Questions of Value

Taking Museum Collections into a High Security Prison

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This research was developed as part of an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award, between the University of Leeds and Leeds Museums and Galleries. The central area for investigation was to establish the value to be gained from providing prisoners in a high security prison access to museum objects and activities inspired by them. The project itself was delivered to a group of prisoners in HMP Wakefield in 2012 over a twelve-week period. The four-stage project provided opportunities for different forms of interaction with the museum objects and culminated in a final exhibition of work created by the prisoner participants during the project. Throughout the project the findings were positive. They offer strong support to the idea that high security prisons can be viewed as a community in their own right where positive relationships can be established and negative stereotypes broken down. When looked at collectively, the findings indicate that participation in the project made both an immediate and longer-term impact on the wellbeing of those who participated. In some cases this also linked to a reduction in the fears associated with feeling institutionalised.

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Chapter One. Introduction

While the use of museum objects as a tool to enhance the educational provision within the prison system is limited there have been some advances in recent years, although there has been little analysis of how such work could change the expectations or objectives of museums' outreach work. There is also a distinct lack of consideration given to what it is about the use of objects that appears to engage prisoners in a way other approaches cannot, and the potential for this engagement to be used to encourage participation in other aspects of the prison regime.

Having worked as a prison art teacher since 2008, I have experienced first hand how under the current government a change in the focus in prisoner education to employability skills, has left a void in personal and social development aspects of the curriculum. Collaborative projects between museums and prisons could be used to fill the void left by the programmes that have been cut since the introduction of 'payment by results' and the move towards vocational training, all of which have a particular focus on prisoners serving short sentences or those due for release.[1] This means, as will be explored further in the thesis, that education in UK prisons now focuses solely on programmes that can be defined in the boldest terms 'economically productive'. For example, whereas in HMP Wakefield education used to include the opportunity to study a large range of qualifications including GCSE's and Open University degrees, now this is

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[1] Ministry of Justice, 'Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders' (London: Ministry of Justice, 2010)

limited to basic skills education up to level two and vocational training, such as catering, up to level two.[2]

One of the central aims of the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award is to provide social, cultural and economic benefits to wider society. As such the potential knowledge and expertise to be shared as a result of this research could have a significant long-term impact.[3] By considering what the impact could be for each institution, this thesis aims to highlight the possible advantages of forging a collaborative relationship between museums and prisons to work towards achieving specific government-set objectives and targets.

In 2010, when the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) was abolished, responsibility for museums and libraries passed to the Arts Council England, who in 2011 published a framework on their expectations for the future of museums and libraries.[4] Central to this view for the future was the focus on museums being accountable to the public and for them to continue to develop a quality service for their local community in order to 'shore up their long-term public value'.[5] Around the same time, the Ministry of Justice published a new Prison Service Instruction (PSI) which set out a revised framework of what constitutes appropriate activities in which

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[2] Level two is classed as a short course equivalent to a C at GCSE. This is based on my knowledge having worked at HMP Wakefield for eight years and Abigail Harrison-Moore's knowledge having worked at HMP Wakefield from 1996-7.

[3] AHRC, 'Collaborative Doctoral Awards' (Swindon: AHRC, 2013).

[4] Arts Council England, 'Culture, Knowledge and Understanding: Great Museums and Libraries for Everyone' (London: Arts Council England, 2011), pp.4-5.

[5] Arts Council England, 'Culture, Knowledge and Understanding' pp.11-12.

prisoners should participate.[6] This PSI was published to replace the previous version from 2008 and demonstrates the impact that negative media reports about activities within prisons can have on policy development.[7] There is a clear change in language between these two PSI's which highlights the added level of awareness expected from prison governors to ensure all activities delivered are both appropriate for the prisoner needs and defensible to any public scrutiny. In the 2008 PSI the advice was for governors to consider how any activity was 'likely to be perceived by the public and by victims', whereas the 2010 version states that it is necessary to ensure 'that what happens inside prisons can be justified to those on the outside'.[8] This change, at least in part, was in response to the backlash received when the media reported on a comedy course being offered at HMP Whitemoor. The Secretary of State for Justice immediately cancelled the course deeming it 'totally unacceptable'.[9] What can be drawn from a comparison of the documents produced by these two organisations is that the aspirations for future museum work clearly correspond with many of the areas outlined for purposeful activities in prisons, suggesting that a mutually

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[6] Ministry of Justice, 'Activities in Prisons PSI 38/2010 ' (London: Ministry of Justice, 2010), p.1.

[7] Ministry of Justice, 'Acceptable Activities in Prisons PSI 50/2008 ' (London: Ministry of Justice, 2009).

[8] Ministry of Justice, 'Acceptable Activities in Prisons PSI 50/2008 ' p.1; Ministry of Justice, 'Activities in Prisons PSI 38/2010 ' p.2.

