still from Disney's *Pollyanna* (1960).**

In *The Parent Trap* (1961) Mills plays two magical girls, twins separated at birth who are reunited at summer camp. One is elegant and lady-like and the other a tomboy with short messy hair. This dual role gave Mills the opportunity to move beyond the cuteness *Pollyanna* required as the girls fight to get their parents back together. They play tricks on their parents and their father's fiancée Vicky until she leaves, but not before she slaps one of the twins around the face in one unexpectedly shocking scene. The characters of the twins become interchangeable by the end as they both become boisterously adventurous as they plan and execute their elaborate pranks. The twins are 13 years old, just a year older than *Pollyanna* yet they seem slightly more mature. This can partly be attributed to the setting. *Pollyanna* takes place in 1910's America, whereas *The Parent Trap* was set in the contemporary time of the early 60s. The emergence of teen culture is in evidence as they are vaguely interested in boys and clothes, things that would have been considered typically 'teenage'. There are residual elements of the pre-teen culture era and they have not

left behind all childish things: they play tricks and still occasionally play with toys. The twins still do have 'magic' about their characters as Pollyanna does; running into each other at camp had a fateful quality, they successfully re-unite their parents and the ingenuity of their schemes is impressive. Disney managed more successfully than the British film industry to allow Mills to grow up to some extent, albeit in a Disney-appropriate, family friendly manner. In her next few films for Disney, *In Search of the Castaways* (1962), *Summer Magic* (1963), *The Moon-Spinners* (1964) and *That Darn Cat!* (1965) she played teenagers of around her actual age rather than children, and they all contained (mostly chaste) romantic storylines for Mills. Romance did not fit well with the child-like star persona that had been cultivated around her, particularly in the British press but to some extent in the US too. She featured on the American edition of *What's My Line* broadcast November 28<sup>th</sup> 1965 aged 19, dressed demurely in pearls and with a bow in her hair. When asked by a blindfolded contestant if she was well known for her romantic leads in her films she rather awkwardly says 'well...er...no. I would say no,'<sup>39</sup> looking to the audience, the playful persona dropping momentarily. Undoubtedly best known in the USA for her Disney films, this adult line of questioning did not fit with the image that Disney had helped create for Mills and the discomfort it causes Mills is clear.

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<sup>39</sup> 'Hayley Mills' *What's My Line?* Series 17: Episode 13. USA: CBS, tx. Nov 28 1965. Dir: Franklin Heller.



**Fig 3: An uncomfortable Mills being asked about romance on *What's My Line?***

**(1965).**

Disney did not create the Mills persona in its entirety or set the trend for the typical character that she played, she had already made *Tiger Bay* which was a critical hit in the UK and had helped set the tone of the parts she would eventually play. Disney did, however, bring Mills to the international stage and helped define her star image through 'Disneyfication' as David Buckingham calls it, which influenced the way her persona was publicised internationally, including in the UK.<sup>40</sup> Her British roles helped re-enforce her wholesome image, as she often played childlike parts which limited the potential for problematic content for Disney. Disney seemed to be happier for Mills to play more mature roles than the British film industry were, even if this was

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<sup>40</sup> Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018)

<https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

in a highly sanitised fashion. The effect of Disney on Mills career is undeniable, and it informed the star image that was created for her, but there were also other cultural and social influences outside of this which affected her image and roles in the British film industry, which will be the main focus of the chapter.

### Stardom

In her first films Mills was typically cast in roles that required a plucky resourcefulness used for either moral or immoral purposes, such as Kathy's ability to hide 'Jesus' in *Whistle Down the Wind* or Laurel's detection of Miss Madrigal's secrets in *The Chalk Garden*. There is also an element of whimsy as displayed in her roles up to and including her first mature part in *The Family Way*. In *Whistle Down the Wind* this whimsy is displayed in Kathy's belief that Jesus is being harboured in the family's barn and in *Sky West and Crooked* the traumatised Brydie's funerals for small animals in the graveyard of her local church. By the time she was at the height of her popularity as a teen star in the early 1960s, the social problem film had established juvenile delinquency and troubled youth as dominant tropes in British cinema and this discourse stretched beyond cinema and became a dominant image of the teenager of the time in the media. Few of Hayley's roles fit this template and her star image was the absolute antithesis of the juvenile rebel; Williams notes 'there is always a social basis for elements of the cultural process that are alternative or oppositional to the dominant elements' (Williams. 1977, 124) and Mills was representing this alternative to the modern teenager and the residual elements of the pre-teenage boom. In David Kynaston's 'Modernity Britain' he quotes a housewife's diary after she had taken her daughters to see Disney's *Pollyanna* twice upon its release, writing the film was 'in

beautiful colour, moral, count your blessings' (Kynaston, D. 458, 2013) and the word 'moral' succinctly describes the kind of teen roles that Hayley often portrayed. If the characters she played did not start off with the right moral standing (*Tiger Bay, The Chalk Garden*) they would undergo a transformation that would eventually lead the character onto the 'right' path. Her Disney films also perpetuated this image of virtue and 'Pollyanna-ish' perfection.

This image was also perpetuated in the marketing of her as a star. Teen stars of the time were often categorised into 'good' and 'bad' and without question Mills was definitively in the 'good' category. She was said to be 'a mascot of the [British] press; she was held up as a sterling example of how every teenager ought to be'.<sup>41</sup> In 1961 the U.S. industry publication *Independent Film Exhibitors Bulletin* described Mills as 'a treasure of a child actress with none of the disturbing characteristics usually associated with that breed of talent'<sup>42</sup> without expanding on what those characteristics might be. She was treated as a child even as she was fast approaching adulthood. For example, in a *Daily Mirror* article from May 1963 it is reported that Hayley received a dress from a film producer as a 'consolation' for not being able to wear nicer clothes in *The Chalk Garden*, as if she was a child who needed placating when she had actually just turned 17.

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<sup>41</sup> D'Arcy, Susan, 'Hayley Mills: I was really lonely and sad, a very introverted teenager', *Photoplay Film Monthly*. 22:11 (November 1971) pp. 63.

<sup>42</sup> Anon, 'Analysis of Summer Product', *Independent Film Exhibitors Bulletin* 28:13 (June 27 1960), pp. 34.

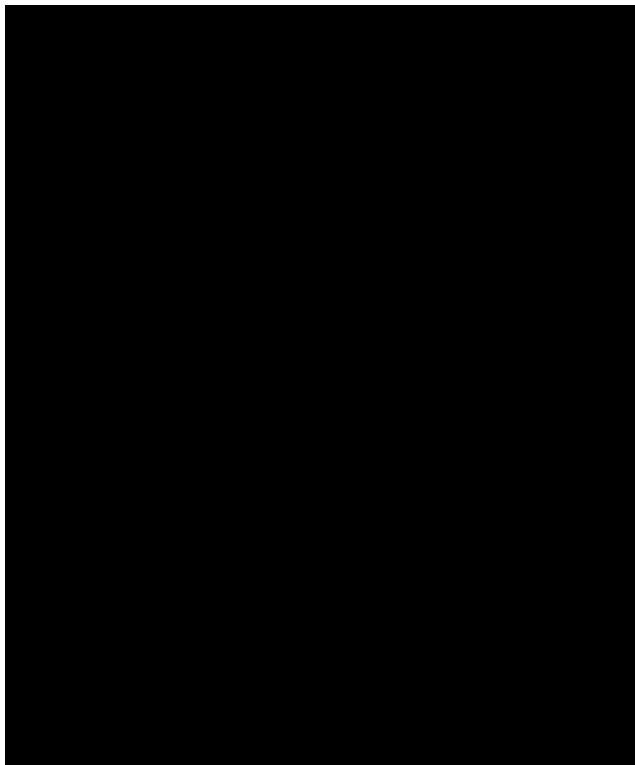


Fig 4: Daily Mirror May 17<sup>th</sup> 1963.<sup>43</sup>

When a role deviated from the picture of ‘goodness’, the change in image was employed as a marketing tool. *The Chalk Garden* sees Mills in her first ‘bad girl’ role playing Laurel, whose troubled life leads her to act out and cause problems for those responsible for her. This deviation from the norm was capitalised upon by the studio: the tagline was ‘Hayley the Hellraiser!’ and the pressbook for the film declares this film reveals ‘a new and even more talented Hayley Mills’ as they claim that we are able to see a new side to Hayley for the first time.<sup>44</sup> The role of Laurel in *The Chalk Garden* is hardly a ‘hellraising’ role; Laurel is a troubled teenager but the trouble she causes is on a domestic scale and she is more akin to a naughty child than the image of the teenage rebel which dominated in the early 60s. She is not unlike Gilly from

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<sup>43</sup> Anon, ‘My! How grown-up Hayley is looking all of a sudden’, *Daily Mirror* (May 17<sup>th</sup> 1963), pp 9.

<sup>44</sup> Anon, *The Chalk Garden: Publicity Services* (London: The Rank Organisation World Film Distribution UK Division, 1963).



*Tiger Bay*, whose rebellious behaviour consists of lying and naughtiness, but which ultimately spirals out of control when adult lives get tangled in their web of lies. Their actions, however, constitute a small-scale rebellion compared to teens in other films of the time. In comparison in *Beat Girl* (1960) 17-year-old Jennifer has raucous parties and takes a job in a strip club and nearly gets imprisoned for murder. Even though *The Chalk Garden* was made four years later, Laurel's rebellion by telling tall stories and snooping on her governess seems quaint in comparison, instead it is Ms Madrigal's dark 'hellraising' past that provides the shocking aspect to the story.

Richard Dyer suggests that 'Stars are, like characters in stories, representations of people. Thus they relate to ideas about what people are (or are supposed to be) like' (Dyer, R. 1998, 20). In relation to this, we can see that Mills was marketed as upholding the residual image of the perfect 1950s adolescent. Her representation of the adolescent was 'formed in the past, but still active in the cultural process' (William, 1977, 123); and this wholesome, seemingly dated image is evident in interviews and articles of the time: for example, her love of horses is frequently referred to. *Modern Screen* featured an unusually floridly written article in 1960 in which the writer talks of how Mills would 'run down to the barn, feed the baby colts, and in watching them with the mares, learn the marvels and mysteries of life'.<sup>45</sup> In the previously mentioned article in *Photoplay* in October 1963, John Mills says 'because she is a bit odd, I shouldn't be surprised if one day she were to give it all up and dash off and work in some racing stable with horses' (Lewin. 1963, 60). And when speaking herself in this interview, the whimsical side of the character breaks through as she talks of herself

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<sup>45</sup> Linet, Beverley, 'Hayley!', *Modern Screen* 34:12 (December 1960), pp. 74.

being 'on a little pink cloud' (Lewin, D. 1963, 17) on her birthday, and playing a 'dark green and shiny girl' (Lewin. 1963, 60) in *The Chalk Garden*. This fancifulness could have been scripted for her and certainly wouldn't have been out of place in a number of her films, certainly Brydie from *Sky West and Crooked* could be imagined saying such things. Her connection to nature that we see in *Whistle Down the Wind* with the kittens or all her interactions with the animals in *Sky West and Crooked* could be connected to this kind of behaviour as well. Richard Dyer says publicity gives us a chance to 'read tensions between the star-as-person and his/her images' (Dyer. 1979, 61). With this publicity, rather than revealing tensions, what is created is a 'polysemic construct' (Butler. 1991, 11) where Hayley's created image and the characters she plays seem to have merged.

In retrospect, and perhaps not unsurprisingly, Mills resented the image of perfection built around her, saying in *Photoplay* in 1971 at age 25 'They all said I was effervescent - terrible word - and said what fun I was. I was always worried that they'd find me out in the end. It was impossible to be the person they imagined. It became such a crashing bore. I was really lonely and sad, a very introverted teenager'.<sup>46</sup> This 'fun' element to her star image is also commented on by Melanie Williams who quotes a fan site which says 'What was great about Hayley is that she wasn't afraid to look silly'.<sup>47</sup> Mills own statement also corresponds with a number of her roles: Laurel, Brydie and even Gilly live lonely, isolated existences. This description of her own personal experience conflicts with how she was portrayed in the media; a number of

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<sup>46</sup> D'Arcy, Susan 'Hayley Mills: I was really lonely and sad, a very introverted teenager', *Photoplay Film Monthly*. 22:11 (November 1971) pp. 63.

<sup>47</sup> Williams, Melanie, 'I am not a lady!', *Screen*. 46:3 (2005), pp. 368.

contemporary newspaper articles show her ‘hijinks’ such as wearing a funny hat or wearing a fake moustache.<sup>48, 49</sup>



Fig 5: *Coventry Evening Mirror* June 21st 1963.<sup>50</sup>

Stars have ‘constructed personalities’ (Dyer, R. 1998, 20) and in Mills’ case her stardom was a projected perfection that could never be sustained. Once she took control of her own life and image and began to behave like an adult in her personal life, the image was destroyed. She garnered much interest from the tabloid media,<sup>51</sup> and her career went into decline. Some whimsical character traits endured into adulthood; as a 22 year old woman receiving critical press for the first time over her

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<sup>48</sup> Adams, Maurice. ‘A most unusual hat hides a very well know face...’, *Coventry Evening News* (21<sup>st</sup> June 1963) pp. 19.

<sup>49</sup> Eastaugh, Kenneth, ‘A last salute to the passing of the moustache’, *Daily Mirror* (September 19<sup>th</sup> 1964) pp. 9.

<sup>50</sup> Adams, Maurice. ‘A most unusual hat hides a very well know face...’, *Coventry Evening News* (21<sup>st</sup> June 1963) pp. 19.

<sup>51</sup> Hitchen, Brian. ‘Our Love- By Hayley’, *Daily Mirror* (Tuesday 14th May 1968), pp. 7.

relationship she describes her situation in a fanciful manner saying 'Even in Africa, every animal I saw had Roy Boulting's face',<sup>52</sup> and 'I thought I was bound to spend the rest of my life weeping and wailing all alone in my ivory tower'.<sup>53</sup> Perhaps the transition to adult star was so difficult due to the success of the image of Hayley Mills the Girl, the once carefully constructed image that had proved so popular was no longer appropriate for the now adult star and interest in her waned.

### Image

Hayley Mills' representation of the teenager is a curious one for the era in which she grew up. Finding fame at 13 in 1959 and working steadily through her teenage years during the 1960s, one would expect to find some roles that represent or embrace the new teenage culture that was being established and dominating the cultural and social spheres, yet the idea of the modern teenager is nearly absent in the roles she played in British cinema. She played a residual, older fashioned type of teen, a good girl who may have transgressed from the straight and narrow in a usually minor fashion but would always be reconciled with the rules of society by the end of the film. All of her characters in her British films to some extent followed this pattern. She was 'blonde, snub nosed, knobbly kneed, tomboyish and gracefully gawky in a happy, coltish way' (Sinclair. 1988, 119), which also perhaps appealed to those looking for an alternative to the 'bad' teens of the social problems films that had dominated the market in the years previously. When she was 'bad', for example as the troubled, abandoned Laurel in *The Chalk Garden*, she was never rebellious in the stereotypical,

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<sup>52</sup>Moore, Sally. 'Hayley In Love', *Daily Mirror* (Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 1968) pp. 14.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

juvenile delinquent manner; rather it came across as naughtiness. Her characters and persona were set outside of society (much like the juvenile delinquents of the social problems films), but her wildness was portrayed in a harmless way. She often portrayed an eccentric girl in a non-troubling way, a free spirit in touch with rurality and nature.

Mills was being promoted as being different from other teen stars, 'the most talented youngster to be seen on screen since Deanna Durbin, Margaret O'Brien and Shirley Temple' (Sinclair. 1988, 118) and devoid of problematic behaviour as articles of the time show. The comparison with O'Brien and Temple, who were child stars and who had their biggest success as preteens, with the teenaged Mills demonstrates how she is often viewed, in academia and beyond, as a child rather than a teenager. David Buckingham's piece is called 'Hayley Mills and the Disneyfication of childhood' despite her being a teen star, finding fame at 13.<sup>54</sup> This statement cements the residual elements of teenage representation in her stardom as it also suggests a disconnect between Mills and her era as these stars are from the 1930s and 1940s, demonstrating how Mills' type of stardom was out of step with the times. Richard Dyer says that 'stars embody social values that are to some degree in crisis' (Dyer. 1979, 25). The birth of the teenager in the mid-1950s and the explosion of teen culture that followed it generated 'anxieties in the parent's culture' (Hill. 1986, 16) as social conventions rapidly changed and the hegemonic development of child into adult which had endured through the ages had been broken apart. This shift in social development

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<sup>54</sup> Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018)

<https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

creating a new transitional period of human development was conceived much to the consternation of the older generation. Mills stardom is a reaction to those anxieties, a return to a simpler, seemingly more innocent time when teenagers behaved like children and then transformed into adults once the school days were over. She often played characters who were still interested in toys, such as in *Tiger Bay* and *The Chalk Garden*, religion in *Whistle Down the Wind* and *Sky West and Crooked*, and when she did grow up she went straight into a 'married woman' role in *The Family Way*.

Mills made her film debut in crime drama *Tiger Bay* (1959), which tells the story of 11-year-old tomboy Gilly, a serial liar who covets a toy gun so she can join in the games with the local boys. She witnesses a murder by Polish sailor Bronislav Korchinsky, and instead of reporting this to the authorities she keeps the gun she sees him hide in order to impress the other children who have been excluding her from their games. Aware that Gilly has witnessed the murder, Korchinsky kidnaps her but instead of harming Gilly the two become friends and Gilly begs to be taken away with him. Gilly is seemingly unable to tell the truth in any situation: she lies to her aunt, to the Police and to the other children. The only relationship which embodies any sort of truth is her friendship with her kidnapper Korchinsky. Realising that he cannot take her away with him, he forces Gilly to return home where she is questioned by the Police. Lying to protect Korchinsky, she identifies another man for the murder but when she lets slip that Korchinsky and his victim were speaking Polish to each other they realise she is lying and manage to identify Korchinsky from the evidence they have collected. After a tense stand-off on the boat Korchinsky has bought his way onto, Gilly falls in the water and Korchinsky saves her from the waves. He is dragged

from the sea by the detective who commends his bravery before arresting him for the murder.

Unsurprisingly there isn't a tremendous amount of the teenager about the character of 11-year-old Gilly, yet Mills was a teenager herself at 13. The character of Gilly became a prototype for the characters that Mills would come to embody and also in the fact that Mills would frequently play characters that were younger than herself. Instead of embodying the dominant idea of the teenager of the era, Mills would remain inert in girlhood until she was able to tackle adult roles. Gilly is definitively still a child in her thoughts, actions and in her physicality, her outrageous behaviour such as accusing the wrong man of murder can be understood in the context of it being the reasoning of a child; it would be harder to understand as a teenager who should have a better developed understanding of right and wrong. Gilly is characterised as a 'tomboy', and Melanie Williams lists her attributes as 'fearlessness, cheekiness, quick-wittedness, mobility and, above all, ebullience' (Williams. 2005, 368); all of these characteristics would also come to describe the star persona of Hayley Mills herself and all describe a mischievous child such as Gilly. Her clothing is that typically worn by a boy, wearing a cut off sweatshirt and jeans and she has short, untidy hair. More than anything, she wants a toy gun to fit in with the boys, so much so that she physically fights with the leader of the gang after he rejects her attempts to join in the game as her 'bomb' necklace does not qualify her to join their gang.

This character establishes the roles that Mills would go on to play for the next six years and informed the star persona that would be built around her. The character is funny, mischievous and clever. She is unafraid to act when she believes in

something, even if she is misguided and it means breaking the law. Even though Gilly has a dubious moral compass, we do not dislike her and occasionally understand her reasoning even if we do not approve of her actions. The bullying she receives from the local boys elicits sympathy from the audience, for example when we watch her watching them through the fence as they enjoy their game, her expression a combination of longing and defiance, the music lively as we observe them having fun. Their rejection of her attempts to join in, telling her to 'go back to London' and knocking the sausages for dinner out of her hand, which forces her to retrieve them with no help makes her loneliness even more evident, eliciting sympathy and understanding from the audience. Gilly is at times funny and charming, and this likability became an important part of Mills star persona and is something that Mills carried with her throughout her youthful films and eventually into her next 'rebellious' role, this time an actual teenager, in *The Chalk Garden* 5 years later.

### Out of Time (Williams. 2017, 142)

In *Women in British Cinema*, Melanie Williams refers to a Tatler article from April 1984 which features Helena Bonham-Carter in an article called 'Girls who look "out of time"' (Williams. 2017, 138), a phrase she returns to during the chapter to describe Bonham-Carter's look and persona which were out of step with the 1980s. Her aristocratic background, English rose looks and frequent appearance in Merchant Ivory's period pieces gave the illusion that she was a resident from a previous era rather than the present day. I will be discussing how Hayley Mills persona was also 'out of time', Mills own stardom being out of step with the long 60s as there was a



lack of acknowledgment of the then very recent cultural revolution and embodiment a teen-age girl.

The previously mentioned *Photoplay* article discusses *The Chalk Garden* as a departure for Mills. For the first time since her debut in *Tiger Bay*, she played a more complex character than the likeable 'sterling example' of a teenager seen in *Whistle Down the Wind* (1963) and her Disney roles.<sup>55</sup> The film tells the story of a disturbed young teen, Laurel (Mills), who lives with her grandmother (Edith Evans) and Maitland, her grandmother's butler (John Mills). Maitland is the only person who can manage Laurel's errant behaviour in an emotionally repressed environment, as embodied by the barren chalk garden of the title. This behaviour keeps driving away governesses until the mysterious Ms Madrigal (Deborah Kerr) arrives. Ms Madrigal seems to be able to relate to Laurel and can tolerate, if not manage, her outbursts of bad behaviour. Laurel, perplexed and unnerved by her, senses there is something Ms Madrigal is hiding and sets about exposing her secrets only to discover that her past has a darker secret than she could have imagined, and she reveals Ms Madrigal's murderous past. Ms Madrigal reveals she sees herself in Laurel and wants to help her before it is too late. She is successful as Laurel returns to her mother, lessons learned and looking forward to a brighter future. Ms Madrigal finds a sort of peace herself by staying with Laurel's grandmother and the butler and begins a new, more truthful life.

*The Chalk Garden* was released in 1964, the same year as the infamous Mods and Rockers Easter weekend riot on Brighton Beach (Perone, J. 2008, 1). The riot took

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<sup>55</sup> D'Arcy, Susan, 'Hayley Mills: I was really lonely and sad, a very introverted teenager', *Photoplay Film Monthly*. 22:11 (November 1971) pp. 63.

place on the south coast of England where *The Chalk Garden* was also set, but teenage life in this film is far removed from teenage gang activities taking place in the area which dominated the headlines. *The Leather Boys* (1964) was made in the same year and depicted the lives of a London based gang of Rockers and tackled the issues of teen marriage and the then still illegal homosexuality. *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) was released; The Beatles' first film was a surreal take on a day in their life as they prepare to perform on a television show. In comparison with other films about or for youth in 1964 *The Chalk Garden* looks quaint and seemingly out of step with the current fashions, a residual form of representation that is 'lived and practised on the basis of residue' (Williams, 1977. 122). Laurel is more akin to an overgrown child than a teenager and her experience has little in common with the dominant British cinematic depictions of youth of the time. Despite the seemingly dated mode of representation, there are indications of the emergent movements within in society in this role. Laurel speaks frankly of sex for example, content that would have been less likely to have been included before the teenage revolution of the 50s and would become commonplace during the 'swinging' portion of the 1960s. This behaviour, however, is also used as an indicator of her immaturity as she does this to shock her governess Miss Madrigal; she says of her mother 'she is so overloaded with sex she sparkles' (a fantastical turn of phrase that wouldn't be out of place in the *Photoplay* interview with Mills about the role). This behaviour was also employed by the filmmakers as shocking 'hellraising' behaviour, and also shows the disparity between this film and the more contemporary films of the era.

The promotional posters emphasise this playing against type concept for Mills; 'Hayley the Hell Raiser!' occupies nearly a quarter of the space and the illustration of

Mills is utterly unlike how she looks in the film. The face that has been painted to show a much younger version of Mills, in keeping with the difficulty the studios had updating her image in line with her age, and the flame of hair isn't the colour Mills' hair is in the film. The poster suggests a much more dramatic experience than the mostly sedate family melodrama it was created for. David Buckingham says of *The Chalk Garden* 'there is a good deal of the film that seems to come from the mid-1950s rather than the mid-1960s' acknowledging its residual cultural and social elements, and the poster for the film proves this as it is similar to the social problem films of the late 50s.<sup>56</sup> For example, the poster for *Violent Playground* (1958) shares the same imagery of fire and terrified adults, suggesting this would be a suitable film for fans of social problem films due to the similar representation. This poster suggests a film about outrageous teenage behaviour and an updating of sorts of Mills' image; yet that is not what the film delivers, what it does deliver is a continuation of her previous work.

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<sup>56</sup> Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018)  
<https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

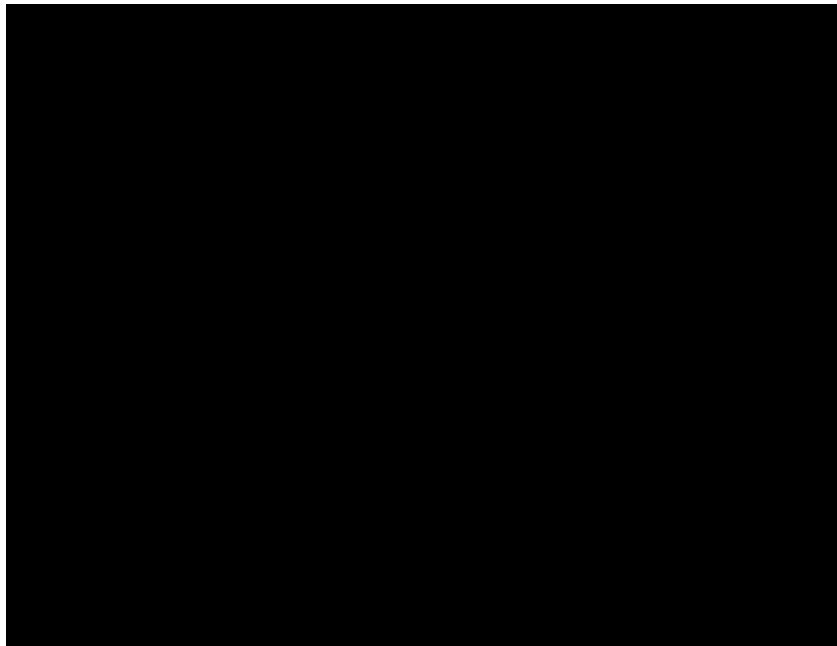


Fig 6: Promotional Poster for *The Chalk Garden*.

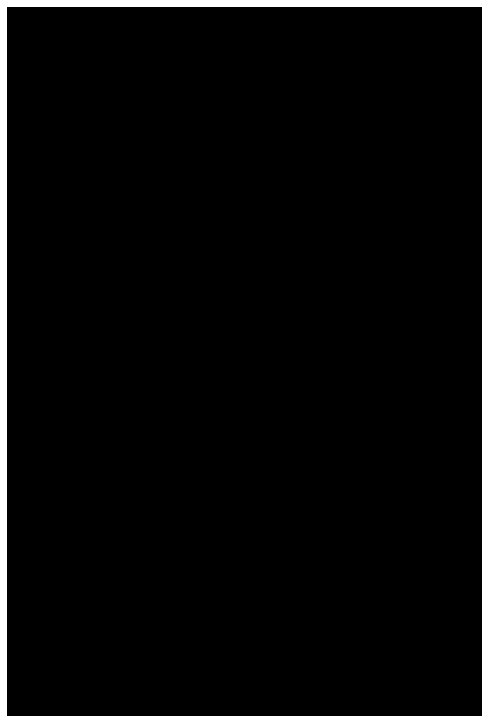


Fig 7: Violent Playground Poster.

Using the term 'hellraiser' in reference to Mills' Laurel in *The Chalk Garden* is an exaggeration in comparison with other films depicting teenage tearaways in the early 60s. The 'hellraiser' trope of the troubled teen out of control was well

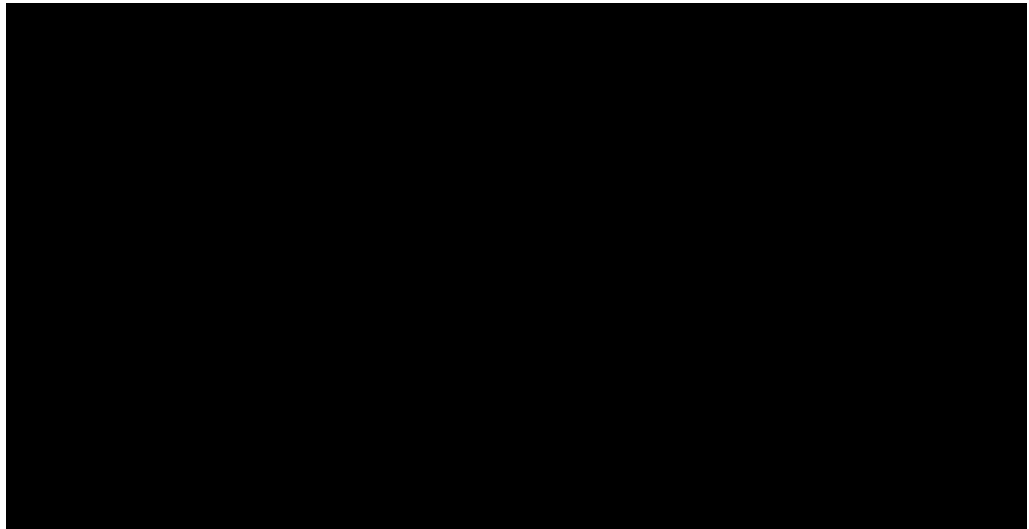
established in British cinema by 1964. The social problem films which had tackled broken homes, juvenile delinquency, racism, teenage sexuality and pregnancy in films such as *Cosh Boy* (1953), *A Taste of Honey* (1961) and *Beat Girl* (1960), were mostly in a working-class setting. Despite the supposedly common theme of teenage rebellion, generically speaking *The Chalk Garden* has more in common with a family melodrama than a social problem film. One common theme also seen in the social problem genre is the broken home, and Laurel's mother left to marry another man and her father died from alcoholism. However, the similarities end there. Laurel lives in a country mansion with her wealthy, elderly relatives and staff. Mills is playing a teen in a rural setting in an upper-class environment, her grandmother entertains local dignitaries and Laurel spends her days painting on clifftops and playing tennis. This lifestyle is not particularly common for a teenager of 1964 as these activities were not necessarily available to many teens in society, particularly urban teens who we see most often in the social problem films. Marcia Landy observes that one trope seen in the family melodrama genre will 'emphasize the threatened extinction of a family, particularly an aristocratic family, and will introduce... an outsider (most often a woman) who will resuscitate the family line' (Landy. 1991, 285). Laurel's wealthy grandmother sees the breaking away of Laurel's mother as the potential end of the family, with Laurel as the last hope. Ms Madrigal resuscitates the family line, not as the new future matriarch, but as a healing presence who unites and invigorates the newly reunited family and helps heal Laurel's emotional trauma. This story of aristocracy and scandal in old monied family lines is not one that could be seen to be modern, urban or of much concern to the teenager of the 60s.

The look of the film is also out of step with the media representation of the teen in the 60s and this particularly applies to the costumes. Laurel doesn't look like a fashionable 17-year-old of 1964; she wears clothes of children of the 50s, another sign of residual culture evident in the film. Historian Mark Armstrong says fashion in the 1960s 'was representative of just how accelerated cultural change could be' (Armstrong. 2014, 6) and the signs of the emerging social change in fashion are missing from *The Chalk Garden*. Rachel Moseley discusses the disparity in ideas of fashion between young women of the 1950s and young women of the 1960s saying there was a 'shift from a notion of stylish dress for the "young adult" to a simpler idea of "young" fashion with the move into the 1960s and "youth culture"' (Moseley. 2002, 81). Once again, Mills embodies an older fashioned idea, and the character of Laurel is dressed as a young adult. Her hairstyle with its very small hint of a beehive is the only indicator that the film was not made ten years previously. Her clothes are plain and neat throughout the film and during the final scene she is dressed in a very proper fashion, with her formal gloves in her hand, the bow of her coat echoing the bows on her mother's own dress. Both mother and daughter wear shades of neutral beige signalling she has now grown up and is ready to enter adulthood; teenage fashions are not featured. For a role which was supposed to show a rebellious teen she is very smartly, conservatively and not particularly fashionably dressed.



**Fig 8: Laurel's transformation.**

In relation to Mills' embodiment of the typical tropes of this era's screen teenager, this was the closest to a 'hellraising' character that she had played. Gilly in *Tiger Bay* had a disregard for rules, but her misbehaviour came from a more childlike place, the coveting of toy guns and accidentally becoming entangled in an adult's affairs. Laurel is 17 yet she is behaving more like a child than a teenager, and transitions to a young adult (as evidenced by her costumes as previously discussed) without a pause for her to be a teenager, the historical path for people before the mid-50s. Both characters have compulsive lying in common: Gilly constantly lies to the adults and authority figures in her life as does Laurel. Laurel also displays other childlike behaviour, unusually for a 17-year-old she still has a doll and when she thinks she is alone she retrieves it from its hiding place in a box at the back of her wardrobe. She cradles the doll, calling the doll Laurel and saying, 'Mummy loves you and will never leave you', her issues with abandonment clearly being revealed in this scene.



**Fig 9: 17-year-old Laurel and her doll.**

When she is interrupted by Maitland, who has been secretly watching her from her door, she is embarrassed and throws the doll at the door breaking it. In doing so she displays some awareness that playing with a doll is not something she should necessarily still be doing at this age. She also climbs trees (echoing *Pollyanna*) and when she snoops around her governesses' room it feels like we are watching a child engaged in a game. The musical score that soundtracks the scene as she sneaks around Ms Madrigal's room is almost light-hearted, suggesting this is a fun activity rather than a gross invasion of privacy. When she discovers Ms Madrigal's murderous secret, she displays maturity for the first time, making a deal with Maitland to never reveal it. Like Gilly before her, the character learns a life lesson and undergoes a moral transformation making her a 'good' girl by the closing credits, returning Mills to her established imaginary space in cinema and image.

Laurel was an awkward role for Mills at an awkward time in her career. By 1964 she had played characters mainly in girlhood, so *The Chalk Garden* is her first attempt in British film to undertake a more mature role and the results are quite



confused. Laurel is not quite a teenager yet not quite a child. She is 17 years old yet requires a governess, she makes up stories and still secretly plays with dolls. She has no other young people to interact with on screen and is the youngest member of the cast by 20 years, the maturity of the rest of the cast emphasises the childlike ways of the character. Yet she also speaks of more mature subjects that would be beyond the understanding of a child. Laurel is stationary in girlhood, despite her age suggesting she should be moving beyond that time of her life. We understand that her development has been disrupted by her family breaking down but her reaction to this trauma lacks the maturity of even a teenager. The portrayal of adolescence here parallels the muddled way in which her stardom was being developed; Mills was becoming a young woman yet was still tackling these parts that did not reflect her own growing maturity.

### Playing young

*Whistle Down the Wind* (1961) was the fourth film Mills had made in her career and her second for the British film industry. By the time she was starring in this, she had made her most famous films under her contract for Disney, *Pollyanna* (1960) and *The Parent Trap* (1961), and had become internationally famous, her image of perky goodness was beginning to establish itself to a wider audience. Alongside this 'good girl' image, the characterisation of Mills as a child rather than teenage girl was also underway. *Whistle Down the Wind* further cements this childish image and sees her closely interact with a group of local children noticeably younger than herself, suggesting they are peers and further implying she is younger than the 15-years-old she was at the time of filming.

*Whistle Down the Wind* is based on the 1959 novel of the same name by Mills' mother, Mary Hayley Bell; four years later she would star in a second film written by Bell called *Sky West and Crooked*. Both films found her playing childish roles despite her growing maturity. Mills plays Kathy, the daughter of a farmer who mistakes a murderer (Alan Bates), known only as The Man for Jesus, when she comes across him hiding in her father's barn. Robert Murphy describes the film as 'an exploration of a children's fantasy world' (Murphy, R. 1992, 46) but it also explores the impact of religion on children's understanding of the world and loss of innocence. We are not told Kathy's age; we know she is the oldest sibling by some margin as she is permitted to go for a walk at the time her siblings are sent to bed, yet most of the actions of the character are that of a child. Kathy discovers the Man in their barn, bloodied and confused from an unknown confrontation, he passes out as he mutters 'Jesus Christ'. Kathy runs away in terror and confusion, dramatic orchestral music playing until she meets a gate with the crash of a cymbal. She sinks to her knees and whispers with incredulity 'Jesus!' as she believes she has undergone what she thinks is a religious experience, the music creating an aural portrait of her inner confusion and epiphany. She returns home and tells her sister who believes the Man has been sent as a punishment as Kathy had previously told her younger siblings that Jesus was dead; Kathy completely accepts Nan's assessment without question. There is four and a half years difference in age between the actors: Diane Holgate who played Nan was born in 1950 and there is a noticeable physical difference in age and maturity between an 11-year-old and a 15-year-old.<sup>57</sup> Yet the characters interact as equals, in fact Nan is

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<sup>57</sup> Anon. 'Diane Holgate', *IMDB*, (unknown) <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0390461/>, accessed February 7<sup>th</sup> 2019.

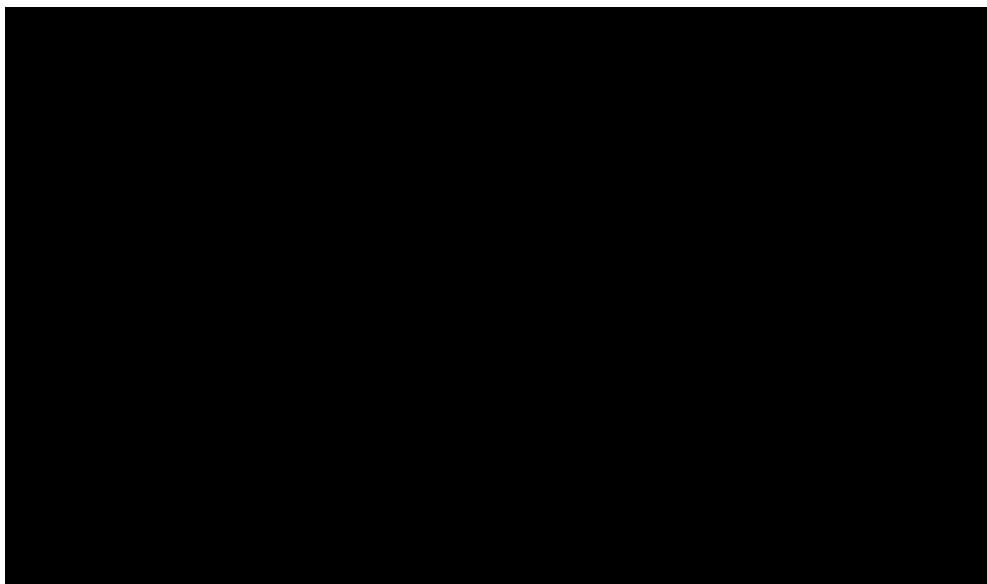
the more dominant character of the two girls, as she not only invests in Kathy's story, but her interpretation gives the story a sort of muddled logic and it is her version that Kathy believes.

The role of Kathy, who like Laurel is living in a rural area but in the north of England, is significantly different from the representation of teens in other northern areas of the early 1960s. In *A Taste of Honey*, also made in 1961, 17-year-old Jo lives in Sheffield and has a love affair with a black sailor which results in pregnancy. *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner* (1962) follows a young man's life in Borstal and beyond. In both of these examples, the teens are dealing with serious issues as they enter adulthood. That is not to suggest there is not space for Mills' representation of the teenager, but to highlight that the image of the child is consistently invoked in her work rather than the teenager Mills clearly is at this point. This is emphasised by her interaction with her friends in *Whistle Down the Wind*, who are all noticeably younger than her. For example, when 'Jesus' is revealed at the party the camera pans around the room. It is filled with small children until we see Kathy in the foreground, dressed like her friends in a childish party dress with modest white collar, but she is noticeably more mature than the children in front of her, emphasising the disparity in age between Kathy and the other children.



**Fig 10: Kathy at the Party.**

*Whistle Down the Wind* is not the only film we see this form of interaction between Mills and her 'peers'. In *Sky West and Crooked Mills* is playing a 17-year-old yet is surrounded by children much younger than herself who are suggested to be her friendship group.

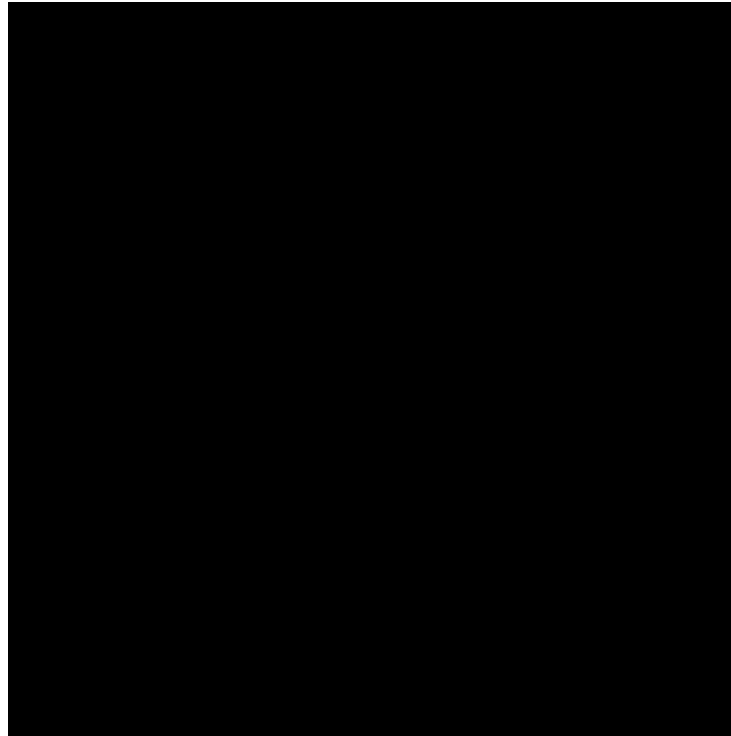


**Fig 11: Brydie and Friends.**

Kathy is portrayed by Mills as an innocent child; for example she runs around the fields saving kittens with her younger brother and sister, behaviour which again is echoed in *Sky West and Crooked* a few years later. She has a powerful imagination which gives her the capacity to believe that this man in the barn is Jesus reincarnated. She experiences a loss of innocence of sorts at the end when The Man is taken away and she realises he is not Jesus, but Kathy telling the children 'He will come again' shows her faith and sense of imagination aren't completely lost. This role also reinforces the 'good' Mills persona as Kathy remains kind and innocent after everything she has just experienced, and we feel hopeful for her. Returning to the story of another northern schoolgirl, *A Taste of Honey* contains adult themes which make the tale of Kathy and her wild imagination seem quaint in comparison. There is a vast difference between Rita Tushingham's burdened, awkward Jo and Hayley Mills' wild and free Kathy. Jo is clearly a teenager growing up in a deprived urban environment, while Kathy finds freedom in her rural life which, despite some hardships, seems idyllic compared to the grim, cramped Salford of *A Taste of Honey*.

As previously discussed, Mills' persona and Disney roles often verged on the whimsical and magical and this continues in her work in British cinema. Kathy's own sense of childhood magic is seen through both her actions and through her costume. Her costume is usually very plain and practical, knitted jumpers, tweed skirts and woolly tights or plain dresses and large wool overcoats. However, during one scene Kathy's costume is adapted, and she is shown wearing a scarf loosely wrapped around her head. The way it is draped echoes paintings of biblical women, in particular the Madonna as demonstrated in this painting by Raphael from the Sistine Chapel, and representation of biblical women is widespread and easily recognisable throughout

society. With her innocent expression and the religious representation through her costume it suggests to the audience that there is something special about Kathy, presenting her as a prophet or a saint.



**Fig 12 and 13: Kathy depicted as a saintly figure compared with a painting of the Virgin Mary with baby Jesus.**

Further examples of magical and whimsy are seen in her other British roles. In *Tiger Bay* Gilly's charm and strength of personality manage to lead a murderer to engage in a selfless act. Kathy displays a huge capacity for whimsy as evidenced by her misguided beliefs and in turn creates a magical environment for the local children. Brydie's actions are all informed by the imaginary world that she has created for herself to escape the abuses she suffers in the real world. Laurel's fantasy world also finds its source in the darkness of her life and leads her to create melodramatic stories

about her past for Ms Madrigal's benefit. Mills' 1960s characters were always different or 'special' girls.

As well as Mills standing out amongst her peers, the behaviours of her characters also suggest child rather than teen. With the exception of Gilly, who could plausibly be of an age where toys were still a part of her everyday life, Kathy's belief in her tale of Jesus in the barn, Brydie's funerals for her pets, and Laurel in *The Chalk Garden* still playing with dolls is not typical behaviour for girls of Mills' age. Examining the influence her parents had on her career with roles written by her mother and films co-starring and being directed by her father, we can gain some understanding of how and why Mills' teen years and burgeoning womanhood was constricted, and her image and work remained static in childhood for longer than most of her contemporaries.

### The Daughter

Hayley Mills received the opportunity to work in film through the connections of her parents. She was observed at play in her garden at the age of 12 by film director J. Lee Thompson, who was visiting her parents' house which led to her 'discovery' and casting as Gilly in *Tiger Bay*.<sup>58</sup> From its inception, her career and stardom would be intertwined with that of her father, and to a lesser extent, her mother, and they had the ultimate power over her career as they chose all the roles she would play.<sup>59</sup> Oscar winner John Mills was one of the biggest stars in British cinema from the 1940s

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<sup>58</sup> 58 Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018)

<https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

<sup>59</sup> 59 Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018)

<https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

onwards, starring in some of the most popular British films of the era such as Noel Coward's *In Which We Serve* (1942), David Lean's *Great Expectations* (1946) and J Lee Thompson's *Ice Cold in Alex* (1958) amongst many other critically lauded and financially successful films. Mills starred with her father in *Tiger Bay*, *The Chalk Garden*, *The Family Way* and British-American production *The Truth About Spring* (1965). She was directed by him in *Sky West and Crooked*, and her mother wrote *Whistle Down the Wind* and *Sky West and Crooked* in which she starred. The continual presence of John Mills meant audiences were consistently reminded of Mills' 'daughter' status and in turn daughterhood's association with girlhood through these films. This was also emphasised by the characters Hayley plays, who as previously discussed are often significantly younger than her years. She repeatedly submits to authority figures often played by her father, for example the troubled Laurel of *The Chalk Garden* only finds true understanding from John Mills' wise butler Maitland, or Gilly learning to trust John Mills' detective in *Tiger Bay*. This focus on daughterhood was also reflected in the publicity Hayley received, as audiences were constantly reminded of her parentage, and in turn her youth, in magazine and newspaper articles. For example, in an article from *The Coventry Evening Telegraph* in 1951, five-year-old Hayley was pictured on a movie set with her father 'helping the make-up department' in a fun publicity still. 14 years later, in 1965, the same publication publishes another publicity photograph of a now famous Hayley and John Mills on the set of his latest film. Again, it shows her 'helping the make-up department' in a fun photograph, however by this time she was a 19-year-old woman and yet she was receiving the same treatment as when she was a five-year-old child.





Fig 14: Coventry Evening Telegraph 19<sup>th</sup> July 1951.<sup>60</sup>



Fig: Coventry Evening Telegraph 16<sup>th</sup> November 1965.<sup>61</sup>

The connection between father and daughter was written about frequently in relation to Hayley's career. The following article is from the *Daily Mirror* dated September 1964, when Hayley was 18 years old. They describe the demise of the

<sup>60</sup> Anon, 'Five-year-old Hayley Mills gives her dad John Mills a helping hand with his make-up...', *Coventry Evening Telegraph* (19<sup>th</sup> July 1951), pp. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Anon, 'Hayley Mills gives the make-up department a hand with her father...', *Coventry Evening Telegraph* (16<sup>th</sup> November 1965), pp. 11.

moustache and use her in a fun picture, and they describe how she 'kisses a moustache most days' - but rather than being a reference to a boyfriend this is in fact, oddly, in reference to her father. Mills was legally an adult at the time of writing, yet she was still being portrayed as behaving like a little girl in the media and this was now making her image quite strange. This is no longer the effect of the residual representation of the teenager, there was now a significant disconnection between her image and her obvious maturity.