[9] Nick McDermott, 'A Sick Joke: Terrorist signs up for Comedy Classes at Top Security Prison', *MailOnline*, 22 November 2008, in *MailOnline* <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1088172/A-sick-joke-terrorist-signs-comedy-classes-security-prison.html> [accessed 15 January 2015]; Emily Dugan, 'Straw Clamps Down on Prison Comedy Classes', *The Independent*, 25 January 2009, in *The Independent* < http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/straw-clamps-down-on-prison-comedy-classes-1515322.html> [accessed 15 January 2015]

beneficial partnership could be developed. In both cases prisons and museums are being called upon to engage further with the public by being transparent about their aims and accountable for the decisions about service provision.

The central proposed outcome of the Activities in Prisons PSI is: 'Prisoners have access to a range of activities that encourage their engagement with the regime and the offender management process and tackle self esteem, behavioural and safer custody issues'.[10] This is broken down into the following areas, where acceptable activities are defined as needing to contribute to at least one or more of:

- Positive social interaction between prisoners or between prisoners and others.

- Offering prisoners the opportunity to make constructive use of their time.

- Development of interpersonal skills.

- The prisoner's physical, mental or emotional wellbeing.

- Pro-social behaviour.

- Maintenance or re-building of family ties.[11]

One of the central goals outlined by the Arts Council is for more people to experience and be inspired by museums.[12] This goal aims to build

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[10] Ministry of Justice, 'Activities in Prisons PSI 38/2010 ' p.1.

[11] Ministry of Justice, 'Activities in Prisons PSI 38/2010 ', p.2.

[12] Arts Council England, 'Culture, Knowledge and Understanding: Great Museums and Libraries for Everyone' (London: Arts Council England, 2011), p.21.

on the success of the work museums do to engage with different community groups and to further broaden access in the future to other groups that do not currently engage with the services offered, one of which could be prisoners.[13] It is also suggested that, within the context of ongoing public reforms, there is new emphasis on the role museums can play in addressing wider social outcomes such as improving wellbeing and encouraging lifelong learning, both of which offer a clear link to the outcomes of the prison service activities criteria.[14] While encouraging lifelong learning clearly links to the vocational training focus for prisoners due for release or serving short sentences, the idea of improving wellbeing could provide both a suitable outcome and a measure of success for activities designed for prisoners serving longer sentences. Museums are relatively experienced with the concept of wellbeing due to the use of Generic Learning Outcomes (GLO's) as a measure of success under the MLA Council's guidelines. This has been combined with a national reporting of The Happy Museum Project which was established in 2011 to 're-imagine the purpose of museums and suggest a link between wellbeing and environmental sustainability'.[15] However, in this context there is the opportunity for wellbeing to be more than just a measure of the affective experience of engaging with museums. As the New

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[13] Arts Council England, 'Culture, Knowledge and Understanding. pp.10-11.

[14] Arts Council England, 'Culture, Knowledge and Understanding. pp.12-13.

[15] MLA, 'Generic Learning Outcomes', in *Inspiring Learning AN IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES,* (Birmingham: Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2010); Sam Thompson and others, 'The Happy Museum: Re-imagining Museums For a Changing World' (Suffolk: Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2011).

Economics Foundation (NEF) suggest, a wellbeing approach can enable one

to

> move beyond looking only at what people lack or need, and
> look at the positive things people bring to situations and
> communities - their assets. This in turn can help us to think
> about the ways that people can be empowered to
> contribute to improvements in their own lives.[16]

From this perspective it can be seen that a wellbeing approach can be used

to highlight issues which participants may be facing to ensure that the wider

services offered as support are appropriate for use and allow for

improvements to existing interventions.[17] In addition to this, as Gerard Lemos

proposes, many of the activities which aim to increase wellbeing can also

contribute to the development of skills associated with reducing reoffending

by encouraging empathy, a sense of calm and consequential thinking in

participants.[18] Therefore, it can be seen that wellbeing has the potential to be

used as a measure for all parties involved in such a collaboration on an

organisational and individual level.

Research Questions

This research aims to explore the potential of working with museum objects

in a closed prison environment through the analysis of the findings from the

development and delivery of a twelve-week project at HMP Wakefield in

2012, in collaboration with the Leeds Discovery Centre Museum. The

[16] Juliet Michaelson, Sorcha Mahony and Jonathan Schifferes, 'Measuring Wellbeing: A Guide for Practitioners' (London: NEF, 2012). p.8.

[17] Michaelson, Mahony, Schifferes, p.25.

[18] Gerard Lemos, 'The Good Prison: Conscience, Crime and Punishment' (London: Lemos & Crane, 2014). p.151.

questions considered within this research have been developed as a result of a comparison between my own experience of working at HMP Wakefield and the existing research into prisoner rehabilitation, criminology and museology.

When developing the research questions it became apparent that the notion of community was key, both in terms of HMP Wakefield as a community and for the group to engage with the wider community outside the prison through interacting with the museum service. From my experience, HMP Wakefield is not like other prisons discussed in the majority of existing research. This means that the culture and community within the prison are generally not comparable to many conclusions previously made. Unlike other prisons, HMP Wakefield does not have a separate vulnerable prisoners (VP) wing which means all prisoners, regardless of the nature of their offence, are held on the main wings. This undoubtedly makes a difference to the sense of community as it means through different aspects of the regime, prisoners will come into contact with others from around the establishment, not just those from the same wing. However, as it is not possible at other prisons to have such an integrated population without the risk of high levels of violence, it seemed that there must be an explanation of why this is possible within the population at HMP Wakefield. A high proportion of prisoners at HMP Wakefield fall into the subculture group described by John Irwin and Donald Cressey as being 'straight' prisoners, meaning they are often 'one-time' offenders with anti-criminal attitudes who generally conform to the

institutional goals and principles.[19] This 'subculture group' are perceived as often identifying more with staff than other prisoners and as a consequence identify less with the inmate code associated with the other central subculture group of convicts.[20] So while there is still some evidence of the 'inmate code' amongst the minority of prisoners who identify with the 'convict' subculture group, such as those voicing beliefs that sex offenders are lower in status and should not be associated with, very little seems to be acted on due to the small ratio of 'convicts' to 'straights' within the population and the overall avoidance of discussing specifics about offences. The impact of this on the community dynamic can be explained further, as Ben Crewe stated 'although certain offences almost categorically lead to stigma, few, in themselves carry an automatic bonus of prestige'.[21] This suggests that prisoners in the 'convict' group recognise there is little to be gained in HMP Wakefield by drawing attention to their offences where they are a minority subgroup. This observation along with the knowledge of the long sentences many of the population at HMP Wakefield are serving, led me to question whether the explanation behind the effect of some of the 'Pains of Imprisonment' faced by prisoners, as proposed by Gresham Sykes, would provide a useful focus in selecting museum objects to use within the

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[19] John Irwin, and Donald R. Cressey, 'Thieves, Convicts and the Inmate Culture', *Social Problems*, 10 (1962), 142-155. p.153;

[20] Rhonda Dobbs, and Courtney A. Waid, 'Prison Culture', in *Encyclopedia of Prisons and Correctional Facilities*, ed. by Mary Bosworth (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2005). pp.719-23. This is often defined using the term 'Importation theory' referencing the fact that prisoners bring previous life experience into the prison with them.

[21] Ben Crewe, 'The Sociology of Imprisonment', in *Handbook on Prisons*, ed. by Yvonne Jewkes (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2007) p.137.

project.[22] As these key areas of deprivation make reference to the value of time spent with family, the value given to personal possessions and the value attributed to the freedom to make choices, they also seemed to provide a range of topics for discussion that could be used when explaining the project to the museum staff, as a way of finding common ground between issues faced by the community groups they traditionally work with and the community within the prison.[23]

I have, consequently, proposed two questions which will be used to frame the focus of the thesis:

- Can access to museum objects, and activities drawn from them, lead to an increased sense of wellbeing and establish a sense of community in prisoners?

- Which objects or collections will engage prisoners, and what are the processes involved in the interactions between the prisoners and the museums objects?

The two research questions therefore seek to outline the benefits that can be gained from the project for both the prison and the museum, with the first question having more focus on the benefits to the prison, and the second question on the benefits for the museum.

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[22] Gresham M. Sykes, *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison*(Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press, 1958) pp.63-78. This is often defined using the term 'Deprivation theory', referencing the 'pains of imprisonment' and the sense of missing something while in prison.

[23] Sykes. pp. 63.78.

Similarities between museums and prisons

At first glance there may not appear to be much in common between museums and prisons. However, by tracking the history of prisons and museums a striking number of similarities can be drawn regarding the change in purpose and role that has led to their place in society today. In *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Michel Foucault explains how the modern prison system evolved during the nineteenth century to become a new way for the state to assert power over the people and maintain control.[24] In *The Birth of the Museum* (1995) Tony Bennett used many of the ideas that Foucault had presented previously, to explain how public museums emerged at the same time and how they employed many of the same tactics to coerce people into conforming to the aims of the state.[25] It is through the discussion of the perspectives presented in these two texts that I will frame the debate here. Foucault explains that prior to the use of imprisonment as the primary form of punishment, the main methods used were public execution and torture, which relied heavily on the public being present as spectators at the delivery of the sentence to acknowledge the power of the sovereign.[26]

> The aim was to make an example, not only by making
> people aware that the slightest offence was likely to be
> punished, but by arousing feelings of terror by the

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[24] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London : Penguin Books, 1977).

[25] Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995)

[26] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London : Penguin Books, 1977), p.58.