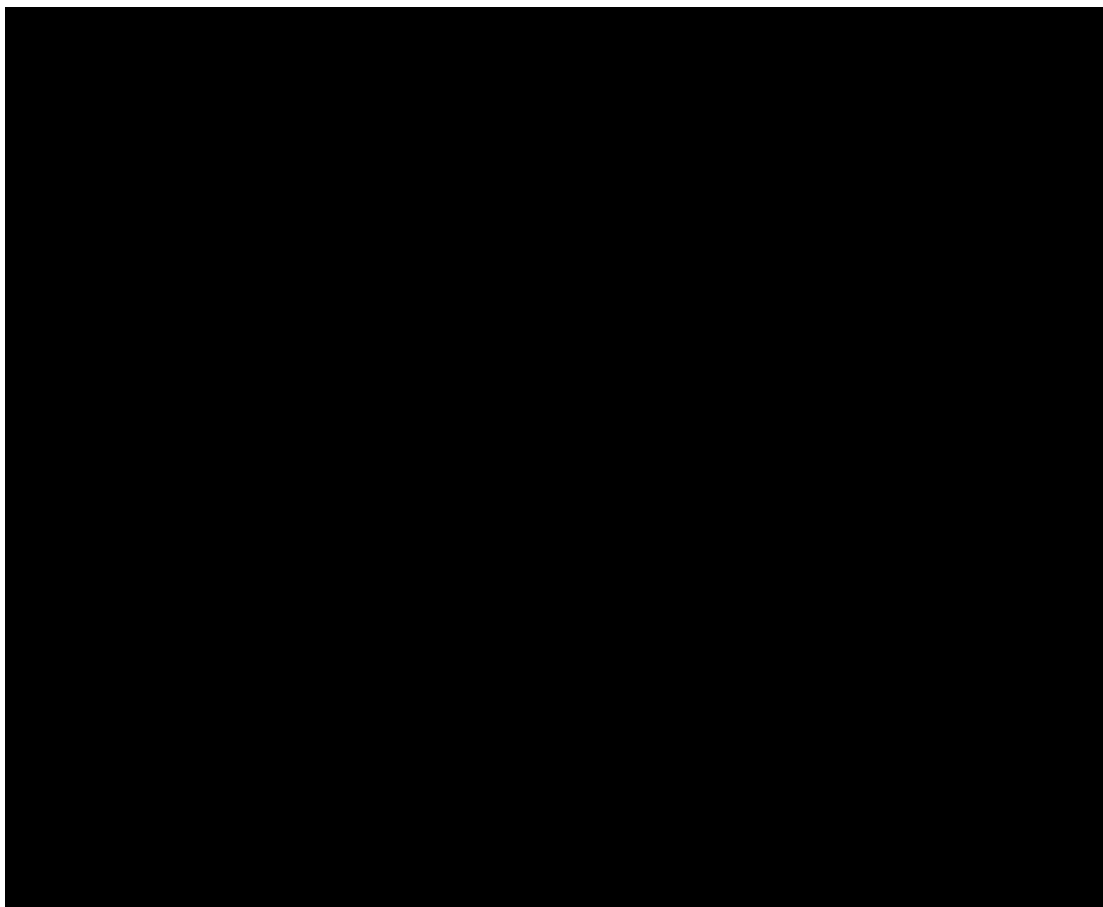


Fig 16: Daily Mirror September 19<sup>th</sup> 1964.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Eastaugh, Kenneth, 'A last salute to the passing of the moustache', *Daily Mirror* (September 19<sup>th</sup> 1964) pp. 9.

The Mills family were also the subject of joint interviews, as seen in the *Photoplay* article which opened the chapter and the following. In an article from *Girl, Film and TV Annual 1961* the Mills' are interviewed in a piece called 'Family Portrait of the other Mills circus!'.<sup>63</sup> The story opens with a picture of the family admiring Hayley's Silver Bear Award she had received from the Berlin Film Festival: she is central in the photograph and surrounded by and the focus of the family. The article states, contradicting other sources, that John Mills took Hayley with him when he met with Walt Disney to discuss his role in *Swiss Family Robinson* (1960) and Disney, who was looking for his Pollyanna, offered her a contract on the spot.<sup>64</sup> This revision of history makes John Mills entirely responsible for the discovery of Hayley and her subsequent career. It states 'John, the father, has always been ready to keep to the background where his children are concerned, but to be available if and when they need help or advice'.<sup>65</sup> This clearly did not apply to Hayley's career as he is ever-present on and off the screen. The article demonstrates how intertwined the Mills' careers were and how in the promotion of Hayley's image she would often be alongside her father, once again emphasising her image as the daughter.

Even though Hayley's success opens the story, most of the article focusses on sister Juliet's and John Mills' careers rather than her, despite appearing in six of the ten photographs illustrating the article. As this annual was being marketed to girls it is unsurprising that she would predominantly feature, as would her sister who would have been 20 at the time it was written and was enjoying some success on Broadway.

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<sup>63</sup> Miller, Maud, 'Family Portrait of the other Mills Circus!', *Girl Film and TV Annual* (1960) pp. 5-9.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

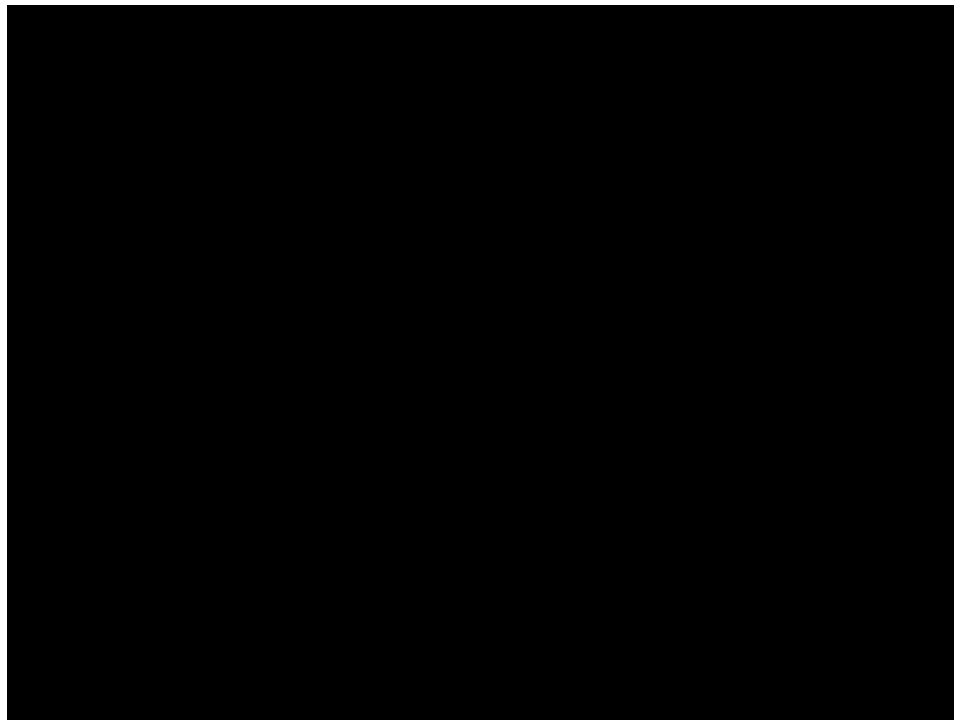
<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

The annual was written in 1960, yet the residue of previous cultural and social movements are evident as it invokes images of 1950s girlhood. Its contents promote family life (as seen in the Mills' article), and includes pieces on Greek sculpture, ballet and classical music, as well as articles on some of the last stars of the Hollywood studio system Tony Curtis, Rock Hudson and Audrey Hepburn. Its coverage of 'new' stars such as Adam Faith ('fancy me being a star!') and American teen idol Fabian present down to earth 'good' boys. Much like Mills' stardom, the annual shows a 1960s Britain still very much indebted to 1950s culture.

John Mills' only directorial credit was *Sky West and Crooked* (known as *Gypsy Girl* in the USA) and was released in 1965, Hayley Mills' 19<sup>th</sup> year. By 1965 the cultural phenomenon of the 'swinging 1960s' was reported to be the dominant cultural movement. By the end of the year The Beatles had released *Revolver*, its psychedelic track 'Tomorrow Never Knows' an indicator of what was to become known culturally as psychedelia, which exerted its influence on artists and those in the media later in the decade. It was the year of 'swinging films', usually London-centric, colourful, permissive stories such as *The Knack* (1965), with Rita Tushingham graduating from her teen role to young adult parts, and *The Pleasure Girls* (1965), a story of a girl moving to 'swinging' London to take up a modelling career. This film starred Francesca Annis who in real life was less than a year older than Mills and was playing a young adult role, yet Mills was continuing to make films in the same fashion as she had done for her whole career.

*Whistle Down the Wind* and *Sky West and Crooked* bear a striking resemblance to each other from the rural setting to the religious themes and the teenage yet girlish

lead. *Sky West and Crooked* tells the story of 17-year-old Brydie (Hayley Mills), who is suspected of involvement in the death of a childhood friend seven years previously and is ostracised by the local community who think she is mentally unstable, 'Sky West and Crooked' being a colloquial term for madness. A group of travellers set up camp nearby and one of their number, Roibin (Ian McShane), falls in love with Brydie, further exacerbating tensions within the local community. The character of Brydie is once again naïve and young-acting for her age, which is reflected in the costumes that give the film a timelessness as she wears Victorian style clothing, once again invoking images of times gone by. These clothes, which are virginal whites and creams, are also too small for her, showing her impoverished background but also emphasising her blossoming into a young woman.

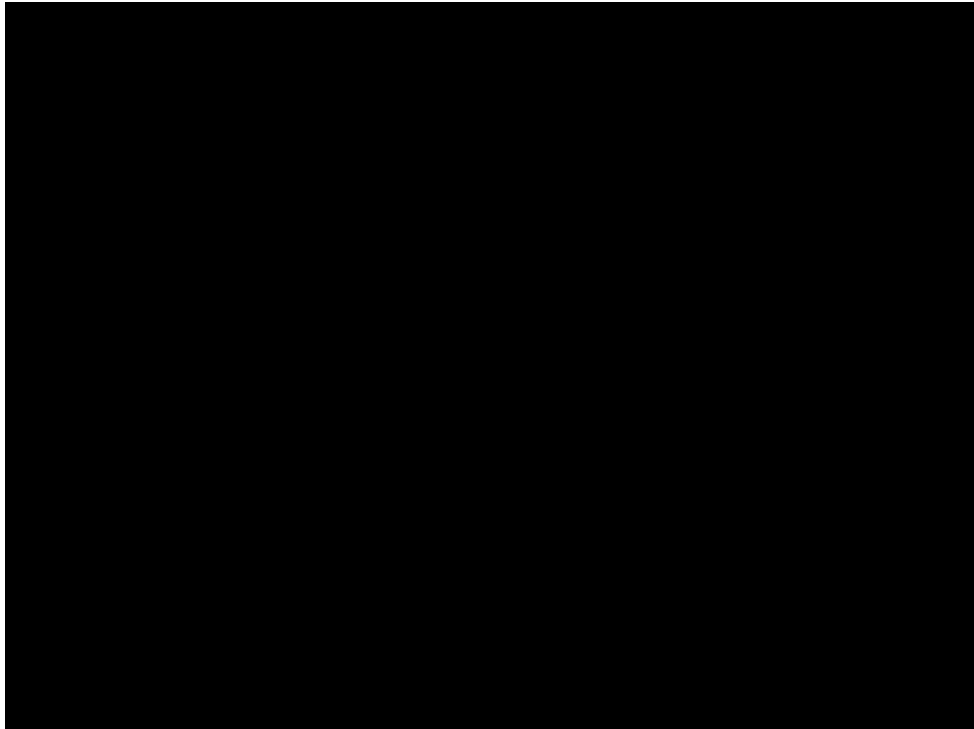


**Fig 17: Brydie's Dress.**

Brydie has clearly been traumatised by previous events, as evidenced in her behaviour and subsequently has remained very young, not unlike a more vulnerable,

less calculating Laurel in *The Chalk Garden*. Her father has died and her mother is an alcoholic who struggles to understand her behaviour. In one scene Roibin spots Brydie and a young local boy in the churchyard burying their respective pets. When Roibin approaches and questions her she says she is burying her two hamsters, a curious and childish activity for a 17-year-old. They make small talk as they look at each other with some intensity, Roibin with interest, Brydie with an excited nervousness. When Roibin spots a scar on Brydie's forehead and she makes an excuse about it because they are interrupted by the church bells chiming, causing Brydie to run off. There are several similarities between *Sky West and Crooked* and *Whistle Down the Wind* and this scene is reminiscent of Mills' role as Kathy in *Whistle Down the Wind*, when she is confronted with The Man in the barn and runs off in terror and confusion. This time the character of Brydie also finds herself confronted by a man but instead it is the awkwardness within her when dealing with romance that makes her run. The characterisation of Brydie as a slightly disturbed and clearly traumatised innocent young girl makes Roibin's interest in her a little disconcerting, even if their romance is fairly chaste and features just one kiss, which takes place as they rest in a field after Brydie's recuperation. This discomfort may be intensified by the fact that the film was written and directed by her parents. There is tension between the viewing of Brydie, and subsequently Mills, as on the verge of adulthood and capable of romantic love, and as the daughter which characterises her as innocent and childlike. This tension is never reconciled, and this may have been influenced by the parent/ daughter dynamic of the writer, director and star team. Preceding the end scene, Brydie is searching for Roibin down rural country roads, the music for this is jolly and childlike, as though Brydie is playing a game rather than trying to find her lost love. On her discovery, the

music becomes more romantic yet the moment itself is not a particularly intimate or cathartic moment of love and relief. The choice to show the reuniting of Roibin and Brydie in a long, almost impersonal shot at the end of the film, a shot which had the potential to be a climactic romantic moment, also represents the conflict between showing Brydie, and in turn Mills, as a mature adult and showing her as a girl.



**Fig 18: The distant climax.**

The power that Mills' parents had over her career was all encompassing. Not only did they choose all the roles she could play and therefore not disrupting their own view of their daughter, they also involved themselves in the production process as screenwriter and director to provide her with material that had their ultimate approval.<sup>66</sup> John Mills was always going to be a presence in Hayley's career as one of

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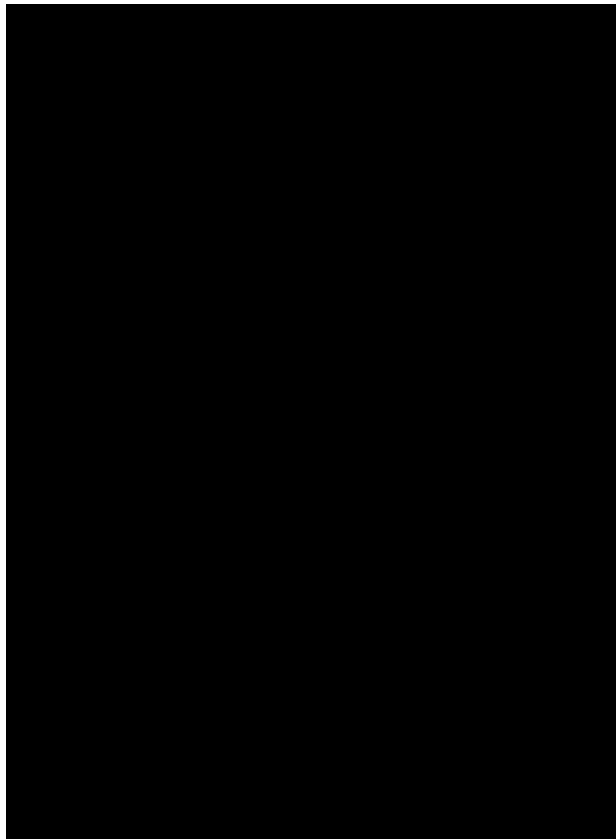
<sup>66</sup> 66 Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018) <https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

the biggest stars in the British film industry; her name alone would have alerted the audience to the connection. But the power he exercised over her career meant the audience was repeatedly seeing Hayley through a parental eye, so when she started playing more adult roles in such films as *The Family Way* (1966) and *Pretty Polly* (1967), audiences were unprepared for the change as they had not been presented with any evidence that Mills had grown beyond childhood as her development had been ignored.

### Romance

Sinclair says if you ignore the 'ambiguities' of the relations between Gilly and Bronislav in *Tiger Bay* the Mills persona and that of her characters is 'bubbly asexual' (Sinclair. 1988, 120). Considering she had been playing childlike characters for most of her teens this assessment is true in her work and also her persona, especially when considering the media's consistently linking her to her father. The promotional poster for *Sky West and Crooked* suggests this role will be Mills' first mature role, the tag line reads: 'There is a wonderful moment in every girl's life when she takes her first step as a woman', yet as discussed previously, Brydie's behaviour is not even that of a teenager and certainly not an adult and it completely disregards the darker elements of the film. The picture has Mills forehead to forehead with Ian McShane, gazing into his eyes, suggesting the film will be a coming-of-age story, the catalyst of which will be a great romance between the two pictured. What we are actually presented with is the story of a traumatised girl who embarks on an uncomfortable (for the viewer) relationship.





**Fig 19: *Sky West and Crooked* Promotional Poster.**

After her transitional role in *Sky West and Crooked*, her first British part in which she played a character with a romantic storyline, Mills eventually moved on to more mature roles in her late teens and early 20s, and there is a jump from roles which represent girlhood to adult roles, disregarding the teenage culture which had emerged in the late 50s and early 60s. At the age of 19 she made *The Family Way* (1966) as a newlywed coming to terms with the realities of married life. *The Family Way* marked a departure from her previous work in that it could definitively be defined as the role of a young adult, yet it was a continuation of it too. Regarding the departure, she is playing a role that is age appropriate, which she had not done for some years in her British films, and she is the first fashionably styled character Mills had played. As Richard Dyer states 'a change in physical style is also always a change

in social meaning' (Dyer, R. 1998, 14). Mills is breaking away from the girlhood roles in this part, and her physical appearance signifies this: she wears make-up and fashionable clothing and has a fashionable hair cut unlike the more formal style of Laurel in *The Chalk Garden*, which she made just two years previously. She is still dressed demurely though; there is no evidence of the miniskirt which Mary Quant had made popular by 1966,<sup>67</sup> as her dresses are cut to the knee, but not above, and she wears some extremely conservative nightwear.

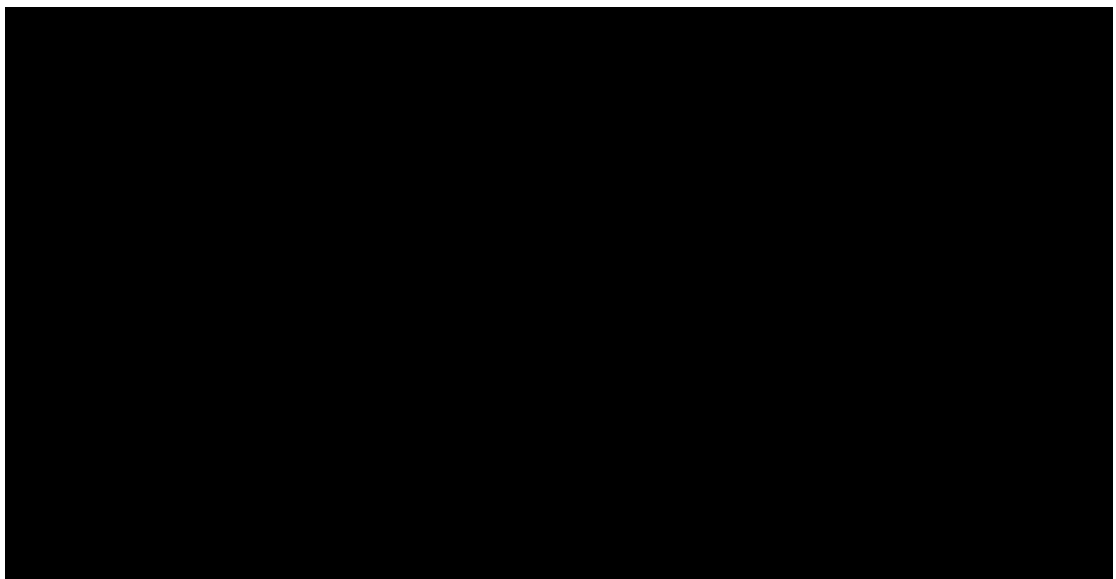
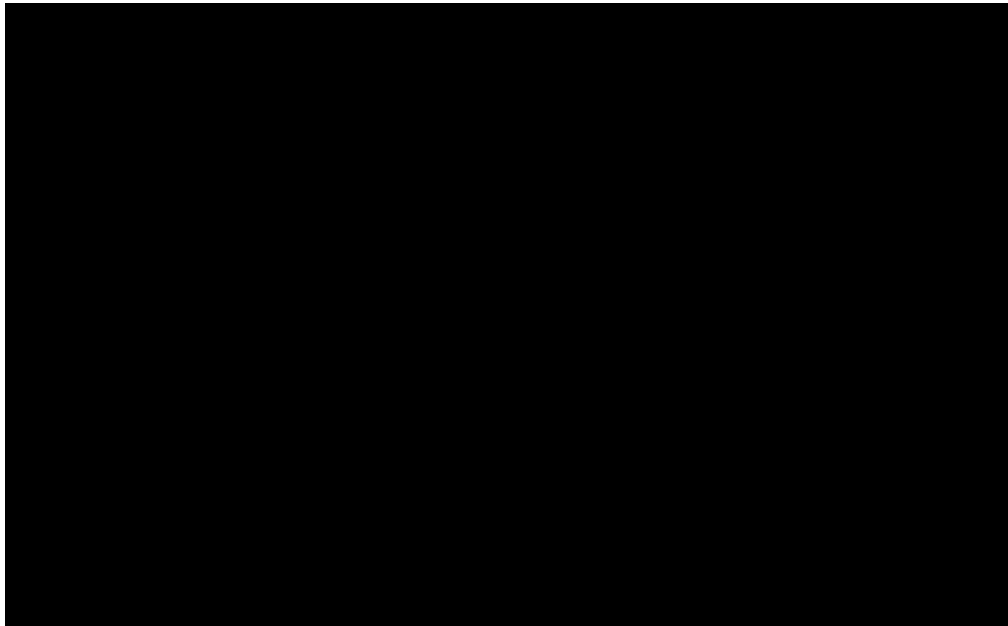


Fig 20: Frilly collars and cardigans in *The Chalk Garden*.

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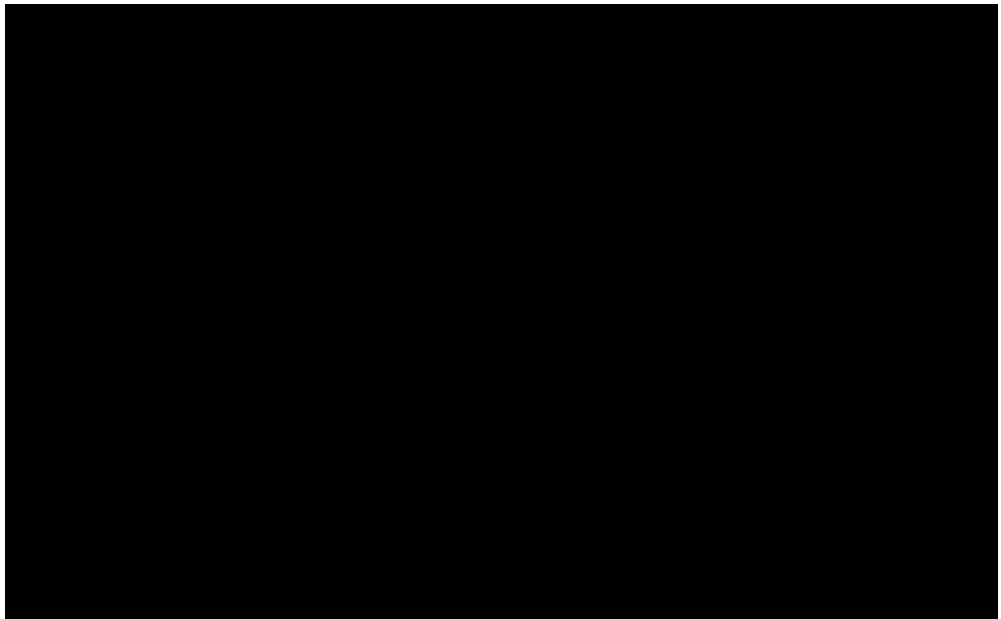
<sup>67</sup> Foreman, Katya 'Icons: The Miniskirt', *BBC Culture*, (21<sup>st</sup> October 2014) <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20140523-short-but-sweet-the-miniskirt>, accessed 17<sup>th</sup> February 2019.



**Fig 21: Modern clothes, though still demure in *The Family Way*.**

Despite the superficial updating of her appearance, however, the role still perpetuated the same traditional, residual values her previous work had. Mills had moved on from being a young girl to a respectable married young woman; the dominant representation of the teenager of the time, fun loving rock and roll fans or more topical dramatic roles from the social problem genre, were absent in her British films. She had played the love interest in her last two American-produced films, *The Moon-Spinners* and *The Truth About Spring*, and both end with her sailing off into the sunset with a suggestion of marriage in the air. Despite indications of 'hipness' in *The Family Way* (the soundtrack was by Paul McCartney) the alternative lifestyles and societal values that were developing had been overlooked to create an old-fashioned, residual idea of the development of youth into adulthood being lived. We see the character of Jenny at a dance with other young people of her own age. The music is contemporary, and she is surrounded by fashionable partygoers, yet she rushes off home early to see her husband and her discomfort at being out too late is clear. Even

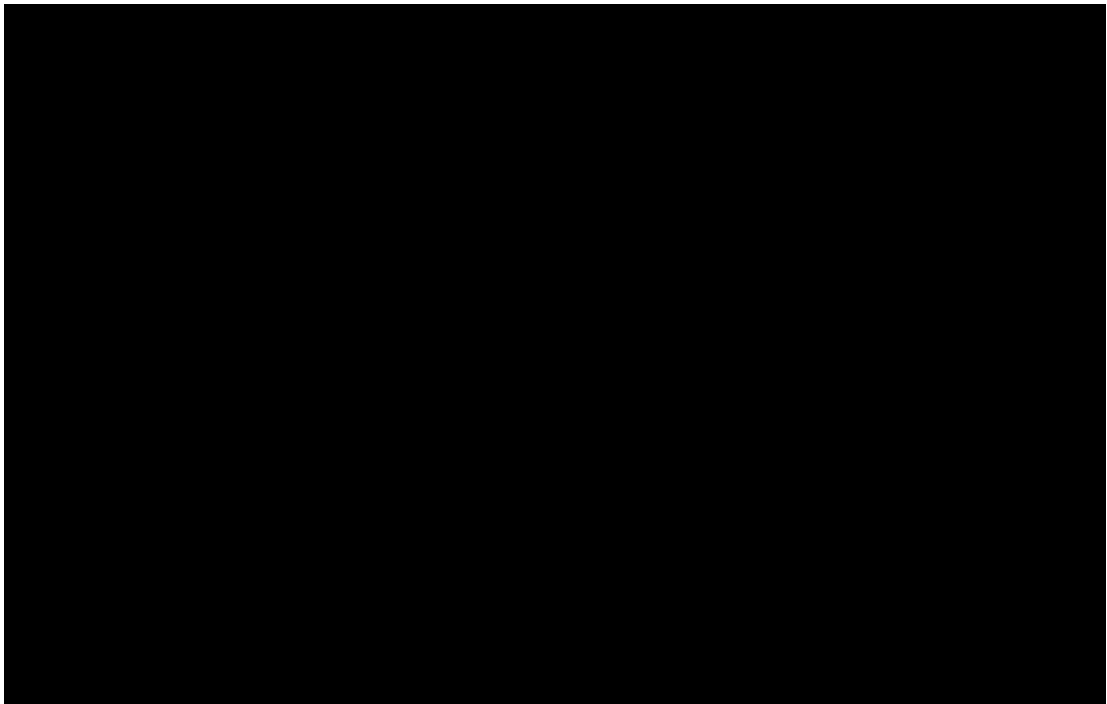
though she is a young woman she feels it is improper to be quite innocently socialising when her husband could potentially be waiting for her. She spends her time waiting to go home and be reunited with her husband, much like the traditional idea of the 1950s housewife.



**Fig 22: Jenny at the Dance.**

As the film starts, the camera pans through white blossomed branches and zooms into the redbrick, flower-lined, white-framed window of Jenny's (Hayley Mills) bedroom. Over the melancholy sound of horns playing the narrator announces, 'once upon a time there was a virgin' - uncomfortably the narrator is the ever-present John Mills, who plays her father-in-law in the film and for unknown reasons is called upon to introduce his real-life daughter's character in this way. We then catch sight of Jenny asleep in bed, her blonde head lies on a white pillow, her left hand resting by her face with an engagement ring clearly in view, her demure pale pink night shirt is practical rather than fashionable or attractive. A teddy bear is tucked under her pillow and

others adorn the single bedframe; even in her first adult role Mills is still being associated with youth and childhood.



**Fig 23: Opening shot of Mills.**

As we watch her sleep the voice over continues ‘She was 20 years old and, as you might say, a rare bird’; again a Mills character is singled out as ‘special’. Her father enters the room and wakes her saying ‘you can’t sleep forever’ and she smiles beatifically as he kisses her forehead and places a cup of tea for her on her bedside table. She tousles her hair as she takes in the new day, her wedding day. As Melanie Williams notes, this is the first ‘of a number of films she made that hinge on the loss of her virginity. The fascination seems to centre on the process of Mills’ transformation from girl to woman, and her prolonged occupation of the liminal area in between’ (Williams, M. 2005, 365). This ‘area in between’ was an extended childhood and never involved a representation of the modern teenager in her British

films, she leapt from girl to woman without a transitional period of adolescence. This transformation elicited interest but would only garner approval from the audience if the character was acting 'properly'. Adolescence can be a troubling time, as the social problem films were showing, so by missing this out Mills' star could remain uncomplicated and untarnished, and she could remain 'good' in the eyes of the audience.

The image presented in this introduction is one of purity and chasteness, maintaining the 'resilient innocence' (Murphy, R. 1992, 111) of her previous roles. Once again, she plays a person who is respectful of and abides by society's rules, she is a virgin about to get married, she once more plays a daughter character, she has her father's love, and she in turn respects him. She is the antithesis of the juvenile delinquents and hell raisers of the social problem films as she is not living outside the traditional boundaries as youths were in the 'swinging' films, even though she is unusual in other ways. Her roles often show her to be a free spirit in her love for nature, and Brydie's romance with Roibin in *Sky West and Crooked* created the idea of a character who followed her heart, which Jenny also does but within acceptable boundaries set out by society. This film once again puts her in the position of being the daughter with the ever-present John Mills co-starring again.

At 19 it was no longer possible for Hayley to be playing young teenagers, especially teenagers in the style of which she had been playing who were more akin to children. The next step for a proper young lady that Mills' image and roles embodied was to get married and *The Family Way* provided her the opportunity to fulfil this destiny. The number of marriage ceremonies increased during the 1960s

despite the frequent talk of the ‘permissive society’ in the decade. As historian Mark Donnelly states, ‘A permissive state is not the same as a permissive society. People may have had more freedom to do all kinds of things in the sixties... but they did not necessarily exercise that freedom’ (Donnelly, M. 2005, 116). The representation Hayley embodied in this particular film may not have been fashionable, but it was more in keeping with what was actually taking place in society at the time and is therefore perhaps a more truthful record of the life of the older teenager than some of the more ‘swinging’ films of the time. So, even though her roles were undoubtedly influenced by the residual cultural and social movements of the 1950s, it can also be argued that she was actually embodying the dominant mode of living for young people at the time.

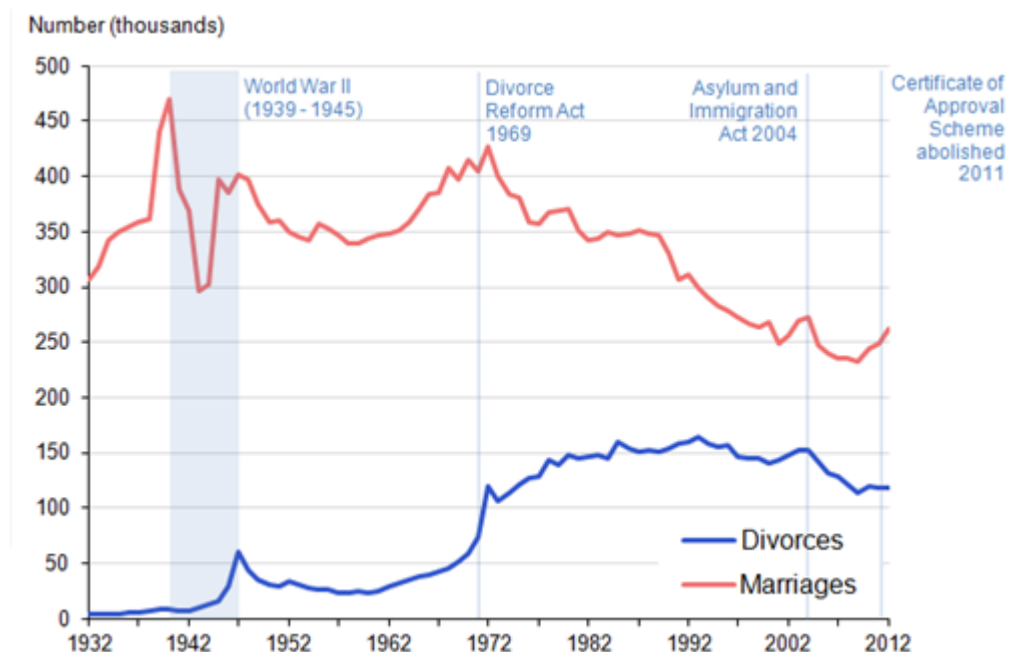
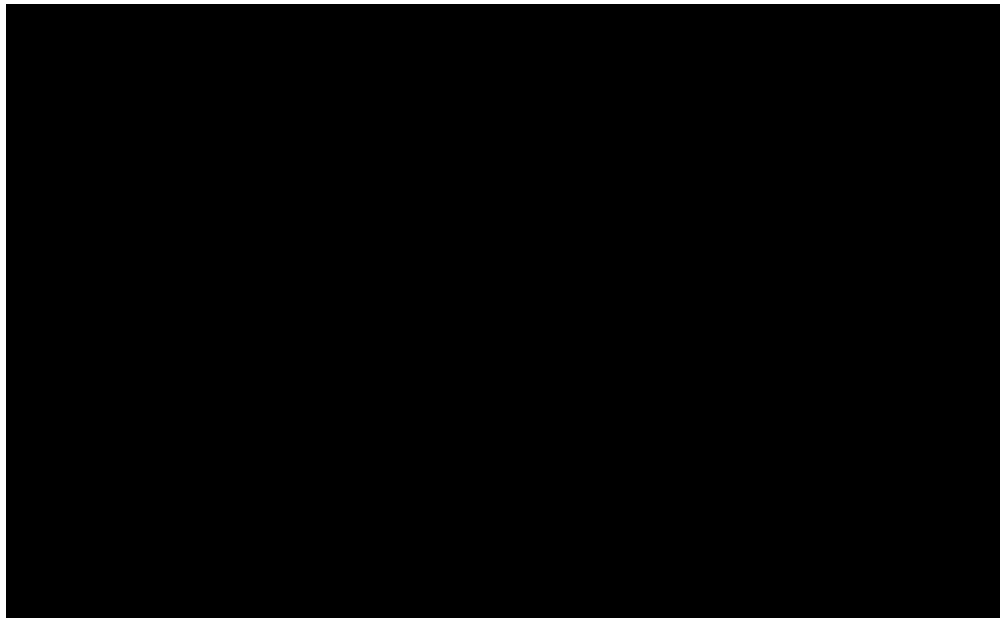


Fig 24: Graph of number of marriages from the office of national statistics.

Mills’ career to this point had been a paradigm of propriety; she had the projected image of the perfect, unproblematic child/teenager, so this role choice is in

keeping with her stardom as she could transition into an unproblematic adult. Despite the traditional setting of the film there were some signs of the emerging social and cultural changes; there is an effort to sexualise her image in this role. She is continually shown in nightwear, even though the nightwear is modest. The exaggerated frills and lack of shape prevent it from being an attractive outfit, the frills giving it a girl-like quality.

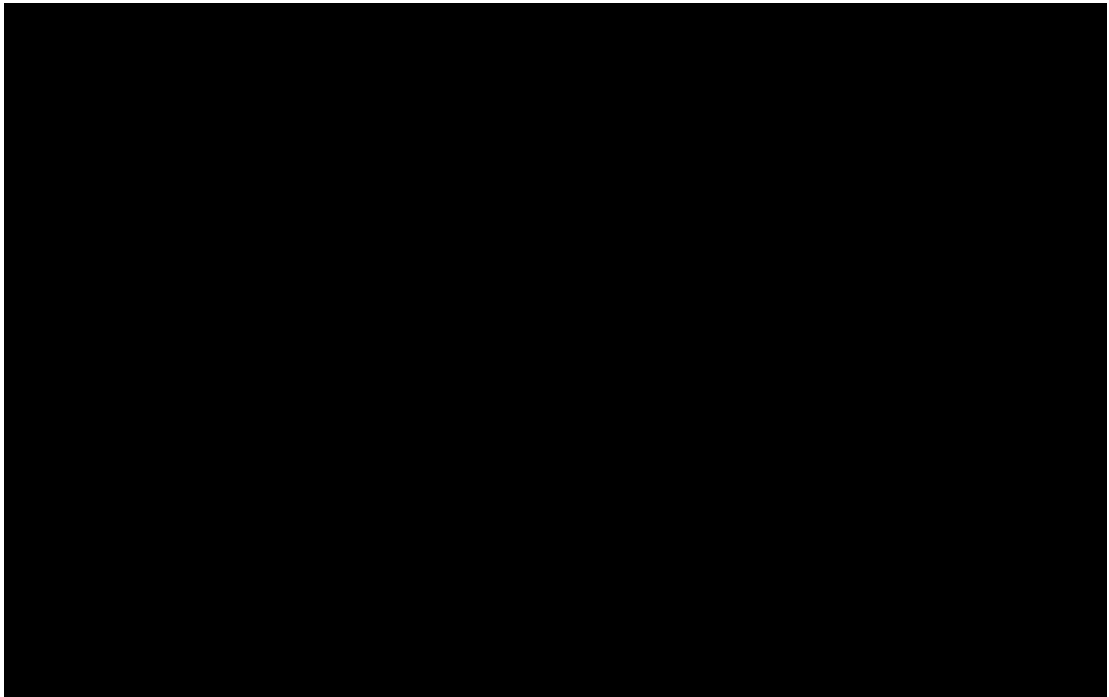


**Fig 25: Jenny's nightwear.**

This film contains Mills first undressing scene as she is happened upon in the bath by her brother-in-law. She prepares herself for the bath by buying toiletries which are marketed to increase sexual attractiveness and she is then shown luxuriating in the bath, sponging herself down. When she is intruded upon, her brother-in-law is clearly taking in her body as she rushes to cover up. She is still shown as innocent and coy however, in keeping with her past characters and persona, as she is surprised by him and says 'I never heard you! You gave me quite a turn' as she



clutches her towel to herself. It is his reaction to her that gives the scene a sexual subtext rather than her performance, which is innocent rather than knowing.



**Fig 26: Jenny is intruded upon in the bath.**

Released in the same year as her adult breakthrough role was the Ida Lupino-directed *The Trouble with Angels* (1966), an American production in which Mills played a mischievous student at an all-girls boarding school. Mills had not quite left the schoolgirl roles behind and there was still a conflict between Mills as a girl and Mills as a young woman. She was still far better known for her Disney roles in the USA, an association she would struggle to leave behind once that contract ended with *That Darn Cat!* in 1965. The American film studios had been quicker and more comfortable to give Mills more mature material, as previously mentioned, but it was always highly sanitised. The British studios were now ready to grant Mills adult material but in the

same fashion. The determination to keep Mills as a 'good girl' limited the possibility of growth in her roles.

### Adulthood

'Meet the new look Hayley Mills... blossom into womanhood' the press book for *Pretty Polly* states, despite her supposedly adult role in *The Family Way* a year previously. Mills attempted to break away from her good girl image by making *Pretty Polly* (1967) (*A Matter of Innocence* for American audiences), which was released when Hayley had turned 21 and did see a marked departure from her previous persona. 1967 has culturally been known as the 'summer of love' (Donnelly, M. 2005, 97) as the hippy counterculture movement dominated in the press and this emerging influence is seen to a certain extent within *Pretty Polly*. At this point in her personal life Mills had been making headlines as she had embarked on a relationship with the director of *The Family Way*, Roy Boulting, who was 33 years her senior. This shattered the image that had been carefully cultivated, 'the "delightful teenager" image disappeared'.<sup>68</sup> There seemed to be an indignation at the fact that Hayley was no longer the sparky little girl she had played for too long into her teens. *Pretty Polly* creates a mirror of Mills' personal development and her star persona seemed to have informed her choice of role. It tells the story of a meek and obedient 'good' 21-year-old woman who is invited to tour Singapore with her overbearing, obnoxious aunt (Brenda De Banzie). When her aunt dies suddenly, she finds herself alone in a new country and intoxicated by her new-found freedom she embarks on an affair with

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<sup>68</sup> D'Arcy, Susan. 'Hayley Mills: I was really lonely and sad, a very introverted teenager', *Photoplay Film Monthly*. 22:11 (November 1971), pp. 63.

Amaz (Shashi Kapoor), an Indian man who had previously been acting as her guide around the country. With her new confidence she also piques the interest of dissolute American Rick Preston who attempts to seduce her at a party. Ultimately, she realises she loves Amaz, but she cannot stay with him as their lives are on different paths. She leaves Singapore for Hong Kong on the recommendation of her uncle (Trevor Howard), who also lives on the island, and she departs a changed woman, more worldly and confident than she had been before she left.

Given an adult certificate on release, the film is not shy in addressing sexuality, something that filmmakers had grown in confidence to do as permissive behaviour was slowly emerging to become more socially acceptable, even though everyday life hadn't yet completely transformed as the wedding boom proves. From the repressed, inexperienced girl who embarks on the trip, Polly undergoes a complete transformation upon her romance with the charming Amaz, and the film frankly depicts the deflowering of Polly. After her character is left free of a chaperone, she takes Amaz up on his offer to be her guide and they end the day walking in the moonlight along the beach, their shadows reflected in the twilight on the sand and romantic music swirls and the sound of the sea takes over. They sit on a bench, Amaz says her heart is thumping and Polly replies so is his. He asks her if she is afraid as he lies her down and she responds, 'why should I be?'. He tells her they can leave if she desires it, and she says 'no, unless you want to leave yourself'. He removes her glasses as the waves crash in the background and we see Amaz from her perspective as they are removed, his face once seen with clarity becomes blurry at the gesture as her world transforms. He leans in and kisses her as the camera discreetly pans away. This event also is frankly discussed by her uncle who, sensing a change in her demeanour,

asks 'were you a virgin when you left England?' She answers quite frankly that a previous beau had attempted to make love to her, but he was too drunk, and that Amaz had only drunk Coca Cola. Amaz is also characterised as a 'gigolo' by her uncle. The adult themes and the depiction of Polly breaking away from being the 'good' girl to become an adult mark a new journey for Mills' career.

*Pretty Polly* also rejects the traditional narrative trajectory of the young single girl finding love, getting married and living happily ever after, the old-fashioned approach that had dominated her few previous romantic films. Conversely it shows a single girl finding joy in her freedom. Instead of her returning home or marrying the man she loves she decides to embark on further adventures on her own in Hong Kong, as the character Mr Preston says, 'for a small-town girl she sure is cosmopolitan'. Mills had previously made a career of being 'small-town', rural girls and this role showed a development to a certain extent. For the first time in her career Mills' character is not doing the proper or respectable thing; she is doing what is right for her in a remarkable moment of liberation, especially for a female character in 1967, and there is no judgement of her choice. In fact, her proper and traditional life in England which had been represented by her obnoxious and overbearing aunt is portrayed as the wrong choice, even if it was - during the residual social movements that Mills' role and persona had tended to embody - the correct one. Her liberated, almost hedonistic uncle (who claimed to spend his entire week's earnings at the weekend) is seen persuading her to carry on her adventures, presenting by far the most convincing and attractive argument and one in line with the permissive actions of the dominant 'swinging' movement of the mid-60s. This new style of youthful behaviour seen in the 'swinging films', which Robert Murphy states shows characters 'doing 'mad' things

like agreeing to fly off on exotic holidays, being irresponsible and carefree and reckless and spontaneous' (Murphy, R. 1992, 83), is exactly what Polly is doing. It also shows an emerging new style of freedom for young women during the first decade of second wave feminism. She is a young woman who is not bound by society's rules, who decides to take control of her own destiny in a non-traditional manner. This was a significant development in the roles Mills would play. She never enjoyed the same success as an adult as she did as a child, but with *Pretty Polly* she was finally allowed to grow up.

### Conclusion

Around the time Mills was becoming famous, film historian Thomas Harris said 'the star system is based on the premise that a star is accepted by the public in terms of a certain set of personality traits that permeate all of his or her film roles' (Harris, T. 1957, 40), and this is true of the first British films of Mills' career. The personality traits that her audience engaged with were entrenched in childishness and girlhood leading to problems once she had progressed irreversibly beyond playing these young roles. She was 'everybody's favourite daughter' (Sinclair, M. 1988, 120), playing innocents younger than her years, sometimes wild free spirits and sometimes mischievous, and this transferred into her brand of stardom. The constant reminder of her father in their shared films and in the press they received created the image of a 'Daddy's girl' as they joked about on set and discussed their closeness off it. David Buckingham discusses Mills' career in terms of child stardom and focusses on girlhood specifically, and once adulthood encroached on her image and roles her career began

to decline.<sup>69</sup> The newspapers had not looked favourably upon her relationship with Roy Boulting, apparently leading to her receiving 'violent letters accusing her of setting a bad example for youth' (Sinclair, M. 1988, 122). There was much confusion in the management of her now-adult image, the image of innocence no longer appropriate for a worldly young woman to be playing, and out of step with the emerging modern society. American publications seemed to manage her aging better than the British press, most likely because the American star system had previous experience of transitioning teen stars to adult roles: for example the careers of Elizabeth Taylor and Natalie Wood had successfully grown into adult roles. The American press discussed the progression of maturity in her roles including extensive coverage of her first onscreen kiss in *The Moonspinners* which, as noted by Melanie Williams in 'I am not a lady!',<sup>70</sup> and according to Mills' own autobiography, created a lot of press interest, much to Mills' own discomfort (Mills. 220, 2021). Perhaps it was because the British press had not handled this sort of career and image progression before as Mills was one of the first internationally noted British child/ teen stars, that they were dismayed with reports of her displaying more adult behaviour as she got older. Geoffrey Macnab argues of the British star system that 'outside various piecemeal attempts at imitating Hollywood, such a system never really existed' (Macnab, G. 2000, vii). Perhaps the lack of management of marketing stars meant that studios and the media didn't know how to manage Mills' success and how to allow her to experience the new teen culture in her work and mature. Admittedly, there were significant constraints

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<sup>69</sup> Buckingham, David, 'Hayley Mills: Child Star', DavidBuckingham.net, (2018) <https://davidbuckingham.net/growing-up-modern/hayley-mills-and-the-disneyfication-of-childhood/hayley-mills-child-star/>, accessed January 20th 2019.

<sup>70</sup> Williams, Melanie, 'I am not a lady!', *Screen*, (Autumn 2005). 43:1, pp. 364.

on the roles that Hayley could play due to her Disney contract. As mentioned previously, she was the first choice to play the title role in Kubrick's *Lolita* (1962), but due to her association with the family-friendly Disney, was unable to play the part (Williams, M. 2005, 364). In her autobiography she herself wonders what impact this would have had on her career if she had been allowed to play the role (Mills. 2021, 130).

Existing writing on Mills speaks of her as a child star: Melanie Williams focusses on her first and most childlike role in *Tiger Bay*; David Buckingham focusses on the representation of childhood and girlhood in her roles, which is unavoidable due to her work and persona; but what often gets lost is that Mills was in fact a teen star rather than a child star. She achieved fame at 13-years-old and continued to be successful for the rest of her teenage years, yet this is often not how she is treated. Put into context, Mills was born the same year as Jane Birkin and Marianne Faithfull, both of whom were finding fame around the same time that Mills was making *The Chalk Garden*. Faithfull certainly started off with the same brand of 'good girl' image that Mills had, but this was quickly dropped once her personal life and her association with the Rolling Stones became known. Jane Birkin was starring in the controversial *Blow Up* (1966) in the same year Mills starred in *The Family Way*. Neither of these stars were treated as children, or even teens; this was specific to Mills. Mills is constantly infantilised in the media and by the film studios, even when her roles required a teenage level of maturity, such as in *The Chalk Garden* or *Sky West and Crooked*; the maturity is denied and she is still treated as a child. Her persona was that of the 'nice' girl, the 'good' girl, without the troubles that adolescence or the dominant teenage culture could bring. Her most controversial trait would be that she was portrayed as

a free spirit, wild in a less troubling way than the then popular trope of the juvenile delinquent. Perhaps it was this 'good girl' persona that meant she was more harshly judged for her mistakes or adult decisions. Unfortunately growing up was not acceptable to her audience despite its inevitability and, not unusually for young stars, her career trajectory faltered beyond her early 20s. Film roles were less forthcoming, and she moved into television roles in the 80s and beyond.

By the time Mills was making *Sky West and Crooked*, *The Family Way* and *Pretty Polly* the 'swinging 1960s' were underway, the dominant representation in film and television portrayed teenagers and young adults as indulging in the new freedoms and independence they were being presented with. Yet, looking at the statistics of the time which showed the increase in marriages as the baby boomer generation aged, perhaps Mills was personifying a more truthful version of teenage girlhood for certain areas of society, as the facts re-enforce the idea of the 'myth' of permissiveness which will be discussed further in the next chapter. Just as Mills was beginning to undertake adult roles, a very different blonde British teenager just breaking into films. Her name was Judy Geeson and she is the subject of the next chapter.