> spectacle of power letting its anger fall upon the guilty
> person.[27]

However, when it was found that the public could revolt in instances where they did not agree with the sentence, or when they sympathised with the offender, it was acknowledged that a new form of punishment was required. Consequently, both museums and prisons, were formed out of the idea of the state asserting power over the population, by encouraging a sense of self governance through instilling the principle of governmental power.[28]

In the case of prisons, Michel Foucault suggests it is through the deprivation of the liberty of the individual as the punishment that the state's power is asserted for the prescribed amount of time of the sentence.[29] The second function of a prison was to transform the behaviour of the individuals held there in preparation for release back into society.[30] In the same way as with other disciplinary mechanisms, such as military training, the intention was that by controlling all aspects of the prisoners' lives through discipline and a strictly timetabled regime, their deviant behaviours would change over time to conform with those behaviours deemed more appropriate in society.[31] In museums the aim was to use culture as a form of governmental power.[32]

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[27] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London : Penguin Books, 1977), p.58.

[28] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London : Penguin Books, 1977); Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995)

[29] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* p.236.

[30] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* p.233.

[31] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* p.236.

[32] Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum,* p.23.

As Tony Bennett explains, the belief was that, by presenting the aspirations of the state in visual form, the population would relate to it and be more inclined to adopt the same values and behaviours in their own lives.[33] This was to be achieved by applying the same underlying principles as the Panopticon prison design.[34] Creating a space within which visitors are always watching the behaviours of others, while knowing that their own behaviours are being seen by other visitors, it was hoped would create a society watching over itself.[35] If the intention of museums was to subtly coerce people into changes in behaviour then a prison was intended as the next step when that failed, or as Tony Bennett concluded 'where instruction and rhetoric failed, punishment began'.[36]

If the comparison is taken a step further, similarities can also be seen between the inhabitants of each institution, prisoners and museum objects. Within the context of museums displaying objects, the social dynamics of what is made visible and invisible are essential components of the meaning presented to the public through an exhibition.[37] This concept in itself raises an area of similarity between the curatorial decision about which objects to include and exclude for particular exhibitions, and the societal decision about what offences committed warrant an offender be excluded from society, and

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[33] Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum,* p.23.

[34] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* p.200.

[35] Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum,* p.69.

[36] Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum,* p.88.

[37] Mary Bouquet, *Museums: A Visual Anthropology* (London: Berg, 2012), p.120.

for how long.[38] In both cases these decisions are justified, to a greater or lesser extent, as being in response to public opinion or public interest. The media is often responsible for 'judging' what is, or is not, deemed 'unacceptable behaviour', in collusion with a particular political ideology, this can powerfully determine the public's concept of crime. This is a dynamic explanation that often alters according to those responsible for writing law and reporting on it. Many of the changes introduced to policies relating to prisons result from the perceived disgust or negative public opinion reported in the media.[39] This example of penal populism is often a 'consequence of an intentional attempt to exploit public anxiety about crime and public resentment towards offenders' and results in 'an excessive concern with the attractiveness of policies to the electorate'.[40] So, if the media have the power to make certain crimes and offenders visible to the public by appealing to their moral and emotional interests and their desire to be shocked by news, the media also controls whose stories are left hidden behind the walls of the prison when they do not express the desired point of view.[41] To discuss the same concept from a museum perspective, it is the curator who controls

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[38] Nick Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment* (Winchester: Waterside Press, 1998), p.46.

[39] Pandya, Abhijit, 'Prisoners' Rights and Soft Justice Are Putting the Public at Risk from Re-Offenders', Associated Newspapers LTD, (2012) <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2150752/Prisoners-rights-soft-justice-putting-public-risk-offenders.html> [Accessed 10th January 2016]; Mirror.co.uk, 'Monsters of Monster Mansion', MGN Ltd, (2007) <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/monsters-of-monster-mansion-511393> [Accessed 9th August 2014]; Daily Mail Reporter, 'Rolf Gets Jail Job Painting Mural: Outrage among Campaigners after Paedophile Is Given Role Because Chiefs Wouldn't Give Him Any More Drawing Paper ', Associated Newspapers LTD, (2015) <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3161517/Rolf-gets-jail-job-painting-mural-Outrage-campaigners-paedophile-given-role-chiefs-wouldn-t-drawing-paper.html> [Accessed 10th January 2016].

[40] Julian V. Roberts, Loretta J. Stalans, David Indermaur, and Mike Hough, *Penal Populism and Public Opinion: Lessons From Five Countries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.3-8.

[41] Roberts, Stalans, Indermaur, and Hough, *Penal Populism and Public Opinion*, p.79.

which objects are made visible in the exhibition and which are left in storage.