## Judy Geeson

Between 1967 and 1968 Judy Geeson starred in some of the biggest hits of the UK and US box office, and became a well-known face associated with the 'Swinging Sixties' cultural and social scene. Born in 1948 in Sussex, she was sent to Corona stage school as a child and from there she found fame in television program *The Newcomers* at 15 years old.<sup>71</sup> By her late teens she was branching out into the film world, starting with a supporting role in British horror movie *Berserk!* (1967), a film that featured Joan Crawford in her last role. Between 1967 and 1969 she starred in a number of films, *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* (1967) (hereafter HWGRTMB), *To Sir, with Love* (1967), *Prudence and the Pill* (1968), and *Three into Two Won't Go* (1969). Despite starring in some of the biggest box office hits of 1967 and 1968, there has not yet been a complete study of Geeson's career and star image. *To Sir, with Love* and *HWGRTMB* have been mentioned in academic texts such as *Sex, Class and Realism* by John Hill and *Sixties British Cinema* by Robert Murphy but her roles were not analysed in depth. Her first adult role, *Two Gentleman Sharing* (1969) had a retrospective viewing at the BFI in 2018 with a Q&A with members of the cast including Geeson. Samira Ahmed wrote an article on the event for her website but, considering the relative importance of the film (which was banned due to fears of inciting race riots) relatively little has been written about it.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Haigh, Peter, 'Saturday Morning to Every Night' *ABC Film Review* 19:3 (March 1969), pp. 15.

<sup>72</sup> Ahmed, Samira, 'Two Gentlemen Sharing: Swinging London's 'Race Picture'', *Samira Ahmed: Journalist, Writer, Broadcaster*, (2<sup>nd</sup> September 2018) <http://www.samiraahmed.co.uk/two-gentlemen-sharing-swinging-londons-race-picture/>, accessed 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

All Geeson's films address, in some form, the perpetuated 'myth' (Street, S. 1997, 85) of permissiveness during the 'Swinging 60s', a period which ran from approximately 1964 to 1968. The movement emerged into the international conscious when Time Magazine announced its arrival with its cartoonish cover in April 1966, showing Beatles-esque characters, red London buses, discotheques, the Queen, Harold Wilson, and many other typically British images. Britain was fashionable, and Judy Geeson was one of its up-and-coming stars.



Fig. 1. Time Magazine cover 15<sup>th</sup> April 1966.<sup>73</sup>

This particular use of 'swinging' is defined in the Oxford English dictionary as 'lively, exciting and fashionable', and the imagery of the British 'swinging' scene became the dominant representation of British culture. Historian Dominic Sandbrook quotes one contemporary journalist saying 'swinging' could be defined as 'wealth, sex

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<sup>73</sup> Dickenson, Geoffrey, 'London the Swinging City', *Time Magazine* 87:15 (15<sup>th</sup> April 1966), pp. cover.

appeal, fame, youth, talent, novelty, and quick success' (Sandbrook. 2006, xviii) at a time when 'Britishness was at the height of fashion' (Sandbrook, 2006. 286), leading to a boom in the music, fashion and film industries. Geeson's rise to stardom in 1967 coincided with the beginning of the decline of the 'swinging' years of the 60s. Sandbrook wrote, by 1967 'the country seemed to be trapped in a downward spiral of economic failure, cultural decadence and public pessimism' (Sandbrook. 2006, 573), an indicator of the social and economic problems to come in the 1970s. The new permissive culture and the famous faces associated with it faced a backlash as 'society's moral guardians were intent on tightening up at least some of the social and cultural loosening of the decade' (Donnelly. 2005, 151). Venues and events were closed to prevent gatherings of young people and in particular members of the hippy movement who were seen to be damaging the image and social standing of various areas (Donnelly. 2005, 152). Mick Jagger and Keith Richards were arrested on drugs offenses; the story of the drugs raid at Richards' home created a huge amount of tabloid newspaper reportage and often included the salacious rumour that Marianne Faithfull was found naked wrapped in a fur rug by the police (Sandbrook. 2006, 522). Even the BBC cashed in on the youthful trends of the moment by introducing its own pop radio station Radio 1 in September of 1967, yet they also banned records that it thought might affect the moral standing of the nation's youth, including records from The Kinks, Sly and the Family Stone, and The Rolling Stones (Donnelly. 2005, 152). In this moment of intense discourse regarding the moral values of the young, Judy Geeson achieved her big break, and with it represented 'swinging' Britain as the movement was dying.

Each of Geeson's films seems to represent different facets of the 'swinging' epoch of the mid-60's. Once again, Raymond Williams 'epochal analysis' (Williams, 1977, 121) will be used to explore evidence of the residual and emergent cultural systems within these films, which embody the supposedly dominant hegemony that the 1960s are still remembered for today. *HWGRTMB* comically represents teenage sexuality; *To Sir, with Love* addresses race relations as immigrants from all over the world made their home in Britain. *Prudence and the Pill* engages with the topic of a new female contraception, meaning for the first-time some women had the opportunity to take control of their own reproductive destiny. Just ten years earlier films about these subjects would have had an altogether different presentation if they had even existed at all. *To Sir, with Love's* sympathetic protagonist is a black teacher from British Guyana, and *Prudence and the Pill* would simply not have been made. The social problem film viewed teenage sexuality with alarm, for example *Cosh Boy* and *Beat Girl* both use sexual activity between teenagers as a sign of their delinquency, whereas *HWGRTMB* treats the subject matter comedically. British cinema was beginning to venture into new territory in the mid to late 60s, taking a different perspective than before, and Geeson was often seen playing a central role in the more successful progressive films of the decade which showed signs of the emergent cultural and social movements of the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Swinging Social Problems**

In comparison to the dour and gloomy predictions for Britain's youth in the social problem films, the swinging films seemed to offer a technicolour alternative. But as Robert Murphy notes, despite their apparent differences, these films often had

a serious undertone (Murphy. 1992, 83), which was masked by the comedic elements and psychedelic imagery they often featured. The representation of the teenager was changing superficially, but swinging films were a tangle of residual, dominant and emergent movements. Underneath their glossy exterior, they were essentially perky social problem films.

*To Sir, with Love* is the most obvious combination of the two subgenres, it can be considered as a late era social problem film, which is how John Hill chose to classify it (Hill. 1986, 67), as well as a swinging 60s film. By the end of the 1960s, the social problem film had evolved as new cultural and social changes emerged. The troubled teens in this film are not killing policemen like Tom Riley (Dirk Bogarde) in *The Blue Lamp*. When a student gives birth, it is not treated with the hysteria Durgnat noted in earlier films (Durgnat. 1970, 181), instead here the class gather to admire the baby. Even the conservative and responsible Mr Thackeray seems pleased to meet the new arrival, there is little judgement and no drama in comparison with previous representations of teen pregnancy, such as Rene's (Joan Collins) attempted suicide after her rejection by Roy (James Kenney) upon discovering her pregnancy in *Cosh Boy*, or the seemingly hopeless situation Jo finds herself in when she is deserted by the loyal and caring Geoffrey and left with her abusive mother at the end of *A Taste of Honey*. The socio-economic circumstances of all three examples are the same: they are all girls from inner city, impoverished backgrounds. Within the 14 years between the release of *Cosh Boy* in 1953 and *To Sir, with Love* in 1967 the issue of teenage pregnancy was now met with a more moderate response. Its brief inclusion in *To Sir, with Love*, a film specifically about troubled teenagers, shows it was still considered a social problem, it was just no longer an insurmountable one.

The other themes explored are poverty, anti-social behaviour, violence, and racism, all of which commonly featured in other films of the genre. The teens are rude and disruptive in Mr Thackeray's class and casually use racist language even after they have grown to respect him. Ultimately, as in most social problem films, the teens finally adhere to the rules of society after learning some hard life lessons, like Geeson's Pamela, whose transformation from sullen and surly teen to sensible young woman is revealed at the end of year disco where she dances with Mr Thackeray, whose authority she had resented at the beginning of the film.

*HWGRTMB* has residual links to the social problem film, but the influence of the genre is still in evidence. These characters are from a different economic background, and their opportunities after the end of school are further education rather than the world of work, but the preoccupations of the film makers are the same. Though Murphy claims the director Clive Donner 'looks un-patronisingly at young people and their attitude to sex' (Murphy, R. 1992, 146), in *HWGRTMB* the eventual reconciliation of these teens with societal norms is a judgement, and girls who do not comply are punished. There is not a tremendous amount of condemnation for Jamie's behaviour as he comedically progresses from girl to girl and disposes of them when he decides to move on to the next one. However, the female characters are punished for the choices they make which are afforded to them by the new 'permissive society'. Geeson's Mary is judged by Jamie as she refuses to be in a monogamous relationship with him, and by the end her future is in jeopardy as she fails at school and doesn't get into a good university as expected. It isn't just Mary that suffers consequences: during the finale it is revealed 'boy crazy' Paula is pregnant by the vicar. These girls have embraced the new permissive society and in turn find

themselves in trouble. Rather than a melancholic tone regarding Jamie's lost innocence, which Murphy suggested the swinging films have (Murphy, R. 1992, 83), the film shows that despite his personal journey, Jamie has not really changed as it finishes where it starts, with Jamie chasing a new girl. The 'swinging' *Prudence and the Pill* has a similar comedic tone with a serious subtext, but rather than being sad about the lost societal norms of earlier in the century, it simply suggests that permissive behaviour creates new societal problems. Geeson's character Geraldine suffers consequences of her behaviour as she finds herself pregnant by her steady boyfriend at the end, but at no point has she in any way been sad about her situation. The attitude of her parents was more of despair and worry for her 'reputation' than a concern about a loss of innocence.

*Berserk!* and *Three into Two Won't Go* were also made during the swinging era, and they also choose to frame the representation of Geeson's teenagers in a social problem context. Even horror film *Berserk!* uses (in an extreme way) perceived problems with the new emerging society as the catalyst for Angela's murderous rage. It suggests that working women are neglecting their parental responsibilities, creating problems for the new generation. Geeson's Angela is escorted back to her mother by a teacher, as she has been engaging in typical teenage misbehaviour at her boarding school, such as going missing in the evenings and smoking. When she opens up to her mother, she talks about being isolated due to her background and feeling like she belonged at the circus with her family, and she essentially accuses her mother of abandonment. *Three into Two Won't Go* not only explores problems with divorce but also the repercussions of the emerging hippy movement, as young people chose to 'drop out' of society and live a peripatetic lifestyle. Geeson's Elle is not happy and

carefree; she is troubled and vulnerable to being taken advantage of, as her relationship with the unfaithful Mr Howard proves. These films are all based around what were perceived as social problems, the only change is the source of the problem.

### 'Do you two... shake?'

Both Geeson's roles and star image are clearly linked to the 'swinging' cultural movement. As previously discussed, the social problem films had a significant influence on Geeson's film roles but there are also obvious influences in the aesthetics and the text of the dominant 'swinging' version of Britain presented in the press and media of the mid to late 60s. Jeffrey Richards argues the 'most prized characteristic of the new era... [was] coolness' (Richards, J. 1997, 159), and the costumes, imagery and text of *To Sir, with Love* and *HWGRTMB* certainly support this statement. They both include fashionable costumes for Geeson and modern slang that young people were using. Iconic British landmarks and objects also feature throughout the films which was typical of 'swinging' cinema and had been immortalised as such on the infamous Time Magazine cover referred to at the beginning of the chapter. In the case of *HWGRTMB*, scenes of psychedelic imagery appear also linking the film to the hippy movement that was gaining momentum, once again proving there is 'a social basis for elements of the cultural process' (Williams. 1977, 124). Both Geeson's roles in *To Sir, with Love* and *HWGRTMB* 'swing' and are 'lively, exciting and fashionable'.

Key scenes in *To Sir, with Love* present us with images that were synonymous with the then perceived dominant swinging aesthetic. When we meet the class, they are listening to records and dancing in the school hall during break time. The swinging 60s prized youth above everything and here we see a large group of young people



enjoying the pop culture of the moment. The song playing is 'Stealing My Love from Me' by Lulu, who, in a meta cinematic moment, is also seen dancing in the hall with the other actors as she is also a member of the cast. It is a fast dance number, its cymbals and jangly guitar-led style typical of the period, which creates a clear sense of the dominant culture of the era. We are presented with an image of very 'cool' young people, fashionably dressed and dancing in the style seen on youth shows such as 'Top of the Pops'. The language Geeson's Pamela uses is also an indicator of the era as she uses a fashionable youthful term for dancing that we can't imagine the adults in the room using themselves, making them seem out of touch in comparison. When the teachers come into to watch the students dance, she walks up to them and with a shimmy asks them 'Do you... shake?' As the teachers retreat, slightly embarrassed, the class laugh at how uncomfortable they are. We see the class in several scenes dressed up and dancing to the pop music of the day, we are constantly reminded that these are trendy young people in the trendiest city in the world at the time.

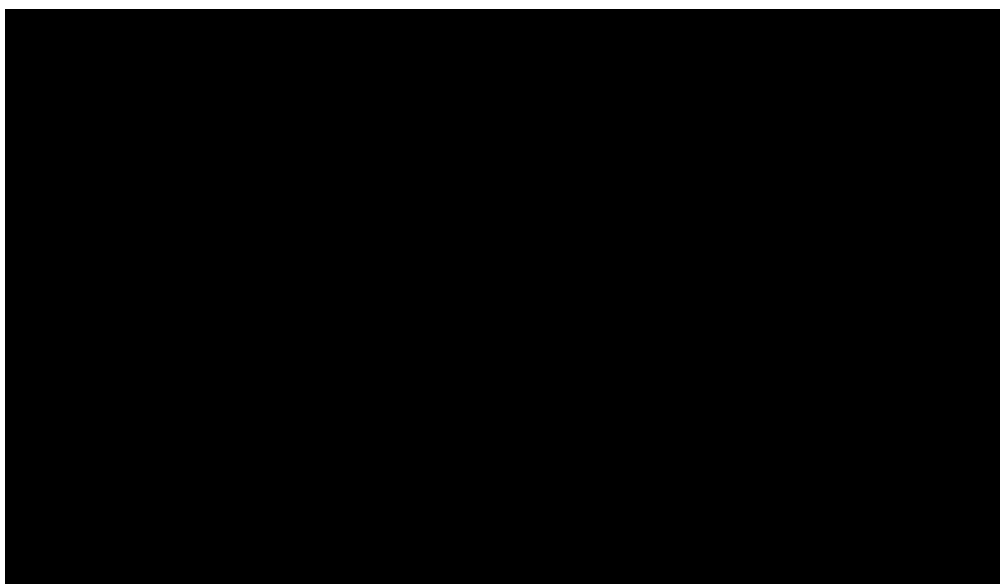
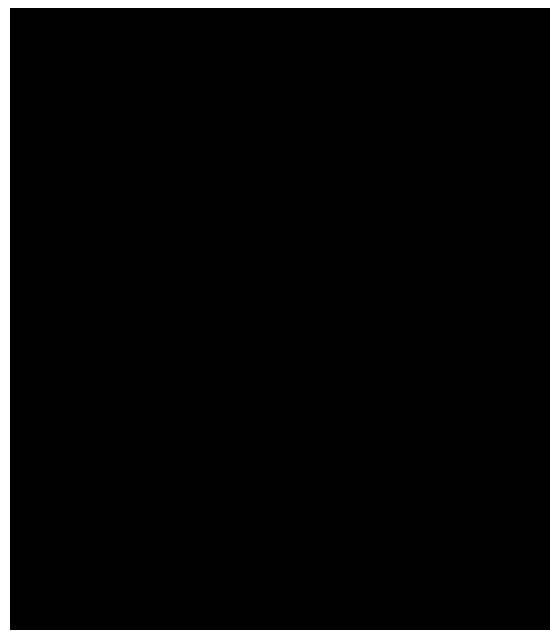
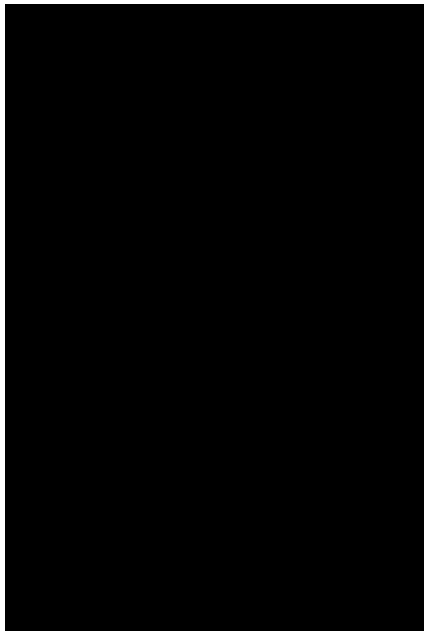
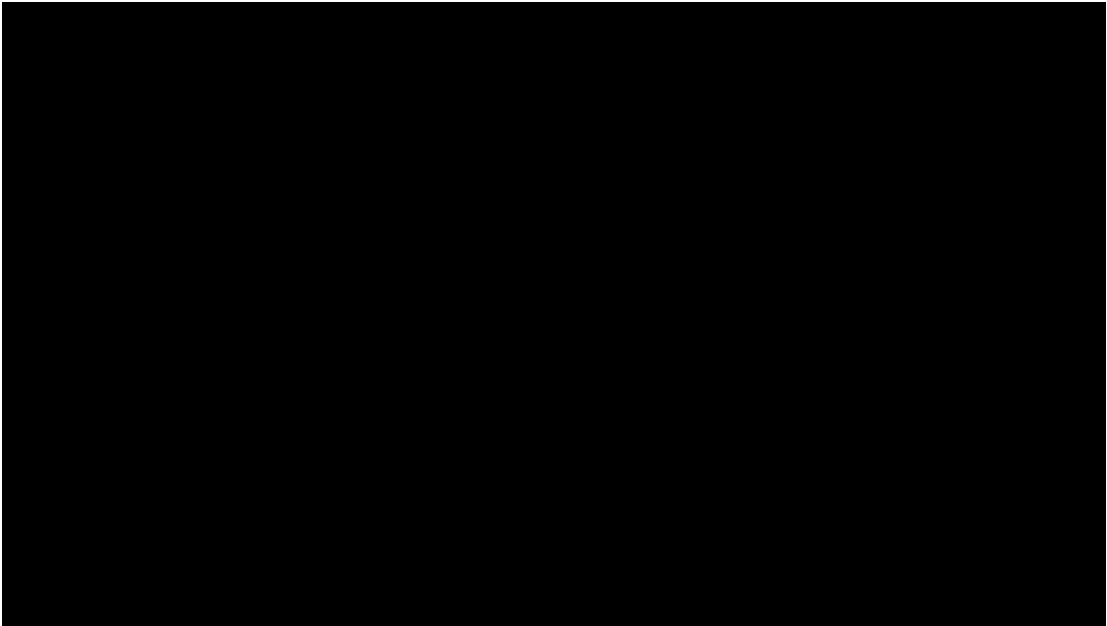


Fig. 2: Dancers in the gymnasium at breaktime in *To Sir, with Love*.

In this screen shot we can see the mix of fashions in the dominant swinging 60s style. In the foreground with her back to the camera, we see Lulu as Babs dressed in a purple polo neck jumper, pearls and large white circular statement earrings. One girl wears a black mini dress with a long necklace with a large circular pendant. The haircuts also enable us to date the picture: the men's haircuts are reminiscent of the long, shaggy haircuts The Beatles made popular and were wearing at the time. After the establishing shot, creating a very particular sense of place and mood, we cut to Pamela dancing flirtatiously with Denham, whose long hair and leather jacket single him out as a bad boy before we have met the character. Pamela wears her hair down, as she does for most of the film, it has been slightly backcombed for volume to give it the fashionable beehive-esque shape. The style is reminiscent of Bridget Bardot's looks of the 50s and 60s and also worn by Julie Christie.

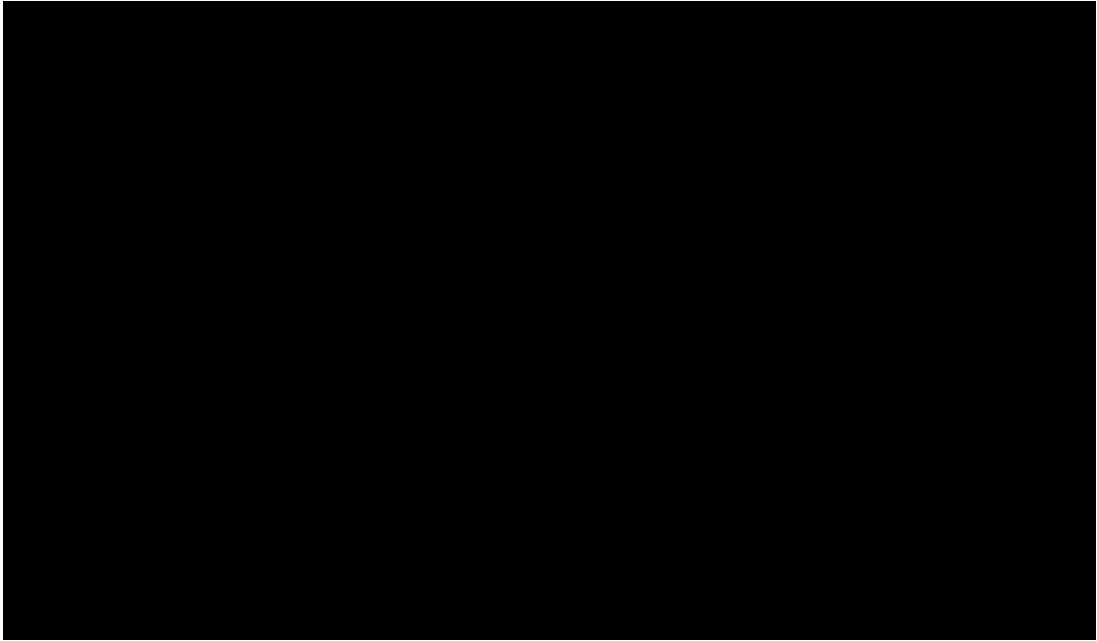


Figs. 3 and 4: Bridget Bardot's iconic 60s style and Geeson's version in *To Sir, with Love*.



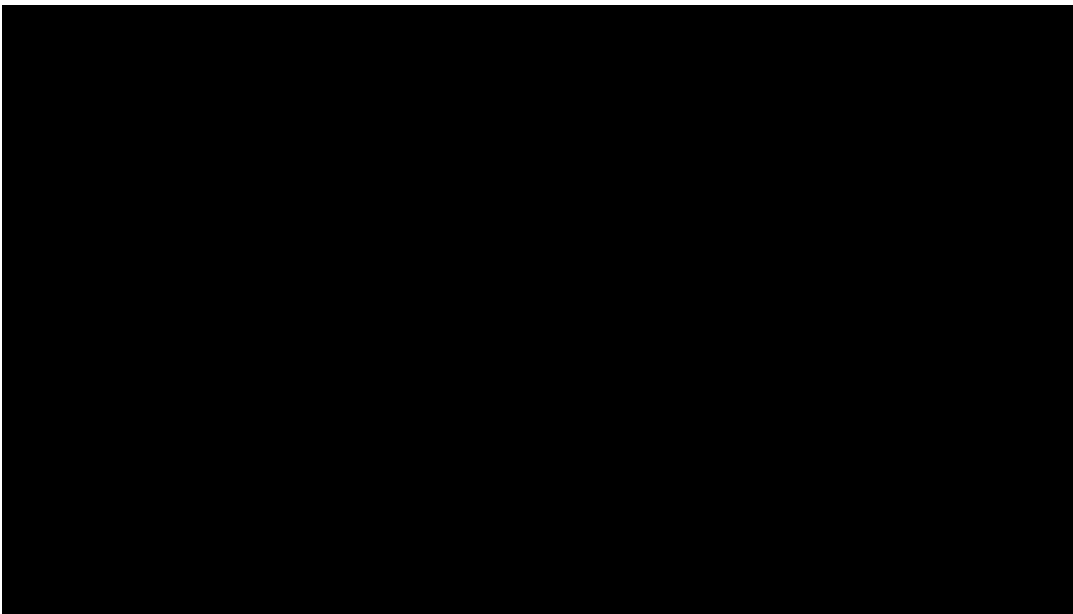
**Fig. 5: Pamela's style in *To Sir, with Love*.**

In this scene, and throughout the first half of the film, Pamela is seen wearing this beige, sleeveless turtleneck top. It is worn on its own, accessorised with a long set of beads or underneath a cardigan. As the film was made before the era of disposable fashion and coupled with the fact that children of this school come from deprived backgrounds it fits with the storyline that Pamela would repeatedly wear the same outfit. Despite the poverty of Pamela's upbringing, the top itself is fashionable. Turtle-neck tops were a trend for both men and women of the swinging 60s as evidenced by these photos of legendary faces of the era, Paul McCartney and model of the moment, Twiggy, who is wearing a top similar to the one Judy sports for a substantial section of the film.



**Figs. 6 and 7: 1960s icons Twiggy and Paul McCartney in turtleneck tops.**

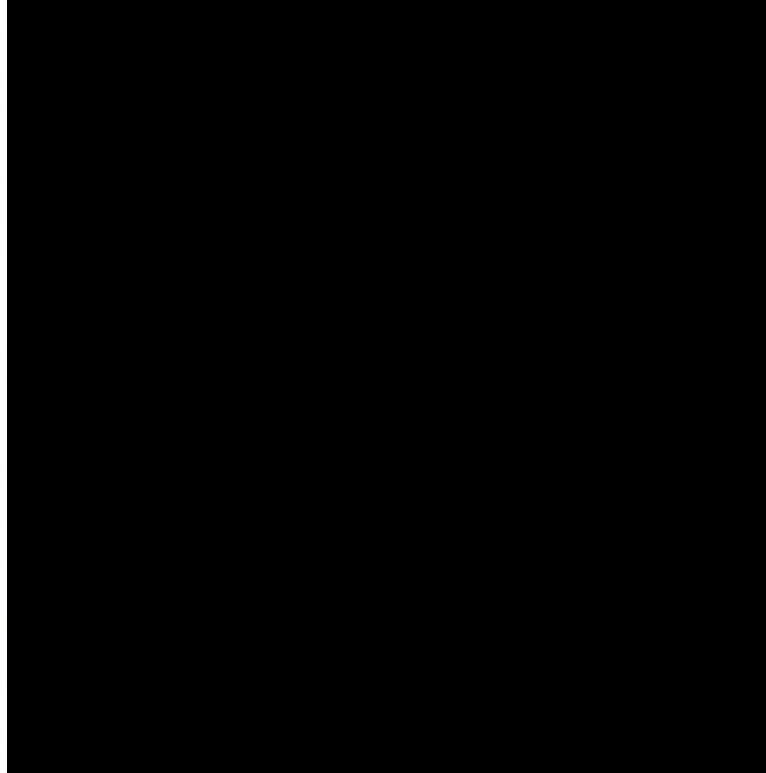
Though it is out of shot in the screenshot, Pamela wears a black miniskirt, a quintessential 60s fashion item created by Mary Quant, and again she wears this skirt repeatedly, only breaking from this when in two scenes she wears dresses for the school trip and the dance.



**Fig. 8: Pamela's style on the school trip.**

Pamela wears a shirt-style mini dress with a small, green floral print. This style of floral is also seen on some of the male characters towards the end at the school discos. Also visible in this shot are the other young people in the class who are dressed in a fashionable 60s style as well, with a baker boy hat, a baby doll dress and several turtleneck tops in view. They provide another stereotypical snapshot of the 'swinging' young people in the media-created myth of Swinging London that dominated popular culture.

The most 'swinging' outfit that Pamela wears features at the end for the school dance. The dress is white crochet and is worn over a white slip with white T-Bar shoes and a white handbag. The link between the colour white and innocence is well established. Before this scene Pamela had always been dressed in more mature clothes and spends most of the last third of the film dressed entirely in black so this makes the sudden change to white all the more notable. Her entire style in the final scene has regressed from troubled young rebel to innocent good girl, perhaps the suggestion being that girlhood is in some way a preferable state to womanhood.



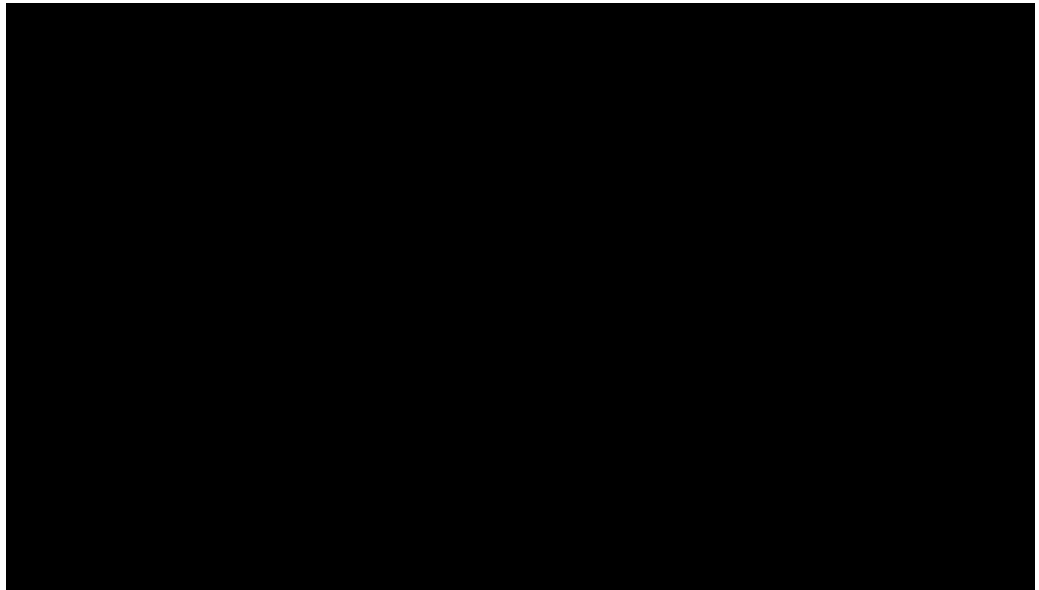
**Figs. 9 and 10: Pamela's black and white outfits.**

Throughout the film Pamela has exclusively worn miniskirts, an iconic female 60s fashion, and this dress is no different. Her hair is in pigtails with white bows, pigtails become a running look for Geeson, as we see them in the *Three into Two Won't Go* poster and in the promotional material explored later in the chapter. Pigtails were a fashionable look for the 1960s and was seen on other actresses and sex symbols of the period.



**Figs. 11 and 12: Brigitte Bardot and Raquel Welch wearing pigtails circa 1960s.**

Pigtails have a strong association with girlhood and in particular with schoolgirls, though examining the pictures of unkempt ‘bed hair’ pigtails on Brigitte Bardot and an intensively styled bouffant pigtails worn by Raquel Welch, whose star image in particular was one of womanhood from the outset as her outfit in the photograph demonstrates, the style was adopted by more mature women during the 60s. Pamela’s pigtails were a fashionable choice, but they also create an image of girlishness, the transition between girl and woman blurred as a child’s hairstyle is worn by an older teen on the edge of womanhood. Pamela’s style of pigtails in particular are childlike. They are neat, worn high above her ears and are accessorised by large white bows. The overly styled Welch or the tousled Bardot’s pigtails seem very different in comparison, Pamela’s pigtails are decidedly the hairstyle of a young schoolgirl especially in comparison to her more mature hairstyle worn for the majority of the film.



**Fig. 13: Pamela's pigtails at the end of *To Sir, with Love*.**

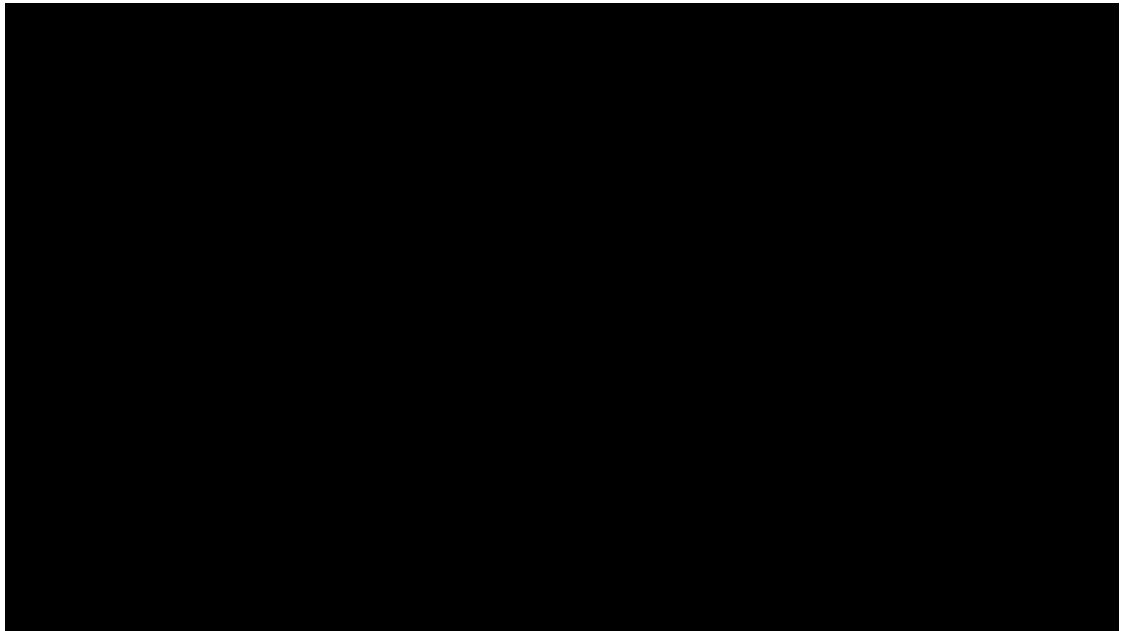
Previously she had been seen with her hair down and slightly backcombed in a more adult style, so choosing pigtails here signal a change in her physical appearance to signal a change in her personal trajectory; the pigtails show she has transformed into a 'good' girl. Throughout the film Pamela has tried to behave as an adult, and teacher Miss Kendall even tells Mr Thackeray that Pamela is a woman in every sense of the word. Yet this hairstyle, worn in the more girlish style rather than the mature adaptation of it, seems to make her character regress in terms of maturity and infantilises her. Geeson's performance of Pamela also signals this change as her whole demeanour has altered from surly and provocative to bright eyed girlish optimism. Optimism was a key component of the 'swinging' ethos.

### 'Swinging' London and beyond

London was 'the swinging city' (Murphy. 1992, 139) according to the world media in the mid-60s. The montage of shots we see as the class from *To Sir, with Love* walks around the museum sees them looking serious as they look at the artefacts,



along with shots of them 'doing mad things' (Murphy. 1992, 83) as characters typically did in 'swinging' movies, such as this shot of Geeson's Pamela pretending to be a relic.



**Fig. 14: High jinks on the school trip in *To Sir, with Love*.**

London was home to 'the first ever tourist event' (Urry. 2011, 20) with the 1851 Great Exhibition, and has been considered a popular tourist destination ever since. *To Sir, with Love* is set in the capital and constantly invokes the famous landmarks of the city which were enjoying a revival, and Geeson is associated with this tourist view of London. The locals speak in cockney rhyming slang. On the school trip to the museum the class, including Geeson, gathers next to and rides in a red London double decker bus, an iconic British object featuring in many feature films across the decades from *Passport to Pimlico* (1949) to *Paddington 2* (2018). London dominates the image of mid 60s Britain, featuring in everything from *Summer Holiday* (1963) to *The Leather Boys* (1964) to *Bedazzled* (1969) and *James Bond* spoof *Casino Royale* (1967), and was also used on the Time Magazine cover. A double decker even features in the video for 'Penny Lane' for the Beatles, but this one was green rather than the

usual red. Before its cancellation due to the Covid pandemic, in the spring of 2020, the Royal Albert Hall was due to run a 'Swinging 60s' tour around key locations in 'swinging' London's history, and the tour was planned to take place on a red double decker.<sup>74</sup> This helps demonstrate how the association of the red bus with the swinging 60s endures to the present day and would be understood as an icon of the swinging 60s by a modern audience. The film repeatedly demonstrates its London setting as it is intersected by shots of Tower Bridge. Charlotte Brunsdon likens the use of the iconography of London in British television to the 'old BBC call sign "This is London"' (Brunsdon. 2004, 85), used to open international broadcasts during the Second World War. In *To Sir, With Love* 'This is London' echoes, repeatedly using images to create a sense of its very fashionable location.

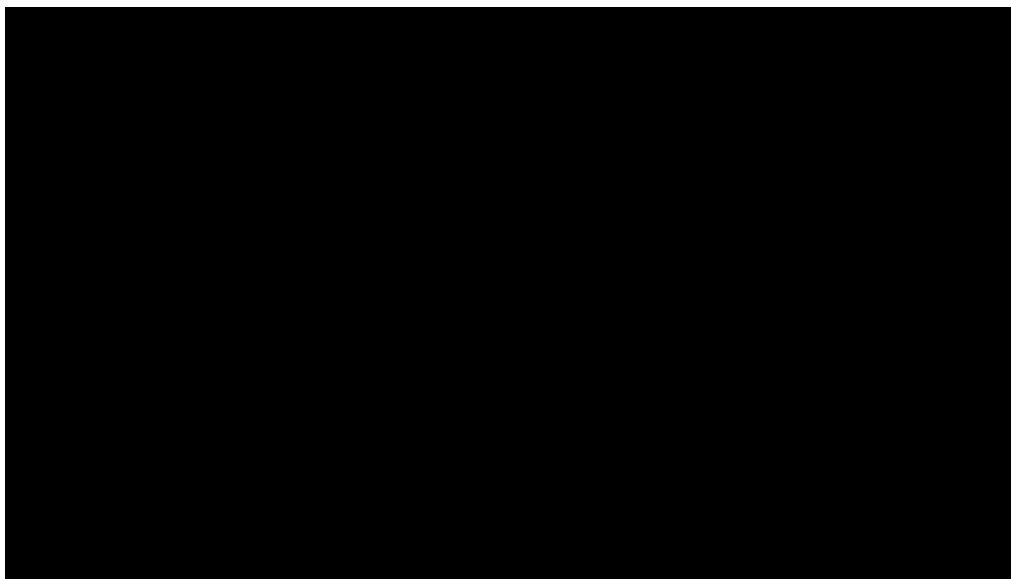


Fig.15: Still of Tower Bridge from *To Sir, with Love*.

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<sup>74</sup>Anon, 'The Swinging Sixties: Bus and Hall Tour Experience', *The Royal Albert Hall*, (2019) <https://www.royalalberthall.com/tickets/tours-and-exhibitions/the-swinging-sixties-bus-and-hall-tour-experience/>, accessed 14th January 2020.

Geeson's other films are also set in London adjacent locations, with the exception of *Berserk!*, but this has its own iconic 60s location as the circus arrives in Liverpool, the home of The Beatles and the Mersey sound that was popular around the world in the earlier part of the decade. *Three into Two Won't Go* spends part of the action in the suburbs of Birmingham, but the majority of the action is spent at the Howard's newly built house on a grand new estate in Middlesex. *Prudence and the Pill* takes place in an anonymous country location on the outskirts of London. In *HWGRTMB*, despite the fact that it was set in a London commuter town rather than London itself, 'swinging' culture dominates the whole film and includes nearly everything that Murphy lists as being typical of British 'swinging' cinema: 'riding in open-topped sports cars, running through parks, doing "'mad"' things like agreeing to fly off on exotic holidays, being irresponsible and carefree and reckless and spontaneous' (Murphy. 1992, 83). The bright colours and psychedelic sequences also tie in with the emerging hippy movement of the time. The film is set in the modern new town of Stevenage, a town 30 miles outside London and rebuilt after the Second World War, meaning the buildings shown are the then-modern shopping precincts and tower blocks. The characters drive around in open topped cars and British-made Minis. These particular vehicles have strong links to Britain and in particular the swinging era, the Mini and 60s British cinema being forever linked by 1969's *The Italian Job*. Geeson is also seen climbing into the open top car without opening the door, because that is what 'mad' young people do.

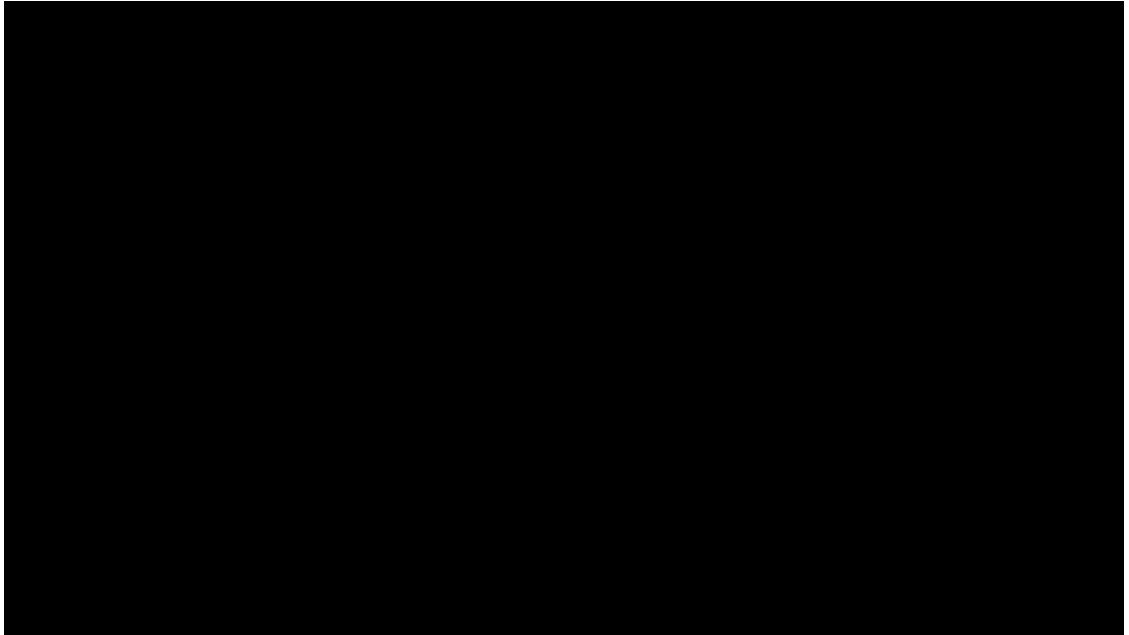


Fig. 16: Judy as a fashionable teenage girl in *HWGRTMB*.

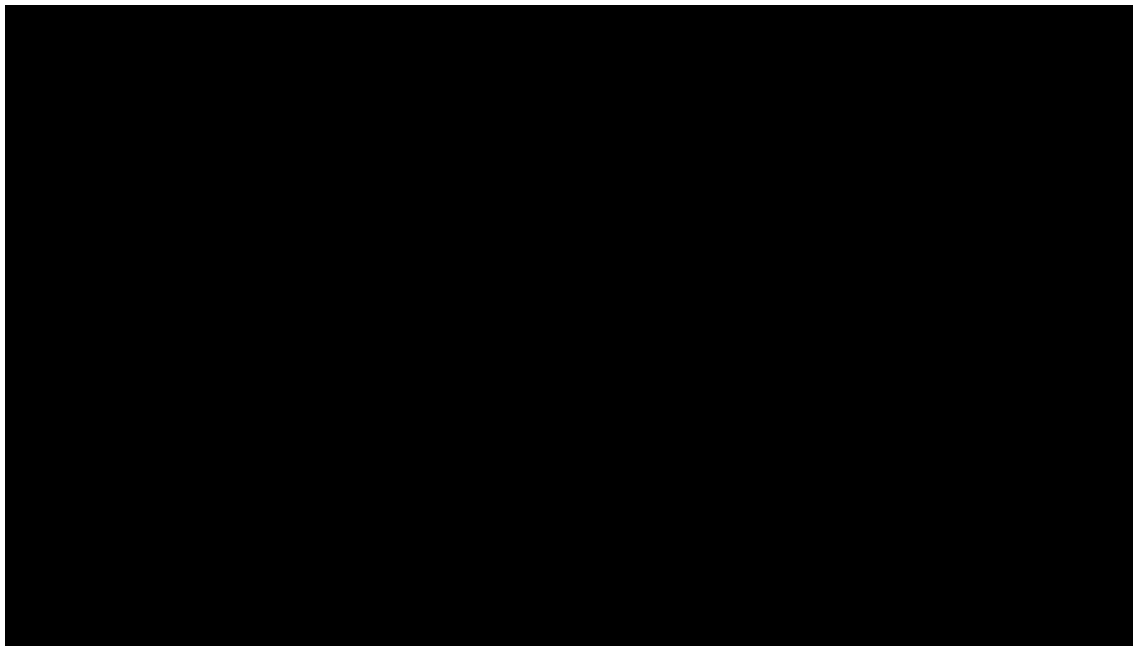


Fig. 17: The fashionable Mini featuring in *HWGRTMB*.

In *HWGRTMB*, Geeson is once again very stylishly dressed, this time without the limitations of the slightly drab setting of an inner-city school like in *To Sir, with Love*. The colours in her wardrobe flourish and she looks like she has stepped out of the pages of a fashion magazine. The first time we see Geeson as Mary, we see her in

long shot so we can take in her whole figure. Jamie has just skidded to a halt at the sight of her and some gentle romantically dreamy acoustic guitar music plays. Mary does a turn, almost in time to the music despite the fact its source is non-diegetic, as though she is a model showing off the garments she is wearing, showcasing her outfit. She is being set up as a person of significance and, more importantly, a romantic figure to be admired. She is wearing mustard yellow with white trim around the hem and stripes around the sleeves with matching pale-yellow shoes and a gold pendant necklace. She glows in the shot against the concrete and brick in the background and also in comparison with the clothing of the people in the back of the frame who are predominantly in browns and greys. The costume helps her stand apart as different, as apart from the people in the background, and helps us understand on a superficial level why Jamie has noticed her and finds her attractive. Geeson's hair has been bobbed, another fashionable look for 1967/68. Like in *To Sir, with Love*, Mary's costumes can be compared to the clothes modelled by 'swinging' icon Twiggy. Twiggy was at the peak of her fashion career at this point in the 60s, any associations with her style can be seen as the costumer making a fashion statement. We can see the similarities in the next three pictures: the shoes, the colour palette, the fit of the dresses are all similar. The picture of Twiggy and the picture from the fashion magazine (with models posing next to a red Routemaster bus), both of these pictures from the fashion world have aligned Mary's costume with fashionable images of the period.



Fig. 18: Judy modelling her costume as Mary in *HWGRTMB*.

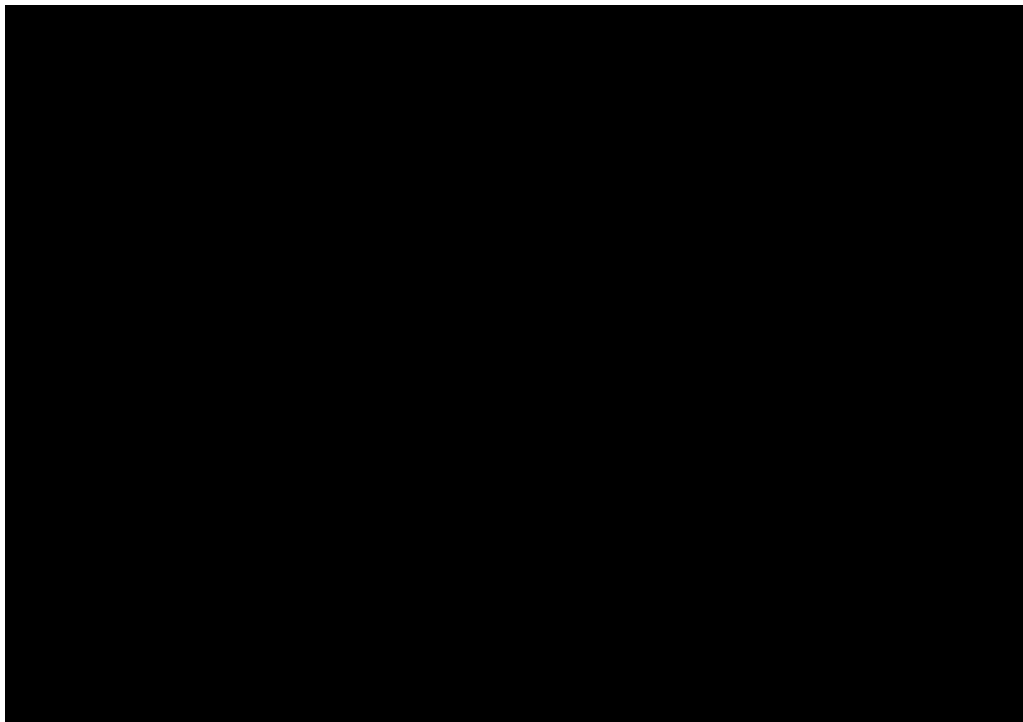


Fig. 19: Contemporary fashion models wearing outfits similar to Geeson's in  
*HWGRTMB*.

Mary also wears a baby pink woollen striped jersey skirt and top, which we also see Twiggy wear in the fashion magazines of the time wearing striped woollen

matching top and skirt, indicating the look was on trend. This is also the outfit Geeson wore on the cover of *Fabulous 208* featured earlier in the chapter. Mary's style is girlish but also body conscious, again she spends most of her scenes in a mini skirt, and if she is not in a mini skirt then she is wearing a fitted or low-cut top as in the next example.

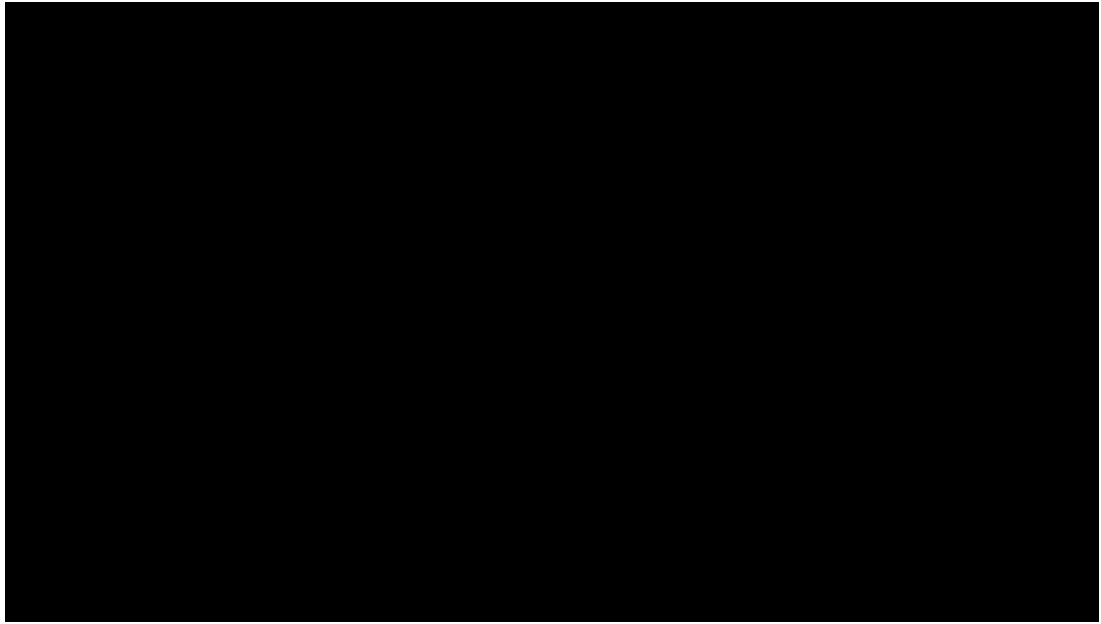


Fig 20: Geeson in pink and white in *HWGRTMB*, and the cover of *Fabulous 208*.



Fig. 21: Twiggy modelling a similar outfit to Geeson's.

In the scene where Mary and Jamie go to the river to go swimming, Mary wears a smart grey suit and white top. The top turns out to be a white tunic with a very low-cut neckline, another indication of Mary's body confidence. This scene also informs us that Mary does not wear a bra as she removes her clothes to go swimming, which suggests she will not be constrained by societies expectations of a young woman. Later in *HWGRTMB*'s year of release, the Miss America protests took place, which saw feminists protesting the competition's sexism and the suggestion that women are valued on looks alone. The protestors placed items in a 'freedom trash can' such as make up, magazines and most significantly for this argument, bras (Genz. 2009, 54), so Mary's lack of underwear could be seen as a feminist statement, and also locates the film at a specific moment in time.

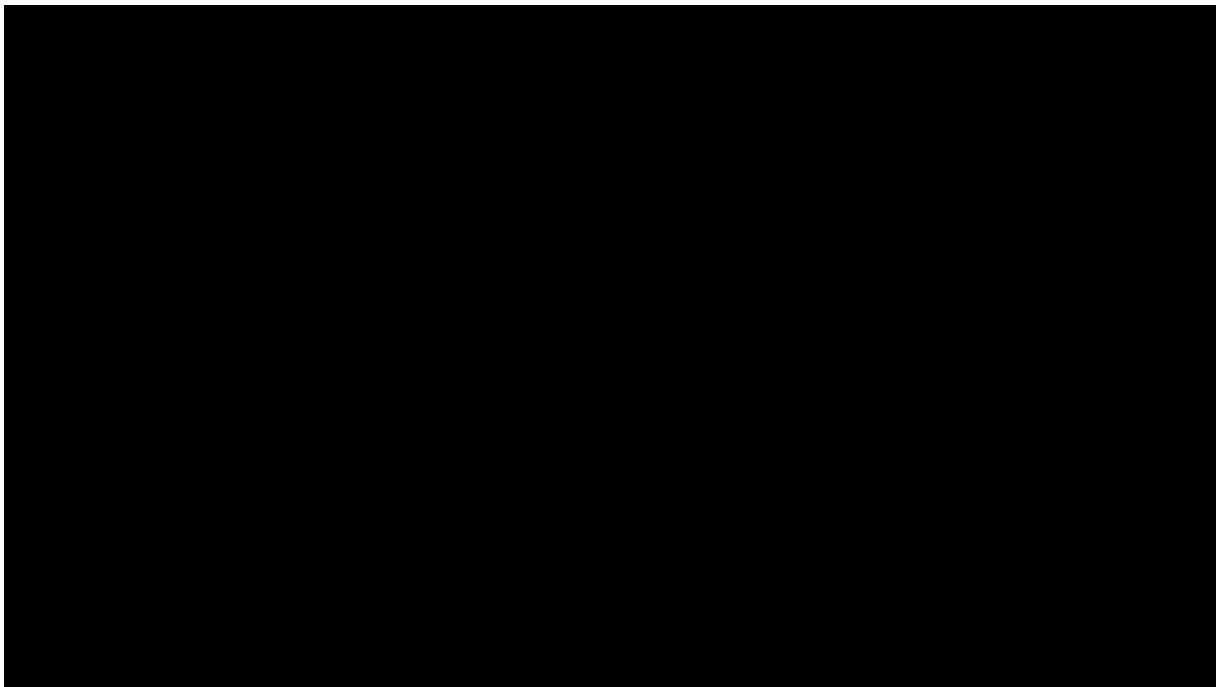
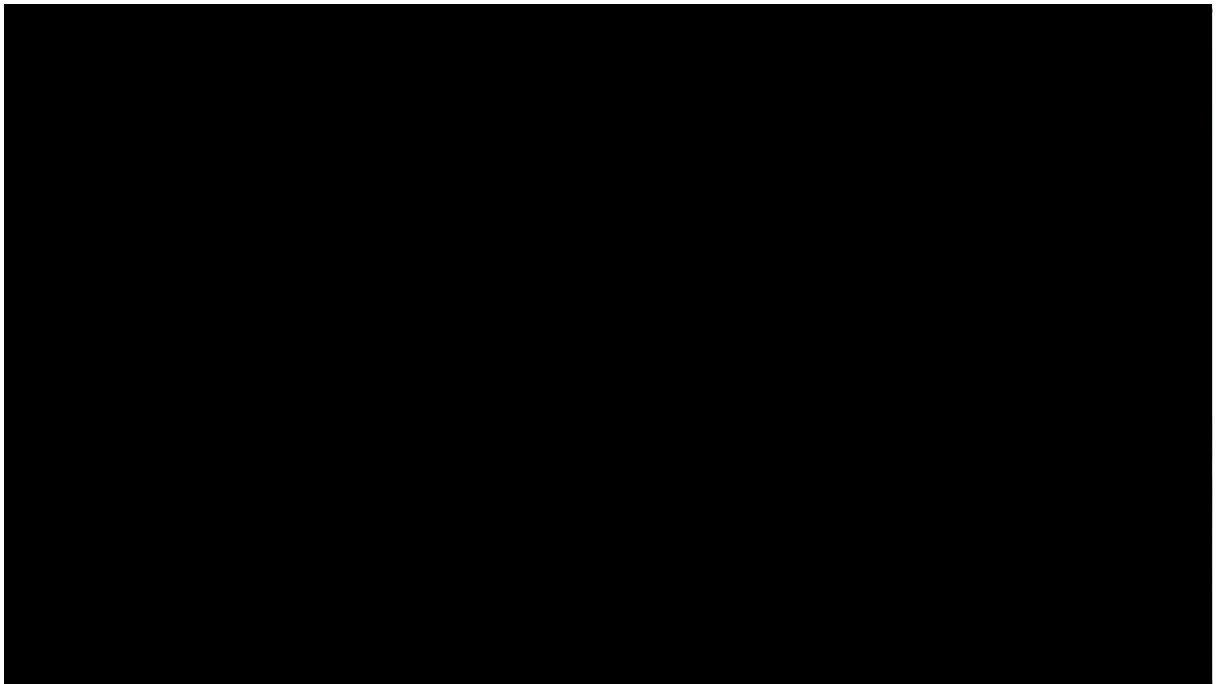


Fig. 22: Geeson's Mary preparing to swim in the lake in *HWGRTMB*.



When Jamie and Mary go sailing towards the end of the film, Mary still manages to be on trend, coupling her practical sailing clothes with her oversized sunglasses to give her look a touch of high fashion. In all of her looks in the film, Mary's look is the epitome of young 60s female with the colours, the styles and the cut of what she is wearing. Her clothes have been almost directly lifted from the fashion magazines of the time. There has been a conscious choice to create images of high fashion which is in keeping with the ethos of the 'swinging' era where youth and fashion were paramount concerns.



**Fig. 23: Geeson's Mary sailing in *HWGRTMB*.**

There are a number of psychedelic sequences in *HWGRTMB* which also ties it to a specific dominant image of the swinging era. We see Jamie take part in an imaginary photo shoot with one of his girlfriends which is sped up and comedic music is played over the top. We also see this again when Jamie visits another girlfriend's

family home and the family chase each other around the garden at comically high speed.

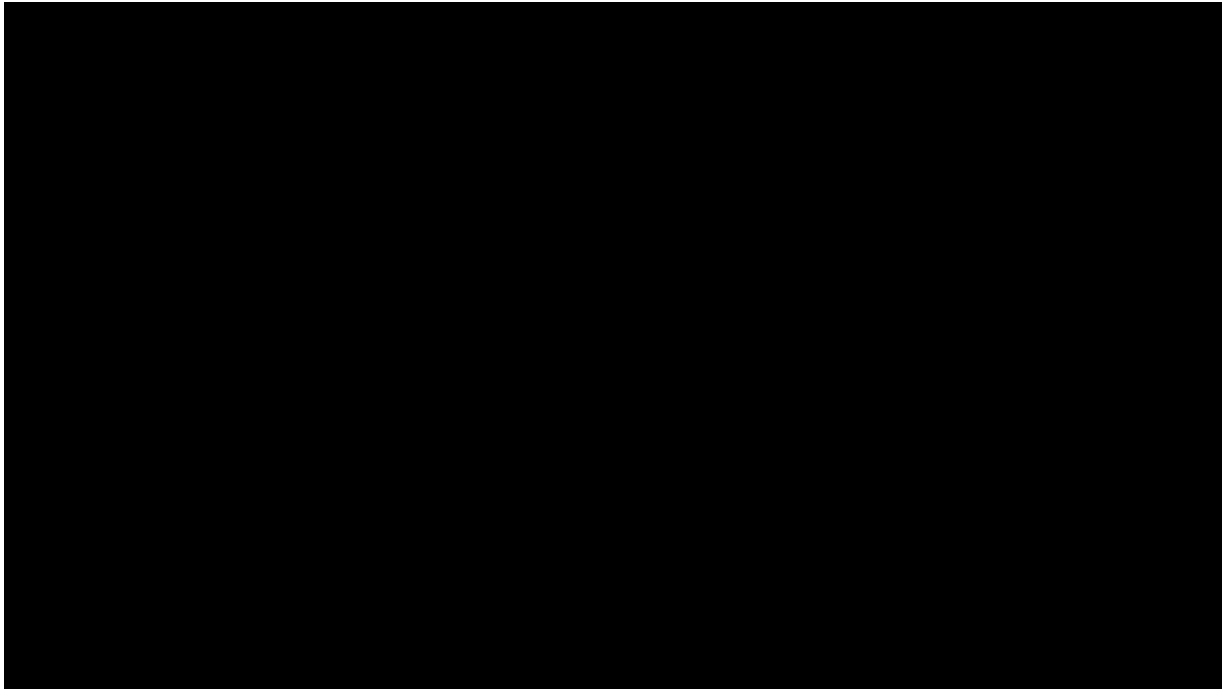


Fig. 24: Psychedelic still from *HWGRTMB*.

There are scenes of the inside of the trendy party after hours at the furniture store that Jamie attends, which has shots of masses of young people getting intimate with each other, enjoying the 'free love' attitude experienced by some young people at the time. Circling back to Robert Murphy's writing on the 'unpatronisingly [look] at young people and their attitude to sex' (Murphy, R. 1992, 146). Yet when Mary decides she does not want to be in a monogamous relationship to Jamie there is certainly judgement here, she is punished for her want for freedom by failing her English A-Level meaning she will not get into the university of her choice. In *To Sir, with Love* Pamela regresses to a certain extent, becomes more of a young girl and therefore 'good' at the end of the film, compared to how she had been for the rest of the running time. Ella certainly doesn't receive a happy ending at the end of *Three*

*into Two Won't Go* as she continues down the same rootless path that she had been following previously. As Dyer says, studies 'suggest that stars embody social values that are to some degree in crisis' (Dyer, R. 1979, 24). These 'swinging' films, and Geeson's characters, embody emerging values but there is tension with the residual values, and in these films the residue triumphs as the backlash against the new permissiveness was gaining ground in society during this period.

Ella the hitchhiker's lifestyle in *Three into Two Won't Go* is also indebted to the 'swinging' ethos (and the hippy lifestyle) by living a footloose existence, being 'carefree and reckless' (Murphy. 1992, 83), taking to the road without anywhere to go, but without the usual wackiness that went hand in hand with the style of the 'swinging' era. This role owed more to the emerging hippy movement of the late 60s, but her attitude and lifestyle is also indebted to the dedication to personal freedom that 'swinging' London created.

### **Authority**

For the final three years of the decade, Judy Geeson seemed to embody the dominant representation of the British teenage girl. Unlike most teenagers, her characters were lacking in one crucial aspect: parenting or any sort of authority. Geeson's teenage roles are notable for their almost complete absence of authority figures, and her characters' domination over the ones that do feature. Her films, typical of the 'swinging' era in British cinema, foregrounded youth. With the exception of *To Sir, with Love*, Geeson's roles are strong teenage girls who ignore the adults around them and solely tell the stories of teenagers. Geeson's characters were the personification of the new teenager standing alone without potentially residual input

from the older generation. When the older generation do appear with Geeson's character they are often represented as foolish, naïve or even immoral in comparison with her characters' new, modern, 'cool' way of thinking and living. Geraldine makes her mother's conservative views look ridiculous in *Prudence and the Pill*, Pamela's mother looks ineffective and weak in *To Sir, with Love*, and Angela makes her mother look naïve in *Berserk!*. Mary and Elle's parents don't appear on screen in *HWGRTMB* and *Three into Two Won't Go* respectively, they spring to life fully formed without any form of reference to their upbringing. The characters were all independent, strong and feisty, and all by themselves.

Geeson's characters nearly all lack effective parental input especially fatherly influence. Fathers are entirely absent from these films with the exception of Geraldine's in *Prudence and the Pill*, and when parents are present they are misguided in directing their headstrong daughters. In *HWGRTMB* and *Three into Two Won't Go* Geeson's characters are both teenagers whose behaviour is free from familial constraint and therefore can be dedicated to their own character's story. There are clashes with the older generation in these cases, but it is not in the role of parent and child. In *Three into Two Won't Go*, after being taken advantage of by the married Steven Howard (Rod Steiger), Ella blackmails her way into the Howard's lives making Steven look corrupt and Frances (Claire Bloom) too trusting. In *To Sir, With Love*, *Prudence and the Pill* and *Berserk!* Geeson's characters each have a despairing mother, all of whom prove ineffective in their dealing with their wayward offspring. In *Prudence and the Pill* Geraldine's mother's outrage at the behaviour of Geraldine emphasises the generation gap and makes her look ridiculous in the face of the calmness of Geraldine's demeanour. In *Berserk!* Angela manipulates her way into her

mother's life by getting herself expelled from school and appealing to her mother about her loneliness there. Her mother's kindness looks like naivety as it blinds her to the implications that Angela is deeply troubled and is ultimately the person behind the murders. Pamela's mother also looks ineffective as she appeals to Mr Thackeray for help, unable to control Pamela's wayward behaviour. Unlike the other characters, Pamela changes her ways, which is due to the intervention of an authority figure, but that figure is Mr Thackeray, not her mother. Older women in these films are often incompetent and occasionally ridiculous in comparison with the strength and reason of Geeson's younger characters. Not only is the beauty of youth prized in Geeson's roles, but her characters often find more positive representation than the older women; she never seems unintelligent. In comparison the characters often display more wisdom than their seniors. Both Geraldine and Mary make thoughtful and compelling arguments for their opinions, even if they ultimately end up on a different path than they expected. Ella proves to have an insight and understanding of the Howards' crumbling marriage, even though she exploits them for her own reasons. Pamela's discussion with Mr Thackeray on the state of the teenage experience in the mid-60s also displays an intelligence and perception. Even Angela is able to elude capture for the crimes she has committed and is only caught as she chooses to reveal herself after murdering her mother's lover in the circus ring. Considering the intelligence these teenage girls show in contrast with the blustering, gullible older women, Geeson is portraying young girls with beauty and brains and the older characters look out of step with the new world and emerging social changes.

This lack of parental or adult presence means that Geeson's characters could be viewed as more adult than teenage, adding to the muddling of her representation

of teen life and her star image. Whereas with a star like Hayley Mills both in her roles and her image we were constantly reminded that she was a daughter, implying a childlike state, Geeson was not constrained by this, plus the tension between treating her as an adult or a child is exacerbated by the fact she often played teenagers, whose immaturity was not being emphasised as she was often set away from adults for comparison and engaging in some adult behaviours. This same tension was also revealed in the treatment of Geeson in the media as they couldn't decide whether to treat her as the blonde schoolgirl or blonde pinup as will be discussed later in the chapter.

### Permissiveness

The characters Geeson played often captured the mood of the new permissiveness that was allegedly dominating British society. However, these characters were often represented negatively and personified the potential problems with the new freedoms teenagers were experiencing. Despite embodying the new 'swinging' teenage experience, the roles showed residual attitudes were still 'active in the cultural process' (Williams. 1977, 122). In *Prudence and the Pill* Geeson plays Geraldine, an 18-year-old who is caught in bed with her boyfriend by her parents. Her mother (Joyce Redman) is horrified, her father (Robert Coote) is outraged, yet Geraldine, after her initial shock at being intruded upon, dismisses the episode as unimportant. The next morning, we see Geraldine in her bedroom getting ready for the day, completely unbothered by the previous night's events. She sings under her breath as she happily skips and trips around her room seemingly without a care. Her room is bright scarlet in colour from the walls to the furniture to the ceiling and the

light fitting. She even owns a scarlet-coloured stuffed penguin, which she casually tosses onto her scarlet bed. Red is often used as a symbol for love and for passion, both of which are felt by Geraldine at this point of the film. Her bedposts have been decorated with huge flowers, suggesting life in her bedroom, and in particular her bed, is blooming. Geraldine stands out amongst the red as she is dressed in a mint green mini dress, green being a colour that is associated with youth. From the previous scene with the encounter with her parents where they found her in bed with her boyfriend, Geraldine has already been established as a young person enjoying her newfound freedom and with new ideas about what is appropriate behaviour. In the next scene she converses with her mother over breakfast in the dining room about the events of the previous evening. She tells her mother that being called a prostitute by her father didn't bother her and is very open about her relationship with Tony (David Dundas), to her mother's horror. For all the perceived permissiveness of her behaviour, during the conversation with her mother it transpires that this was not a casual encounter. She reveals both she and her partner Tony were virgins when they met, so therefore confirming they are not promiscuous. She reveals her ultimate objective is to marry Tony, which isn't an incredibly progressive aim and, as discussed in the previous chapter, is in keeping with the statistics proving there was a marriage boom in the 60s despite the moralistic panic surrounding the idea of young people enjoying 'free love'. Throughout the scene Geraldine is almost flippant about her situation and her mother hovers between horrified and furious, at one point telling Geraldine she is behaving like a 'slut' when Geraldine explains what has been happening. Each of them embodies the perceived attitudes of their generation and it is clear who we are supposed to support, with Geraldine's mother's melodramatic

indignation seeming ridiculous in the face of Geraldine's calm pragmatism. It is key to acknowledge the audience is led to approve of Geraldine as, even though she is breaking a taboo, it was within certain boundaries.

Geraldine's embodiment of permissiveness reveals the tensions between the old and new attitudes. She is frank and open about her sexuality; she finds her parents' preoccupation with the situation trivial and is clearly content and fulfilled in her relationship. She understands the benefits of the new contraceptives available to her, suggesting that she is not sleeping with Tony to conceive but for her own enjoyment, which was a revolutionary idea, but in her mother's old-fashioned opinion makes her a 'slut'. Geraldine is young, fashionable and sexually active but her aim is to settle down and marry, much like her mother, and when she gets pregnant at the end of the film, she is not unhappy and is keen to marry Tony the following week to ensure her child's legitimacy. She embodies a transitional time between the relaxing of laws and societal attitudes, where these new freedoms were emerging but had not fully established themselves in the wider society yet. Many of Geeson's roles would come to represent this moment, where young people were being offered a new way of life but were not taking up all that was being offered due to the residual social stigma that was still prevalent. Like Hayley Mills before her, Geeson was playing a teenager whose aim was to marry, much like Mills' role in 1966's *The Family Way*. There are differences between these two teenagers however, which do show changes in the representation of young women in 1960s Britain and their attitude to sex. Geeson's Geraldine has a relaxed attitude to premarital sex, yet two years earlier Mills was playing a character that had not even considered sex before marriage, both she and her husband were expected to wait. This was not unusual according to studies in



the mid to late 60s, and the *Sunday Times* reported: 'a quarter of men and nearly two thirds of women said they were virgins when they married... when *The Sun* asked the same question about pre-marital virginity of its working class readership in 1971, it found a similar response amongst men, but 90 percent of its female respondents stated they had been virgins on their wedding day' (Donnelly. 2005, 123). The brief difference in time may help explain this opposition of attitude; when *The Family Way* was made some laws hadn't been relaxed or repealed yet, but we also have to consider class as a factor here too. The character of Geraldine is from an upper-class family who live in a country mansion, whereas Mills' Jenny is from a working-class background and lives in terraced workers houses in industrial Lancashire. Robert Murphy reports that the uptake of the pill (which emerged into the community in the early 60s) was not widespread during the 60s and in fact found that only 19 percent of married couples were using it by 1970 and far fewer single girls and women even had access to it (Murphy. 1992,142). The majority of those with access were from the middle and upper classes, so it would have been unlikely the pill would have been available to working-class teenage girls and women like Jenny and would be especially difficult to acquire by an unmarried girl. Even Geraldine only has access to the tablets through a prescription from her married mother, and she would have been unlikely to be able to procure a prescription for herself. Abortion was not legalised until 1967 and life as an unmarried mother at the time would have been very difficult; it has been established during the 60s that more than 15,000 babies were put up for adoption against the will of their mothers as they were seen as immoral and unsuitable parents,

something that is undergoing a parliamentary enquiry in the present day.<sup>75</sup> So perhaps along with reasons of faith, remaining a virgin until marriage would have been seen as the easiest option to prevent unwanted pregnancy. Therefore, the new permissiveness that was said to have been taking society by storm was often only available to wealthier members of society, and even young people with access to money like Geraldine faced challenges.

The character of Mary in *HWGRTMB* also shares Geraldine's relaxed attitude to sexuality but to a further extreme. Mary does not wish to be monogamous, much to Jamie's dismay and despite his own previous actions. After spending the night together at the sailing club, Jamie and Mary take a boat out on the invitation of the man Mary plans to meet the following weekend. After Jamie cross examines her about her plans the following weekend she replies with 'I can do what I like, and you can do what you like'. He asks her if she plans to stay the night and she replies that she will see how she feels, subsequently upsetting Jamie by saying 'he's just a bloke and you're just a bloke' and adding 'I am not a nun, you know, I haven't taken any vows.' She dismisses Jamie's anger with 'you are just a romantic'. Again, as in *Prudence and the Pill*, Geeson's character's progressive views and behaviour are under attack from a person with more conservative ideals, this time from a teenage boy who until this point has been behaving in the same way as her. Jamie spends the film pursuing several young women in his attempts to bed one, casually throwing aside the

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<sup>75</sup>Human Rights, Joint Committee, 'Official apology sought in recognition of lasting suffering caused by adoption practices 1950s-1970s', *UK Parliament* (15<sup>th</sup> July 2022) <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/93/human-rights-joint-committee/news/172077/official-apology-sought-in-recognition-of-lasting-suffering-caused-by-adoption-practices-in-1950s1970s-involving-unmarried-mothers-jchr/> accessed 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

last one for the next. Yet when Mary does the same thing to Jamie, displaying the same desire to be free to behave as she wishes, she is judged as being callous by the person whose behaviour she is mirroring. So, even though we are led to approve of Geraldine's attitude when she is seen as behaving permissively because she is doing so within certain boundaries, the filmmakers are leading us to judge Mary for behaving permissively, despite the fact we are led to approve and laugh with Jamie's adventures which were similar to Mary's own. The suggestion being that Jamie can behave as he likes as 'boys will be boys', but girls must restrict their behaviour otherwise they will be labelled as 'sluts'. In differing ways both suffer consequences which could be seen as a castigation for their behaviour. This punishment for permissive behaviour and muddled messages about teen femininity is a theme that continues through Geeson's films.

### 'She broke all the rules'

An example of the tension and of the muddled representation of the teenager Geeson embodied was in her first film role in British horror film *Berserk!* (1967). She plays Angela, the daughter of Joan Crawford's Monica Rivers, who runs a circus travelling around Britain with a number of acts, both human and animal. During their tour the employees of the circus are systematically getting murdered, during performances and offstage. Even though Geeson doesn't appear for the first hour of the film, she plays a key role in the final 35 minutes and tied for fourth billing with the more established names of Michael Gough and Robert Hardy and behind Joan Crawford, Ty Hardin and Diana Dors. Considering how early this was in her career it displays a confidence in her abilities to bill her equally alongside these well-known

performers. As horror films are typically aimed at a youthful audience, having a young star was also a good publicity draw. Angela first appears when she is delivered to her mother by a teacher from her school who characterises her as a pupil who 'broke all the rules, refused to study and has no obedience whatsoever,' she smokes cigarettes, imitates teachers and goes missing from her bed. Angela begs her mother to let her stay with the circus, emphasising her isolation at the school by saying 'coming from the circus, I am different to other girls', 'nobody wanted to be my friend,' and 'I was lonely and miserable'. We find out in the last five minutes that this abandonment by her mother and isolation from her peers has driven her to murder as she is revealed as the person who has been sabotaging the performances and killing the circus workers. She describes herself as 'a piece of baggage with the wrong address on it,' which leads her to murder; 'Kill! Kill! Kill! It's all I feel inside me!' she screams as she runs out of the big top and is struck by lightning and dies in the rain outside the tent in the final frames. Murderous urges aside, Geeson's representation of the teenager is a residual version of the juvenile delinquents in the social problem films, until the dramatic ending which breaks away from the expected norm as the horror genre often does. She is a young girl who feels different from her peers and is looking for acceptance from a remote parent who doesn't understand her. She acts out in this bid for attention, initially in what we believe are predictable ways with her smoking and running away, but this is before we establish her running away from school was to commit murder at the circus in order to stop her mother travelling and to keep her in one place. Yet her behaviour and the way her appearance is portrayed are contradictory. When she first appears she is wearing a smart checked jacket with gloves and handbag, her hair neatly combed and held back by a hairband. She looks

smart, conservative, and modestly dressed, and though her costumes are fashionable for the time none of her wardrobe is particularly eye-catching. This look is repeated throughout the film in various forms until the end scene where her appearance completely transforms. She is dressed in a black and gold sequinned corset and fishnet tights, coupled with a black choker with gold beads, a black hairband and black ballet style pumps. Once the act is over, her once neat hair is dishevelled, and we see her character has changed. It makes her look a little unhinged (once we know she is the killer we understand this better) but it also seems to show her for the first time as a grown woman. Previously she was referred to, characterised and dressed as a teenage schoolgirl, with her modest jumpers and neat hair, yet this costume is clearly designed to display Geeson's figure, and the look directly echoes her mother's costume. She breaks down as she is cornered after killing the tightrope walker and this shows her immaturity as it is much like a child's tantrum. It shows her as a neglected child, yet this happens whilst she is dressed in what could be likened to a burlesque costume. The image of the woman contradicts the behaviour she displays, which is that of a child or angry teen (albeit with psychopathic tendencies). The photos that accompany the film for promotional purposes also show Geeson posing in the sequinned costume on a chaise longue framed by velvet curtains and under a chandelier. They are clearly set up as glamour photos that female actresses often had to pose for in the studio era, and the framing is clearly for a woman rather than a teenage girl, though Geeson's natural pose and smile are not as suggestive as the setting the picture was taken in.

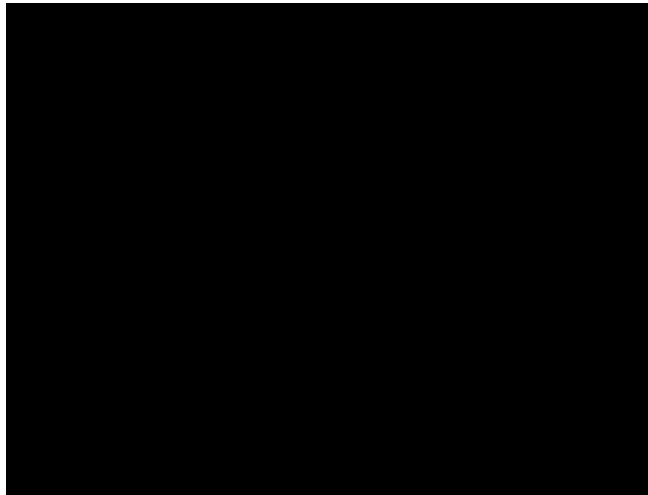


Fig. 25: Angela pre-transformation.

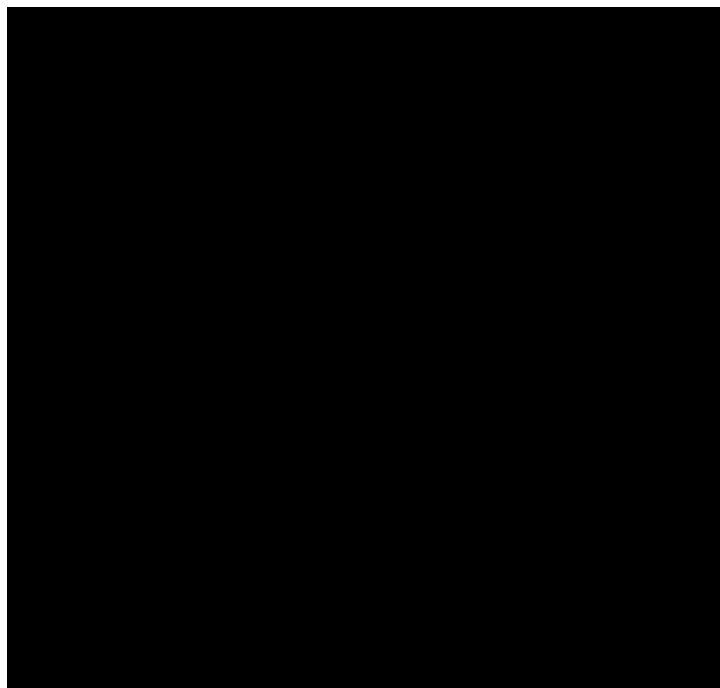
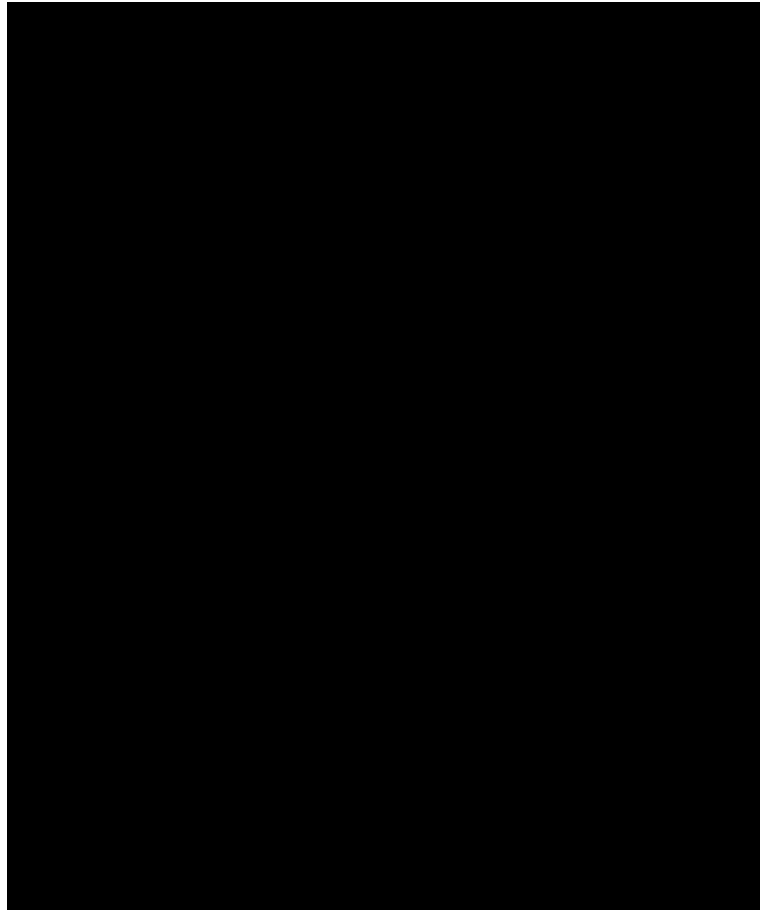


Fig. 26: Angela post-transformation.



**Fig 27: Promotional still of Judy as a transformed Angela in *Berserk!*.**

The confusion of whether we are to view Angela and Geeson as a child or an adult is never resolved. Once again there was a struggle to clearly delineate the character of the teenage girl and Geeson characters and image embody this disconnect between the residual and emerging representations.

### Object of Affection

Christine Geraghty argues in 'The Development of the 'Darling' Girl' that Geeson had a 'lack of star image' (Geraghty. 2009, 318) and essentially 'apes [Julie] Christie' (Geraghty. 2009, 318) meaning her star 'cannot be authentic' (Geraghty. 2009, 318). Julie Christie was undoubtedly an influential star, and this stardom was at its zenith during the mid to late 60s. She won an Oscar in 1966 for *Darling* (1965) and

she starred in some of the biggest and most influential films of the decade including *Billy Liar* (1963), *Dr Zhivago* (1965) and *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1967). Both Geeson and Christie looked alike and were blonde, middle-class, fashionable 60s 'It' girls. Geeson did endure comparisons to Christie simply as another English actress of the time but their star images (and Geeson did have a complex and individual star image herself as will be discussed) and work were entirely different from one another. Very quickly Christie graduated from small budget British films to prestige productions which attracted the attention of critics and awards bodies. Geeson tended towards more populist works that weren't always held in such high critical regard. Christie enjoyed enduring success in the British and American film industries whereas Geeson's was more localised to Britain and this stardom did not endure in the same fashion. Geraghty suggests Christie is a person who has some scepticism about fame as her 'real friends' (Geraghty. 2009, 317) were not in the business and she eschewed the trappings of this fame as she 'dossed down in the flats of...friends' (Geraghty. 2009, 317). Geeson seemed to embrace her celebrity, frequently appearing in the tabloids and discussing her 60s status symbols such as her Mini Cooper and central London home.<sup>76</sup> And, crucially, Geeson is 8 years younger than Christie and was a teen star of the 60s. She was still playing the youthful role of a university student as late as 1970 in *Goodbye Gemini*, by which point Christie was 30 years old. In contrast, Christie was playing adult roles from the beginning of her career in 1961. Their physical styling may be similar, but even this was in no way unique to these two

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<sup>76</sup> Sunday Express 21<sup>st</sup> June 1969 Roderick Mann

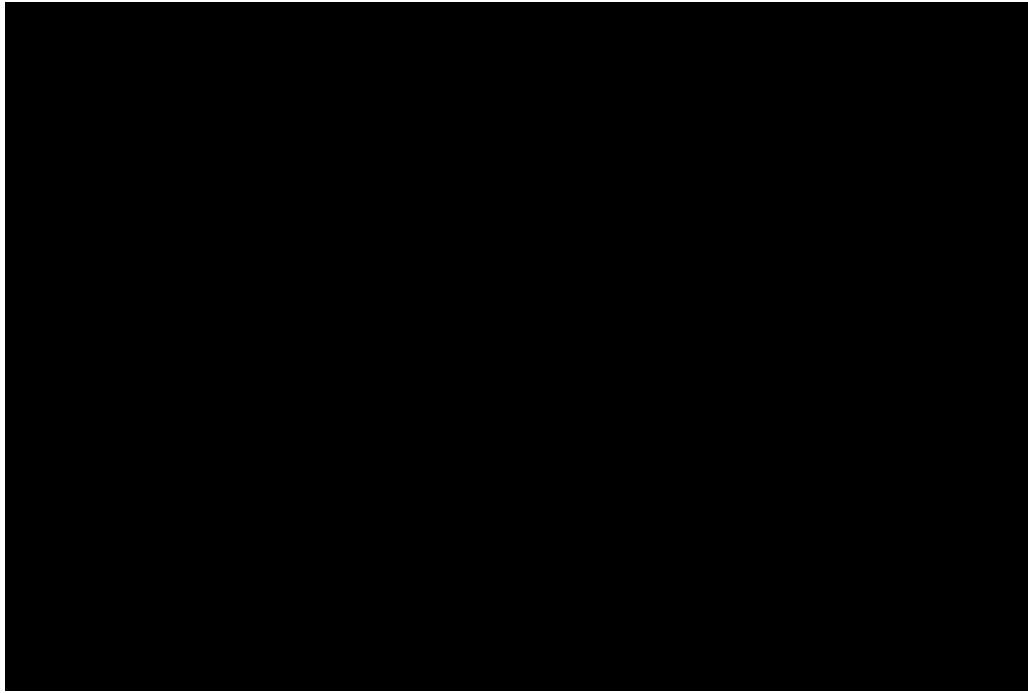


actresses as previously discussed. Geeson was a different kind of star to Christie, authentically her own.

Although Geeson often played feisty, intelligent, modern girls, romance was still a key dominant element of her first teen roles, as it had been in the careers of many other teen stars of her era and before, with residual representation 'still active in the cultural process' (Williams. 1977, 122) despite her seemingly modern stardom, which was more in line with 'emergent' (Williams. 1977, 124) social and cultural attitudes. Geeson was described by the studios in their pressbook for *HWGRTMB* as a 'dream girl', a romantic moniker describing her role as the perfect girl, whose romantic life is the focus of her character's story. She is the object of desire and obsession for Jamie (Barry Evans) in *HWGRTMB* and is the subject of desire *To Sir, with Love's* as Pamela experiences a powerful schoolgirl crush on Sidney Poitier's Mr Thackeray. The role of love, romance and sex, as seen in her films, spilled over into the marketing of her image and the press coverage she received in teen magazines and newspapers, as did the objectification of her personally. For example, the following two covers from 60s teen magazine *Fabulous 208* show her with her onscreen and rumoured offscreen boyfriend Barry Evans.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Anon, 'Judy Geeson: Faces for the Future', *Evening News* (5<sup>th</sup> Jan 1968), pp. unknown.



Figs. 28 and 29: Fabulous 208 covers from May 1967 and March 1968  
respectively.<sup>7879</sup>

Both covers show her in a romantic situation; in the first as she is being pulled close to Evans and half smiles as she looks into his eyes, her hair is in girlish pigtails, and her hat, although fashionable, recalls a bonnet from a period romance, and her top is a delicate pastel floral print. In the photo they are in an intimate close-up framed by autumnal leaves, suggesting they had just taken a romantic stroll in the countryside together. The magazine's subject line announces they are 'Swinging Loves', the word 'Swinging' giving the almost timeless quality of the picture a 60s context. In the second there is a more comical, and slightly disconcerting, take on their relationship. Geeson, her blonde hair now bobbed, is again fashionably dressed in a costume directly from *HWGRTMB* in a playful pale pink and white striped mini

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<sup>78</sup> Anon, 'Swinging Loves', *Fabulous 208* (20<sup>th</sup> May 1967), pp. cover.

<sup>79</sup> Anon, 'Widescreen', *Fabulous 208* (March 1968), pp. cover.

dress and pale pink Mary Jane heels. She lies on the floor with her right leg bent upwards and head supported by an upturned arm, gazing up with a smile to Evans who is very much the focus of the picture. He stands over her dressed entirely in white with one foot resting on her rear, his arms crossed, and his head tilted slightly, a smile suggesting a triumph over Geeson. In the photo he stares straight at the camera whereas Geeson looks at him, she is entirely submissive, and his stance suggests a triumph over her. Both pictures show Geeson as a prize to be owned and something to be admired, the first as Evans is protectively pulling her close and the second more explicitly as he has figuratively and literally pinned her down and strikes a pose that suggests victory. Geeson's depiction as an ideal girl to be attained, both in image for teenage girls and romantically for teenage boys, which had spilled over from the screen into her representation in the marketing of her image. This idol status is emphasised by the March 1968 issue, which also announces on the cover that the pull-out picture of the month is of Geeson.

The partnering of Geeson with another emerging young star in Evans had also been an established marketing technique in the publicity teen stars received in the USA, such as Natalie Wood whose 'sexual maturity had been the subject of several teen magazine stories' (Higashi. 2014, 107) and who publicly went on dates with her fellow young actors such as Tab Hunter and Robert Wagner. Even 'good girl' Hayley Mills was linked with *The Virginian* actor Gary Clarke in movie magazine *TV Radio Mirror* in May 1963, despite the substantial age gap considering she was 17 and he was 29 at the time. However it was made clear that Mills was uninterested in Clarke,

reconciling her behaviour with her star image.<sup>80</sup> In a number of contemporary newspaper articles, Geeson discusses her love life and Evans features in these as her boyfriend from the end of 1967 to the start of 1968 when her career was beginning to take off.<sup>81</sup> Then she became something much more attainable and marketable: a single girl who is looking for love. It has been a proven marketing technique to conceal partners of teen idols, for example John Lennon was told not to reveal he had a wife on press tours when the Beatles were first starting out (Harrison George et al. 2000, 128), and in interviews Judy could be very vocal about her single status.<sup>82</sup>

This pre-occupation with the romantic featured in Geeson's film roles and built on her image as a romantic ideal girl post *To Sir, with Love* in 1967. As Pamela Dare, we see her progress from antagonistic, rebellious schoolgirl to 'mature' young woman ready to go out and make her way in society. A significant event for her character is when she develops a crush on her teacher, Sidney Poitier's Mr Thackery. The intimacy she tries to establish with him is evident in two scenes when she asks him 'call me Pamela', as he abides by formality and calls her Miss Dare. In the first scene she asks if he is trying to discuss her problems at home with her, teacher to student, as she flirtatiously perches on the edge of a desk. Ultimately, she leaves disappointed as she says he is 'just like all the rest' and races out of the room, upset that Mr Thackery does not understand her perspective. In the second scene we see Pamela catch up to Mr Thackery on the way into the final school dance of the year. Half smiling at the change in her demeanour, Mr Thackery tells Pamela she looks lovely, and her pleasure from

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<sup>80</sup> Emmons, Beatrice, 'Connie and Jim', *TV Radio Mirror* (May 1963) pp. 37.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> Mann, Roderick, 'I really need a man to love', *Sunday Express* (21<sup>st</sup> June 1969) pp.9.

this comment is evident as she blushes and says thank you. She asks him to dance, and he accepts. She then asks him again to call her Pamela and this time he agrees, her face in close-up we see her happiness as she thanks him. There is then a long six second pause as Pamela and Mr Thackery say nothing whilst maintaining eye contact with each other, she gazes at him as he looks at her affectionately. This pause is suggestive, it is unclear if there will be some developments in the relationship between Pamela and Mr Thackery as Pamela's behaviour and delivery exudes romance, her voice is gentle as she makes her request, and her face is luminescent with affection. Mr Thackery, to some extent, mirrors her behaviour by acquiescing to her requests and gazing back at her. She then runs away and leaves Mr Thackery pensively considering their interaction before he moves on himself with nothing inappropriate transpiring. The formal language used between them emphasises the propriety with which they both conduct themselves, now Pamela has matured in attitude from the fiery schoolgirl from earlier in the film. As Dyer discusses, the characters played by the star reinforce their 'proper' social roles without disrupting societal norms and hence the 'status quo' has been preserved (Dyer. 1979, 24), and in this scene we see social norms being adhered to. The overtly romantic and almost old-fashioned tone of the scene fits with Geeson's image and ties in with the marketing of her star that we saw in the teen magazine covers and newspaper interviews.

Despite Geeson being set up as a romantic ideal, the characters she played were in no way unattainable; in fact, the characters she played embraced love and sex unashamedly which was a typical attitude associated with the dominant 'swinging' lifestyle as discussed. Her characters were more than willing participants in romantic

situations, as evidenced by Geraldine in *Prudence and the Pill*, and Mary from *HWGRTMB*. As Pamela tells Mr Thackery when he questions her about 'being in trouble', she replies 'trouble' is only for idiots in this age and that her generation 'are the first to enjoy life if we want,' with life clearly meaning sex, a freedom previous generations had not been able to enjoy without potentially negative consequences. As Mary in *HWGRTMB* she enjoys her freedom to the extent that she breaks her relationship off with Jamie as she doesn't want to get tied down. As the morally ambiguous teenage hitchhiker Elle in *Three into Two Won't Go*, when questioned about what gives her pleasure she lists 'travel, conversation, food, and sex'. As previously mentioned, as much as these characters may be represented as liberated in a way teen characters before the 60s may not have been, their path is never straight-forward and they suffer consequences of their actions in different ways; Geeson's characters were often punished subtly or otherwise for their permissive behaviour.

Interviews with Geeson at the time also display a tension between residual traditions and dominant and emergent attitudes regarding romantic relationships and marriage. She says in one article 'I'm the kind of woman who really needs a man to love and wants to be married and have children,'<sup>83</sup> and she 'doesn't agree with promiscuity or the so-called permissive society,'<sup>84</sup> creating an image of an old-fashioned girl whose life is 'lived and practised on the basis of residue' (Williams. 1977, 122) of the previous epoch's societal norms. This statement contradicts some of the

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Freeland, Michael, 'Judy Geeson faces the camera again after her mystery illness', *Photoplay Film Monthly* 20:7 (July 1969), pp.28.

characters she had played to this point. The idea of Geeson as a girl, and then a woman, looking for love followed her through her adult career and into the 1980's as she discusses her desire for children and marriage limiting her potentially 'progressive' image and establishing her as an old-fashioned girl at heart.<sup>85</sup>

There are indications of the emerging relaxation of attitudes in her interviews. She supports the idea of couples living together before they get married saying 'if people are sensible and think marriage would be a nice idea, it makes sense to live together for a year to find out if they get on,' which is a progressive attitude for the time and something that would not have been acceptable earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>86</sup> The contradictions in her press and publicity present her image as an old-fashioned girl who wants to be married, but also one who enjoys the benefits of the time she lived in by being able to live with a partner before marrying. Dyer says 'stars embody social values that are to some degree in crisis' (Dyer. 1979, 25) and Geeson can be understood as representing this transitional period; her attitude and the contradictions in her star image show the contradictions of being a young woman of her time, trying to unite residual, traditional values with emerging freedoms, demonstrating, as Dyer states, that 'the star effects a 'magic' reconciliation of the apparently incompatible terms' (Dyer. 1979, 26).

### 'Judy Geestring'

'Guiltless, natural, non-prurient,' (Dyer. 2004, 29) is the way Dyer describes Marilyn Monroe's attitude to the nude photographs taken of her before she found

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<sup>85</sup> Mann, Roderick, 'I really need a man to love', *Sunday Express* (21<sup>st</sup> June 1969) pp.9.

<sup>86</sup> Freeland, Michael, 'Judy Geeson faces the camera again after her mystery illness', *Photoplay Film Monthly* 20:7 (July 1969), pp.28.

fame. This attitude was embraced by the younger generation of the 60s and this freedom of expression was reflected in many works of the 60s once censorship laws were relaxed in 1968 (Richards. 1999, 203). It was also something Geeson initially embraced. She was one of the first actresses who had a more relaxed attitude to nudity in film, something that hadn't been typically seen before the 1960s, and she disrobes in both *HWGRTMB* and *Three into Two Won't Go*. When asked in the *Sunday Express* in June 1969, she expresses her opinion of the difference between the generations and their attitudes, saying 'There are two different attitudes where nudity is concerned. To the older generation nudity is always connected with sex... But not to youth. To them nudity is beautiful, it's an expression of freedom'.<sup>87</sup> This willingness to disrobe earned her a notoriety in the traditional press and was seen as notorious enough for her to gain the tabloid nickname 'Judy Geestring'.<sup>88</sup> Her decision to stop participating in nude scenes was also viewed as significant enough to be reported in the *Daily Mirror* on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1969 in an article entitled 'Judy says goodbye to all that' in which she is condescendingly described as 'lightly-clothed'.<sup>89</sup> She states she is now making the decision to stop participating in nude scenes as she is a 'serious actress', implying the decision to disrobe is unprofessional in some way. Melanie Williams discusses the more mature Glenda Jackson's relaxed attitude towards nudity in *Women of British Cinema* (2018) during the 1970s, suggesting change was just around the corner as Jackson enjoyed a critically acclaimed career as a 'serious' actress despite being dubbed 'Britain's first lady of flesh' (Williams. 2017, 117) due to

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<sup>87</sup> Mann, Roderick, 'I really need a man to love', *Sunday Express* (21<sup>st</sup> June 1969), pp.9.