This decision would be made depending on the specific section of the

community being to appealed to or the specific message being expressed

through the exhibition in response to public feedback.[42] In a discussion of the

visual anthropology behind the practices of displaying objects Mary Bouquet

suggests that

> Objectification in the museum context involves the
> appropriation of cultural property and its reconfiguration
> within a systematic framework of knowledge. Once
> objectified in public visible form, culture can be discussed,
> used and manipulated - exactly because it has been
> transformed.[43]

As Janet Marstine discusses, museums are increasingly being

encouraged to be more transparent about the issues they are facing, the

'hows' and 'whys' of their decision making processes and to be prepared to

discuss these with the public.[44] Transparency in this context is different to

that proposed by Foucault who emphasised the idea that the transmission of

knowledge is to assert or rationalize power.[45] In many ways Foucault's

description of transparency still seems to be the attitude adopted by prison

management, as the subject of imprisonment often slips 'well below the radar

of political contention for long periods', leading to a belief that the public have

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[42] Jette Sandahl, 'Disagreement Makes Us Strong?', *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 55 (2012), 467-478. p.470.

[43] Bouquet, *Museums: A visual Anthropology,* p.123.

[44] Janet Marstine, 'The Contingent Nature of the New Museum Ethics', *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics - Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century Museum*, ed. by Janet Marstine (Oxon: Routledge, 2011) p.14.

[45] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p.27.

little interest in prisons until something goes wrong such as a riot or when

particular stories involving high profile prisoners are reported in the media as

discussed earlier.[46] In such instances the public interest is short lived and

often does not lead to any significant change or wider debate, meaning that

prison management only seems to be transparent to defend decisions made

about issues that reach the media to reassure the public, rather than sharing

the wider processes and reasoning behind what goes on in prison.[47]

The most basic comparison that can be made between prisoners and

museum objects is in the way both are numbered and labelled. During the

reception process at a prison, when a prisoner is inducted for the first time,

the individual is assigned a unique prisoner number that remains with them

for the duration of their sentence. When allocated a cell, this number is

printed on a card and placed on the door alongside their name and religious

denomination. This serves as the prison staff's main form of identification for

that prisoner. The prisoner is also issued with an ID card, which must be

worn at all times.[48] When an object is formally accessioned into a museum's

collection, it too is assigned a unique accession identifier. This name usually

consists of numbers and letters in a format specific to the individual

institution, and is a key method by which the object can be identified as part

[46] Esther Heffernan, *Making it in Prison: The Square, the Cool, and the Life*, (London: Wiley-Interscience, 1972) p.1; Richard Sparks, 'The Politics of Imprisonment', in *Handbook on Prisons*, ed. by Yvonne Jewkes (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2007). p.73.

[47] Esther Heffernan, *Making it in Prison'*,p.1.

[48] Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment*, pp.115-116; Ministry of Justice, 'Early Days in Custody - Reception in, First Night in custody and Induction to Custody PSI 74/2011' ed. by HM Prison Service (London: Ministry of Justice. 2011). p.4.

of the process of collection management. An object's accession number is physically attached to the object, either by a tag or written directly on to it if appropriate, in the same way as a prisoner would be expected to wear their ID card. The object is then given a second name which relates directly to the collection of which it will be in order to make it physically recognisable.[49]

The second proposed area of similarity concerns the criteria and methods by which prisoners and museum objects are placed in different categories. All prisoners held in UK prisons are categorised based on an assessment of the level of security risk they pose. The four security categories within the prison service are A, B, C and D, with A being the highest risk level. The security category allocated to an individual is significant as it helps to determine the prison to which they will be sent.[50] In addition to this formal form of categorisation, there is also an alternative form amongst prisoners themselves, based on the type of offence committed. As Joe Sim (2006) suggests, under this hierarchy prisoners whose offences are viewed as masculine, such as armed robbers or those linked with organised crime, are seen as higher in status and at the opposite end of the scale from those who have committed sex offences or offences against children.[51] The process by which museum objects are named and categorised can be viewed in a similar way. The main way museum objects are categorised is by museum collection or subject discipline, such as Archaeology or Natural

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[49] Susan M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp.128-129.

[50] Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment*, p.49.

[51] Joe Sim, 'Tougher than the Rest? Men inPrison', in Prison Readings: A Critical Introduction to Prisons and imprisonment, ed. by Yvonne Jewkes and Helen Johnston (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2006), pp.109-120.

History. They are then classified further based on rules imposed from formal taxonomic systems, by culture, geography, use or physical characteristics or in order to make it easier to distinguish between similar objects.[52] As Mary Bouquet suggests, the reasoning behind this method of categorisation was based on the assumption that,

> Classification by physical characteristics made the collection more scientific. The viewer's attention was focussed on characteristics visible on the surface of the artefact (referred to as the internal criteria), rather than external criteria such as provenance.[53]

Research into the experience of long-term imprisonment by Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor (1972) suggests that on entry to the prison the pre-institutional self loses its importance and a new institutional identity is created.[54] It is on this new identity that researchers and prison staff appear to focus. If the same perspective is applied to museum objects, it can be seen that, in order to become part of a museum collection, an object must too be removed from its original context and reinterpreted as part of the collection. At the point when it is displayed in its new context within the museum, different meanings can be attributed to it, in line with the intentions of the curator.[55] These examples indicate a parallel with the idea of governmental

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[52] Pearce, *Museums, objects and Collections*, pp.119-123.