<sup>88</sup> Norman, Barry, 'Miss Geeson, often known as Judy Geestring, filming at last with her clothes on', *Daily Mail* (30<sup>th</sup> April 1970), pp. unknown.

<sup>89</sup> Kerrigan, Mike, 'Judy says goodbye to all that', *Daily Mirror* (25<sup>th</sup> November 1969), pp. 21.



her willingness to undress for a role (Williams. 2017, 115). Geeson's career was just on the cusp of this change in attitude however, and although previously she would undress when called for, she felt sufficiently persuaded to change her own attitude. Geeson chose not to undress on screen after 1969; residual conservative moral attitudes prevailed, signifying that while changes were starting to take place they did not yet have acceptance on a wider scale.

The newspaper advert for *Three into Two Won't Go* uses a picture of Geeson's bare back and Geeson's nudity in the role is a significant enough selling point to be mentioned in the description of the film as she is said to be 'beautifully naked'. The troubling advert misogynistically describes Geeson's character as a 'slut' whilst hypocritically using her body to market the film. Coupled with the fact that they have decided to put Geeson's hair in childish pigtails whilst being photographed naked from the back, clearly showing a womanly figure; the advert is providing the reader with shockingly muddled information about the film and Geeson's stardom. The sexuality that Geeson's previous roles had embraced has here been used to a disturbing effect, combining confident sexuality with the juvenile imagery of pigtails on a fully developed naked young woman. The pressbook for the film advising on how the film should be publicised perpetuated this confused construction of Geeson's image, describing Geeson's character in the film a 'sexpot' full of 'teenage sensuality' and also the even more unsavoury 'pretty, young [and] childlike'. When watching the film Geeson is certainly pretty and young, but certainly not childlike. She plays a vulnerable and immature young woman. When questioned by Steiger's Steve Howard about her age (which he didn't think to ask before they slept together), she says 'old enough' which sounds like a young person playing at being worldly. Watching the film

50 years later, we see that Geeson's Elle doesn't actually entice Steven to do anything he didn't want and engineer to happen, going to bed with Elle was clearly his first consideration from the moment he saw her. The first encounter between the characters sees Elle hitchhiking at the side of the road and we are seeing her through the male gaze as we watch through middle-aged Steven's eyes (Steiger was 44 at the time of filming, Geeson was 21 and playing 19). We start off as passengers in the back seat of Steven's car, listening to chirpy diegetic horn-led music, whistling along as he drives along a very typical British road in the countryside in what looks like the afternoon. His whistling trails off as he sees the back of Elle walking alongside the grassy verge dressed in nearly white trousers and white t-shirt, with a backpack and jacket slung over her shoulder. The clothes are practical yet form fitting, not overtly alluring and suited to someone who is travelling on the road. She makes a half-hearted thumbs up gesture to obtain a ride without looking at the car and he pulls over a little way ahead of her. We are then invited to see what he sees, which is Elle casually waiting to see what Steven will do. We then see Steven through the windscreen sliding his sunglasses down his nose in a suggestive manner as he looks in his rear-view mirror at the figure of Elle, a half-smile playing about his mouth. He pursues her, encouraging her to get in the car. All the promotional material suggests that Geeson is a seductress who becomes a cuckoo in the Howards' nest, yet beyond thumbing a lift from drivers at random and getting in Steven's car, not one of these actions so far have been her choice. Steven sees her, he sees she is attractive, and he decides to stop based on this information. When she makes no move towards his car he chooses to reverse, and he verbally offers her a lift and then he even opens her door for her to get in. Once we are in the car with the characters, we view Elle and her body from

Steven's perspective, objectifying her. Subjecting the film to close analysis shows that the whole sequence does not feel like Elle has much power in this situation at all, this has been entirely engineered by Steven and his choice to prey on a young girl on the side of the road with no means of transport. The description of her as a 'slut' and a 'sexpot' when really she was not in control of the situation is inaccurate as the situation was created by Steven, not Elle.

For a film whose subject matter is regarding a marriage deteriorating in the face of infidelity, the studio created this image of Geeson without a clear idea in mind of whom their target audience were. Geeson's image dominates the advertising despite the star of the film, Rod Steiger, experiencing a career peak after winning an Oscar for *In the Heat of the Night* (1967) the year before. In the sections entitled 'Here's how to put GO into your promotions!' the recommendations vary wildly from suggesting that Geeson's picture is placed in 'teenage boutiques, trendy fashion outlets, cosmetics counters, beauty parlours, hairdressers etc' to using pictures of her in 'teenage columns and as glamour art in sports specials and weekend supplements'. They suggest that 'the casual sports clothes she wears in the film will appeal to teenage girls' and, rather amusingly, 'those planning a hitch-hiking holiday'. Considering the mature themes, the content of the film and its X certificate (downgraded to a 12 for modern audiences), the story is ostensibly about the troubles of a middle-aged couple, so the attempts at cross-generational appeal to attract a teenage audience based on Geeson's appearance in the film seems a curious choice. As well as the suggested appeal to people looking to go on a hitch-hiking holiday, the pressbook briefly discusses the lure of having a married couple in the leads (Bloom and Steiger were married at the time of filming) and also makes the interesting

suggestion of contacting 'the heads of the Women's Institutes and the Young Wives Club to notify them of the film and its important theme' to facilitate discussions about the film with their groups and the local press. Most of the marketing suggestions, however, are based around using Geeson to bring in a younger female crowd. Apart from a recommendation that images of Geeson be used in stereotypically male areas such as sports columns, the main spaces that her image was being suggested to be used were at the time traditionally female ones such as hair dressers and beauty salons and the female-led clubs such as the WI and the Young Wives Club. The film is based on a book by Andrea Newman and the screenplay was adapted by Edna O'Brien, facts which could have been used as a key selling point to a young female audience of the time considering this was the era of second wave feminism, yet the use of a naked Geeson on the poster and the misogynistic language they use about the female characters, 'barren' and 'slut', wouldn't necessarily attract a female demographic. Despite the attempts to engage teenage girls and young women, the marketing material itself and the way the film uses her image do not coalesce. There is an attempt by the distributor to appeal to every audience and it uses Geeson as the uniting figure. The result provides us with a peculiar image of Geeson, she is marketed to be the seductive villainess, but also the lost waif with her pigtailed. She is a sexual figure, but they also describe her as 'child-like'. Where Hayley Mills jarringly transformed into an adult without the transitional teenage stage in her stardom, Geeson was allowed to be a teenager, but this confused idea of the teenage girl presented here shows filmmakers and studios were unsure of how to manage teenage roles and stardom beyond their treatment as a social problem from the previous decade.

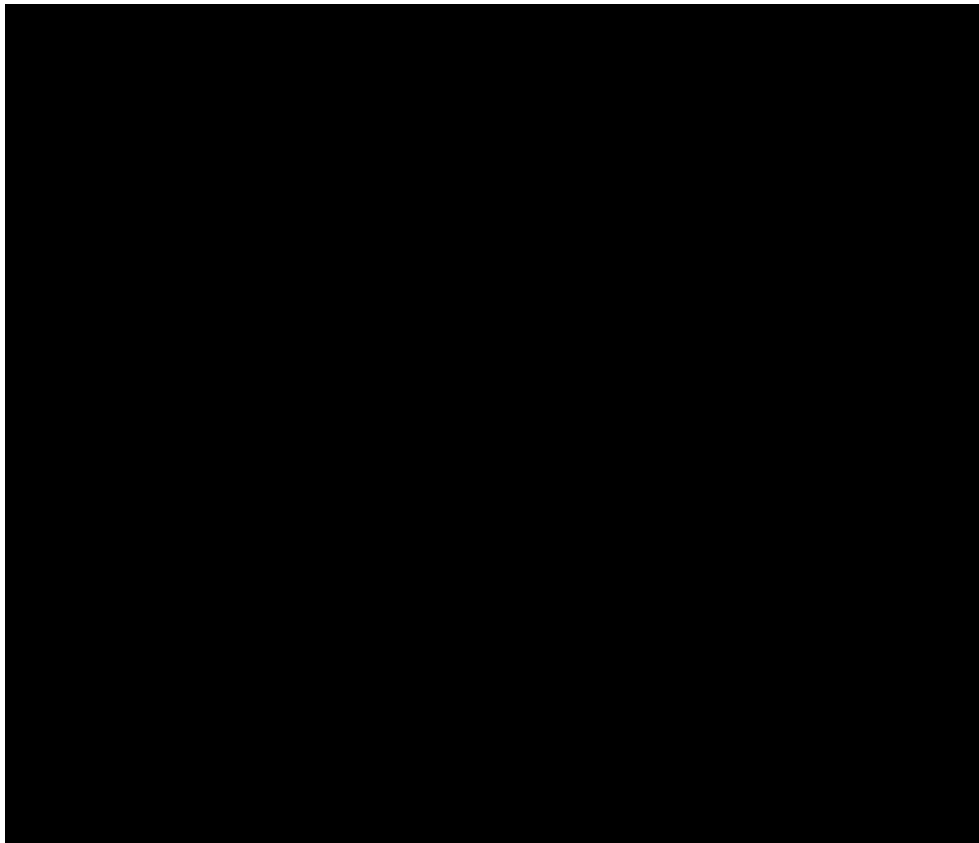


Fig. 30: Newspaper advert for *Three into Two Won't Go* 12<sup>th</sup> September 1969.<sup>90</sup>

### 'Blonde and Vivacious'

Ginette Vincendeau argues in her article 'And Bardot... became a blonde' that '[o]n the one hand blondness connotes virtue and the angelic... yet conversely it also signifies the sexual allure of the temptress- both sides of the coin being well represented by film stars' during the 1950s (2016, 99). When discussing the importance of the bloneness of Bardot, Vincendeau claimed it was easy to categorise her image and persona as a temptress within these groups, as well categorising other prominent blonde film stars of the 50s. For example, she categorises Marilyn Monroe as a temptress and 'the subject of illicit male desire', and Grace Kelly as angelic

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<sup>90</sup> Anon, '3 into 2 won't go' advert, *Kensington Post* (12<sup>th</sup> September 1969), pp. 37.

(Vincendeau. 2016, 99). It would also be easy to classify Hayley Mills from the previous chapter into these two categories, with her perky innocence she was undoubtedly in the heavenly group, which again ties her stardom to residual ideas of teenage girls before the teenage revolution and these ideas still being 'active in the cultural process' (Williams. 1977, 122). The blondeness of Geeson was clearly an important focal point for the marketing of her image, as it is frequently referred to in interviews and promotional material for her films. Yet considering these suggested binaries, classifying her blonde 'type' is difficult and shows the increasing complexity of images of girls and women over the 1960s. She is not portrayed as totally virtuous or seductive in any of her acting roles, the characters she played tended to have a combination of good and bad characteristics.

Geeson's hair colour is a key element of her star image. It is mentioned in nearly every article and piece of promotional material I have encountered, much like the star image of Marilyn Monroe, whose early career was defined by her role as 'the beautiful blonde' (Dyer. 2004, 20). The press book for *Three into Two Won't Go*, as we have seen, made a big effort to place Geeson in the role of 'temptress' referring to her as a 'sexpot' and 'sensual'. However, *HWGRTMB's* press book simply refers to her as a 'dream girl' (another phrase that is used in more than one set of publicity material), which could be classified as the 'angelic' side of the blonde image, setting her up as a perfect, untouchable ideal. The editorial for Geeson in the *Prudence and the Pill* press book emphasises the versatility of Geeson as an actress, rather than her physical attributes.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, she features in three of the six main stills taken

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<sup>91</sup> Anon, *Prudence and the Pill: Publicity Services* (London: Twentieth Century Fox UK Division, 1968).

from the film for publicity, which is unusual considering she only features in 15 minutes of the film's total 90-minute runtime. In various publications there is an attempt to sexualise her star image through her bloneness and it is often the opening descriptive term. There are the simple examples of her hair colour being used to open a sentence such as 'the 18-year-old blonde'<sup>92</sup> or 'the 20-year-old blonde'.<sup>93</sup> It is also used as a gateway term for a longer descriptive of her person 'the looks of a blonde teenager awaiting her end-of-term report'<sup>94</sup> and 'all blonde hair and blue eyes and white lace and white bows'.<sup>95</sup> These two examples in particular fall into categorising her as the angelic, 'good' blonde in her lace and bows. Then there are the more explicit and prurient, such as referring to her as the 'dishy blonde with misty blue eyes and sensual lips,'<sup>96</sup> 'the nubile, pink-and-white blonde,'<sup>97</sup> and the 'strawberry blonde...[with] that well-shaped chin, those succulent baby-pink lips and smoky blue eyes began to form into a Junior Miss version of a sex-bomb'.<sup>98</sup> 'Pink and white', 'baby-pink' and 'Junior Miss' all have strong associations with childhood and girlhood, yet the writing links these descriptions to adult sexuality. There seemed to be a disconnect in how to construct Geeson's image as she hovers between the angelic and the worldly, and the representation of and obsession with her bloneness is a key example of this. Perhaps it is because Geeson embodies the emergence of new representations of female teenagers and young women; by the time her star was on

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<sup>92</sup> Nathan, David, 'Is staring Miss Geeson in the face', *The Sun* (28<sup>th</sup> August 1967), pp. unknown.

<sup>93</sup> Freeland, Michael, 'Judy Geeson faces the camera again after her mystery illness', *Photoplay Film Monthly* 20:7 (July 1969), pp.28.

<sup>94</sup> Mann, Roderick, 'I really need a man to love', *Sunday Express* (21<sup>st</sup> June 1969), pp.9

<sup>95</sup> Mann, Rick, 'Why Judy cried at herself', *Sunday Express* (3rd November 1968), pp. unknown.

<sup>96</sup> Anon, 'Judy Geeson: Faces for the Future', *Evening News* (5<sup>th</sup> Jan 1968), pp. unknown.

<sup>97</sup> Anon, 'Why Judy gave up stripping', *The Sun* (14<sup>th</sup> April 1973), pp. unknown.

<sup>98</sup> Davis, Victor, 'The 'G' may be soft but not Miss Geeson', *Daily Express* (16<sup>th</sup> December 1967), pp. unknown.

the ascendant the world was rapidly changing with the previously discussed 'permissiveness' being a much talked about topic and second wave feminism highlighting the representation of and fighting for the equal rights of women. This may be the cause of the tension between representing her as an angel or a temptress; not the 'good girl' and 'bad girl' of the social problem films, the world was no longer operating along such limited lines and more complex representations were emerging. Unfortunately for Geeson, she was becoming successful around the time of the changes in attitude but not late enough for these attempts at categorisation to no longer be relevant. Therefore, her star image is riddled with contradictions, revealing tensions between the representation of young and old, the residual and the emergent. It also contained a combination of American and British teen representations.

### **The Mid-Atlantic Teen**

From its inception there has been an American influence in British cinema both economically and artistically, 'American domination has had a profound impact on the British film industry' (Street. 1997, 3). The concern over this influence has, over the decades, inspired a number of initiatives to try and tackle Hollywood dominance of the film industry and create a truly British cinema. Higson theorises 'it is possible to identify five relatively distinct economic policies adopted by national film industries' (Higson. 1995, 11): collusion with Hollywood, trying to compete with Hollywood, creating a unique national brand differentiating the output from Hollywood, state interference (for example the Quota Quickies from the 20s and 30s) to try and support British productions, and active resistance to Hollywood (Higson. 1995, 12). Geeson's films were undoubtably tied to the specific brand of 'swinging' London, yet Murphy



uses two examples of 60s films to encapsulate the idea of the 60s 'mid-Atlantic' (Murphy. 1992, 3) features and both happen to star Geeson: *Prudence and the Pill* and *To Sir, with Love*. Murphy's choice of examples suggests Geeson had a transatlantic appeal and could portray a version of the teenage experience that could be understood by and unite British and American audiences.

America's star system was more established than the British star system, due to the size of the American film industry compared to the British system and the length of time the system had been developing. Hollywood began to portray an image of the teenager almost at the inception of the concept in the 50s. With *Blackboard Jungle* in 1955, Hollywood helped popularise the concept of the teenager and the associated teenage culture. Hollywood even provided the soundtrack to the movement by giving the new rock'n'roll music a platform in the film. With this movement came many new stars to embody the new teenage girl with a diverse set of stars such as 'bad girl' Natalie Wood from *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) to 'good girl' Sandra Dee of *Gidget* (1959) fame. Of the former Higashi writes of Wood as 'a provocative teen acutely aware of her sexuality' (Higashi. 2014, 3), conversely of Sandra Dee's image, Georganne Scheiner states in her article 'Look at Me, I'm Sandra Dee: Beyond a White Teen Icon' the star 'is remembered as the embodiment of the virginal, perky, uncomplicated, adolescent girl of the 1950s' (Scheiner. 2001, 87), an angelic blonde. The 'good' and 'bad' girl imagery endured into the 60s in the US and moved across the Atlantic to encompass British stars, for example last chapter's subject Hayley Mills' image was undeniably marketed in the 'good' girl category; Scheiner could be talking about Mills' image when she describes Dee as 'virginal, perky, uncomplicated' (Scheiner. 2001, 87). These images became a recognisable language on an

international scale and the image of the American teen, the fashions, and the music, fed into the representation of the British teen. Geeson's image had more in common with Natalie Wood than Sandra Dee, in her roles she was often behaving what would have been considered provocatively for the time, and off screen her dating life and occasionally modern opinions also became teen magazine and tabloid news. The definition of these images started to blur over time as Geeson's image shows, she could be defined as a 'bad girl' in some ways, she also had some 'good girl' traits such as her longing to settle down and have a family.

Despite the Britishness of the film, there is an argument to label *To Sir, with Love* as transatlantic. It was created by Columbia Pictures' British division and it starred Sidney Poitier at the height of his fame, but it also goes beyond these superficial signifiers. For a film that often 'looks back to the 1950s' (Hill. 1986, 112) for its source and themes, this also stretches to Geeson's transatlantic representation which has much in common with the 50s teen who had 'began to form a separate and rebellious peer group culture with an emphasis on sensation and sexuality which alarmed their parents' (Higashi. 2014, 147), and middle class, white girls in particular emerged and 'transformed themselves... by wearing 'tight skirts, big hair and heavy make-up'' (Higashi. 2014, 148). The 'peer group' that Geeson's Pamela find herself part of are rebellious, spend their time dancing and listening to the latest music, and they have sexual relationships. Pamela wears form fitting clothes, has big hair and wears heavy make-up. The coding of the character would be easily understood by anyone who had consumed a teen magazine or a newspaper in the previous 12 years. The American rock'n'roll teenager had much in common with the teens we see in *To Sir, with Love* and Geeson's image, and therefore could be understood by an American

and British audience. Despite this transatlantic appeal, Geeson didn't achieve significant success in Hollywood and her star in Britain began to fade quite quickly despite the hype surrounding her initial success.

### Up and Coming

While exploring the press surrounding Geeson, it is in articles attempting to predict the stars of tomorrow that she most frequently appears, continually being touted as an emerging talent. In fact, she was featured in these articles in various publications over a two-year period and these were after she had experienced her biggest successes in film, infantilising her despite her achievements. She was nominated for a 'Golden Laurel' award by *Motion Picture Exhibitor* for most promising newcomer in 1969, alongside actresses who also embodied different facets of 60s stardom: Mia Farrow, Katharine Houghton and the tragic Sharon Tate, whose murder was one of the events that was reported to have heralded the end of the 60s.<sup>99</sup>

When interviewed by Peter Haigh for the March 1969 article 'Saturday Night to Every Night' about young up and coming stars she talks about the success she has enjoyed, this despite the fact she is being included as up and coming even having established her career:

'It's incredible to think I get so many offers that I can afford to turn most of them down... It's a bit frightening in a way, when people are forecasting a great future for me. I only hope I shall live up to it'.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Anon, 'Golden Laurel Awards: 1968', *IMBD* (Unknown) <https://www.imdb.com/event/ev0000394/1968/1/>, accessed January 13<sup>th</sup> 2020.

<sup>100</sup> Haigh, Peter, 'Saturday Morning to Every Night' *ABC Film Review* 19:3 (March 1969), pp. 15.

Geeson said she was inundated with offers and was reported to be one of the new great talents of her era, the foundations for her potential career continued to be built for nearly three years. Yet, despite the fact that she continued to work throughout the 1970s and beyond, the 'great future' (meaning starring roles in big productions) never fully established itself and during the 1980s and 90s she received more publicity regarding her private life and her trouble in finding acting work.

Nearly a year before the March 1969 article, in May 1968 she had appeared in the same publication in another article, by the same writer entitled 'Up and Coming'. They report similar information, Geeson's resumé and what she was working on at the time of writing. A few months earlier in a January 1968 article she was included in a piece called 'Class of '68' in the *Daily Mirror* with five other actresses. The writer Christopher Ward named them as 'the six girls I think are most likely to succeed in 1968. A smashing lot'.<sup>101</sup> This is the least critical comment he makes during the entire article as he subjects his choices for his accolade to a patronising and misogynistic tirade about his trouble arranging a suitable time for everyone and overlooks their work entirely. Geeson is seated in the photo next to Jane Birkin (who is probably the most enduring star from this shoot) and they are posed in the most natural way in comparison with the artificiality of the other subjects, who are posed awkwardly like mannequins behind them. All the starlets are wearing fashionable clothes, there are mini-skirts and dresses and leather jackets as worn by the rocker gangs during this period. Geeson is barefoot, a fashion choice also seen on popular 60s singer Sandie Shaw who had won the Eurovision song contest the previous year with 'Puppet on a

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<sup>101</sup> Ward, Christopher, 'Class of '68', *Daily Mirror* (6th January 1968), pp. 9.

String'. Each actress in the photo is clearly trying to create an image for herself; the barefoot, natural Geeson in her mini dress and bobbed hair the perfect image of the modern 60s girl.

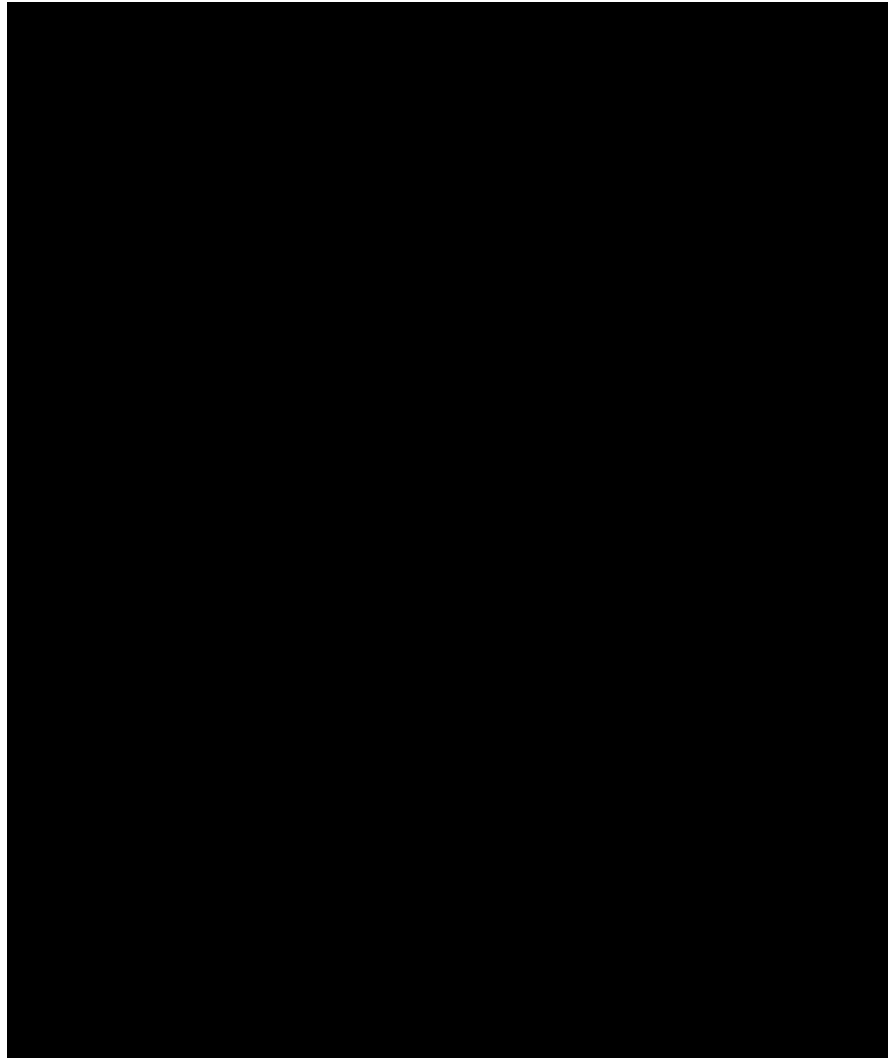


Fig. 31: The Daily Mirror's 'Class of '68' featuring Geeson.<sup>102</sup>

For more than two years Geeson was marketed as an up-and-coming talent, which belittled her considerable achievements and made her subsequent achievements pale in comparison. She was also tagged as a new 'it' girl, this status coinciding with and tying her to the 'swinging' period, which dated her image quickly

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<sup>102</sup> Ward, Christopher, 'Class of '68', *Daily Mirror* (6th January 1968), pp. 9.

as she was defined by a specific fashion and time. As this era came to an end so did the more prominent film roles for Geeson and in the early 70s she made a move back into mainly television work, which, considering her auspicious start, unfairly made it seem like she was not living up to her potential. She was continually associated with a specific period. Much like Hayley Mills who struggled to emerge from her childish persona, Geeson struggled to shake off the association with the 'swinging' 60s.

### Conclusion

Geeson's image and work were a muddle of residual, dominant and emergent cultural and social movements of the mid to late 60s, but she will forever be associated with the then-perceived dominant 'swinging' aesthetic which, as discussed, was a complex combination of residual, dominant and emergent trends. The roles discussed featured in what were debatably Geeson's most successful in the film industry and the films she is most closely associated with. They have been included in the 'swinging 60s' canon of films by academics such as Robert Murphy and Jeffrey Richards. They were box office successes, particularly *To Sir, with Love* which was a huge hit in the USA,<sup>103</sup> most likely due to the star power of Poitier whose career was peaking in the 1960s, and even spawned a number one hit single for Lulu for the title song.<sup>104</sup> Being tied to these films which so embodied the specificity of a time and cultural movement also meant that Geeson's work and her image were tied to, and helped define, this time and this particular place. Once this time was over, which it was quickly due to

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<sup>103</sup>Anon, 'To Sir, with Love: Box Office', *The-Numbers.com* (Unknown), <https://www.the-numbers.com/movie/To-Sir-With-Love#tab=summary>. [accessed 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020].

<sup>104</sup>Bronson, Fred, 'The Story behind Lulu's 'To Sir, with Love'', *Billboard.com* (2017), <https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/behind-lulu-to-sir-with-love-which-topped-the-hot-100-in-1967-saturday-night-live-snl-7662608/>, [accessed 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020].

these films being made at the beginning of the end of the 'swinging' era, she fell out of fashion. Geeson continued to work in films through the 1970s; some of her better known roles were in *The Eagle has Landed* (1976) and *10 Rillington Place* (1971), but she never found the same level of success as she did in her 'swinging' films and she took on more television roles as the decade progressed. The 'swinging' nature of her biggest successes hampered Geeson's chance to break out of this image or the publicity that she received at the start of her career, setting her up as the 'next big thing' in British film, meant that her more modest success later on made it seem like her career had stalled or even failed.

Geeson moved into adult parts in the early 70s, starring in a range of roles from period dramas to featuring in the *Carry On* franchise and Hammer horror films, and spent some time on stage with the Royal Shakespeare Company in the late 60s and early 70s. Perhaps her best-known role was in the previously mentioned *10 Rillington Place* (1971) with John Hurt and Richard Attenborough as young mother Beryl Evans who was murdered by serial killer John Christie (Attenborough) and whose husband Timothy Evans (Hurt) was wrongly executed for her murder. Geeson moved into television roles during the 70s and 80s, playing Caroline Enys in the successful BBC adaptation of *Poldark* (1975-77) and taking parts in American productions after a move to the USA. Despite continuing to work steadily, Geeson never again hit the heights of the films of her early career in her late teens and early 20s.

Hayley Mills' representation of the young British female in the early 60s saw her play childish roles and then she suddenly progressed into young adult parts without a significant period of adolescence. The new idea of the teenager was passed

over completely for a representation of a girl coming of age in keeping with times before the mid-1950s when ‘teenagers’ and their culture didn’t exist. This representation also spilled over into her star image, as she was still being described in childish terms at the age of 19 and was often shown with her father whose shadow stretched long over Mills’ career. Despite the fact that Mills was only two and a half years older than her, Geeson experienced a completely different type of fame and was afforded different opportunities than Mills. It is true that Geeson did not have a famous name to live up to, so the public and film industry were not constantly preoccupied with her in the image of the ‘daughter’ in the way the Mills was. Geeson’s parents did operate as unofficial spokespeople occasionally, such as when Geeson was hospitalised with a mystery illness in January 1969 and her parents spoke to the newspapers about the progress in her condition.<sup>105</sup> <sup>106</sup> She did eventually become known as part of an acting family as her sister Sally found fame for her role in *Bless This House* during the 70s, but the connotation of being a sister is far different than the idea of the daughter which implies a childlike state. Despite these exceptions, Geeson was usually represented as a fashionable teen of the moment; a romantic object, a ‘dream girl’, her image sexualised in a way that Mills’ was not until she started taking adult roles, and even when this did happen for Mills it was rejected by a public who could not erase the image of Mills as a little girl. There was confusion about Geeson’s image as the different treatment she received from various papers attest, some portrayed her like a young girl and others as a sex symbol, the transition from

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<sup>105</sup> Lithman, Adella, ‘How Judy nearly died- by her father’, *Daily Express* (21<sup>st</sup> January 1969), pp. unknown.

<sup>106</sup> Caskin, Fergus, ‘Judy Geeson in fight for life after holiday fever’, *Daily Sketch* (21<sup>st</sup> January 1969), pp. unknown.



girl to womanhood became blurred with Geeson's star image. In this way, the image of the female teen was being represented for the first time in British film beyond the social problem genre - something that Mills' films failed to do due to its absence of the 'teenage'. Mills' films recall the film world of the late 50s and early 60s and treated the teenager as either a problem or in the categories of 'good' and 'bad'. By the late 60s, more complex characters were emerging, though the residual problems remained in different forms in films of different genres, as Geeson's roles prove. Pamela Dare in *To Sir, with Love* is the closest to a social problem character as a troubled, impoverished teen in an urban setting; Mary from *HWGRTMB* is punished for her commitment to her own personal freedom by not getting into university and faces uncertainty in her future; Geraldine in *Prudence and the Pill* becomes pregnant out of wedlock after misusing the contraceptive pill; and Ella in *Three into Two Won't Go* remains adrift after her hippy-esque lifestyle fails to find her happiness. The transitional period Geeson was working in, of new freedoms and attempts to curb them, is apparent in these roles. Despite seeming to embody the dominant swinging 60s culture, her work and image were a unification of emergent and residual values as well. Representation was expanding but had not quite broken away from the teen as problem concept. When the teen was embracing these new opportunities, they were either punished in some way or reconciled to continue the old traditions of a time before these freedoms became available.

This tension between the residual and emergent is also apparent in Geeson's star image. She features in magazine articles about being part of the 'swinging' scene. Like her characters she is often dressed in fashionable clothing and with fashionable haircuts, she is tied to the period she found fame in through her image. When

interviewed she also discusses how she thinks that people should live together before they get married, and how she owns her own home and car in London and lives a generally independent life for a young woman. However, she is also quoted as saying she would ultimately like to settle down, get married and have children, which are aspirations perceivably more in keeping with the older generations. Superficially she seems like a modern young woman embracing new freedoms but on closer examination her roles and persona often perpetuate residual attitudes, expressing the contradictions of a teenager of her period. There is a progress towards young teenagers being represented in a different way and in different genres of film, but they usually end up failing to establish themselves and result in the eventual triumph of the old values. Geeson's roles and star image are the epitome of this, with her fashionable image signalling towards an emerging modern way of life but hidden within these images and texts are suggestions that the residual way of life is still the 'correct' path for a young woman and any deviation can result in punishment. Geeson's characters and choices in life may have seemed subversive to adults of the late 60s, especially in comparison with older representations of teenage girls like Hayley Mills, and they did indicate the beginning of change because of this, but these changes were not established yet - much like the changes in society which had become a battleground by the late 60s.

Geeson appeared as another Pamela in the star-studded war film *The Eagle Has Landed* (1976) with Michael Caine, Donald Sutherland and Robert Duvall. The female lead in this film is next chapter's subject, Jenny Agutter, whose own success by the mid-70s had eclipsed Geeson's, who here is billed as the third female lead. Considering they both started their careers in British film as teenage girls, how did

Agutter manage to secure starring roles well into adulthood as Geeson's own career stalled?

## Jenny Agutter

Two portraits of Jenny Agutter are kept within London's National Portrait Gallery's collection. Capturing the actor at the ages of 17 and 23, they were taken by famed 20<sup>th</sup> century photographer Lord Snowdon. In contrast with the artful shots of Agutter, the pictures held by the gallery of Hayley Mills show her in cheesecake studio shots or in pictures from her marriage to Roy Boulting which had scandalised the tabloids; there are no pictures held of Geeson at all. These portraits are an example of the different kind of fame Agutter experienced: she was treated with a seriousness that was seen less frequently in the cases of Geeson and Mills.

The first picture shows Agutter in costume as Bobby from *The Railway Children* (1970), sitting deep in thought on a worn bench set on rain-soaked cobbles and in front of a faded brick wall. There was a 'growing nostalgic impulse' (Allen. 2011, 100) in British cinema during the 1970s that can be seen here. Her costume is that of an Edwardian child with her black leather ankle boots, dark brown cape and skirt neatly concealing her outfit, the only splash of colour is a dark red scarf and atop her head is a dark green beret. Agutter looks self-contained and melancholy as she pensively stares at the cobbles. This particular shot is not featured in the film so we can presume this is a portrait of Agutter herself rather than her character. This is how *The Times* interpreted the photograph in their 8<sup>th</sup> November 1970 edition. Their caption says 'Jenny gets away from 1970 basics, she's a girl who wakes up to the joys of the

Victorian branch line'.<sup>107</sup> The official title of the picture is 'Jenny Agutter as Bobby Waterbury in *The Railway Children*', Snowdon has asked her to pose as Bobby, defining Agutter by her work rather than as a star in her own right.<sup>108</sup> This definition of Agutter as an actress rather than a typical 'star' will occur frequently during her career as a teenager and beyond. This type of photograph would not have fitted with the star images of the 'fun' Hayley Mills or the 'dream girl' Judy Geeson. Agutter was not tied to the dominant current trends or a residual view of teenage girlhood nor an acting dynasty, she was simply a working actress as this picture portrays.

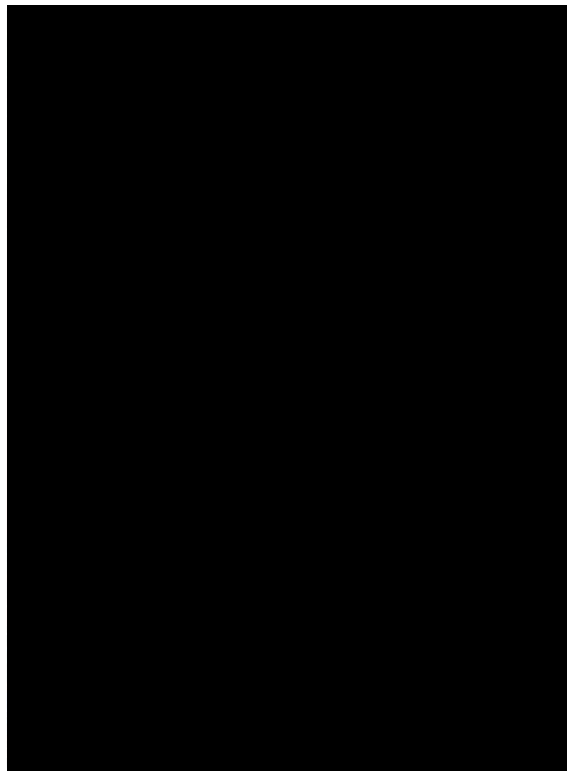


Fig. 1: Jenny/Bobby during the making of *The Railway Children* in 1969.

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<sup>107</sup> Anon, 'The girl now waiting on Platform One has just caught the train to stardom...', *The Times* (8<sup>th</sup> Nov 1970), pp. unknown.

<sup>108</sup> Armstrong-Jones, Anthony, 'Jenny Agutter as Bobby Waterbury in *The Railway Children*', *The National Portrait Gallery*, (1970)

<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw83603/Jenny-Agutter-as-Bobbie-Waterbury-in-The-Railway-Children?LinkID=mp70536&role=sit&rNo=2>, accessed 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

In her second portrait we see a transformed Agutter at 23: by this time she was moving into more mature roles with *Logans Run* (1976).<sup>109</sup> Here Agutter is half seated, leaning on sacks of wheat in a barn surrounded by farming equipment. Her casual, outdoorsy clothes of leather boots, corduroy trousers and a black top contrast with the slightly awkward positioning. There is something suggestive about the pose as the focus of the eye is drawn down to her outstretched leg. This is also emphasised by her confident, half-smiling? look directly at the camera, she has now become an adult star. Like the previous photo this isn't 'fun', and it isn't a 'teen dream' picture and, despite her spending a period as a teen idol, her image is still difficult to define. There is a maturity to Agutter's image; both in the thoughtful on set picture from 1970 to the barn portrait in 1976 that is lacking in images of Mills and Geeson. I will argue that it was constructed through the type of roles she was playing and the type of media coverage she was receiving. Hayley Mills had her portrait taken by David Bailey, a photographer who captured the 60s and whose own image was forever encapsulated within that period, much as Geeson's was.

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<sup>109</sup> Armstrong-Jones, Anthony, 'Jenny Agutter', *The National Portrait Gallery*, (1976) <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw241555/Jenny-Agutter?LinkID=mp70536&role=sit&rNo=0> , accessed 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

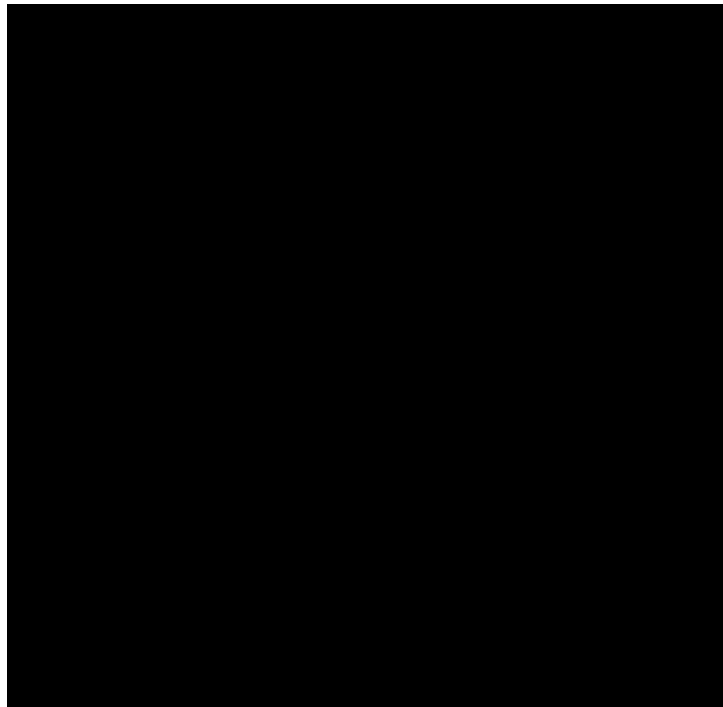


Fig. 2: Snowdon's portrait of Agutter from 1974.

Jenny Agutter was born on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1952 in Somerset, England but spent much of her early childhood abroad due to her father's job in the Army. At 8 years old the 'naughty and...obstinate' Agutter was sent to Elmhurst Ballet School (as was Mills) as a boarder by her parents who were living and working in Cyprus during this time.<sup>110</sup> Also, like Hayley Mills before her, the Disney corporation were involved in providing Agutter with a break early on in her career, although unlike Mills, the part she won was on a much smaller scale. She had a small role in a 1966 episode of *Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color* (1961-69) entitled 'Ballerina'. This experience was to have a profound effect on her and from this time Agutter began to 'single-mindedly' focus on her acting career.<sup>111</sup> Like Judy Geeson before her, she began her career in television and received recognition in the UK in the BBC soap opera *The Newcomers*

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<sup>110</sup> Whitney, Hilary, 'Jenny Agutter', *The Times Educational Supplement*, issue: 4884 (2<sup>nd</sup> April 2010), pp8.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

(1965-69). She then began to branch out into parts in US and UK film productions, including a small part as Julie Andrews' character's daughter, Pamela, in *Star!* (1968). She then won the role which would arguably made her famous. She first played Roberta in the BBC's serial adaptation of *The Railway Children* (1968), a role she would play again in Lionel Jeffries' 1970 adaptation. Her association with *The Railway Children* would endure into adulthood, not only through the frequent repeats of the series and film during the 1980s and 90s, but she also went on to play the role of Mother in ITV's production of the story in 2000 and she reprised the role of Bobby as an adult in *The Railway Children Return* (2022). As a young actress she did not limit herself to appearances in period pieces such as *The Railway Children* and the 1930s set television film *The Snow Goose* (1971), she also would also appear in modern roles in films *I Start Counting* (1969) and *Walkabout* (1971). Unlike Geeson and Mills who focussed mainly on film roles during what was arguably their career peak in their mid-to-late teens, Agutter astutely maintained a simultaneous career in television from her beginnings both in the US and the UK. She was clearly conscientious about her choices, the roles she featured in were mainly prestige television productions with respected actors of the period. She played multiple roles opposite Anthony Hopkins in *The Inimitable Mr Dickens* (1970) and portrayed Mary Shelley opposite Robert Powell's Percy Bysshe Shelley in the BBC TV series *Shelley* (1972). She played Hedvig in Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* (1972) for the BBC's *Play of the Month* with Denholm Elliot, a role which Hayley Mills coincidentally had been playing on stage just a year before in 1971, with the 24 -year-old Mills again playing much younger than her years as the 14-year Hedvig. Diverging from these period roles which she was playing on British television, she also starred in *A War of Children* (1972) in US/UK production which told



the story of two families during the troubles in Northern Ireland the same year that Bloody Sunday occurred. This film would go on to be nominated for an Emmy and a Golden Globe award.<sup>112</sup> Agutter's late teens were a fruitful period in her career, all the diverse roles listed above were completed before Agutter had turned 20 years old.

## 1969

By 1969, the image of freedom and optimism during the mid-sixties was replaced with a 'dominant motif... of decline' (Donnelly. 2005, 194) later in the decade. The peace and love ethos ushered in by the Hippy movement of the late 60s suffered a series of blows. A Rolling Stones concert at Altamont resulted in the death of concert goer Meredith Hunter at the hands of Hells Angels (Sandbrook. 537, 2006). The influential and quintessentially British band, The Beatles, who had helped define the sound of the 60s, were in the process of an acrimonious break-up throughout 1969 and would eventually confirm the end in April 1970 (Sandbrook. 2006, 724). Alongside these high-profile cultural events, Harold Wilson's government was on the brink of collapse after the economic boom of the 50s and early 60s. Britain's economy had entered an economic spiral that would result in the mass strikes and shortages that would become an increasingly common part of life in the 70s, an indicator of what to come would see 1969 itself with '7 million working days lost to strikes...reaching a record 23.8 million days in the industrial anarchy of 1972' (Sandbrook. 2006, 687). The Troubles in Northern Ireland had been inflamed during the late 60s and 'violence continued to escalate' (Donnelly. 2005, 194) until the Good Friday Agreement was

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<sup>112</sup> Anon, 'A War of Children', *IMDB* (1972) [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0069484/awards/?ref =tt\\_awd](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0069484/awards/?ref =tt_awd), accessed 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

signed 30 years later. Despite its reputation as a troubled year, there were a few positive events that occurred in 1969. Apollo 11 landed on the Moon ushering in the new space age, the Divorce Reform Act was introduced giving people more freedom to leave unhappy marriages and which dispelled some of the stigma attached to the status of divorced people (Donnelly. 2005, 121-22). There were 'about seventy 'women's lib' groups across the country' (Sandbrook. 2006, 663) and the following year UK based Germaine Greer's seminal feminist text *The Female Eunuch* was published, helping further establish second wave feminism in the UK and whose campaigning would go on to progress women's rights through the next decade. By 1969 Mills was struggling to establish herself as an adult star and Geeson was playing the last of her swinging 60s dream girls. For Jenny Agutter, however, the year would prove an important and formative one for her career and, taking into consideration this period of historical transition, would create a different kind of star persona.

1969 was an extremely busy year for Agutter and she played two of her most enduring parts, both of which she is still identified with today. At the start of the year, she made *I Start Counting*, which was restored by the BFI in 2021. During the spring and early summer, she filmed Lionel Jeffries' *The Railway Children* and in August she travelled to Australia to make *Walkabout* with Nic Roeg. These films, all products of the 1960s, in more than just production dates through their form, themes and subject matter were not released until 1970, except for *Walkabout*, which wasn't released until May 1971 when it was entered in the competition at the Festival de Cannes.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Anon, 'Festival de Cannes: 1971 Selection', *Festival de Cannes (1971)*, <https://www.festival-cannes.com/en/74-editions/retrospective/1971/selection/competition-1>, accessed January 14<sup>th</sup> 2021.

By adhering to the concept of the 'long sixties', Agutter could still be classified as a sixties star. The films she made in the period either encapsulated the 'permissive' and questioning liberal climate portrayed in cinema of the time as seen in *I Start Counting* and *Walkabout* or diverged from modern life all together much like Mills' work in *Whistle Down the Wind* or *Sky West and Crooked*. Agutter's voyage into the past which explored Britain's fictitious history in *The Railway Children* and *The Snow Goose* are what could be considered as early additions to the heritage genre which would become so important to maintaining an economically viable British film industry in the 80s, with films such as *Chariots of Fire* (1981), *A Passage to India* (1984) and the Merchant Ivory productions providing much needed hits for an industry in crisis (Higson. 2011, 49). This association with heritage films and television would help shape her star persona as a teenager and would continue throughout her adult work to the present day where she is a long-standing cast member of the BBC's 50s and 60sset drama *Call the Midwife*.

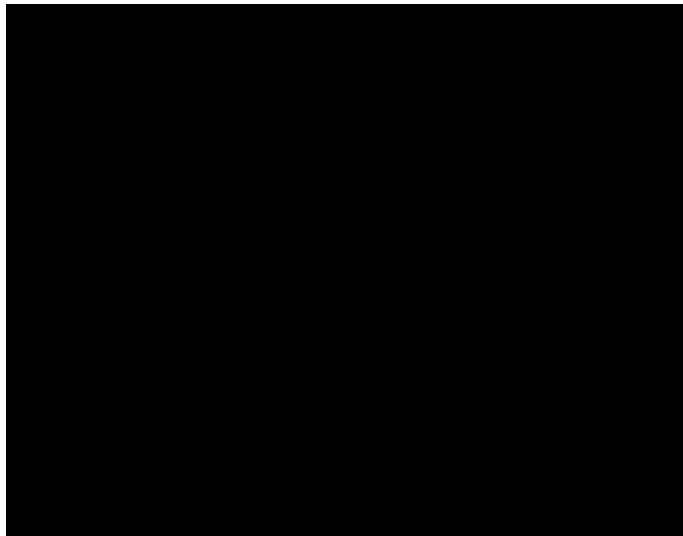
Like Hayley Mills before her, Jenny Agutter started working as a child actress, but unlike Mills by her teen years, she had progressed into playing teenage roles, allowing for a transitional period which was not available to Mills in her British films. During her late teens Agutter played a diverse group of teenage girls in four very different films. Her first starring role, and the first teen she played on film, was as the very modern Wynne from urban Bracknell in *I Start Counting* (1969). Subsequently, she went on to play Edwardian teenager Roberta in costume drama *The Railway Children* (1970) and directly after she played the unnamed girl lost and trying to survive in the Australian outback with her younger brother and a young Aboriginal boy

they befriend in *Walkabout* (1971). A year later she played Fritha, a teenage eel fisher from the bleak Essex marshes in the 1930s in *The Snow Goose* (1971).

In addition to her film work, her television roles saw her tackle characters which were suited to her age group and crucially she also played characters that would complement her star image. She took on roles in classical and historical films and worked with auteurs, who were appropriate choices as they fit with the image of the serious actress she was being characterised as in press and publicity. This diverse collection of roles was not seen in the careers of Mills or Geeson. Mills was playing children for far longer than was appropriate and so was deprived of more mature material until she was in her early 20s and Geeson repeatedly played the permissive late 60s teen and struggled to break out of that mould once the trope began to become less relevant. Unlike Mills and Geeson, Agutter's image came second to her work and would experience a wholly different type of stardom to her predecessors. Her range of roles saw her embody residual versions of teenagers 'formed in the past' (Williams. 1977, 122) in *The Railway Children* and *The Snow Goose*, dominant ideas of teenage life in the contemporary 1969 as Wynne in *I Start Counting* and emerging ideas in *Walkabout* and her first adult role in *Logan's Run*. Her work was multi-faceted and she represented teenage girls at each stage of the cultural process suggested in Williams "epochal' analysis' (Williams. 1977, 121).

The role that is the closest representation to a teenager in 1969 in terms of themes and aesthetics is Wynne in *I Start Counting* (1969). The film is based on a novel of the same name by Audrey Erskine Lindop. Agutter plays the 14-year-old catholic schoolgirl who lives with her adopted family in a flat in Bracknell, a family

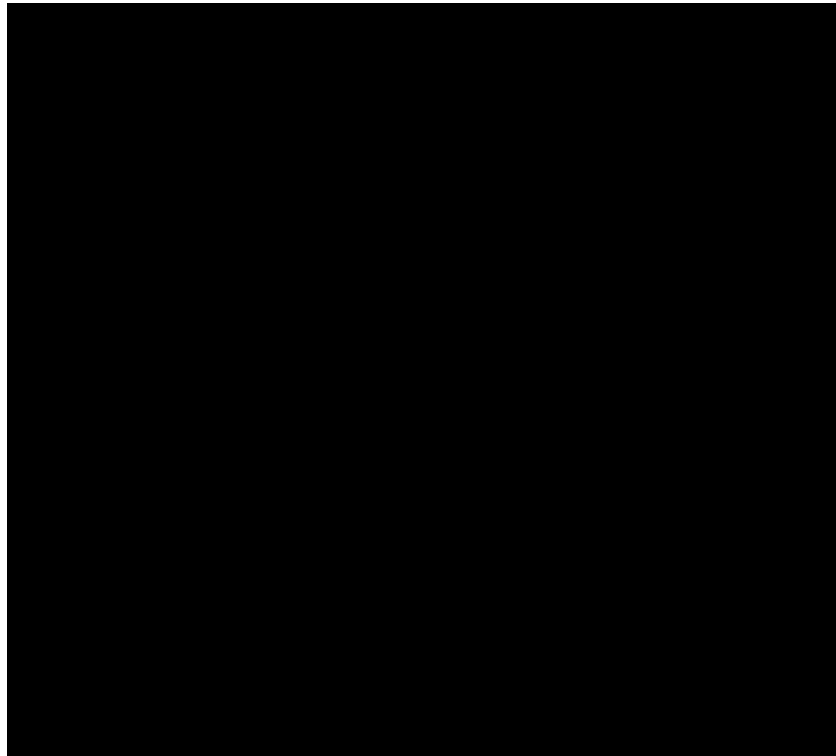
which includes her two much older adopted brothers as well as her adoptive parents. Wynne is an incredibly complex and confused girl. She thinks herself in love with her much older adopted brother George (a grown man in his early 30s) and tells her (allegedly) sexually precocious friend Corrine lies about an affair they are having and their plans to run away and marry. Flashbacks hint at a violent trauma in her past which may or may not involve George who, despite her crush, she also suspects is guilty of the murders of local girls which are happening in the area. Rather than telling her parents or the police of her suspicions, she decides to investigate herself and, in one memorable scene, subtly hints to George that she would support him even if he was a murderer. George's absences from the home are not the result of a killing spree; he is having an affair with an older woman, which Wynne discovers when she stows away in his work van to spy on his whereabouts. After a disastrous day out with Wynne's family, Corrine is murdered and subsequently Wynne also finds herself in peril from the real killer. Agutter's understated performance of Wynne benefits the film, which could quite easily have descended into hysteria considering the improbable subject matter.



**Fig. 3: Promotional poster for *I Start Counting*.**

The film crosses genres; it is a family melodrama, a murder mystery and even a teen film as the focus of the film is on Wynne and her school life, friendships and sexual awakening. There are also some horrific moments and jump scares adding elements of the horror genre to the cross-genre film. Despite the lack of generic specificity, the film was marketed as a horror film with the tagline 'In the world of Nightmare, a little blood adds colour!' with the accompanying picture of a dead body at the bottom of the stairs clearly implying the film falls into this specific genre. The poster also features hands being thrust towards Agutter's fearful face suggesting she is under attack from an unknown assailant. Horror is genre that has generic conventions and imagery which can be an asset to marketing campaigns, such as the use of pretty girls as either victims or 'final' girls. This genre is also often popular with younger audiences and the use of a pretty, young star like Agutter, a horror archetype, is capitalised upon to entice this lucrative audience to the box office. Despite the clear indicators of horror that we see here, the film is much more mundane than this poster suggests. It is a coming-of-age story with a few horrific and melodramatic moments

peppered throughout. We spend much of the film in the company of Wynne at school, at home or walking around the town centre in daylight with her friend. It is not until the final ten minutes there is a more traditional horror sequence of Wynne being pursued in the dark and eventually through a derelict house by the killer. The tagline suggests the audience will enter 'the world of Nightmare' implying some sort of supernatural peril or relentless persecution of a character, when it actually refers to the recurring memories that Wynne has of a traumatic event that she tries to decipher. The focus of the poster is on Agutter's face, the close-up is accompanied by three repeated pictures of her looking over her shoulder. Both images suggest she is in peril, but rather than having her screaming in horror they have her looking alarmed which still allows them to display her prettiness at the same time: there is a definite effort here to capitalise on her looks despite her tender age of 16. This was the beginning of her becoming a sex symbol for a new generation that was growing up with her, and a focus on her looks was something that would frequently occur in much of her future work.



**Fig 4: Multiple shots of Wynne's face from *I Start Counting* poster.**

Agutter's character of Wynne embodies the 'catholic schoolgirl' trope, a fetishization of young schoolgirls who looked innocent and 'good' but were actually naughty and 'bad' and this 'badness' was often associated with precocious sexual behaviour. Corrine is a more extreme example of the trope through her more adult costumes and provocative dialogue throughout the film, but Wynne is also characterised as a wayward teen in several scenes. She is often wearing the uniform for her school, the innocence of this outfit often contradicting the dialogue she speaks and actions of the character. For example, as George gives her a lift to school, Wynne rolls a cigarette in the back seat and during a visit from a priest during school assembly Wynne and Corrine enquire whether a relationship could be considered incestuous if the people in question were adopted siblings, barely concealing Wynne's true association with the question. The priest, who seems confused and uncomfortable by

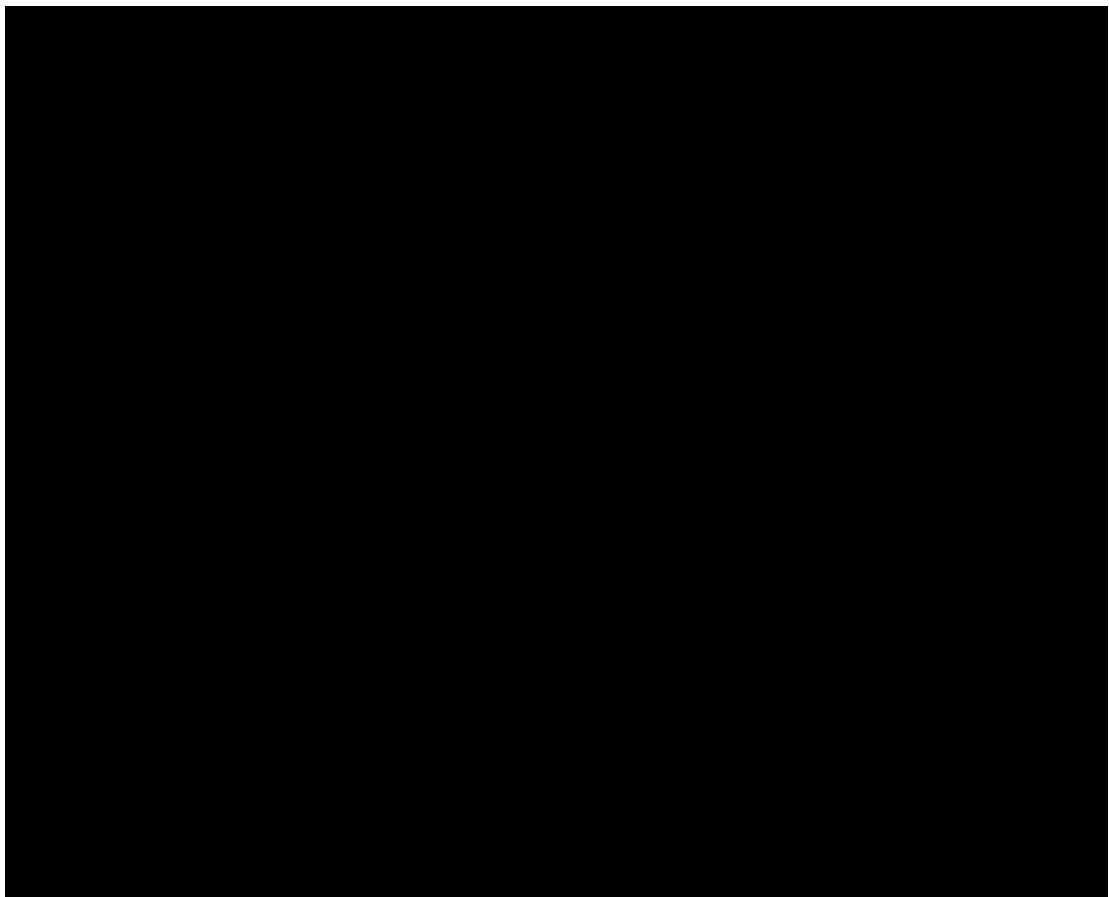


the line of questioning, eventually concludes that as they are not blood related then the relationship could go ahead. The ending of the brief scene sees another question from the audience from another female pupil who asks, 'what has the Pope got against the Pill?' to giggles from the rest of the pupils. Here we are seeing the roots of digression in the school from their theological teachings and the dissemination of more permissive behaviour within society here seen amongst the very young. The preoccupation with sex and relationships which was emerging during Geeson's swinging 60s peak had now established itself as a dominant trope in the embodiment of teenage girls, as seen here and in Agutter's future roles in *Walkabout* and *Logan's Run*.

In another scene we see Wynne and Corrine socialise in town and go to a café. The soundtrack provides a narration of the girls' inner world as the song chosen discusses how teenagers are not interested in their 'A's and O's' and they only want to learn about things they cannot learn in school, namely love and relationships. Wynne's costumes are modest in comparison to Corinne: she wears clothes not dissimilar from her school uniform as we see her in a grey pleated skirt, a roll neck jumper and cardigan and long socks and flat shoes. Director David Greene chose a muted palette for the film and Wynne blends into the subdued urban sprawl in the background. In contrast Corrine stands out, wearing a low-cut blue mini dress with matching hat. Their youth is on full display in the costume choices, Wynne is dressed as the schoolgirl she is and Corrine's attempts to dress older than her years only serves to emphasise her youth even further as she squirms and adjusts her clothing, accidentally revealing her underwear to an appreciative group of young men. The girls' fantasy world is on full display as they discuss their fictional encounters, Wynne noting

the waiter must be about 40 to which Corrine replies George is 32. Wynne defensively states '32 is her favourite age for a man'. They look incredibly naïve as they discuss what they think are adult matters in this scene with Wynne defending her imaginary relationship and the inappropriate age gap between her and George and Corrine's lying about attempts at flirtation with the much older waiter who seems oblivious to her attention. We also see them peeking through the bars of the balcony in the cafe, looking like children playing hide and seek or spying on adults at a gathering. When they are approached by young men their own age they dismiss them, more comfortable with their fantasies than a real encounter as, in reality, they are just children trading tall stories in the hope of impressing one another. The character of Wynne diverges from Agutter's own star image in that she was never portrayed as rebellious or immature, but the role did see her tackle challenging and controversial subjects such as teen sexuality, and this fearlessness is something we see repeated in Agutter's career, especially in work on Roeg's *Walkabout*.

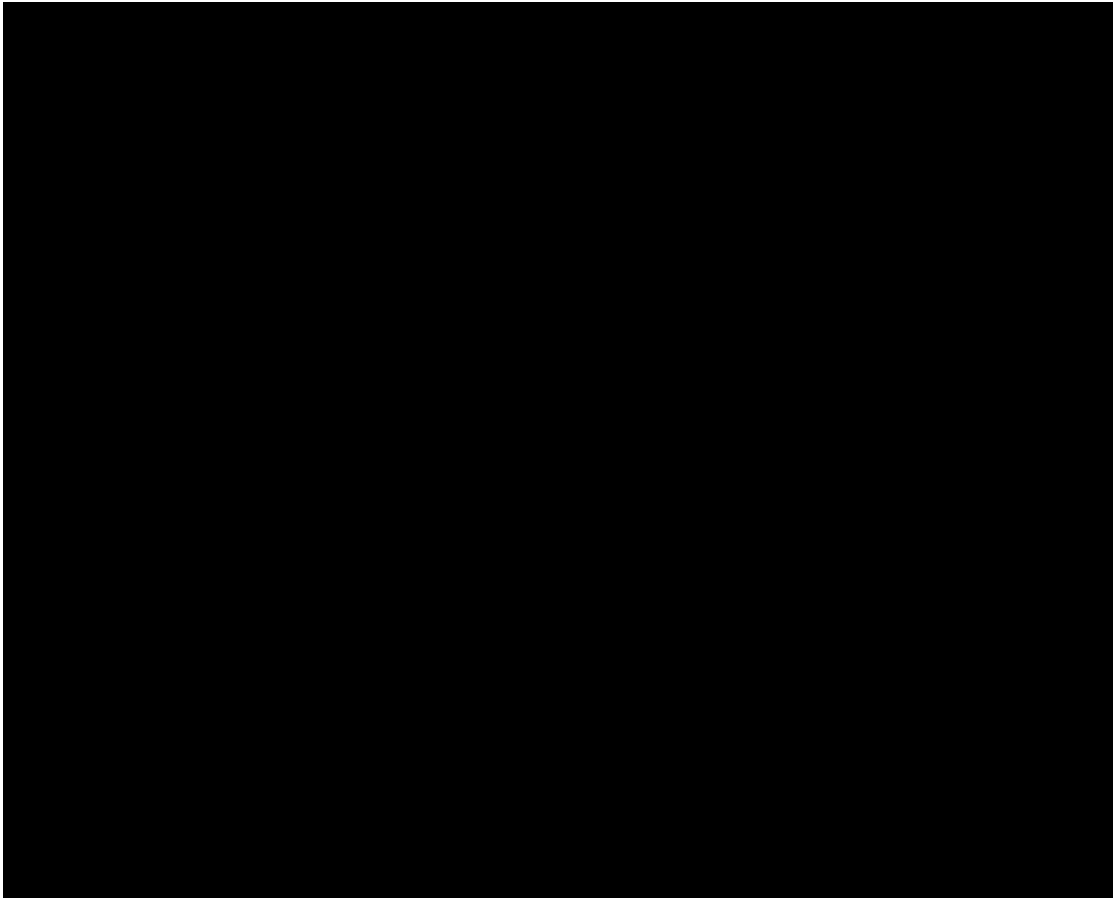
In a series of promotional photos for *I Start Counting*, we see Agutter in three different situations. In the first she is lying on a circular cushion in medium close-up. Half smiling, she stares directly at the camera as her hair is splayed out like an explosion on the cushion behind her. She is wearing a frilly white vest top with her underwear clearly showing beneath the straps and she is hugging a sinister, red-eyed rabbit stuffed toy wearing a shirt and jacket, a clear reference to *Alice in Wonderland*.



**Fig. 5: Agutter styled as Alice from *Alice in Wonderland*.**

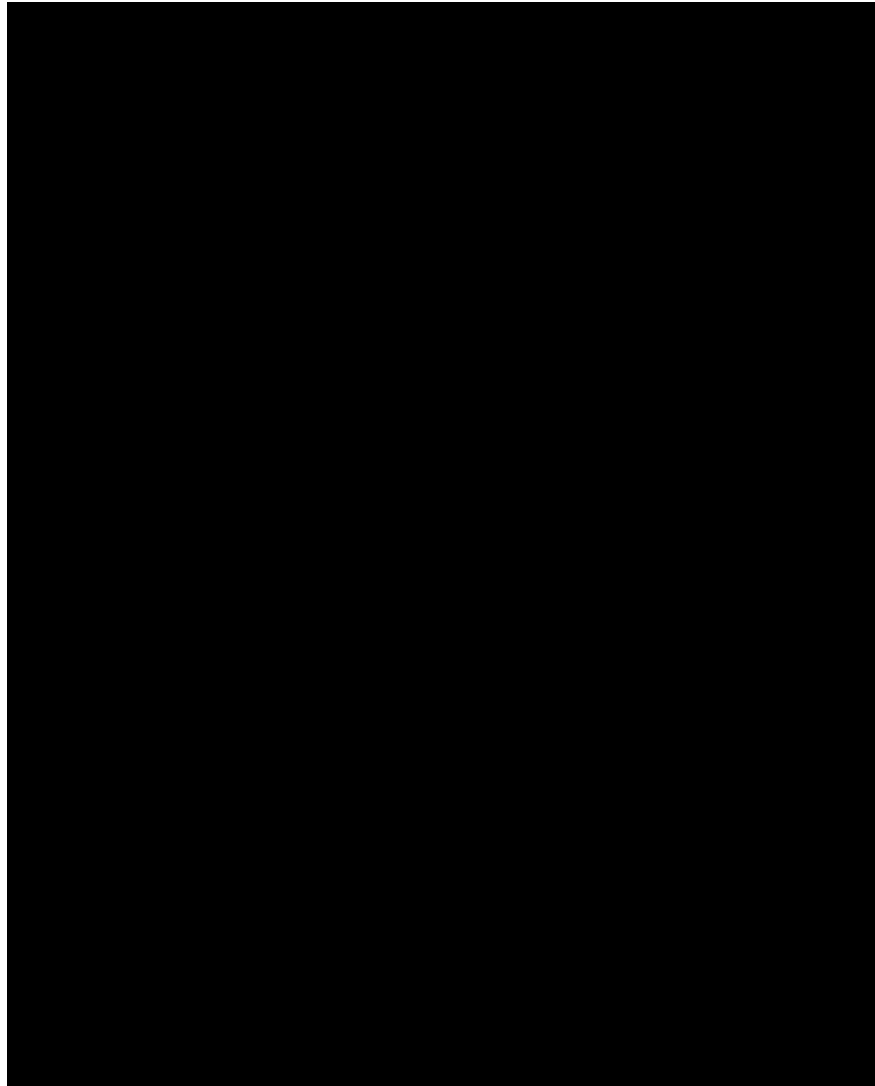
Like Alice, Wynne also falls into a fantasy world of her own making, encounters some terrifying characters and struggles to manage the consequences of her choices. The sinister stuffed rabbit and the provocative costume choice with her underwear glimpsed beneath her clothes suggest this is a modern *Alice in Wonderland* story with more adult themes than the original story. The suggestive photo also indicates the beginning of Agutter becoming a teen pin-up, something that would be further established with the release of *Walkabout*. In the second picture the focus is on the religious theme in the film as Wynne is in a confessional with a priest, the picture is black and white in contrast with the colour *Alice in Wonderland* photo. She is obscured by a screen but there is clearly a cross in the background, the priest is foregrounded

with a bible on a ledge between them, there is an expression of slight disapproval on his face.



**Fig. 6: Wynne in confession.**

The screen symbolises the divide between Wynne and her religious teaching, she is facing the priest trying to communicate and gain answers, but he is not understanding, the bible and their generations dividing them. In the final still, Agutter's arm is being grabbed through a broken window in a broken door by an older man, her face is framed by broken glass and much like the poster she looks scared but is not screaming and it looks more like she is trying to speak.



**Fig. 7: Wynne under attack from the murderer.**

The generic confusion over this film is clear as each of the photo's depicts a different genre, fantasy film, religious drama and horror. These pictures do show the versatility of Agutter as an actress which is something that would become important in her career and the cultivation of her star image, her talent and ability to embody multi-faceted characters.

Despite the attention grabbing, if misleading, poster and subject matter *I Start Counting* was not a huge success. It caused minor controversy and gained some negative publicity when the headmaster of the school used in the film objected to the

content and its apparent advertising in some quarters as a 'sex film'.<sup>114</sup> By the time of its release it had been suggested to be a horror film, a sex film and a coming-of-age drama. The film is difficult to classify generically and must have been challenging to market which in turn resulted in some advertising misfires. It certainly contains elements of horror but is not a horror film, it is inaccurate to classify it as a 'sex film' unless we consider the teenage girl's pre-occupation with the subject, something that was hardly unique to this film as the previous chapter proves. The main story is the coming of age of the confused Wynne as she ventures into and learns about the adult world beyond her own fantasies. The link to the horror genre is established as the film dramatically slides into a chase for the last 10 minutes as Corrinne is murdered and Wynne is pursued through the dark house by the murderer. The misclassification of the genre of the film could have hindered its box office chances and disappointed the audience it did attract who expected jump scares or risqué content and instead followed the days of two girls through their mundane school days and inappropriate crushes.

One review of *I Start Counting* from November 1970 states it was a film 'without stars'<sup>115</sup> yet only a month later this statement would no longer be true as Lionel Jeffries' adaptation of *The Railway Children* was released and would go on to become the most popular film at the UK Box Office of 1971, making Jenny Agutter into a star.

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<sup>114</sup> Barker, Felix, 'Not so lurid', *Liverpool Echo* (7<sup>th</sup> Nov 1970) pp. 6.

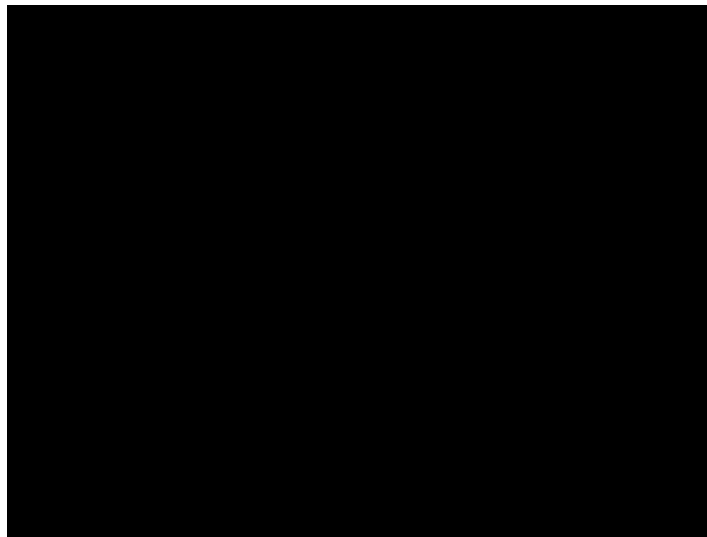
<sup>115</sup> Watson, Albert, 'Why aren't there more like this?', *Reading Evening Post* (14<sup>th</sup> Nov 1970), pp. 7.

## A Sensible Little Woman

Edith Nesbitt's 1906 book *The Railway Children* tells the story of Roberta, Peter and Phyllis whose move to the countryside after their father's mysterious arrest leads to an interest in the local Railway Station and their subsequent adventures around the countryside through which the railway runs. Actor Lionel Jeffries directed an adaptation of the story in 1970 with Agutter in the starring role as Roberta. As previously mentioned, this was not the first time she had played Roberta, the BBC had filmed a version of the book in 1968 with Agutter in the role. E Nesbit wrote of the character, 'mothers never have favourites, but if their mother *had* had a favourite, it might have been Roberta' (Nesbit. 1906, 1) encapsulating the virtuous qualities of Roberta seen in Agutter's portrayal that she carried over into the television and film adaptation. Roberta's goodness is a key element of her characterisation; she is fair, thoughtful and kind. As the eldest she is always helping her mother, the townspeople and even the local doctor of the town who, somewhat condescendingly, calls her 'a sensible little woman'. 'Sensible' is a key word for many of Agutter's characters, the level headedness of the Girl in *Walkabout* sees her save her brother from her father. Fritha in *The Snow Goose* is orphaned and works as an eel fisher in the Essex marshes to survive. Agutter's image could be described as 'sensible' and she was rarely portrayed as anything but a talented young character actress. There was little coverage of her private life or relationships, and whenever a glimpse was caught of her personality or opinions it was to re-enforce this idea of a 'sensible little woman'.

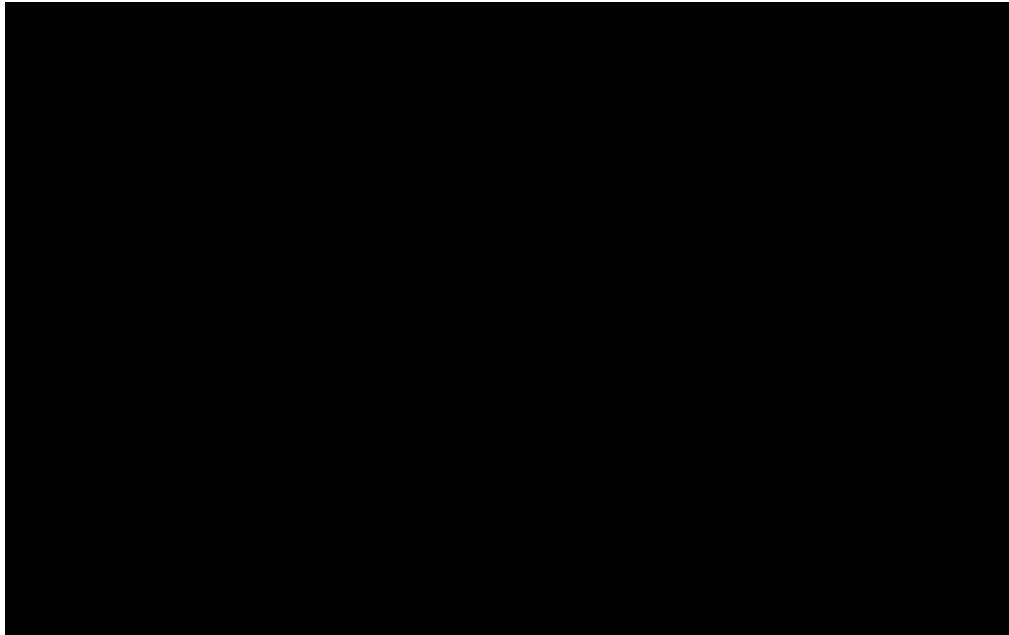
Agutter was 15 when she made the BBC adaptation of *The Railway Children* and 17 during the making of the film adaptation. This results in the BBC version of the

story having a more childlike version of Roberta, especially in her appearance. Roberta is often seen with her hair in ringlets and pigtails with large bows in keeping with its Edwardian setting. In the film version Roberta's appearance is more mature, her hair is styled in a more adult fashion not dissimilar to her mother's style and its neatness contrasts with Phyllis's (Sally Thomsett) unruly un-styled look. She does occasionally wear a ribbon but rather than framing her face as in the television version, it is worn on the back of her head.



**Fig 8: Agutter as Roberta in the BBC's 1968 adaptation of *The Railway Children*.**

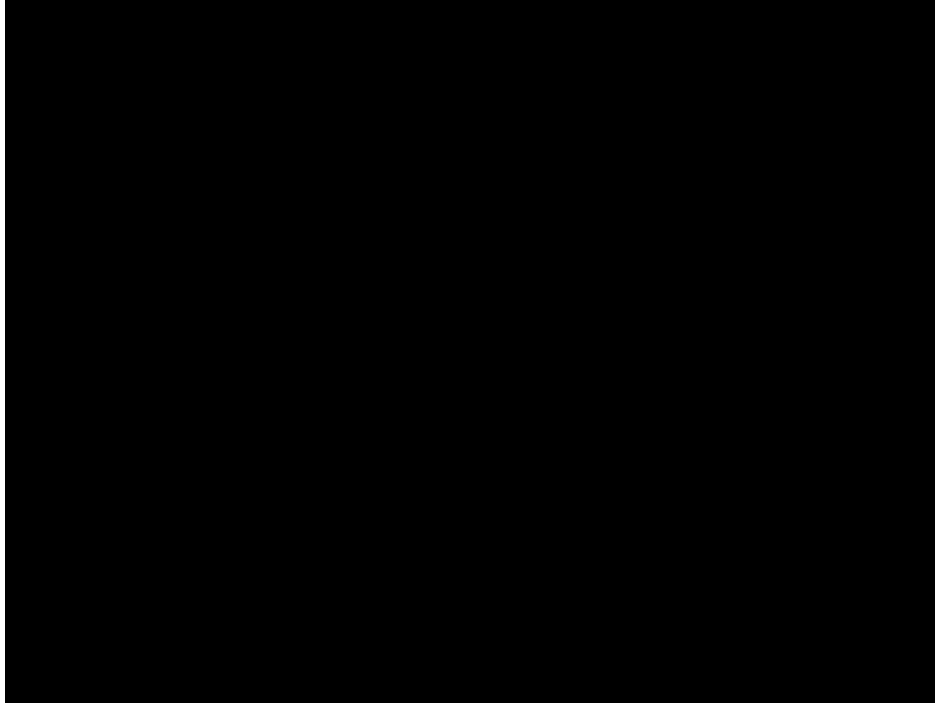




**Fig 9: The children of the 1970 adaptation of *The Railway Children*.**

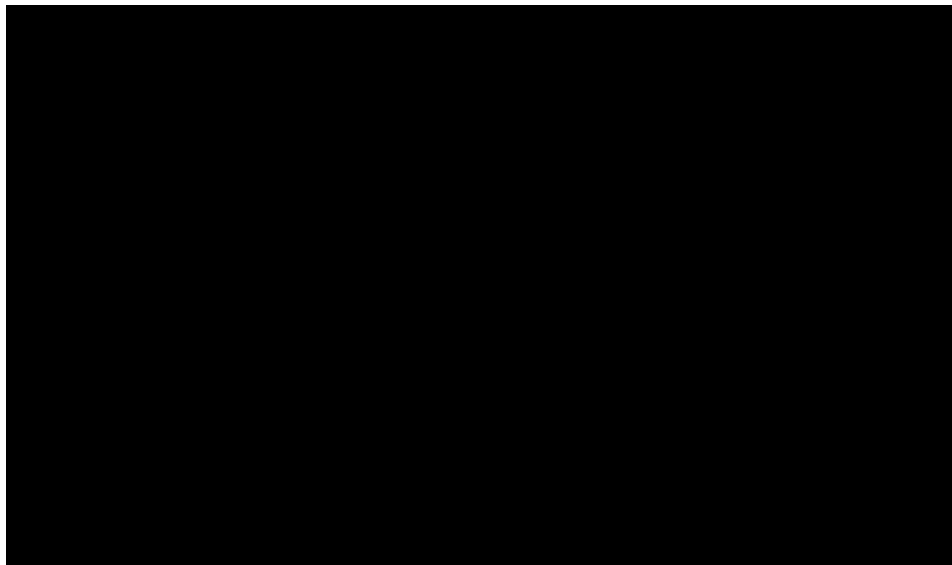
Agutter's Roberta is a residual version of a British teenage girl. She could be considered by 1970 as moving towards an archaic representation, which Williams defines as 'wholly recognised as an element of the past' (Williams. 1977, 122). Teen culture by this time had been firmly established in the public consciousness for 15 years and Roberta's experience of teenagerhood had rapidly 'become an historic one. Like Mills' roles which were imbued with residue of the teen experience of ten years previously, Agutter's Roberta embodied middle-class teenage life of 60 years before, that few in society would have experienced by this time. An effort has been made in the film to create an image of Roberta as a girl on the cusp of womanhood rather than just as a child, with modern teenagerhood understandably absent. Her clothing indicates she is in transition and like her hairstyle there are echoes of her mother's fashion choices. They feature delicate frills, lace panelling and fitted bodices, something that again contrasts with Phyliss's child's wardrobe which features shapeless dresses with oversize frills. However, we also see her wearing a child's

smock much like Phyliss's although throughout the film we see the smock with decreasing frequency, indicating she is growing beyond childhood and, was being initiated into adulthood directly without a transitional phase.



**Fig. 10: Bobbie in her smock costume.**

In the opening scene we see a fully grown Roberta dressed in a scarlett, fur-lined, off the shoulder evening dress walking around her nursery, a glamorous outfit that suggests a prosperous future for the character. She is clearly reminiscing about her childhood. This is a scene that was created for the film, it does not feature in the television series or the book, and its clear purpose is to not only inform the audience we are to follow Roberta's story and, despite its archaic version on the teenage experience, attempts to invoke feelings of nostalgia for our own childhoods, for a simpler time and for an idealised historical version of England.



**Fig. 11: Bobbie surveying the playroom as an adult.**

To aid the creation of this cosy, historic England, *The Railway Children* does feature poverty, but it is poverty within comfort. When the Waterbury's relocate to Yorkshire in the film adaptation it is to a large country house with a beautiful garden and views (the television version has them living in a more modest cottage). The suggestion is that they are living on limited means, they lack coal for the fires and beg for food off the Old Gentleman, yet they are still able to afford help from staff occasionally and throw Roberta a jolly birthday party. Even the Perks family live in relative luxury in their large home even though they are supposed to be poor as exemplified by Perks balking at the idea of charity when presented with the town's donations for his birthday. The regional accents of the characters also note the difference in circumstance and class of the characters as the inhabitants of the 'poor' town they have moved to have Yorkshire accents which the Waterbury's do not. Agutter's quiet, well-spoken voice lends an authenticity to Roberta and contextualises her place in society and her place in 'the country' where her family have relocated. Her voice also lends her character and her image a natural quietness which in this

particular role works to her advantage as the thoughtful, mother's favourite Bobbie Waterbury. Agutter's adult roles would also help create this selective, nostalgic view of England, for example her current role in cosy Sunday evening drama *Call the Midwife*.



Fig. 12: The promotional poster for *The Railway Children* inspired by its literary roots.

The floral lined film poster for the film also creates a rosy, rural vision of the past. The literary inspiration is clear as the poster has been created as a book cover and the artist has chosen to feature the characters as illustrations found in children's literature rather than photos. Agutter is billed second to the then better-known actress Dinah Sheridan who played mother, but she was billed above the also well-known Bernard Cribbins which shows a confidence in the film makers of her performance and star potential. A smiling Agutter is placed centrally in the poster and is flanked by Phyllis (Thomsett) and Peter (Warren), they have their arms around each other with Agutter uniting the group. A feature of her work and her star image is a serious, unsmiling nature, the choice to have Agutter/Roberta smiling in this poster works against this. Roberta herself is quiet and serious and rarely seen laughing as she is here, the choice here is clearly for marketing purposes as an unsmiling face, even if it is an accurate reflection of the character and actress, may not be as appealing to a family audience. The film itself has its fun, light moments and is full of childhood fancy but these are not necessarily provided by the 'sensible little woman' Roberta, yet the film is her story. Perhaps featuring a serious faced main character as the focus of the poster, however accurate, would have misrepresented the film.

The children are featured in full colour and are dressed in their Edwardian children's costumes and the adult characters are in the background drawn in greys, fading into the background making the children the focal point much like the story. We also see Agutter in the background of the poster in one of the more dramatic moments of the film, when she flags down an oncoming train with a flag made from her red petticoat, the red of the petticoat contrasting with the grey of the background picture. The costume chosen for Agutter is the white frilled pinafore we see in the film

so the choice here is to show Roberta as a child rather than as a teenager on the cusp on adulthood which all her other teenage roles would feature. This absence of teenagerhood is what can be seen in Hayley Mills' characters in her late teens in such films as *Whistle Down the Wind* and *The Chalk Garden* and reflects a portrayal of teenage girls from early in the previous decade. Whereas Mills was exclusively tied to this portrayal of teenagerhood, Agutter was playing a more diverse set of roles elsewhere and was not tied to residual versions of teenage life. She was and is strongly identified with the role of Roberta and *The Railway Children*, but her roles in her other work would show she was able to play modern versions of the teenage girl.

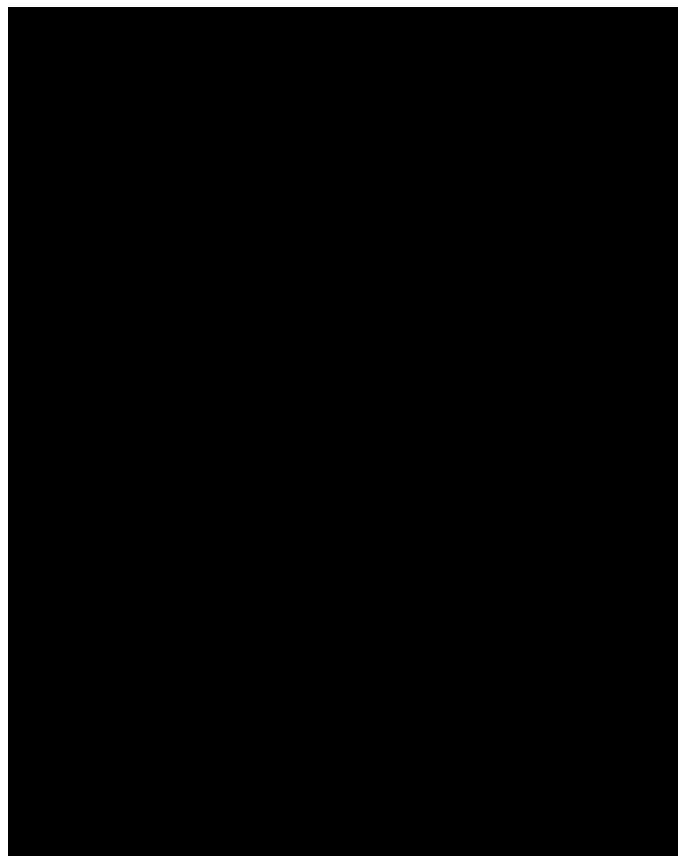


Fig. 13: Agutter profile in the Daily Mirror from November 1970.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Richards. Dick, 'Sex fantasies of a school girl aren't so very shocking', *Daily Mirror* (3<sup>rd</sup> November 1970), pp. 7.

The image of the 'sensible little woman' followed Agutter from her roles and informed the construction of her star persona. A profile in the *Daily Mirror* from November 1970 describes her as 'demure but not dim' and having 'an intelligent awareness' within her work, an intelligence which could help progress her to greater things if she is given the right material. The photo picked to illustrate the article shows a smartly dressed Agutter in a chic belted trench coat, silk scarf, handbag and knee-high, almost Victorian in style, lace up boots. She smiles as she holds a hat in an outstretched hand, awkwardly posing for the camera with a rather unglamorous building site as the backdrop and she looks to be surrounded by litter. The article states Agutter is 16 but she was one month shy of 18 when the article was published, and her outfit is very mature for a teenage girl and lacking in the frivolity you would perhaps expect from a young person's outfit. She doesn't escape objectification completely however and is described as 'pretty, though not beautiful. Slimly attractive, but not sexy' which contrasts with the sexualisation of Geeson's image. The text contrasts with the mature image however, the title suggests that Agutter has been discussing the 'sex fantasies of a schoolgirl', when in reality the article is focussed on discussing the role of Wynne and the associated controversy involving the headmaster of the school used in *I Start Counting*. Like Geeson, Agutter was the subject of 'next big star' articles, but the focus again was on her work rather than her private life.

### Artistic Success

In 1971 Agutter's career and profile was boosted by two films, the first *Walkabout* (1971) released to festivals in May of that year saw her work with Nicolas

Roeg during a period that Roeg was arguably at the height of his powers, having just completed *Performance* (1970) with Mick Jagger and whose next film would be celebrated horror *Don't Look Now* (1973) with 60s 'It girl' Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland. Her second film from that year was a television version of Paul Gallico's *The Snow Goose* (1971) directed by film and theatre director Patrick Garland, for which she won an Emmy for Best Supporting Actress.

Agutter started work on *Walkabout* in the summer of 1969 at the age of 16 and, along with *The Railway Children* and *Logan's Run*, it is one of her most enduring and discussed film. Based on the young adult book by James Vance Marshall it tells the story of a teenage girl (Agutter) and her little brother (Luc Roeg) who are driven deep into the outback by their father who then unsuccessfully attempts to shoot them before setting their car alight and shooting himself. They are left to fend for themselves in the arid landscape, which they do with little success until they meet a young Aboriginal boy (David Gulpilil) on his 'walkabout', a traditional rite of passage where, upon his 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, he is left to explore and survive off the land before returning to his people. He aids the girl and boy on their way, helping them understand their terrain and teaching them how to survive by showing them how to find water and catching food for them to eat. As their journey progresses, they begin to understand and become comfortable in each other's company and the white children's restrictive western ways are slowly eroded as they become accustomed to living in the outback, eating the meat the aboriginal boy kills and swimming in the lakes. The young boy begins to acclimatise to the lifestyle more easily than the young girl, whose sense of purpose to find a town or a city is always present. When the Aboriginal boy takes them to a deserted farm, her repressed desperation is released,



and she weeps as she realises she was not being led to the salvation she was hoping for. The aboriginal boy then performs a dance in an attempt to woo the young girl, an act that scares her and he is left rejected. She tells her brother they will not be travelling with their friend again and the boy reveals that the aboriginal boy is dead. They passively observe his body in the tree where he died and then follow the road near the farmhouse which takes them to an abandoned mine where they encounter a surly security guard who offers them little help, unlike the friend they have just lost. We then travel forward to the future, the girl is living in an apartment like the one she grew up in, her partner comes in discussing his day and her mind wanders away to her time and the freedom she enjoyed in the outback with her brother and her friend.

The film addresses many subjects; the sad legacy of colonialism on the indigenous population of Australia, the restrictive artificiality of the western lifestyle versus the free authenticity of the aboriginal way of life and within these two cultures the coming of age and the end of childhood. As well as the differences and clashes between the differing cultures, Roeg also presents us with similarities, images of the aboriginal boy preparing his meat is juxtaposed with images of a butcher in Sydney, we see the aboriginal boy hunt, we see white settlers hunt. At the centre of these differences and similarities is Agutter's girl who is embedded in the urban way of her life and resistant to the ways of outback life, but in her future finds herself pulled to the freedom the outback offered her for a brief moment in time. 'The focus by the end of the film...becomes the girl and her sense of alienation and joylessness, even

though it is framed by her nostalgia'.<sup>117</sup> We are not certain the moment shown with herself and the boys swimming together actually happened during their journey together or if it is just a fantasy, but we understand her longing for the feeling.

Initially the girl is the personification of the dominant ideas around the modern 60s teenage girl. We meet her in school as she and her class seem to be undertaking a bizarre vocal exercise for an unknown purpose as a Didgeridoo soundtracks the scene, indicating its Australian setting and seems like a call to the girl from the outback. We next meet her at home, we see her through her despairing father's eyes as he observes her kindly teaching her brother to swim, choosing to teach him in an artificial pool despite the presence of a large river next door, the trappings of modern life confining their existence. Their trip in the car is also sound tracked by incessant noise from the girl's radio, another annoyance to her father and another example of the film's presentation of the triviality of the girl's modern life. Her school uniform with its neat hat and blazer is completed by a short skirt, which is afforded a grieved glance from her father, giving the outfit a modern silhouette. As her modern life is stripped away so is her costume, the formality of the hat and blazer which looks so out of place in the outback gives way to her plain white blouse and skirt for practical reasons and eventually clothes are eschewed all together during bathing in a creek. She sheds the layers of her clothing as she sheds layers of resistance to her surroundings, and she finally accepts her life in the natural environment.

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<sup>117</sup> Simmons, Garry, 'Walkabout: Film as Text', *Australian Film Education* issue: 20 (2002) pp 188-191.

Considering the type of publicity Geeson received when she decided to disrobe on film, for example the 'Judy Geestring' headlines from the previous chapter, Agutter's choice here was not seen as controversial despite being alarmingly young when the scenes were filmed. Perhaps because of the youth of Agutter at the time of filming, she was just 16, and when the swimming scene is mentioned by Agutter, it is in the context of her expressing feelings of freedom.<sup>118</sup> We do undoubtedly see Agutter's character from the perspective of the male gaze during *Walkabout*. The film was made by a male director, she is the object of the Aboriginal boy's affection and the montage of the girl swimming in the creek is an elongated three minutes long and intercut with footage of the boys hunting for food with spears, the girl being filmed voyeuristically for the audience to watch her body in a private moment of freedom and the boys doing a typically 'male' activity, the gentle versus the violent. However, Agutter herself doesn't consider this scene as anything other than an expression of the girl's feelings of freedom. In another modern interview with the Daily Mail, Agutter herself said she views this scene as being 'about innocence'<sup>119</sup> rather than the erotic, and how she had never considered that the nudity would be 'exploited'<sup>120</sup> in the age of the internet and considered out of context of the film and this expression of freedom.<sup>121</sup> Despite her thoughts, much like other articles on Agutter, the Daily Mail exploits this subject matter in this very interview by using the headline 'It's sad that years after I swam naked in *Walkabout*, my nudity was exploited on the internet':

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<sup>118</sup> Buxton, Olivia, 'It's sad that years after I swam naked in *Walkabout*, my nudity was exploited by the internet. Inside the head of Jenny Agutter', *Daily Mail*, (8th August 2015) <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/event/article-3186965/Jenny-Agutter-s-sad-years-swam-naked-Walkabout-nudity-exploited-internet.html> accessed 19th March 2021.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

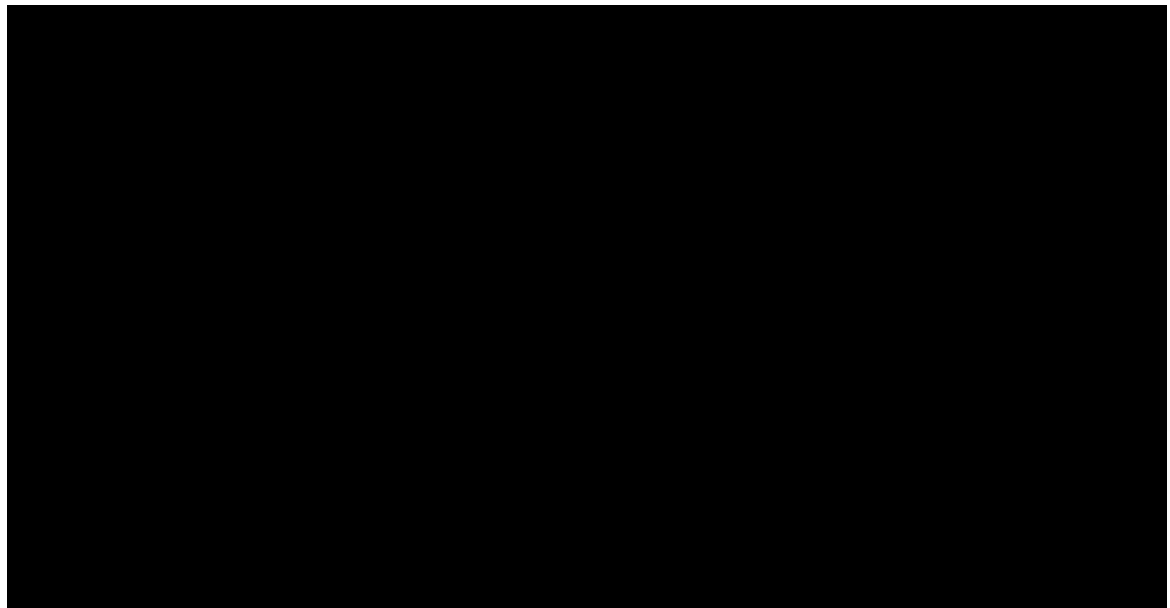
Inside the head of Jenny Agutter' using the famous scene to attract readers. Despite the final cut including shots and scenes which clearly view Agutter from the male gaze and attempts to create her as a new sex symbol, Agutter still stands by the scene and its original intention as the girl expressing a joy in her freedom. There are other moments during the film that show Roeg was attempting to give us the girl's perspective as well as that of the male characters, something Gary Simmons writes about in his article on *Walkabout*.<sup>122</sup> For example, we also see the Aboriginal boy's body from the girl's fragmented perspective. As her brother tries to distract her with the passing by of a herd of camels, she is preoccupied with observing the Aboriginal boy's body as she looks at his buttocks and down to his feet. This could be curiosity on the girl's part or could be an act of 'othering' the boy as his dress is so different to those of the westernised children with his body on full display. Roeg does, however, chose to show the girl looking again a few moments later suggesting a curiosity or fascination with his form, even suggesting an attraction. In the final scene, as the girl fantasises about her time in the outback, all the children swim naked together in the lake laughing and playing freely in nature. However, the camera work is less intimate than that of the earlier scene with the girl alone as we see them from a far in an extreme long shot, but it demonstrates the requirement for nudity did not only include the female form.

In a modern interview with *The Guardian*, the interviewer claimed the swimming scene was the moment Agutter became 'an enduring pin-up' to a new

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<sup>122</sup> Simmons, Garry, 'Walkabout: Film as Text', *Australian Film Education* issue: 20 (2002) pp 188-191.