[53] Bouquet, *Museums: A Visual Anthropology,* p.124.

[54] Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor, *Psychological Survival: The experience of Long-Term Imprisonment* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972), p.147.

[55] Bouquet, *Museums: A Visual Anthropology,* p.123.

power discussed by both Michel Foucault and Tony Bennett.[56] As Bennett explained governmental power

> typically works through detailed calculations and strategies which, embodied in the programmes of specific technologies of government, aim at manipulating behaviours in specific desired directions.[57]

By turning the focus to the political influences on each institution over the last thirty years, it is also possible to find similarities between the expectations of museums and prisons. These can help to demonstrate how, in the current political climate, there is a significant mutual benefit to be gained if collaborative relationship can be established.

As public institutions, both museums and prisons are accountable to the government and, as such, the services they deliver and the role they are expected to play in society can change with every new government.[58] During most of the twentieth century, both museums and prisons were seen as authoritative institutions whose value and place in society were essentially unquestioned; it was taken for granted that they were worthwhile.[59] However, that level of autonomy was drastically reduced for both institutions during the 1970's following the introduction of the Local Government Act in 1972 and

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[56] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish;* Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*

[57] Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum*, p.23.

[58] Caroline Lang, John Reeve and Vicky Woollard, 'The Impact of Government Policy', in *The Responsive Museum*, ed. by Caroline Lang, John Reeve and Vicky Woollard (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), p.19.

[59] Caroline Lang, John Reeve and Vicky Woollard, ed. *The Responsive Museum: Working with Audiences in the Twenty-First Century* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), p.3.

the election of the Conservative government in 1979.[60] Since then, both

museums and prisons have been required to make significant changes as a

result of the introduction of new policies and changes to funding and

budgets. Both institutions are measured against government set

performance indicators. For sponsored National Museums, this includes the

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) being responsible for

collecting, comparing and reporting statistics relating to visitor numbers,

trading income and levels of fundraising as the measure of success.[61] For

local authority museums it can be even more complex as 'success in meeting

strategic goals often depends on acquiring external funding and meeting the

differing and sometimes conflicting criteria of different funding agencies'.[62]

For prisons the main measure is through the results of the Her Majesties

Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMCIP) inspections which evaluate individual

prisons against four expectations: safety, respect, purposeful activity and

resettlement.[63] In instances where these results are poor, with little sign of

improvement, the prison can be put up for tender and potentially privatized.

The same can be seen with the governance of museums as 'the general

drive to cut costs has also led many local authorities to look for alternative

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[60] Ian Lawley, 'Local Authority Museums and the Modernizing Government Agenda in England', *Museum and Society*, 1 (2003), p.76.

[61] Liz Foxell, Alex Hanson, and Jodie Hargreaves, 'Sponsored Museums Performance Indicators 2013-2014', (London: Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2015). pp.4-12.

[62] Ian Lawley, 'Local Authority Museums and the Modernizing Government Agenda in England', *Museum and Society,*1(2003). p.75.

[63] HMCIP, 'Her Majesties Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales: Annual Report 2013-14', ed. by HM Inspectorate of Prisons (London: Crown Copyright, 2014). p.1.

forms of governance for their museums'.[64] This has led, for example, to an increasing number of councils opting to put their museums out to trust.[65]

Four key areas have been highlighted for discussion here which range from the effect of drastic budget cuts, to the impact of social exclusion policy and the rise of academic study of both museology and criminology.

The first area concerns the response of prisons and museums to the fiscal policies implemented by the Conservative government in the 1980's. During the 1970's and 80's public services across the board were hit with drastic budget cuts in addition to an increased emphasis on performance indicators and accountability for proving 'value for tax payer money' of the services provided.[66] This signalled a change in attitude towards prisoners whereby, instead of being viewed as victims of circumstances, the decision to commit a crime was seen as a personal choice and therefore was solely the responsibility of that individual.[67] This change in political and public opinion was heavily influenced by Robert Martinson's *What Works?* report in 1974, and the recommendations of the May Committee in 1979, both of which concluded that there was little evidence to suggest that the rehabilitative programmes in place made any significant change in the

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[64] Ian Lawley, 'Local Authority Museums and the Modernizing Government Agenda in England'. p.77.

[65] Lawley. p.77.

[66] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.24; Liora Lazarus, *Contrasting Prisoner Rights: A Comparative Examination of England and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.137.