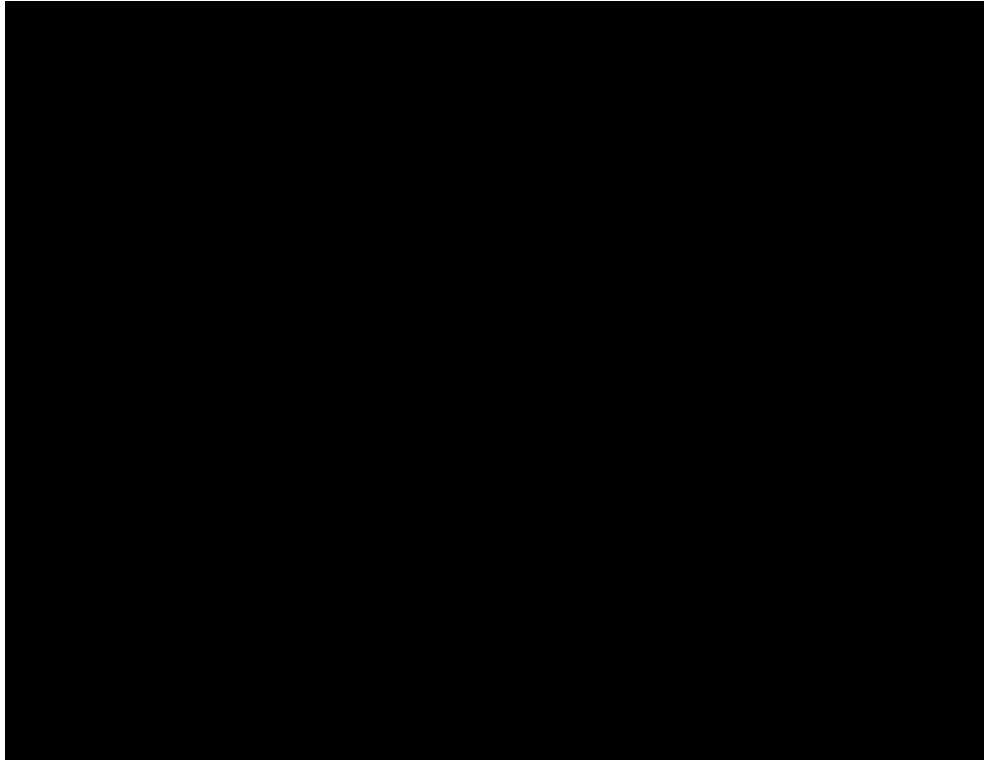
generation.<sup>123</sup> Yet, the controversy that Geeson endured for making the same artistic choices did not materialise for Agutter, perhaps due the nature of *Walkabout* being an art film by an auteur director and the nudity being seen as artistic. Perhaps it was due to the seriousness with which Agutter and the press viewed her work and her talent as an actress or perhaps it was due to the fact that Agutter, at 16, was still a child and this scene was supposed to be an expression of childish freedom. She may have become a 'pin-up' to a generation of young people through this scene but this status did not detract from the perceived quality and seriousness of her work or the respect she was receiving for it from the press and her peers. A new form of stardom for teenage girls had been constructed.



Figs. 14 and 15: Promotional posters for *Walkabout* for the American market.

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<sup>123</sup> Lee, Benjamin, 'Jenny Agutter: 'I am not that young woman that people have fantasised about'', *The Guardian* (16<sup>th</sup> April 2015) <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/apr/16/jenny-agutter-railway-children-tin-older-women-interview>, accessed 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021.



**Fig. 16: Promotional poster for the UK market.**

There is a contrast between the UK and the US promotional posters for *Walkabout*; they are each focussing on different aspects of the film to try and portray a genre. The commonality is that Agutter is the focus of all, the two US posters use the tagline 'The Aborigine and the girl 30,000 years apart...together' bringing the focus of the film on the relationship between the two teenagers and the picture of Agutter focussing on her burgeoning adulthood. The first poster features a photograph of Agutter in the bathing scene with the silhouette of the Aboriginal boy at sunset in the background. The second features the same picture of the boy but inset is a still of the two climbing trees, the boy sits on a branch laughing whilst the girl hangs off the branch in her school shirt and skirt with her legs and underwear on show. Both posters do not feature the girls brother keeping the focus on the potential romantic relationship between the two older children. Rather than suggesting the film as a

romantic adventure the UK poster's tagline suggests it is a thriller choosing 'Strange, savage and terrifying things happen on a Walkabout' and places Agutter and Luc Roeg in the foreground fleeing both the burning car and the Aboriginal boy, which is a curious choice considering the Aboriginal boy befriends the children and helps them survive. Like the poster for *The Railway Children* Agutter is animated once more but this time the artist has chosen to depict Agutter with the figure of a mature woman. Her hairstyle is not the straight long schoolgirl style we see in the film, they have added a thickness and a wave to make the picture more glamorous. They have also enhanced her figure to that of an adult when she was a 16-year-old playing a 14-year-old girl. Contradicting Agutter's comments that the swimming scene was not seen as an erotic moment until the advent of the internet, there is already an effort in both to sexualise Agutter's image with the UK poster depicting her as older and the US poster using a romantic tagline and featuring the nude scene specifically.

In the transition from the girl with the self-consciously fashionable short skirt to one who is becoming one with the land in image and action, she unites the contradictions of urban and natural environment. Roeg himself stated his film was about 'addressing the most basic human themes: birth, death, mutability'<sup>124</sup> and this mutability is integral to the character of the girl and ultimately Agutter's star image itself. Agutter played diverse roles in different genres, she created a 'reconciliation of the apparently incompatible terms' (Dyer. 1979, 26) as Hayley Mills and Judy Geeson's stardom had before her but also exposed them. She played quintessential English

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<sup>124</sup> Gillard, Gary, 'Walkabout: Simply a road movie?', *Australian Film Education* issue: 32 (2003) pp.96-99.

Roberta in a celebration of English culture and history in *The Railway Children* yet as the girl in *Walkabout* she embodies the ignorance and imposition of western, and in turn British, culture on foreign lands. Within her stardom she both embodied the historical English Rose and a modern version which exposed the hypocrisy and artifice of the historical form.

The importance of the casting of Agutter cannot be understated. Ian Cameron wrote in *Movie* in September 1962 that there are 'a few films whose authors are not their directors...Given a weak director the effective author of a film can be its photographer...composer...producer...or star' (Caughie. 1981, 55). I am not suggesting that Roeg was a weak director, Cameron also notes that weak direction is not a pre-requisite for authorship not to lie solely with the director and that 'something really remarkable can come from an efficient director with some magnificent collaborators' (Caughie. 1981, 55). Using the example of Angie Dickinson in *The Sins of Rachel Cade* (1961) a film with what he considers an 'excellent' director, he writes that it was 'above all an Angie Dickinson movie... entirely shaped by her personality and deriving all its power, which was considerable, from her performance' (Caughie. 1981, 55). It could be argued the role of the Girl in *Walkabout* was 'entirely shaped' by Agutter's personality and star image and was responsible for at the very least co-authoring the film with the director and, to a lesser extent considering they were supporting roles in comparison with Agutter, the other child actors Lucien John and David Gulpilil. Her quiet self-possession, resourcefulness and intelligence drive the story and are also key characteristics of the role and her star image, which by the time of release had been established. She was also the focus of much of the marketing and press the film received and, considering modern interviews with Agutter, was the

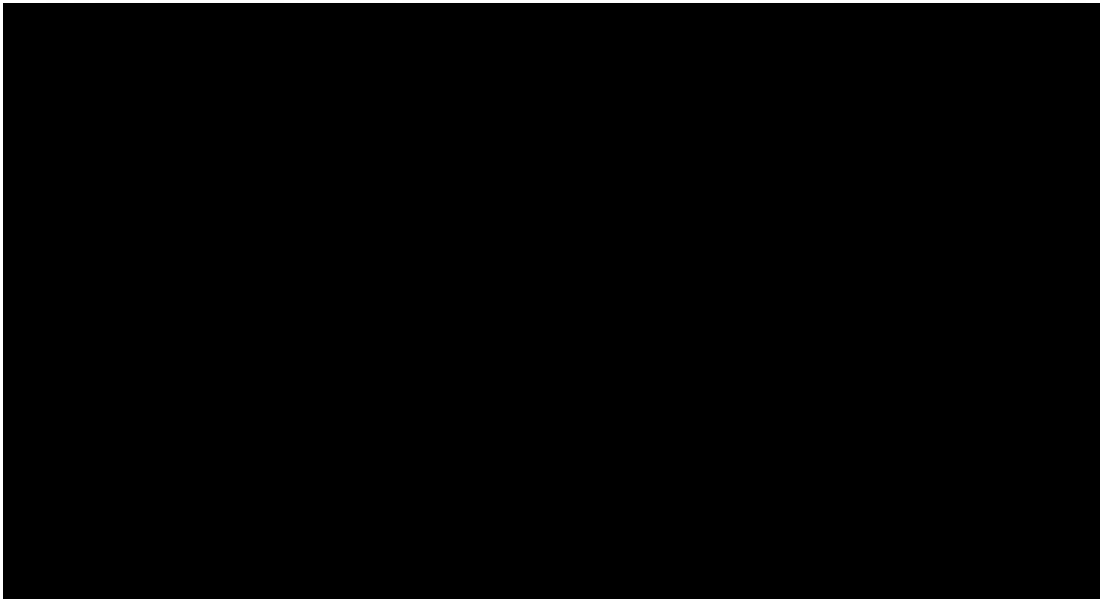


enduring image which the film was 'deriving all its power' (Caughie. 1981, 55) and she remains the steadfast supporter of the film's intentions and importance today.

### Englishness

*The Snow Goose* is an adaptation of Paul Gallico's novel and is set in the Great Marshes of Essex in the 1930s. It tells the story of Fritha (Agutter), a young eel fisher and orphan who works the marshes to earn a living. As she works, she sees a Canadian Snow Goose get shot and injured by hunters much to her great distress. This event is also witnessed by Phillip Rhayader (Richard Harris), a reclusive lighthouse keeper and amateur ornithologist who, with Fritha's help, saves the goose from the hunters and nurses it back to health. The two form an unlikely friendship and Rhayader, an amateur artist, eventually paints Fritha holding the goose. Once the goose is nursed back to health and finally migrates back to Canada, Fritha also leaves Rhayader and the two drift as Fritha ages. When war is declared in 1939 Rhayader is keen to enlist but is rejected by the armed forces due to his disabilities, a rejection he takes to heart. Even when Fritha and the goose return to him, this sense of futility stays, so when he hears the calls for small boats to take part in the evacuation of Dunkirk's beaches, he immediately sets sail. He refuses to take Fritha with him, but the Snow Goose stays by his side as he saves scores of soldiers from the beach until he is killed by enemy fire as he returns for more. When the boats return to the Marshes, Fritha searches desperately for Rhayader until a soldier informs her of his heroism in his final hours and of his tragic death. Bereft, she goes to the top of the lighthouse and sees the Snow Goose circle and then fly home, expressing a final goodbye to Fritha and the lighthouse as it had done to Rhayader on his final mission. Fritha leaves the lighthouse

with the painting Rhayader had made of the goose and herself, grieving for her friend and the end of an unlikely friendship.



**Figs. 17-19: Book covers featuring Agutter in her literary roles.**

Agutter's work associated her with literary adaptations. *Walkabout*, *The Snow Goose* and *The Railway Children* were all adaptations of popular novels with associations to England. Marshall and Nesbit were English authors and despite being written by an American, *The Snow Goose* was set in England. Her image was used on contemporary book editions of the films she had starred in, further associating her with the literary world. In keeping with the diversity of her star image, two of the films are set in Edwardian and Depression era Britain respectively, whereas *Walkabout* was first published in 1959 and the film is set in the present day. *The Railway Children* is considered a children's classic and *Walkabout* and *The Snow Goose* have been taught in schools in Australia and the UK respectively.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Boyle, Anthony, 'Two images of the Aboriginal: *Walkabout*, the novel and the film', *Literature/Film Quarterly* 7:1 (1979), pp. 67.

Made the year after *The Railway Children*, Agutter once again returns to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century for her film roles. Both *The Railway Children* and *The Snow Goose* explore a dying way of British life, both rural but portraying different lifestyles and social classes. Whilst Roberta from *The Railway Children* is decidedly middle-class in dress and behaviour despite being uprooted to rural Yorkshire from a London suburb, Fritha is an orphan who works the Marshes to earn her keep. And whilst there is a conscious effort to make the Yorkshire countryside look picturesque, the Essex Marshes are shown as foggy, rainy and as a place where the land is farmed rather than enjoyed. What Agutter embodies in both these roles is kindness, both Fritha and Roberta make unlikely friends with lonely people and they both care about their surroundings. They are both stoic in the face of tragedy, Fritha's loss of her parents is mentioned but not explored in depth. Much like the girl in *Walkabout* who keeps her father's attempted murders of her and her brother and his subsequent suicide a secret, Roberta knows her father has been wrongly imprisoned and keeps the information to herself. This version of English femininity she creates is one of goodness, discretion and bravery, much like Mills' characters and in Geeson's work in the finale of *To Sir, with Love*.

By the time Agutter collected her Emmy award for *The Snow Goose* in May 1972, she had experienced perhaps her most critically acclaimed year of work to date. Her award further helped establish her reputation as a young talent with a potentially bright future ahead of her. Her appearance at the awards ceremony helped build a specific residual image of Englishness for the young star contrasting with the Hollywood setting of the ceremony, this specificity was created through her dress and behaviour. The dress she chose to wear is like a period costume and combines some

of the most recognisable styles of female dress in English history from the Medieval, Tudor and Regency periods, a nostalgic, 'pastoral look' (Gregson, Brooks and Crew, 2015, 6) popular in the 70s. The bodice recalls the Regency period with its empire line waist, and the Tudor period is evoked with its long, elaborate flowing sleeves. The colour green could connote not only her youth, but also connects with a country often associated with greenness, a characteristic celebrated in art and poetry as the 'Green and Pleasant Land' in Blake's well-known poetry attests. The lack of jewellery, understated make-up and her hair pulled back into a plain bun emphasises her fresh-faced youth as well as showing a lack of Hollywood glamour. In fact, only her thin, arched eyebrow shape popular in the 70s (a fashion which itself had been influenced by historical films of the early 70s which portrayed the 1930s) belie the era of the awards.

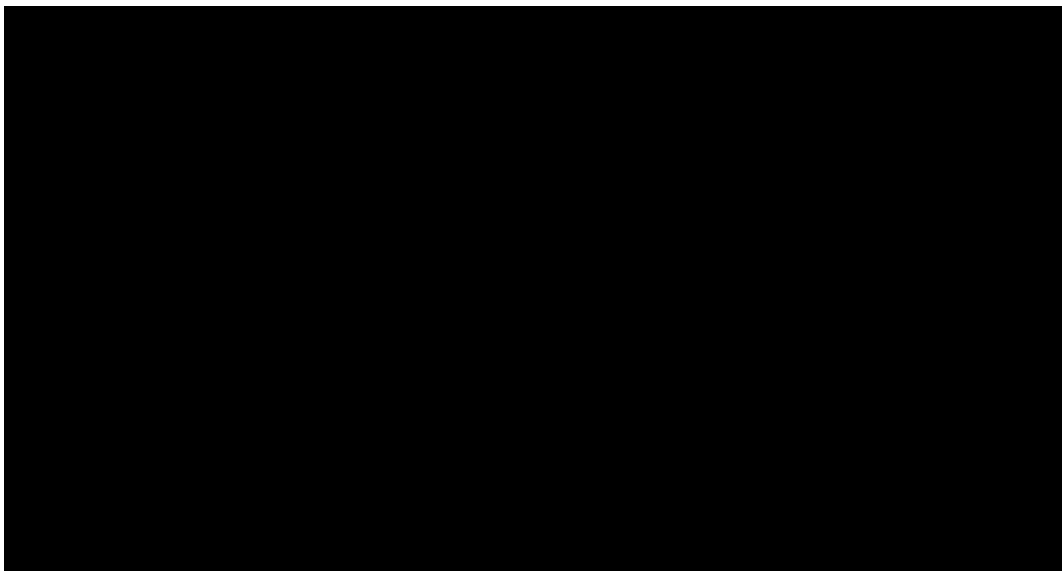
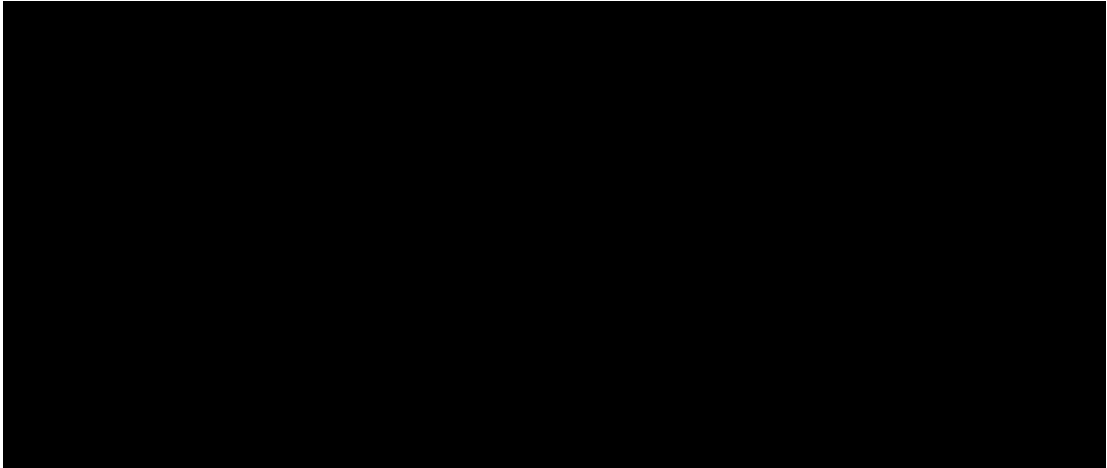


Fig. 20: Agutter making her way to the stage to collect her Emmy award.



**Fig. 21: Agutter delivering her acceptance speech.**

Even the music the Emmy organisers chose to play during her victorious walk to the stage, with its use of triumphant horns, sounded like the music to used to soundtrack the entrance of a historical monarch from a period drama. After her name is called as ‘Miss Jenny Agutter’ (and mispronounced by presenter Johnny Carson as Orgutter) she glides to the stage and delivers this very brief acceptance:

‘First of all, I would like to thank the Academy for giving me this award. I would like to say this wouldn’t have been possible without the help of a great many other people. Thank you very much’.

Unlike many acceptance speeches at film and television award shows, particularly in modern times where we often see winners ushered off the stage for overrunning their time, Agutter’s win and acceptance is only a little over 30 seconds in length, including the walk to the podium. Although clearly pleased with her win, her delivery is understated and restrained, her upper-class English accent noticeably contrasts with the American accent of the award host, again making her seem like a stranger in the glamorous homogeny of the Hollywood landscape. Reviewing the other victory

speeches of that evening, there is a notable difference in Agutter than there is with usual behaviour of the winners and the general drama of award shows in general. For example, Ed Asner's three and a half minutes on the podium sees him naming multiple people and providing laughs for the audience. There are also dramatic gasps from the room when the award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy is a tie, resulting in a tearful joint acceptance speech from Sally Struthers and Valerie Harper. The only other awards acceptance for a major award that finished in under 1 minute that year was Julie Andrews' proxy acceptance for Glenda Jackson's win for Outstanding Lead in a Drama Series. This is worth noting as Jackson, another English actress who like Agutter was making critically acclaimed films and television programmes in the US and the UK, had not even shown up to accept, something she had also done for her two Academy Award wins. This was not exceptional behaviour for members of the British acting community. Maggie Smith was also absent for her win for *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1969) two years earlier. Excepting Julie Andrews' appearance, as it could be argued Andrews was more of a Hollywood entity than a member of the British acting establishment through her film work to this point, this perhaps creates a sense of the British acting establishment not feeling entirely comfortable at this moment in time with these very Hollywood events or did not regard them with any sense of importance. This unease was something that Agutter herself embodies with her brief cameo at the ceremony, exemplified by the end of her speech when she thanks the audience, she seems relieved, as though she was a little uncomfortable with her moment. There is no mistaking Agutter for a Hollywood star. There is a restrained aspect to this behaviour, Agutter can be placed in a group of

'serious' English actresses such as Jackson and Smith before her who do not partake in this kind of Hollywood frivolity.

### Gymslip Jenny

In February 1974 Agutter gave an interview to the *TV Times* regarding her new work in episode 'The Savage Curse' in ITV's *Thriller* series, a horror anthology show made in the mid 70's. Much like her profile in the Daily Mirror discussed earlier which suggests Agutter will be discussing her fantasies, the scandalous title of the article misleads the reader as to the subject matter. The article is seedily entitled 'A Change of Role for Gymslip Jenny', yet upon reading that is where the salaciousness of the interview ends. She discusses how she experienced a pause in her career when she struggled to establish herself as an adult actress after playing school girls for so long, 'I was getting a bit big for school uniforms, but people weren't ready to see me in adult roles yet'<sup>126</sup> she astutely states, displaying an understanding of an audiences dislike for change, something that had profoundly damaged Hayley Mills' career transition. She balks at the suggestion that she is a 'sensual' actress, perhaps displaying she herself might not be entirely comfortable with adulthood yet. A key quote which features in this article, and many subsequent articles about Agutter which appear in this chapter, is from director Bryan Forbes who said Agutter was like a young Katharine Hepburn.<sup>127</sup> Hepburn was a talented and enduring actress who shunned glamour and scandalised the Hollywood of the 1930s by wearing trousers. There is discussion of her Emmy win (clarified for unknowing British readers of the 1970s as the US version

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<sup>126</sup> Block, David, 'A change of role for Gymslip Jenny', *TV Times* (9<sup>th</sup> February 1974), pp. 61.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

of a British Television Academy Award) for *The Snow Goose*. Her fortunes were transformed and there was 'not a gymslip in sight'<sup>128</sup> when she was cast as Miranda in the National Theatre's production of *The Tempest* directed by John Gielgud, the 78<sup>th</sup> actress to audition for the role, highlighting Agutter's special appeal as well as her acting prowess in being able to impress one of the greatest British actors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>129</sup> The most sensational part of the conversation is a lowkey affair, as she discusses how she 'escaped the full frontal headlines'<sup>130</sup> after the swimming in the creek scene in *Walkabout*. The interviewer David Block suggests that Agutter's 'wholesome'<sup>131</sup> image was so robust that it had prevented the press from criticising the actress for her artistic choice. Again, this concept of wholesomeness in young teenage girls had restricted Mills' career when she began to behave like a young adult in her films and, more importantly, her private life, yet Agutter had successfully avoided censure for her artistic choice. What is consistently missing from Agutter's interviews however is a sense of her personality. In this interview she reveals a self depreciation regarding her appearance and her dislike for being called shy, but elements of her life beyond her professional achievements are absent. Comparing this interview with a *TV Times* interview with Judy Geeson 13 months previously, we can clearly see the divergence in their star images.<sup>132</sup> Like Agutter, Geeson is afforded a double page spread discussing her new role in *The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes* with Richard Beckinsale, yet the vast majority of Geeson's article is given over to her views on love, marriage and children, her choices in real estate purchases and her

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<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Laving, Dave, 'Happiness is just being together', *TV Times* (22<sup>nd</sup> January 1973), pp. 12-13.



relationship with designer Sean Kenny. Her work is very much secondary to the conversation despite it being the purpose of the interview, whereas Agutter's interview is the opposite. The illustrations of the interviews also demonstrate this polarity, Geeson is pictured with her partner and is afforded a small shot of her work in her recent role. Agutter is also featured in a large image for the piece sitting thoughtfully in front of a mirror in a fashionable dress, but the interview is surrounded by four photos from her previous successful roles. Geeson is treated as a personality with work being a secondary concern, Agutter is treated as a professional actress and her work is treated as paramount to the interview with image or celebrity being a far less significant factor. In the numerous articles reviewed for this chapter, only a handful from the early 70s discuss Agutter's private life, her relationship with the much older Patrick Garland (who had directed her in *The Snow Goose*) with whom she was in a relationship with from the ages of 18 to 21 (to his 35 to 38) is briefly mentioned in one or two sentences without any expansion on the subject from Agutter herself. The Sunday Express reported on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1974 that the relationship had ended, the news was provided in three sentences with a brief quote from Agutter saying 'There is no one in my life now'.<sup>133</sup> Mills' relationship with Roy Boulting caused extensive tabloid coverage, yet Agutter's relationship with a man twice her age caused little to no sensation at all.

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<sup>133</sup> Anon, 'Goodbye Patrick', *Sunday Express* (10<sup>th</sup> Nov 1974), pp. unknown.

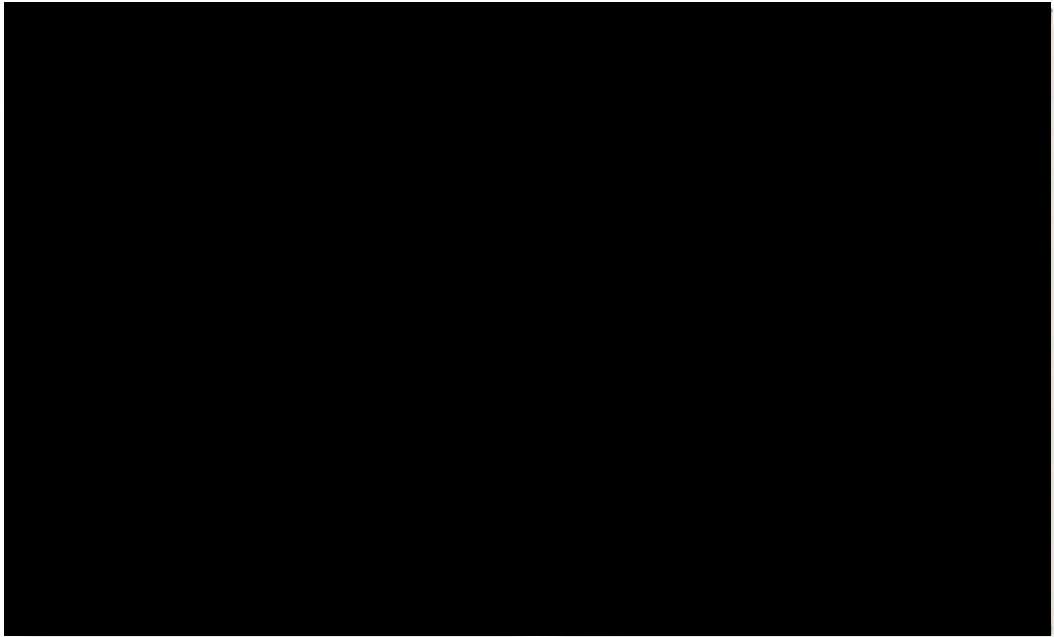


Fig. 22: Interview with Judy Geeson in the *TV Times* 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1973.<sup>134</sup>

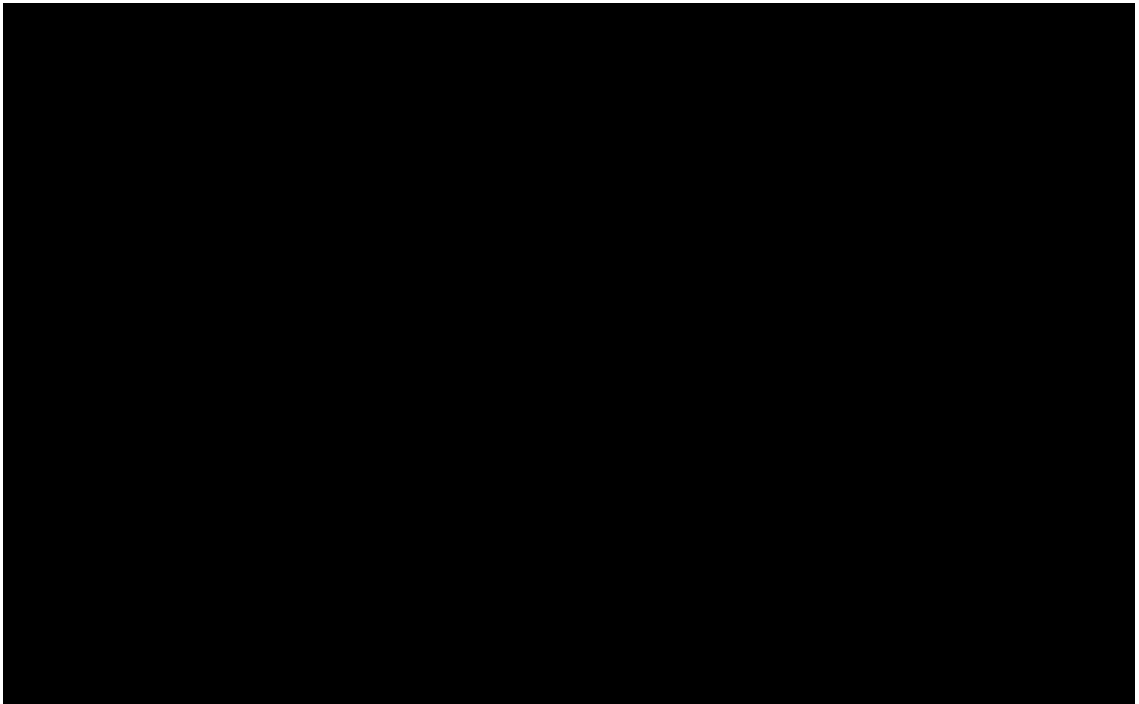


Fig. 23: Interview with Jenny Agutter in the *TV Times* 8<sup>th</sup> February 1974.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Laving, Dave, 'Happiness is just being together', *TV Times* (22<sup>nd</sup> January 1973), pp. 12-13.

<sup>135</sup> Block, David, 'A change of role for Gymslip Jenny', *TV Times* (9<sup>th</sup> February 1974), pp. 61.



**Fig. 24: Interview with Agutter in *Jackie Magazine*.<sup>136</sup>**

An interview in teen magazine *Jackie* with Agutter in January 1972 also reveals the same lack of personal information. Uncoincidentally positioned above the beauty queries section of the magazine is a large picture of a newly blonde Agutter wearing a pale blue linen shirt framed by wild flowers, little if any make-up worn and her hair pulled off her face in a half-pony tail. The focus of the picture is her face, her eyes fixed on the camera and a half smile emphasising a natural state and a lack of artifice. There is also a picture of herself and Richard Harris as Fritha and Rhyader from *The*

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<sup>136</sup> Harris, Sam, 'Animal Crackers', *Jackie Magazine* (22<sup>nd</sup> January 1972), pp. 19.

*Snow Goose* not unlike the photo of Agutter herself, with the actors lying in a field hair pulled back and practical clothing. As with the article from two years later, stardom, image and glamour give way to study of her work as she provides amusing stories about working with trained geese from the set, the most insight we get into her life is her choice to remain blonde for a little while beyond the end of filming.



Fig. 25: Daily Mirror profile December 1970.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Zec, Donald, 'Tomorrow's people', *Daily Mirror* (10<sup>th</sup> December 1970), pp. 13.

Beyond the magazines, the newspapers would also discuss Agutter in reference to her career rather than her personal life, complicating her star image due to the lack of information about Agutter herself. This article on the rise of Agutter's career from the *Daily Mirror* in December 1970 recycles the same Bryan Forbes quote about her potentially being a new Katharine Hepburn. It considers her 'lively talent' and states 'the gifted 17-year-old' could potentially be 'the star of the year'. The photograph they use of her is a candid picture of her looking unglamorous and smiling, supporting the text which suggests, like Hepburn, she has a lack of interest in personal glamour as she is 'rangy [and] uncombed'. They combine the article on her work with a discussion of Ken Russell's latest film *The Devils* (1971), the controversial arthouse director, perhaps suggesting the two are associated and that Agutter is, or soon will be, a person of similar artistic importance.

Much like her brief Emmy appearance, we learn little about Agutter as a person or a star. With Mills we know she was a whimsical teen with a love for nature and horses, with Geeson we learn that she is a modern, independent 60s teen with forward thinking ideas about marriage and domesticity. With Agutter, we learn she is shy, but dislikes this about herself, she is self deprecating about her appearance and willing to take risks if her art calls for it, she describes her swim in *Walkabout* as an 'artistically beautiful scene'.<sup>138</sup> Unlike Geeson, who became 'Judy Geestring' for making the same artistic choices as Agutter, Agutter was not criticised for this and

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<sup>138</sup> Block, David, 'A change of role for Gymslip Jenny', *TV Times* (9<sup>th</sup> February 1974), pp. 61.

avoided the 'ballyhoo'<sup>139</sup> she was dreading. Perhaps this was because she was treated as a serious actress when Geeson was often just treated as a celebrity despite some critically acclaimed roles in some well known films. Although it may seem that there was virtually no image cultivation for Agutter this lack of star persona is a persona within itself. In comparison with other stars, we see a similar treatment of some of the great theatre Dames of the age such as Judi Dench, Maggie Smith or Eileen Atkins. We know them through their work, we know their reputation as great actresses yet we know little of their private lives or interests beyond the most basic information. When we see them in discussion as themselves with Joan Plowright in *Nothing Like a Dame* (2018) we see them laugh about past moments in their career and discuss people they worked with, but they are much more guarded about their private lives. By her late teens Agutter had already become adept at avoiding providing her audience with personal revelations, leaving the press and the marketing department of the studios with little to work with beyond her resumé which in turn helped define her as an actress whose focus was on her work rather than being a film star.

Agutter projects a quiet stillness through her roles which often involve characters who are thoughtful and this is something that can also be said of herself in her interviews. This aspect of her persona is complimented by her gentle speaking voice and a shyness, which was noted in the TV Times piece much to her chagrin. She is shown either in costume during filming or in fashionable, but not glamorous, clothing and little make-up. Even as a blonde, with all the connotations that can be associated with this choice as discussed in the last chapter, she isn't glamorous and

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

is pictured in a field surrounded by flowers suggesting an 'angelic' (Vicendeau. 2016, 99) blonde image. There isn't a total rejection of Hollywood in these choices. She moved to Los Angeles in 1974 to pursue a career there so clearly had no issue with working within the US industry, however there is a rejection of the glamour that accompanies this. In the TV Times interview she states she feels she 'looks like a tart'<sup>140</sup> when she wears make-up demonstrating a clear discomfort with this aspect of stardom. This rejection of glamour fits in with a persona of a natural talent, the emphasis being on her roles not herself or the more frivolous aspects of film stardom. We can see this emphasis on roles being based on the residual effect of the choices of previous 'serious' actresses, but we can also view this as a 'new practice' (Williams. 1977.1 24). With the emergence of second wave feminism there was a new awareness and campaign for respect of working women as evidenced by the Equal Pay Act of 1970 (Sandbrook. 2006, 663). The importance of Agutter's work dominated her image, this would not have been possible even five years previously with Geeson and Mills.

### **Moving to Hollywood**

Agutter underwent a transitional phase during which she acknowledged her audience had difficulty accepting her as an adult.<sup>141</sup> There were attempts to gently update her image during this period.

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.



● **JENNY AGUTTER**  
(above) the shy star of *The Railway Children*, has bought the first home of her own. It is a flat in the Holland Park area and it cost £12,000.

Says Miss Agutter, 19 :  
"I want to discover what I can do for myself. My parents are quite happy now to let me go. We discussed it for some time and they realise I can't be with them forever.

"It is a two-room flat in an old house and it needs some renovations before I move in. It should be ready for Christmas.

"I won't be starting from scratch. I have collected a desk, settee and chairs and LIONEL JEFFRIES gave me a lovely old phonograph."

Fig. 26: Article from the *Sunday Express* December 1972.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>142</sup> Anon, 'Jenny Agutter', *Sunday Express* (3<sup>rd</sup> December 1972), pp. 2.



In this article from the *Sunday Express*<sup>143</sup> from December 1972, just as she was about to turn 20, it is reported she is leaving home and purchasing her own flat. She discusses moving out of her parents house and the small collection of furniture she has acquired. The picture they have chosen is a more mature image of the star, she wears a white broderie anglaise mini dress and no shoes. Her hair is worn loose around her shoulders and she looks directly into the camera unsmiling. This is a transformation in comparison with the picture from the *Daily Mirror* from 1970, the mannered pose and oddly formal clothes have been replaced by a confident, casual and more adult Agutter. There are still allusions to her teenage work in the article, she is characterised as ‘the shy star of *The Railway Children*’ and the highlight of the final paragraph is that Lionel Jeffries, director of *The Railway Children*, gifted her a phonograph, but the choice of image and the subject of leaving home shows her image in transition from teenager to adult. Geeson was also the subject of articles covering her moving out of home including one also from the *Sunday Express* on 21<sup>st</sup> June 1969.<sup>144</sup> In contrast to the brief quote from Agutter, Geeson discusses her difficulties in leaving, her closeness with her parents and her need for independence. She even discusses her star sign in relation to her need for freedom as well as her being ‘the kind of woman who really needs a man to love and wants to be married and have children’.<sup>145</sup> The minimalistic nature of Agutter’s input contrasts with the conversational tone of the Geeson article and exemplifies the difference in their images, Geeson discusses her thoughts at length, giving a fuller sense of herself and

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<sup>143</sup> Anon, ‘Jenny Agutter’, *Sunday Express* (3<sup>rd</sup> December 1972), pp. 2.

<sup>144</sup> Mann, Roderick, ‘I really need a man to love, says Judy’, *Sunday Express* (21<sup>st</sup> June 1969), pp. 9.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

creating a media personality whereas Agutter's brief reply doesn't give much of a sense of herself. 'New meanings and values' (Williams. 1977, 124) were emerging and Agutter's thoughts on domesticity was no longer the most pressing question of the day.

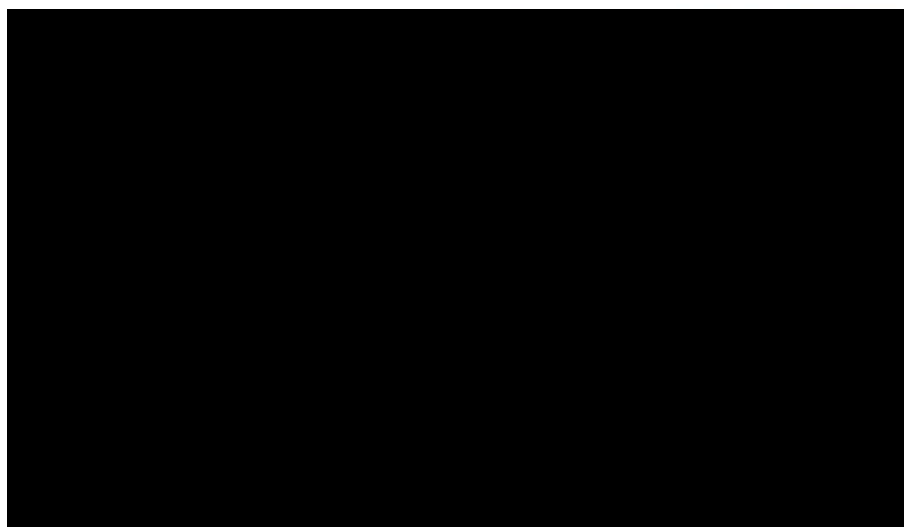
Agutter eventually found more mature roles in theatre and television. By the end of 1974, she had relocated to Los Angeles to pursue bigger opportunities in Hollywood and by 1976, aged 23, she would find wider fame than she had achieved before in her first Hollywood film, *Logan's Run*. Her co-star Michael York was an established film star by 1976 having starred in some of the biggest hits of the 70s to this point, from *Cabaret* (1972), *The Three Musketeers* (1973) to the star studded *Murder on the Orient Express* (1975). Set in 'year of the City 2274' *Logan's Run* is the story of a human society governed by a computer. People over 30 are 'renewed' via a ritual called the 'carousel', the reality of this ceremony is that these people are killed and anyone who tries to escape the ritual are hunted down by 'Sandmen' and murdered. Logan 5 (Michael York) is a Sandman who discovers there is a place known as the 'Sanctuary' outside the City walls where runners allegedly live and, along with Jessica 6 (Agutter) a resident with knowledge of Sanctuary, becomes a runner himself. Initially his mission to run is given to him by the computer governor of the City who wishes him to attempt to escape to help discover where sanctuary is and destroy it, but eventually he becomes a true runner once he learns the truth about the 'carousel' and experiences the freedom of life outside the City limits. Pursued by Logan's fellow Sandman, Francis 7 (Richard Jordan), Logan and Jessica 6 battle through the perimeter of the City to discover the outside they never knew existed. Once they escape they encounter an old man (Peter Ustinov) and in turn discover that life does not have to

end at 30. They take the old man back to the City and, once Logan has destroyed the computer, they bring the young people of the City to the old man which enlightens the community and exposes the deception the old regime perpetrated.

Agutter fully established herself as an adult film star in *Logan's Run*, successfully updating her child star image. Our introduction to Agutter's Jessica is when we see her meet Logan through a teleportation based dating service, where citizens can scroll through prospective partners for the evening by having them beam directly into their living rooms for their consideration. Logan is paired first with a man whom he casually dismisses, a significant choice by the filmmakers to show the emerging 'new values' (Williams. 1977, 125) in society as homosexual acts had only been legalised in England in 1967 which was less than a decade before the film was made. He is then offered and accepts Jessica as a partner, who we subsequently learn had signed on to the service as a distraction from her grief as one of her friends had participated in the carousel earlier in the day. After being quizzed by Logan about her sexuality, another moment expressing the tolerance of this futuristic society towards all members of their community, she decides she no longer wishes to participate in their date. She does share her thoughts with Logan about death and the truth about carousel which, for the moment, he disregards as subversive nonsense.

Immediately we are being introduced to an adult Jenny Agutter through the text and the imagery as one of the main themes of this scene is adult sexuality and this is also reflected in her risqué attire. Agutter's costume in this scene is a futuristic sheer green dress with a gold chain belt, which is entirely open at one side revealing her body underneath. The colour is significant as green represents where Jessica is in

her life cycle within the City and is called 'the green' by Francis when he is in pursuit of the rogue couple. It is, as also previously discussed, a colour of the natural world linking the character of Jessica to the 'outside'. She is subsequently seen in green for the rest of the film. Once Jessica and Logan go on the run her green tunic she wears undergoes some damage and gets elegantly ripped in flattering places as they encounter physical challenges on their journey, the exposure of Agutter's body once again being capitalised on by the filmmakers. We undoubtedly view Agutter in this role from the position of the male gaze, her costumes are designed to view her body in a sexual manner and more than once she is called upon to disrobe in a way that Logan is not. When they make it to the land of ice Logan states they must remove all of their clothes so they do not freeze as they are wet from a previous encounter in a water tank. Jessica undresses completely whereas Logan keeps his shorts on, which not only contradicts his own advice, but also shows the inequality between the displaying of the female and male forms in this film and reveals the attitude with which we are to view these characters.



**Figs. 27-29: Agutters costumes in *Logan's Run*.**

This scene, and also a scene later in the film where Logan and Jessica are running from Francis and find themselves briefly delayed in a room full of nude people who try to entice the couple to stay and join their party, is a residual sign of the free love values that gained notoriety in the late sixties and the swinging era of British film. Also, like many of the swinging films discussed in the last chapter, there is an underlying conservative bias which is revealed when Logan and Jessica learn about marriages and family through the old man and chose this lifestyle over the free love available to them in the City. The people in this society may be free to sleep with whomever they choose, but monogomy is still the ultimate prize in *Logan's Run* and the 'right' choice for the characters.

Jessica 6 has the same intelligence that most of Agutter's previous characters display; she can see beneath the façade of the City's way of life and, unlike many citizens, understands that the religion of the City with its belief in renewal at the carousel is false. She is in some ways a damsel in distress whom Logan saves, but she also displays the now familiar resourcefulness and bravery we often see in Agutter's roles. She choses to go on the run with Logan and towards the end battles briefly with Francis, disarming him, before his final confrontation with Logan. She also returns to the City with Logan where she undoubtedly knows they will face resistance and possibly death to try and spread the word about the truth behind the brutal regime. We also see echoes of her swimming scene in *Walkabout*, the swim in *Logan's Run* is also a reflection of freedom and a bond with nature, but this scene has been updated to include adult themes as she is swimming with Logan as part of a courting ritual before they consumate their relationship.

In an interview with *Films Illustrated* in 1976, Agutter discusses her role in *Logan's Run* and her transition from teen to adult star and her choice to move to the USA. She said:

'Working in the theatre really broke up the transition to adult roles. Everybody knows a film takes a long time to come out and that you must have changed and yet when they're casting a film they assume you are going to look exactly as you did in *The Railway Children* or *Walkabout*. More people here assume I am younger than they do in the States. I hope that *Logan's Run* will establish my age a bit.'<sup>146</sup>

Agutter had made what turned out to be an astute decision to take a break from the British film industry and establish herself in another country as she understood the difficulty audiences had with accepting their child and teen stars as adults. In the US, where she was a far less familiar face, she was able to play adult parts without the hinderance of her teen star identity imposing on the casting of the role, and the *Films Illustrated* article states she won the role of Jessica 6 after just one month in the country.<sup>147</sup> Now an adult star, the writer of the article asks Agutter about the differences between the star system in Britain and in Hollywood and Agutter provides a revealing quote on why, perhaps, she refused to cultivate a star image or celebrity around her work saying 'What happened to those people was that they almost sold their lives. They became stars, but at the cost of their own personalities'<sup>148</sup> showing a wariness to cultivating celebrity around her image. As the article comes to a close

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<sup>146</sup> d'Arcy, Susan, 'Go West, Young Woman', *Films Illustrated* 15: 54 (Spring 1976) p 224-5.

<sup>147</sup> d'Arcy, Susan, 'Go West, Young Woman', *Films Illustrated* 15: 54 (Spring 1976) p 227

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

the interviewer tries to obtain some personal information from Agutter about her private life but gets a typically vague reply saying though she might settle down in the future 'work is of prime importance to me'.<sup>149</sup> Once again, the major part of the interview with Agutter addresses her work and she provides stories of film making and being on set and she politely but vaguely addresses the more personal questions the interviewer has for her. The article is illustrated with pictures of Agutter's work from stills from *The Railway Children* and *Walkabout* to promotional shots of *Logan's Run*. There is no portrait of Agutter as herself, the star of the interview, the full page portraits they use are of her in costume on the set of *Logan's Run* as Jessica 6. She is described as having a 'combination of giggles and gravity' but the interviewer emphasises the serious aspect of her personality by then describing her as being 'self contained, wise beyond her years, capable': all descriptors that would be appropriate for her image as a teen actress from previous years. Her weariness of being pigeonholed is evident in conversations with her as early as 1971, when she was interviewed by the *Daily Express* about her role in *Walkabout*, she said 'I would not accept being turned into a sex symbol. They are only allowed to be that one thing. I would rather have the actress's insecurity of never knowing what is coming'.<sup>150</sup> Agutter, with her horror of Hollywood stars having 'sold their lives'<sup>151</sup> for their careers and her reluctance to be a pin up, was not going to revise her star image as she moved into adulthood. She had a clearly stated wish to be defined by her work as an actress rather than by her personality, something which she maintained during her

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Davis, Victor, 'Why Jenny Agutter decided to reveal all', *Daily Express* (20<sup>th</sup> May 1971), pp. unknown.

<sup>151</sup> d'Arcy, Susan, 'Go West, Young Woman', *Films Illustrated* 15: 54 (Spring 1976) p 224-5.

transitional years from girl to adulthood. The new empowerment of professional women that was emerging allowed for this to happen.

### Conclusion

*Logan's Run* was a moderate hit and led to further film roles for Agutter and a BAFTA award for her role in *Equus* in 1977.<sup>152</sup> She starred in canonical body-horror *An American Werewolf in London* (1981) and, as mentioned in the previous chapter, played a key role in *The Eagle has Landed* (1976) with Judy Geeson in a smaller role. Agutter had successfully transcended the label of child or teen star through her success in her transitional roles, a label Hayley Mills was never really able to lose. Judy Geeson had also made a move to the USA for work in the 1970s yet struggled to find the same magnitude of role she had in her late teens and early 20s. In comparison Agutter's career, at least for the first decade she was in Hollywood, flourished and once she returned to the UK consistently found work in television. There are a number of reasons why Agutter's career was allowed to flourish whilst Geeson's and Mills' careers were so restricted. From her childhood, Agutter was being particular about the work she was doing and the work she wanted to do and consistently chose roles on prestige, 'awards-bait' productions with notable directors and co-stars. In 1966 she turned down a role in Jack Clayton's *Our Mothers House* (1967) due to conflict over pay showing that she, or at least her management team, had a strong sense of her value even when considering work with a prestigious director at the peak of his career as Clayton was in the mid 60s following on from the success of *The Innocents*

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<sup>152</sup> BAFTA, 'Film: Supporting Actress 1978', BAFTA, <http://awards.bafta.org/award/1978/film/supporting-actress>, accessed 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.



(1962).<sup>153</sup> This careful consideration of roles would have not been possible for Mills as she was limited by her Disney contract and bound by the influence of her parents on her British work. Both of these factors meant her chances of flourishing as a young adult actor were restricted. Agutter did not restrict her career to film and cleverly maintained a parallel career in television, whilst Geeson and Mills focussed on film and when they moved into television roles it looked like 'stepping down' as television work, unlike cinema, was not as well respected in the 1970s unlike the present day . She also played a diverse set of roles meaning type casting or being tied to a perceived dominant trend became impossible. She was a precocious 1960s school girl, an Edwardian train enthusiast, a 1930s eel fisher and eventually a sci-fi heroine. Geeson played the various facets of the 'swinging' teen in *To Sir, with Love*, *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush* and *Three into Two Won't Go* meaning her face evoked memories of a certain era within the cinema going public and film industry who struggled to see her in films outside of these boundaries. Geeson also experienced a fame akin with the celebrity culture of the 2000s, every facet of her private life was questioned by the tabloid press, yet with Agutter we learn very little about her private life, the emerging womens's liberation movement enabling her to focus on work rather than personality. Her interviews reveal virtually nothing of her circumstances or opinions and mainly focus on her work and her particular talent.

As previously mentioned, by the time Agutter was finding fame, second wave feminism had emerged into the mainstream and the rights and representation of girls and women were in transition. This in turn informed the portrayal of women on

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<sup>153</sup> BFI online resource ref JLC-10-2-5 'Correspondence relating to the casting of Jenny Agutter': Accessed in the digital BFI archives 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021. See appendix 1.

screen, in the press and influenced the choices actresses made within their careers. The characters Agutter played all had multifaceted personalities and showed intelligence, they were not 'bimbos' or sex objects and they were not exclusively defined by their role within a family or domestic setting. Roberta continually showed initiative during her families enforced relocation to the country, Fritha worked the land as an eel fisher, Wynne is multilayered character, The Girl in *Walkabout* struggles at first but becomes adept at surviving in an inhospitable terrain and Jessica 6 is an underground activist within the oppressive society of the City. As much as Agutter's roles display a progression from the era of Mills and Geeson, in the case of *Logan's Run* in particular, the audience are still invited to view Agutter from a male perspective, particularly through the use of her costume and the displaying of her body.

With Agutter we see a focus on her career and a far less intrusive approach to her private life when compared with Geeson and, especially considering the coverage of her marriage to Roy Boulting, with Mills. Interviews often focus on Agutter's special talent and discuss her roles in detail rather than reporting the more salacious aspects of her private life, a private life which we are rarely given an insight in to. Historically, even the most reclusive of film stars were subject to rumour and speculation, for example Greta Garbo famously shunned publicity yet reportage of her personal life did not cease because of this. Agutter did not represent a sea change in the reporting of young female performers as, particularly in the tabloid newspapers, press intrusion continues to this day for example the phone hacking scandal of the 2010s and the work of campaigners to protect peoples right to privacy. However, Agutter's star image did show a progression in that the transition from performer to celebrity was

not necessarily a compulsory move. She is still associated with her work during her teens, most articles about her will refer to *The Railway Children*, *Walkabout* or both and is happy to embrace the work and is comfortable conversing about it. But, unlike Mills and Geeson, due to the image she cultivated, or lack thereof, the roles she played and the shrewd choices she made with the material she was offered, she has endured and has enjoyed professional success to the present day.

## Conclusion

In an episode from 2006, American teen drama *Gilmore Girls* featured a London themed party. Amongst the stereotypical British iconography in the décor, Rory Gilmore's choice of costume is a quintessentially swinging 60s outfit. She wears a red mini dress with white trim on the pockets and sleeves, a wide brimmed hat, long straight hair and heavy eye make-up. The outfit (and scenery) would not look out of place in *HWGRTMB*. Into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the enduring, dominant international image of British culture and British girl's fashion is from the 1960s, an image my case study stars embodied in differing ways.

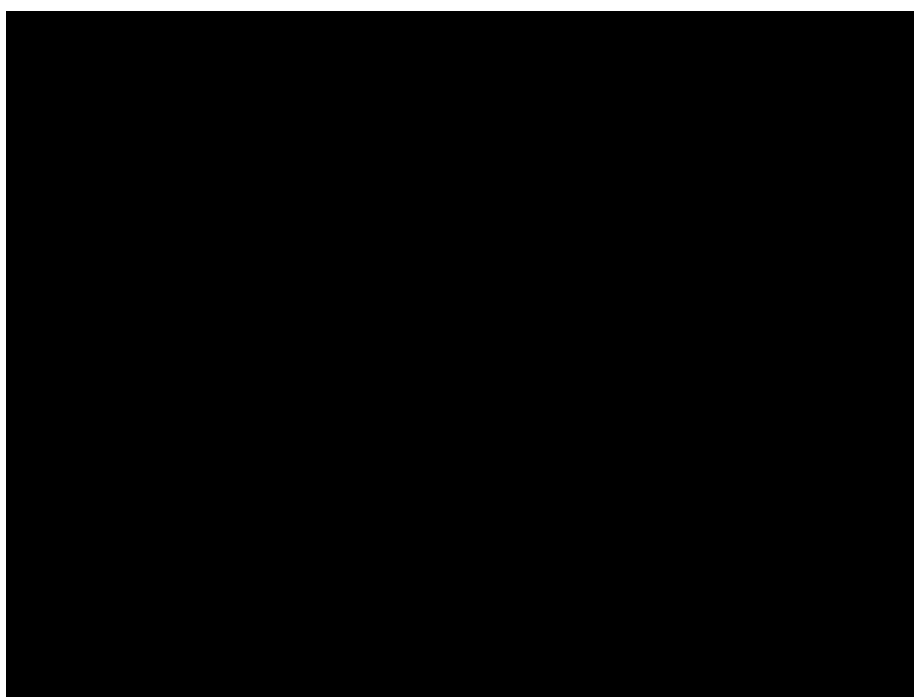


Fig 1: Rory Gilmore dressed for the London themed party in season six of *Gilmore Girls*.

In his work on Marilyn Monroe, Dyer says ‘there is a sense in which stars must touch on things that are deep and constant features of human existence, such features never exist outside a culturally and historically specific context’ (Dyer. 1986, 17). I have shown the representation of teenage girlhood the stars in this thesis embodied are tied to the specificity of the epoch in which they were working. Using Raymond Williams’ theoretical framework for cultural change, I have demonstrated we can see a clear progression in the representation and star image of the teenage girl throughout the long 1960s. I have expanded and complicated the conversation regarding teenage girl stars of the 60s and their links to cultural and social change of the era. I have proved that each of the actor’s roles and star images contained signs of residual 1950s attitudes and styles, dominant 1960s culture which, as this example proves, still dominates the imaginary of Britain into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the emergent cultural and social movements which went on to become culturally significant in 1970s society and beyond.

As I have shown, the historical and cultural context is key to understanding the changing images of the teenage girl in British cinema of the period. Using archival and paratextual material I have demonstrated the changing attitudes towards teenage girls in cinema and the media. I explored the stardom of Hayley Mills through the lens of a teen star rather than a child star which she is more often thought as. Mills’ image was tied to the 1950s idea of childhood and girlhood, before the teenage revolution had taken place and children became adults once they left education as young as 15-years-old.<sup>154</sup> I have complicated the discourse surrounding Mills by

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<sup>154</sup> Unknown. ‘The Education Act of 1944’, *UK Parliament*. (Unknown)  
<https://www.parliament.uk/about/living->

writing about her in the context of her as a teen star rather than a child star, which she is much more commonly considered and researched as. She had a few highly sanitised 'teen' roles for Disney which didn't reflect teen culture of the time, none of the teen roles in British cinema had much of an influence on the media-created image of contemporary teenage life. Her trajectory from child to married woman coalesced with the statistics explored in the first chapter and also matched the marriage boom of the 1960s suggesting that, despite the numerous depictions of the wild and free teenager in the late fifties and early 1960s British cinema, the majority of teenage girls were still expecting to marry once their school days were over. Despite the new attitudes being depicted on screen, I have shown residual attitudes still resonated in society and Mills' roles reflected that as did her star persona before the Boulting relationship was reported.

Hayley Mills' image and work in her British films was heavily influenced by residual cultural and social movements with the occasional spark of what was to emerge later in the long 1960s. At 13 years old, Mills played 11-year-old Gilly in *Tiger Bay*; Gilly is a child who plays with toys. Five years later, a 17-year-old Mills played the immature, child-like Laurel in *The Chalk Garden*. The transitional teenage period is virtually absent as her embodiment of the teenage girl reflects pre-1950s attitudes, before the social and cultural revolution which created the distinct societal group of 'the teenager'. Mills was a child who then transitioned directly into an adult; a key moment that exemplifies this is when Laurel is rehabilitated by Miss Madrigal in *The Chalk Garden*, in the final scene she wears an outfit that echoes her mother's,

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<https://www.heritage-transformingsociety.org/livinglearning/school/overview/educationact1944/>, accessed 29<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

signifying a successful transition from child to woman. This absence is also reflected in her star image, contemporary interviews with Mills painted her as a fanciful and whimsical child with a love of horses and the outdoors. In the interview which opens the chapter on Mills she celebrates her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday yet she is pictured with a teddy bear on her back, a remnant of childhood that does not reflect Mills growing maturity. The press she received also repeatedly reminded the reader that she was the daughter of John Mills, this association with daughterhood also associated her with childhood rather than maturity. When she started to tackle more mature roles, it was as a young wife in *The Family Way* and as an (initially) conservative young woman in *Pretty Polly*. As Melanie Williams notes there is a 'fascination...on the process of Mills' transformation from girl to a woman' (Williams. 2005, 365) and this in turn created a preoccupation with her sexual maturity. Each of these films had permissive aspects and show the emerging changes in attitude in the way young womanhood were being portrayed, yet she was initially embodying a more conservative version of young womanhood by playing a wife. Her star image was shattered when she began to behave like an adult in her personal life and started a relationship with the much older Roy Boulting on the set of *The Family Way*, the image of the child that had been carefully cultivated and re-enforced by repeated reminders of her youth was no longer sustainable.

Geeson, who previously had not been the subject of an extended study, embodied British teenage femininity of the 'swinging' 1960s and, superficially, was allowed more freedom to express more facets of teen life than Mills. Just as Mills' progression into adult roles was restricted by her childlike and 'out of time' (Williams. 2017, 142) stardom, I have showed that Geeson's roles and image were crystallised

by this cultural movement to the detriment of her career as she struggled to move beyond the specificity of the swinging London image. She was 'up and coming' for years and never quite established herself beyond her promising roles in her late teens and early twenties.

Judy Geeson's image and roles encapsulated the dominant iconography of the 'swinging' mid-1960s teenage girl, although she was also not entirely free of residual conservative attitudes of the 1950s. London, and to some extent Britain as a whole, became a focal point for the cultural developments of the mid-1960s as the *Time* cover in the Geeson chapter proves, and Geeson personified these changes. Her roles in *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*, *Prudence and the Pill* and *To Sir, with Love* were of 'cool' urban or suburban teenage girls who were fashionable and enjoyed the freedom of the new permissive behaviours that were now available to them. Alongside her image, the films texts explored ground-breaking and quintessentially 1960s topics such as free love, the Pill and race relations. I have shown they all had an underlying conservative bias, as the free young women Geeson played would ultimately pay for their behaviour or would eventually conform to the old standards. Unlike Mills' roles, Geeson's characters were allowed to be teenagers and the associated experiences that were now supposedly available to that age group despite ultimately being greeted with disapproval. When interviewed, Geeson would also espouse fashionable opinions; she owned her own home and believed in couples living together before marriage. But, like some of her characters, she stated she believed in marriage and ultimately wanted to settle down and have children, as was expected of previous generations of women (and as her contemporaries were doing as discussed in relation to Mills). Geeson was often objectified in a way that Mills was not, her



blonde hair and figure were frequently referenced in articles in a sexualised context. I showed with Geeson we can see an embryonic version of the 'hyper-scrutiny of the female celebrity'<sup>155</sup> that dominated the press into the 2000s; there is a fixation with her physical form and the more salacious details of her private life and work that would become commonplace as the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed. I also demonstrated how we can see glimpses of the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of feminism within Geeson's star persona and roles. However, ultimately, she and they would conform to the older-fashioned lifestyle or be punished for their embracing of their freedom. The new order had not quite taken hold.

Like Geeson, Jenny Agutter's is also a star that has not been the subject of a study. Her stardom and film roles diverge from Mills' and Geeson's. I demonstrated that we can see the emergence of a new type of representation of teenage femininity and star image in British cinema, as well as fading of both residual conservative and dominant 'swinging' attitudes. As Wynne in *I Start Counting*, there was a residual 'hysteria' (Durgnat. 2011, 234) which was evident in the social problem films of the 1950s; Wynne and Corrine are not criminally inclined like the juvenile delinquents of these films but the panic around teenage sexuality, especially regarding teenage girls, is evident in their attempts to behave older than their years. Their preoccupation with romance and sex aligns with the new attitudes emerging in 'swinging' Britain. Despite this, I have shown Agutter's roles and image were created in a new and different mode to those in the past. In the previous studies, there was an emphasis on the physical image and personality with Geeson and a pre-occupation with childhood with Mills.

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<sup>155</sup> Lobalzo-Wright- Julie, 'Female celebrity and aging in the limelight and under the microscope', *NECSUS* 3:2, (2014), PP.195-202.

Agutter's image was secondary, the focus was almost always solely on her work. Even in the featured article from *Jackie* magazine, whose usual focus was on pop idol gossip, beauty tips and teenage fashions, Agutter's interview focussed on her work in *The Snow Goose*. Like Mills, in real life she also had a relationship with a much older man as an older teenager, but this potentially controversial story was only granted a few lines in the newspaper which significantly contrasts with the coverage Mills' relationship with Boulting received. We learn very little of Agutter herself in her early interviews, unlike the celebrity which surrounded Geeson or the joint interviews Mills undertook with her parents. The comparison with Geeson and Agutter's *TV Times* interviews show the significant differences in their stardom as they moved into adult roles, whilst Geeson is quizzed with prying questions about her private life and opinions on domesticity, Agutter is once again discussing her work. Agutter also tended to favour prestige television and film roles; provocative subject matter, adaptations of classic novels and work with auteurs all feature. Both Mills and Geeson were involved in critically acclaimed work, but they also featured in some films which could be seen as somewhat corny or, after a short amount of time, outmoded. I have demonstrated that Agutter was seemingly free of limitations and was able to embrace a range of roles on offer to her without having to consider parental influence or current fashions. Her image was not immature or frivolous, she was a serious actor and was treated as such despite her youth.

If Mills and Geeson struggled along the narrow path of typecasting, Agutter was the sole case study who was able to escape the same fate. By the late 1960s second wave feminism was beginning to gain momentum and we can see a reflection of this in Agutter's image and work. Mills had been infantilised through her frequent

child roles and association with her father, Geeson was stereotyped as the provocative, sexually precocious teen girl in her work and the media. Agutter was able to reject limiting paths and had the opportunity to show a range of roles. She also actively chose to avoid the kind of celebrity Geeson, and to a lesser extent Mills, had experienced leading to a strict focus on her work.<sup>156</sup> She played a modern teen in the suburbs of London and the Australian wilderness, and a rural girl in period dramas set in the 1910s and 1930s. She wouldn't be restricted, her roles were at times fanciful, sensible, resourceful, deceitful, honest and compassionate. She demonstrated range and her work was the paramount concern. Mills could have played the sensible Roberta in *The Railway Children*, Geeson could have played precocious Wynne in *I Start Counting*, yet Geeson playing Roberta or Mills playing Wynne would have jarred with their image and the roles they had played. Only Agutter had the flexibility in her star image to comfortably play both and we can partly attribute that to the emergence of the women's liberation movement.

This work contributes to the field of girlhood studies as well as film studies. As discussed in the literature review, British girlhood in relation to film and stardom in the 1960s is an overlooked area of the field. When it is written about it is as part of a larger study, such as Carol Dyhouse's analysis of *Beat Girl* in *Girl Trouble: Panic and Progress in the History of Young Women*. This is something I have addressed, I have discussed how each of the stars in this work created a specific construction of 1960s teenage girlhood on screen and in the press. Mills was innocent and childlike, traits which continued in her first adult work in *The Family Way* where she immediately

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<sup>156</sup> d'Arcy, Susan. 'Go West, Young Woman', *Films Illustrated*, 5:54 (Summer 1976) pp. 227.

became a bride. Although she was blonde like Geeson, this feature wasn't engaged in an attempt to sexualise her image, she was a 'good' girl and comfortably could be classified as an 'angelic' (Vincendeau. 2016, 98) example of a blonde teenager. Geeson was the 'bad' teenage 'temptress' (Vincendeau. 2016, 99), a 'dream girl' causing problems for boys and men alike and engaging in behaviour that would be sure to outrage the 'anxious' (Hill. 1986, 6) older generation. These two actors became entrenched in this imagery to the detriment of their adult careers. There was an effort to portray Agutter as a sex symbol too, as discussed the US posters from *Walkabout* which attempt to mould her image into a mature buxom blonde, but this was not a striking part of her star persona. Agutter's refusal to be anything other than an artist meant her transition into mature roles was less problematic. She understood her audience's struggle to see her as an adult star,<sup>157</sup> and she astutely moved into stage roles for a period and then to America where they were less familiar with her work as a teenager. *Logan's Run* enabled her to have a hit film away from the British film industry and establish herself as an adult star. By the 1970s there had also been British teen stars who had gone before her, Mills and Geeson are just two examples, from whom she could learn and try to avoid the pitfalls that befell them.

The economic and social turbulence of the late 1960s swept into the 1970s causing 'general economic chaos', shortages, 3-day weeks, power cuts and strikes became commonplace (Hellema. 2018, 49). After the Anglomania of the long 60s dissipated, the British film industry was in crisis as the Hollywood productions which provided much needed investment began to look elsewhere to the new fashionable

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

trend (Murphy. 1992, 275). The social realism that had dominated British films of the late 1950s and early 1960s once again came into fashion in art cinema with Ken Loach's *Kes* (1970) being a box office hit. The psychedelic films of the 'swinging' 1960s fell rapidly out of fashion, sex comedies progressed into low budget fare such as the 'Adventures of a Taxi Driver', a series led by *HWGRTMB*'s Barry Evans and also featured Geeson in a prominent role. The surreal nature of some of the 'swinging' films was also distorted into something much darker in Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), a disturbing exploration of a teen gang's exploits, creating an extreme example of Durgnat's 'hysteria' (Durgnat. 2011, 234). Hammer and Amicus Films continued to make low budget horror films to dwindling audience numbers,<sup>158</sup> Geeson would become known as a scream queen starring in *Goodbye Gemini* (1970) and *Fear in the Night* (1972) with another former British teen star Joan Collins. The British film industry was 'kept afloat by popular franchises such as the *Carry On* and *Doctor* cycles'<sup>159</sup> for much of the decade. Teenagers continued to be represented in British film, *Melody* (1971) re-united Mark Lester and Jack Wilde from *Oliver!* (1968) as two young teens grappling with first love tinged with class conflict. Nostalgia for the recent past was already featuring in hit films, *That'll Be The Day* (1973) starred 70s teen idol David Essex in this romanticised, re-assessed version of 1950s youth. The fantastical *Tommy* (1975) showed the life of the eponymous 'deaf, dumb and blind kid' played by the decidedly non-teenage Roger Daltrey. As the decade progressed *Quadrophenia* (1977) replayed the Mods and Rockers rivalry of the early 1960s and *Scum* (1979) portrayed the life of young men in Borstal. The life of the teenager was now seen in

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<sup>158</sup> Brooke, Michael, 'British Film in the 1970s', *BFI: ScreenOnline* (unknown) <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/1237381/index.html>, accessed 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

films in a range of genres with new themes being explored. Beyond the films of Jenny Agutter, there were fewer films with teenage girls as the star or focus than those of the teenage boy as the previous examples attest. *All the Right Noises* (1971) stars 20-year-old Olivia Hussey playing a 15-year-old girl who has an affair with a married man, yet the film's focus is on the man and was 'an exploration of masculinity in crisis'<sup>160</sup> rather than from the perspective of the girl. *Quadrophenia* features female characters but the protagonist is a teenage boy, Derek Jarman's punk film *Jubilee* (1978) also features young women but most of the characters are just out of their teens. Like the 1960s before them, the British teenager in film in the 1970s has not been the subject of an in-depth study and could be a potentially fruitful area of future research.

By examining the careers of these three case studies, I have tracked and explained the development of the stardom and representation of the teenage girl in British cinema of the long 1960s within its social and cultural context, contributing to the field of both film studies and girlhood studies. I have shed new light on three teenage stars whose careers were previously under-researched, two of whom had not been the subject of an extended study. Through archival research I have demonstrated each of these actor's star images contained signs of residual, dominant and emerging cultural and social attitudes during a key decade in Britain which saw a substantial amount of social change and cultural progress. The restricting conservative attitudes towards the teenage girl compromised the growth of the careers of Mills and Geeson yet, by the early 1970s, in Agutter's image, we can see

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<sup>160</sup> Anon. "All The Right Noises' (1971)". *BFI* (unknown) <https://www2.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2b6abd71c0>, accessed 8<sup>th</sup> Aug 2022.

the emergence of a new respect and understanding of the teenage femininity in British film.

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*Tiger Bay*. Dir. J. Lee Thompson, Prod. Rank Organisation, UK, 1959. Main Cast: Hayley Mills (Gillie Evans), Horst Buchholz (Bronislav Korchinsky), John Mills (Police Superintendent Graham).

*To Sir, With Love*. Dir. James Clavell, Prod. Columbia Pictures, UK, 1967. Main Cast: Sidney Poitier (Mark Thackeray), Judy Geeson (Pamela Dare), Christian Roberts (Bert Denham).

*Tommy*. Dir. Ken Russell, Prod. Ken Russell, Robert Stigwood Organisation Ltd, Hemdale Films, UK, 1975. Main Cast: Roger Daltrey (Tommy Walker), Ann-Margret (Nora Walker), Oliver Reed (Frank Hobbs).

*Too Young to Love*. Dir. Muriel Box, Prod. Welbeck Films Ltd, UK, 1959. Main Cast: Pauline Hahn (Elizabeth Collins).

*Two Gentlemen Sharing*. Dir. Ted Kotcheff, Prod. American International Productions/Epstein-Kulick Productions, UK/USA, 1969. Main Cast: Robin Phillips (Roddy), Hal Frederick (Andrew), Judy Geeson (Jane).

*Violent Playground*. Dir. Basil Dearden, Prod. The Rank Organisation, UK, 1958. Main Cast: Stanley Baker (Sgt Truman), David McCallum (Johnnie Murphy), Anne Heywood (Cathie Murphy).

*Walkabout*. Dir. Nicholas Roeg, Prod. Max L. Raab- Si Litvinoff Films, UK/Australia, 1971. Main Cast: Jenny Agutter (Girl), Lucien John (White Boy), David Gulplil (Black Boy).

*Whistle Down the Wind*. Dir. Bryan Forbes, Prod. Allied Film Makers, UK, 1961. Main Cast: Hayley Mills (Kathy Bostock), Alan Bates (The Man).

## Television

*24<sup>th</sup> Emmy Awards*, USA, NBC, tx. 14.05.1972. Writer. Michael Barrie, Harry Crane, Jim Mulholland, Prod. ATAS. Dir. Bill Foster. Main Cast: Johnny Carson (Host), Jenny Agutter (Award Winner).

*Call the Midwife*, UK, BBC, first tx. 15/01/2012. Writer. Heidi Thomas, Dir. Various, Prod. Annie Tricklebank. Main Cast: Vanessa Redgrave (Older Jennifer Worth), Jenny Agutter (Sister Julienne).

*Gilmore Girls*, series 6 episode 22, USA, Warner Bros. Television, tx 09.05.2006. Writer. Amy Sherman-Palladino, Daniel Palladino, Dir. Amy Sherman-Palladino, Prod. Amy Sherman-Palladino. Main Cast. Lauren Graham (Lorelai Gilmore), Alexis Bledel (Rory Gilmore).

*Juke Box Jury*, UK, BBC, first tx 01.06.1959. Writer. Various, Dir. Various, Prod. Peter Potter. Main Cast: David Jacobs (presenter), Noel Edmonds (presenter), Jools Holland (presenter).

*Ready, Steady, Go!*, UK, ITV, first tx. 09.08.1963. Writer. Various, Dir: Various, Prod. Frances Hitching, Vicki Wickham. Main Cast: Cathy McGowan (presenter), Keith Fordyce (presenter).

*Shelley*, UK, BBC, tx. 05.08.1972. Writer. John Elliot, Dir. Alan Bridges. Main Cast: Robert Powell (Percy Bysshe Shelley), Jenny Agutter (Mary Shelley).

*The Great Inimitable Mr. Dickens*, UK, BBC, tx. 02.06.70. Writer. Caryl Brahms, Dir. Ned Sherrin, Prod. Ned Sherrin. Main Cast: Anthony Hopkins (Charles Dickens), Gordon Jackson (Narrator), Jenny Agutter (multiple roles).

*The Newcomers*, UK, BBC, first tx. 05.10.1965. Writer/Creator. Colin Morris, Dir. Waris Hussein, Prod. Verity Lambert. Main Cast: Alan Browning (Ellis Cooper), Maggie Fitzgibbon (Vivienne Cooper).

*The Railway Children*, UK, BBC, tx. 12.05.1968-23.6.1968. Author. E Nesbitt, Dir. Julia Smith, Prod. Campbell Logan. Main Cast: Jenny Agutter (Bobbie), Gillian Bailey (Phyllis), Neil McDermott (Peter).

*The Railway Children*, UK, ITV, first tx. 23.04.2000. Writer. Simon Nye, Dir. Catherine Morshead, Prod. Charles Elton. Main Cast: Jemima Rooper (Bobbie), Jack Blumenau (Peter), Clare Thomas (Phyllis), Jenny Agutter (Mother), Richard Attenborough (The Old Gentleman).

*The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes*, UK, ITV, first tx. 29.01.1973. Writer. Emmuska Orczy, Alan Cooke, Dir. Graham Evans, Prod. Kim Mills, Reginald Collin. Main Cast: Judy Geeson (Polly Burton), Richard Beckinsale (Richard Frobisher).

*The War of Children*, UK/USA, tx: 05.12.1972 (USA). Writer. James Costigan, Dir. George Shaefer, Prod. Roger Gimbel. Main Cast: Vivien Merchant (Nora Tomelty), Jenny Agutter (Maureen Tomelty), Anthony Andrews (Reg Hogg).

*The Wild Duck*, UK, BBC, tx 21.03.1971. Writer. Henrik Ibsen (play), Max Faber (adaptation), Dir. Alan Bridges, Prod. Cedric Messina. Main Cast: Denholm Elliott (Hjalmar Ekdal), Jenny Agutter (Hedvig Ekdal).

*Thriller*, series 2 episode 3, UK, ITV, first tx. 25.04.1974. Writer. Brian Clemens, Terence Freely, Dir. John Sichel, Prod. John Sichel. Main Cast: Jenny Agutter (Dominie Lanceford), George Chakaris (Robert Stone).

*Top of the Pops*, UK, BBC, first tx. 01.01.1964. Writer. Various, Dir. Various, Prod. BBC Television Service. Main Cast: Various.

*Walt Disney's World of Colour*, USA, first tx. 1966. Writers. Casey Robinson, Peter Schnitzler, Robert Westerby, Dir. Norman Campbell, Prod. Various. Main Cast: Walt Disney (Host), Jenny Agutter (Ingrid Jensen).

*What's My Line?* Series 17 episode 13, USA, CBS, tx. 28.11.1965. Writer. Franklin Heller, Dir. Franklin Heller, Prod. Bob Bach, Gil Gates, Ann Kaminsky. Main Cast: Hayley Mills (Herself).

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<input type="checkbox"/> Reference	JCL-10-2-5
Title	Correspondence relating to casting Jenny Agutter
Date	September 1966
Date from	1966-09
Date to	1966-09
Scope and Content	<p>File containing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transcript of telephone conversation between Jack Clayton and Denys Becher regarding disagreement over Jenny Agutter's contract, 8 September 1966; [two copies]</li> <li>- Draft letter to Denys Becher from Jack Clayton regarding the misunderstanding over Jenny Agutter's fee. 'I can only tell you this is a small budget picture and great artists such as Dirk Bogarde seem to find it worthwhile to accept terms vastly beneath their market value.... This is a shocking and painful situation for me. It concerns a beautiful and talented child called Jenny Agutter. I had no other desire than that she should play a part in my film - and through this - gain stature for her career of the future', no date</li> </ul> <p>[Jack Clayton very much wanted Jenny Agutter to play the role of Diana but after an agreement could not be reached, Agutter went on to film The Gates of Paradise instead and Pamela Franklin was cast as Diana]</p> <p>4 documents</p> <p><a href="#">Casting (acting)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Jenny Agutter</a></p> <p><a href="#">Our Mother's House</a></p>
Extent	
Subject	
Person	
Related Film / Television work	
Access information	

## Appendix

Year	Title	Director	Starring	Description	Other
1950	Dance Hall	Charles Crichton	Natasha Parry, Petula Clark, Jane Hylton, Diana Dors	Four young female factory workers spend their evenings at Chiswick Palais, the local dance hall.	
	Treasure Island	Byron Haskin	Bobby Driscoll, Robert Newton	Based on the childrens adventure book Treasure Island	Set and Made in England but the production was mainly American
	Prelude to Fame	Fergus McDonell	Guy Rolfe, Jeremy Spenser, Kathleen Byron	13-year-old musical prodigy is exploited by ambitious English woman.	
	Lilli Marlene	Arthur Crabtree	Lisa Daniely, Hugh McDermott	A french girl (21) is kidnapped by the Nazi's to sing for them.	Potentially too old
	The Blue Lamp	Basil Deardon	Jack Warner, Jimmy Hanley, Dirk Bogarde	Social problem film about violent youth and his interactions with the Police.	
	The Dragon of Pendragon Castle	John Baxter	Leslie Bradley, David Hannford, Graham Moffatt	Two boys find a dragon at their grandfathers castle.	Unknown ages of children-find
	The Happiest Days of Your Life	Frank Launder	Alastair Sim, Margaret Rutherford	A boys and girls school have to share quarters after the outbreak of war in 1939.	

	The Magnet	Charles Frennd	Stephen Murray, Kay Walsh, James, Fox	A boy becomes convinced he is guilty of murder after mishearing a conversation about a prank he has played.	James Fox was 11 at the time of filming- too young?
	The Mudlark	Jean Negulesco	Irene Dunne, Alex Guinness, Andrew Ray	A boy is mistakenly thought to be plotting to assassinate Queen Victoria	Andrew Ray was 11 at the time of filming- too young?
	No Place for Jennifer	Henry Cass	Leo Genn, Rosamund John, Janette Scott	A girl is traumatised during he parents divorce.	Janette Scott was 12- too young?
	Old Mother Riley Headmistress	John Harlow	Kitty McShane, Arthur Lucan	Mother Riley buys a school with an inheritance.	
195 1	The Browning Version	Anthony Asquith	Michael Redgrave, Jean Kent	A public school master reflects on his career.	Unsure how much the pupils appear as it seems the main story focusses on the teacher.
	The Franchise Affair	Lawrence Huntington	Michael Denison, Dulcie Gray	A school girl claims she has been kidnapped and beaten by two women living in isolation.	
	Lady Godiva Rides Again	Frank Launder	Pauline Stroud, Dennis Price, Diana Dors	A small town girl wins a beauty pageant and seeks fame.	Potentially too old for inclusion.
	Tom Brown's Schooldays	Gordon Parry	John Howard Davies, Robert Newton	Based on the novel	

	Worm's Eye View	Jack Raymond	Ronald Shiner, Diana Dors	Family comedy set in WW2 about 5 fire fighters who come to stay.	
<b>195 2</b>	The Card	Ronald Neame	Alec Guinness, Petula Clarke	A 16 year old from a poor background attempts to climb the social ladder	Alec Guinness was 37 and plays the character at 16 at the start of the film...
	The Frightened Man	John Gilling	Dermot Walsh, Charles Victor	A young man is sent home from University and gets involved in gang crime.	Too old?
	Hindle Wakes	Aruthur Crabtree	Lisa Daniley, Brian Worth	Two mill girls go on holiday which ends in the death of one and the emancipation of the other.	Too old?
	I Believe in You	Basil Deardon, Michael Relph	Celia Johnson, Cecil Parker, Joan Collins	Follows the life of a probation officer.	
	The Importance of Being Earnest	Anthony Asquith	Michael Redgrave, Michael Denison	Algenon and Jack fall in love, Algenon with the 16 year old Cecily	
<b>195 3</b>	Background	Daniel Birt	Valerie Hobson, Phillip Friend	A couple decide to divorce and worry about the affect on their children	
	Cosh Boy	Lewis Gilbert	James Kenney, Joan Collins	A social problem film about gangs.	Available as 'The Slasher'
	Personal Affair	Anthony Pelissier	Gene Tierney, Leo Genn, Glynis Johns	Teenage Barbara has a crush on her teacher and his wife finds	



				out and reacts badly.	
	Street Corner	Muriel Box	Peggy Cummins, Terence Morgan	About women in the police force, including a section on an 18 year old shoplifter.	
	Top of the Form	John Paddy Carstairs	Ronald Shiner, Antony Newly	Comedy about a bookmaker who becomes a headmaster at a boys school.	
	Twice Upon a Time	Emeric Pressburger	Hugh Williams, Elizabeth Allen	The Parent Trap	
	The Yellow Balloon	J. Lee Thompson	Andrew Ray, Kenneth More	12 year old Frankie inadvertently causes the death of a classmate after he steals his balloon.	12 may be too young.
<b>1954</b>	Bang! You're Dead!	Lance Comfort	Jack Warner, Sean Barrett	13 year old accidentally kills a man.	
	The Belles of St Trinian's	Frank Launder	Alistair Sim, Joyce Grenfell	High jinks at a girls boarding school.	
	Lease of Life	Charles Frend	Robert Donat, Kay Walsh, Adrienne Corri	A clergyman and his wife try and send their gifted daughter to music college.	
	Murder by Proxy	Terence Fisher	Dane Clark Betty Ann Davis	A down and out is offered money to marry a young heiress and wakes the next morning to find himself framed for murder.	Betty Ann Davis was 19 at the time of filming.

	Romeo and Juliet	Renato Castellani	Laurence Harvey, Susan Shentall		
<b>1955</b>	Fun at St. Fanny's	Maurice Elvey	Fred Emney, Vera Day	25 year old heir is kept at school by his dodgy teachers.	Despite school setting, story focus is on the adults.
	The Man Who Loved Redheads	Harold French	Moira Shearer, John Justin	A man cannot get over the girl he first loved at 16.	
<b>1956</b>	It's great to be young!	Cyril Frankel	John Mills, Cecil Parker	A music teacher tries to get his pupils to engage with music, especially Jazz.	
	Jaqueline	Roy Ward Baker	John Gregson, Kathleen Ryan	A girl tries to get her Dad's job back.	Jaqueline is 12- too young?
	My Teenage Daughter	Herbert Wilcox	Anna Neagle, Sylvia Sims	A mother tries to deal with her daughters descent into delinquency.	
	Now and Forever	Mario Zampi	Janette Scott	A rich girl and poor boy elope.	
	Wicked as they Come	Ken Hughes	Arlene Dahl	A girl does anything to survive.	Unknown age of 'girl'.
<b>1957</b>	Blue Murder at St Trinian's	Frank Launder	Alistair Sim	High jinks at a girls school.	
	High Tide at Noon	Betta St. John	Philip Leacock	A young woman recalls being 17 and being pursued by 3 suitors.	
	Saint Joan	Otto Preminger	Jean Seberg	Story of Joan of Arc	British funding

	The Scamp	Wolf Rilla	Richards Attenboroug h, Colin Peterson	A boy is taken in by a family after his abusive father abandons him.	Boy is 11- too young?
	The Secret Place	Clive Donner	Belinda Lee, Ronald Lewis	An adolescent boy gets caught up in a heist.	
	The Story of Esther Costello	David Miller	Joan Crawford, Heather Sears	Story of a 15 year old deaf dumb and blind girl relationship with an unhappy older woman.	
	These dangerous years	Herbert Wilcox	Frankie Vaughn, George Baker	A wannabe rock star gets called up for national service and seeks revenge after his friend is killed by the camp bully.	
	The Tommy Steele Story	Gerard Bryant	Tommy Steele	Tommy Steele's stars in his own bipoic about his rise to fame.	Tommy was 21 at time of filming.
195 8	The Golden Disc	Don Sharp	Mary Steele, Lee Patterson	A young girl and boy help their aunt open a rock and roll café.	
	Innocent Meeting	Godfrey Grayson	Sean Lynch, Beth Rogan	A young tearaway bonds with a middle class girl after meeting in a record shop.	
	Violent Playground	Basil Deardon	Stanley Baker, David McCallum	Story of a Liverpool street gang.	
	The Young and the Guilty	Peter Cotes	Phyllis Calvert, Andrew Ray	Parents misunderstand	

				the teenagers romance.	
<b>1959</b>	Idol on Parade	John Gilling	Anthony Newley	Main character is called up for national service- based on Elvis's conscription.	
	Look Back in Anger	Tony Richardson	Richard Burton, Claire Bloom	Based on the play	Kitchen sink but protagonists too old.
	Room at the Top	Jack Clayton	Laurence Harvey	An ambitious young man tries to climb the social ladder.	Too old?
	Sapphire	Basil Deardon	Nigel Patrick, Yvonne Mitchell	A pregnant young woman is found murdered.	Too old?
	Serious Charge	Terence Young	Anthony Quayle, Sarah Churchill	A vicar tries to get a 19 year old delinquent on the right path.	
	Tiger Bay	J. Lee Thompson	John Mills, Hayley Mills	A 13 year old girl witnesses a murder	
<b>1960</b>	Beat Girl	Edmond T. Greville	Gillian Hills, David Farrer	A middle class girl descends into delinquency.	
	The boy who stole a million	Charles Crichton	Maurice Reyna	A boy steals money to help his father.	How old is boy?
	Linda	Don Sharp	Carol White, Alan Rothwell	A young gang member falls in love with a girl who tries to rehabilitate him.	
	The Pure Hell of St Trinians	Frank Launder	Cecil Parker, Joyce Grenfell	More high jinks from the all girls school.	

	Saturday Night, Sunday Morning	Karel Reisz	Albert Finney, Rachel Roberts	A young machinest tries to break away from domestic drudgery.	Age?
	Too Young to Love	Muriel Box	Thomas Mitchell, Pauline Hahn	A 15 year old recounts her life to a judge as she stands in court.	
	Trouble with Eve	Francis Searle	Robert Urquhart, Hy Hazel	A small town tearoom is mistaken for a brothel.	Eve' is played by 18 year old Sally Smith
<b>196 1</b>	Girl on Approval	Charles Frend	Rachel Roberts, James Maxwell	A bereaved couple foster a 14 year old girl.	
	The Greengage Summer	Lewis Gilbert	Kenneth More, Danielle Darriieux, Susannah York, Jane Asher	A 16 year old girl has to look after her younger siblings one summer.	
	No My Darling Daughter	Ralph Thomas	Michael Redgrave, Juliet Mills	Single father does not know how to deal with his daughters growing up.	
	Ragdoll	Lance Comfort	Jess Conrad, Hermione Baddeley	17 year old runs away from her alcoholic father to live with her aunt in London.	
	So Evil, So Young	Godfrey Grayson	Jill Ireland, Ellen Pollock	Two girls commit a robbery.	
	Taste of Fear	Seth Holt	Susan Strasberg	A girl investigates her fathers murder.	
	A Taste of Honey	Tony Richardson	Rita Tushingam	A schoolgirl gets pregnant.	

	Whistle Down the Wind	Brayn Forbes	Hayley Mills, Alan Bates	Some children unknowingly harbour a convict thinking he is Jesus.	
	The Wind of Change	Vernon Sewell	Donald Pleasance, Johnny Briggs	A teddy boy murders a young black man in a racist attack.	
	The Young Ones	Sidney J Furie	Cliff Richard	A young singer tries to save a youth club from demolition.	
1962	The Boys	Sidney J. Furie	Richard Todd, Robert Morley	4 youths are on trial for the murder of a night watchman.	
	It's Trad Dad!	Richard Lester	Helen Shapiro, Craig Douglas	Teenage Jazz fans fight to save a jukebox with their favourite music on.	AKA Ring a ding rhythm
	Lolita	Stanley Kubrik	James Mason, Shelley Winters, Sue Lyon	A middle aged man becomes obsessed with a 13 year old girl.	
	The Lonliness of the Long Distance Runner	Tony Richardson	Tom Courtney	Colin tries to break out from his life of delinquency.	Age?
	Play it Cool	Michael Winner	Billy Fury	Billy Fury vehicle	Fury was 21 at the time of filming.
	Girl on Approval	Charles Freund	Rachel Roberts, James Maxwell, Annette Whiteley	A couple foster a troubled teenage girl.	
	Some People	Clive Donner	Kenneth More	A group of social workers try to help some	

				teenagers in Bristol.	
	The Wild and the Willing	Ralph Thomas	Ian McShane, Virginia Maskell	University students wild behaviour spirals out of control.	
1963	Billy Liar	John Schlesinger	Tom Courtnay, Julie Christie	Billy fantasises of a life away from his humdrum existence.	
	The Damned	Joseph Losey	Macdonald Carey, Shirley Ann Field		
	Live it Up!/ Be My Guest (1965)	Lance Comfort		A film of contemporary musical performance.	
	Lord of the Flies	Peter Brook	James Aubrey	A group of schoolboys are stranded on an island.	
	The Maniac	Michael Carreras	Kerwin Matthews, Nadia Gray	A man meets a woman with whom he starts an affair whilst also being attracted to her teenaged daughter.	
	A Matter of Choice	Vernon Sewell	Athony Steel	Two youths accidentally kill a man.	
	A Place to Go	Basil Deardon	Bernard Lee, Rita Tushingham, Michael Sarne	A working class young man yearns to break free.	
	Summer Holiday	Peter Yates	Cliff Richards	Some youths go on holiday.	
	This Sporting Life	Lindsay Anderson	Richard Harris, Rachel Roberts	A young coal miner is recruited by a local rugby team.	
	Two Left Feet	Roy Ward Baker	Michael Crawford,	A youth is keen to learn	

			Nyree Dawn Porter	about sex and romance.	
	The Yellow Teddy Bears/ Gutter Girls	Robert Hartfrd-Davis	Jaqueline Ellis, Annette Whiteley	Pupils at a girls school deal with issues such as teen pregnancy.	
<b>1964</b>	The Chalk Garden	Ronald Neame	Hayley Mills, Deborah Kerr	A mysterious governess is called to look after a difficult teenager.	
	The Eyes of Annie Jones	Reginald LeBorg	Richard Conte, Francesca Annis	A 17 year old sleepwalker is involved in a murder.	
	Girl with Green Eyes	Desomd Davis	Peter Finch, Rita Tushingham	A girl leaves convent school and moves to Dublin where she and her friends party.	
	A Hard Days Night	Richard Lester	The Beatles		Age-but important to youth culture.
	The Leather Boys	Sidney J. Fury	Rita Tushingham, Colin Campbell	Drama about London's Rocker subculture.	
	Nightmare	Freddie Francis	David Knight, Moira Redmond.	A girl at finishing school is haunted by her past.	
<b>1965</b>	Catch us if you can!	John Boorman	Dave Clark	Dave Clark 5 vehicle.	
	The Collector	William Wyler	Terrence Stamp, Samantha Eggar	A young man stalks and kidnaps a young woman	
	The Knack.. And How to Get It	Richard Lester	Rita Tushingham, Ray Brooks, Michael Crawford	Womaniser and his awkward friend fall for the same girl.	Jane Birkin uncredited.



	Night caller from Outer Space	John Gilling	John Saxon, Maurice Denham	Teenage girls go missing after answering an advert in a magazine.	
	The Pleasure Girls	Gerry O'Hara	Francesca Annis, Ian McShane	A beautiful young girl moves to London and discovers it's swinging.	
	Shakespeare Wallah	James Ivory	Felicity Kendal, Shashi Kappor	19 year old white British girl falls in love with Indian Man	
	The Truth about Spring	Richard Thorpe	Hayley Mills, John Mills	A young girls isolated life is livened up by an adventure to find buried treasure.	
<b>1966</b>	Alice in Wonderland	Jonathan Miller	John Gielgud, Peter Sellers	13 year old Alice has adventures in wonderland.	TV film
	Blow Up	Michelangelo Antonioni	David Hemmings, Vanessa Redgrave, Jane Birkin	Photographer takes suspicious photo.	Jane Birkin and Gillian Hills both feature.
	Dateline Diamonds	Jeremy Summers		Musical film to showcase music of the time	
	The Family Way	Roy Boulting	Hayley Mills	19 year old gets married	
	The Great St Trinians Train Robbery	Frank Launder	Frankie Howerd		
	Georgie Girl	Sylvio Narizzano	Lynn Redgrave		Protagonist is 22
<b>1967</b>	Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush	Clive Donner	Barry Evans	Jamie learns about girls and sex.	
	To Sir With Love	James Clavell	Sidney Poitier, Judy Geeson, Lulu	Mr Thackeray teaches at an inner city	

				London school.	
	Our Mothers House	Jack Clayton	Dirk Bogarde, Pamela Franklin	The Hook children conceal their mothers death.	
	Half a Sixpence	George Sidney	Tommy Steele	Musical about a young draper assistant falling in love.	
	Pretty Polly	Guy Green	Hayley Mills	A young woman travels around Singapore.	
	Poor Cow	Ken Loach	Carol White, Terence Stamp	An 18 year old runs away with her boyfriend.	
<b>1968</b>	Baby Love	Alastair Reid	Anny Lynn, Keith Barron	A school girl is adopted after her mother's suicide.	
	The Girl on a Motorcycle	Jack Cardiff	Marianne Faithfull	A woman is torn between her husband and lover.	Faithfull was 22
	If...	Lindsay Anderson	Malcom McDowell	Public schoolboys rebel	
	Joanna	Michael Sarne	Genevieve Waite	A young art student has an affair with her teacher.	
	Romeo and Juliet	Franco Zeffirelli	Leonard Whiting, Olivia Hussey	Traditional telling of Shakespeare play.	
	The Touchables	Robert Freeman	Judy Huxtanbles	4 girls kidnap their pop idol.	Too old?
	Up the Junction	Peter Collinson	Suzy Kendall, Adrienne Posta	A young heiress attempts to make her own way.	
<b>1969</b>	Bronco Bullfrog	Barney Platts Mills	Dell Walker, Anne Gooding	Follows 17 year old Del and his gang	

				of petty criminal friends	
	Kes	Ken Loach	David Bradley, Freddie Fletcher	A boy has a pet Kestrel.	
	Lola/Twinky/London Affair	Richard Donner	Charles Bronson, Susan George	A 38 year old writer falls in love with a 16 year old girl.	
	The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie	Ronald Neame	Maggie Smith, Pamela Franklin	Follow Miss Jean Brodie, a teacher at an girls school.	
	Three into Two Won't Go	Peter Hall	Rod Steiger, Claire Bloom, Judy Geeson	A teenage hitchhiker has an affair with older married man.	
	The Virgin Soldiers	John Dexter	Hywell Bennet	Two young men are conscripted for national service.	
<b>1970</b>	Eyewitness	John Hough	Mark Lester, Lionel Jeffries	A boy witnesses a murder.	
	The Go-Between	Joseph Losey	Julie Christie, Alan Bates	a 14 year old boy acts as a go-between 2 lovers.	
	I Start Counting	David Greene	Jenny Agguter	A 14 year old girl has a crush on her much older step brother who she also suspects is a serial killer.	
	The Railway Children	Lionel Jeffries	Jenny Agguter	Based on the novel.	
	There's a girl in my soup	Roy Boulting	Peter Sellers, Goldie Hawn	An unlikeable tv presenter falls in love with a 19 year old hippy.	
<b>1971</b>	All the Right Noises	Gerry O'Hara	Tom Bell, Olivia Hussey	A married man has an affair	

				with a 15 year old actress	
	Assault	Sindey Hayers	Suzy Kendall, Frank Finlay	A girl is attacked on her way home from school.	
	Black Beauty	James Hill	Mark Lester, Walter Slezak	Based on the book.	
	A Clockwork Orange	Stanley Kubrick	Malcolm McDowell, Warren Clarke, Steven Berkoff	A gang of youths terrorise a neighbourhood.	
	Melody	Waris Hussein	Mark Lester, Jack Wilde	A love story between two young teens.	
	What the Peeper Saw	James Kelley	Mark Lester, Britt Ekland	A young boy takes an unnatural interest in his step-mother.	
	Please Sir!	Mark Stuart	John Alderton	A teacher takes his class out on a trip.	
	Who ever slew Auntie Roo?	Curtis Harrington	Mark Lester, Shelley Winters	Two children murder their Aunt.	
	Walkabout	Nicolas Roeg	Jenny Agutter	Two children have to fend for themselves in the Australian outback.	
<b>1972</b>	Alice's Adventures in Wonderland	William Sterling	Fiona Fullerton, Hywell Bennet, Michael Crawford	Musical version of the story.	
	The Amazing Mr Blunden	Lionel Jeffries	Dorothy Allison, Lynne Frederick	A family ghost story.	
	Fright	Peter Collinson	Ian Bannen, Susan George	A babysitter is terrorised by her charges father.	
	Twins of Evil	John Hough	Peter Cushing	Teenage twins, one	

				good, one evil fight vampires.	
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