[67] Bennett, 'Prisoner Backgrounds and Biographies', p.7.

behaviour of prisoners.[68] As a result, the role of prison during this period was almost entirely focussed on security and protecting the public, with any purposeful activities used to keep the prisoners occupied rather than to attempt any form of rehabilitation.[69]

During this period there was an emphasis on individualism and a belief that 'market and money can always do things better than government', which led to many public services being privatised.[70] This new way of thinking can be summed up by a quote from Margaret Thatcher, 'there is no such thing as Society. There are individual men and women, and there are families'.[71]

For museums, the reduction in core funding signalled a change in the day-to-day running of them as a service, with individual institutions being expected to adopt business-like management techniques and enhance their funding through sponsorship, admission charges or sales.[72] With quantitative data, such as visitor numbers, being used as one of the main indicators of a museum's worth, this led to an emphasis on marketing and audience development, and an increase in the amount of time spent fundraising and

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[68] Robert Martinson, 'What Works? Questions and Answers about Prison Reform', *The Public Interest*, 35 (1974), 22-54; Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment,* p.37.

[69] Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment,* p.37; Bennett, 'Prisoner Backgrounds and Biographies'. p.7.

[70] Roy Ballatyne and David Uzzell, 'Looking Back and Looking Forward: The Rise of the Visitor Centred Museum', *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 54 (2011), 85-92 (p.87); Lang, Reeve, and Woolard. p.24.

[71] Jamie Bennett, 'Prisoner Backgrounds and Biographies', in *The Prisoner*, ed. by Ben Crewe and Jamie Bennett (Oxon: Routledge, 2012),1-12 (p.7)

[72] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.24.

securing sponsorship.[73] The government at the time also actively

encouraged local authorities to consider transferring their museums to

charitable trusts.[74]

For both prisons and museums the effect of these drastic changes on

the services they delivered led to significant reforms in the 1990's, although

the catalyst in each case was significantly different. In the prison system, the

riots at HMP Manchester (Strangeways) and six other prisons in 1990,

resulted in a public inquiry being commissioned which provided the catalyst

for long-term changes to the system. The Woolf Report proposed that a

stable, healthy prison could only be established where three requirements

were proportionately balanced.[75] These are security, preventing prisoners

from escaping; control, preventing prisoners from being disruptive; and

justice, the need to treat prisoners fairly and with humanity.[76] The report

concluded that prisoners often felt a sense of justice was lacking, and this

was one contributing factor which had led to the riots.[77] The

recommendations made to address this imbalance in levels of justice centred

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[73] Carol Scott, 'Museums and Impact', Curator: The Museum Journal. 46 (2003), 293-310. (p.293); Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.24.

[74] Lawley. p.77.

[75] Rt Hon Ld Chief Justice Woolf, 'Prison Disturbances April 1990. Report of an Inquiry by the Rt Hon Ld Justice Woolf (Parts I and II) and His Honour Judge Stephen Tumim (Part III), in *Document Type: COMMAND PAPERS,* (1990). pp.225-226.

[76] Rt Hon Ld Chief Justice Woolf, p.226.

[77] Rt Hon Ld Chief Justice Woolf, p.226.

on respect and responsibility.[78] It was proposed that prisoners must be

required to take responsibility for the actions that had resulted in their

incarceration, as well as for what they did during their sentence.[79] This was

suggested alongside the idea that prisoners should be provided with

opportunities to make choices and, in turn, be held accountable for their

choices.[80] It was believed that the impact of providing opportunities for

responsibility and autonomy would increase levels of respect, both between

prisoners and between staff and prisoners.[81] By the late 1990's, this renewed

emphasis on rehabilitation outcomes led to the introduction of Offending

Behaviour Programmes and the development of existing education provision,

as a way of addressing the social and thinking skill deficits identified in

prisoners.[82]

     Following the 1998 Government Comprehensive Spending Review

there was a change in focus to evidence-based policy which promised to

> temper the opinion and value bases of political preference
> and accountability with reasoned, evidential criteria for
> decision making and resource allocation.[83]

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[78] Rt Hon Ld Chief Justice Woolf, p.373.

[79] Rt Hon Ld Chief Justice Woolf, p.243.

[80] Rt Hon Ld Chief Justice Woolf, p.373.

[81] Rt Hon Ld Chief Justice Woolf, p.373.

[82] Flynn, pp.123-125.

[83] Tim Hope, 'Pretend it Works: Evidence and Governance in the Evaluation of the Reducing Burglary Initiative', *Criminal Justice*, 4 (2004), 287-308. p.289.

This meant that government departments were expected to provide analysed

evidence to support any proposal they made before a policy could be

introduced. Critics felt, however, that this could lead to research being

carried out to validate policy rather than discover why certain programmes

worked or which parts had the most effect.[84] There was also a feeling that

research could be misused or criticised by politicians if it found that a popular

policy might not work.[85] So, although researchers within the field increasingly

included qualitative methods as part of their practice, policy makers still

placed a disproportionate emphasis on quantitative data.[86]

A similar level of politicization could be seen in museum research at

the same time, with the strong government emphasis on social inclusion

informing the level of research into museum visitors.[87] As policy makers can

be sceptical about anecdotal or subjective evidence many museum

researchers focussed on combining qualitative and quantitative research

methods in order to effectively work towards this agenda.[88]

In the museums sector, it was widely felt that the budget cuts had

made it difficult, if not impossible, for many museums to raise money for

development and refurbishment. Consequently many British museums were

[84] Hope, p.288; Clive R.Hollin, 'Evaluating Offending Behaviour Programmes: Does only Randomization Glister?' *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 8 (2008), 89-106. p.95.

[85] Hope. p.290.

[86] Hollin. p.95; Loic Wacquant, 'The Curious Eclipse of Prison Ethnography in the Age of Mass Incarceration', *Ethnography*, 3 (2002), 371-397. p.385.

[87] Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, 'Studying Visitors', in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. by Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011) p.374.

[88] Hooper-Greenhill, p.374.

looking 'tatty and tired compared to those in other European countries and North America'.[89] The most significant change to begin to address these issues came in 1994 with the introduction of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), which was set up to raise funds for 'good causes' including work by museums.[90] As a funding stream, the aim of the HLF was to offer smaller grants for community projects that had a particular focus on education, access and social inclusion, and larger funds to assist in constructing or redeveloping museum buildings and education centres.[91] The criteria set out for HLF grants is designed to reflect government thinking and as such requires museums seeking funding to work towards meeting certain performance indicators by providing evidence of the benefits for the public of the work delivered by them.[92]

The election of the Labour government in 1997, and their commitment to tackling social exclusion, led to the second area of similarity between prisons and museums highlighted for discussion here.[93] The focus of the Social Exclusion Unit, introduced in December 1997 as a 'force of change', was to reintegrate those who had become socially excluded, to invest in basic minimum standards for everyone and to prevent social exclusion in the

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[89] Sara Selwood and Maurice Davies, 'Capital Costs: Lottery Funding in Britain and the Consequences for Museums', *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 48 (2005), 439-65 (p.439.)

[90] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.20.

[91] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.20.

[92] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.23.

[93] Helen Jermyn, 'The Arts and Social Exclusion', ed. by Arts Council of England (London: Arts Council of England, 2001). p.2.

future.[94] As the social exclusion policy was a priority across all related

government departments, there was an impact felt on the services delivered

by both prisons and museums.[95]

Prisoners were identified early on as a group at risk of social

exclusion. The 2002 report from the Social Exclusion Unit, *Reducing*

Reoffending by Ex-Offenders, highlighted that, 'many prisoners will have

experienced a lifetime of social exclusion'.[96] The report went on to explain

the depth and scope of this problem by stating that prisoners are thirteen

times more likely than the general population to have been in care as a child

and two and a half times more likely to have had a family member convicted

of a criminal offence.[97] This highlighted the significance of tackling social

exclusion as a method of crime prevention, due to the suggestion that, if not

addressed successfully, social exclusion could become intergenerational.[98]

The report also highlighted the value of education as a method of reducing

the effects of social exclusion, stating that prisoners are ten times more likely

to have been a regular truant from school and that eighty percent of

prisoners have a writing level at or below the level of an eleven-year-old

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[94] Social Exclusion Unit, 'Preventing Social Exclusion'. ed. by Social Exclusion Unit (London: Cabinet Office, 2001). p.4.

[95] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.22.

[96] Social Exclusion Unit, 'Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners', ed. by Social Exclusion Uit (London: Cabinet Office, 2002), p.6.

[97] Social Exclusion Unit, 'Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners', p.6.

[98] Social Exclusion Unit, 'Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners', p.6.

child.[99] Amongst the range of recommendations the report made were the focus on encouraging prisoners to engage with education courses to address deficits in basic skills and life skills and encouraging participation in Offending Behaviour Programmes (OBPs).[100]

The Group for Large Local Authority Museums (GLLAM) report on 'Museums and Social Inclusion' (2000) found that local authority museums had started to develop positive relationships with their communities and were working towards becoming agents of social change.[101] The aim of the report was to highlight museum initiatives that had worked towards addressing issues around inequalities and disadvantages by engaging with people at risk from social exclusion.[102] As a means of demonstrating the value of the new focus on museum education, the MLA Council developed the Generic Learning Outcomes.[103] These suggest that museum education and outreach work has the potential to contribute to the following five areas; knowledge and understanding; skills; attitudes and values; enjoyment, inspiration, creativity; activity, behaviour, progression.[104]

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[99] Social Exclusion Unit, 'Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners', p.6.

[100] Social Exclusion Unit, 'Reducing Re-offending by Ex-Prisoners', p.133.

[101] Eilean Hooper-Greenhill and others, 'Museums and Social Exclusion: The GLLAM Report (Leicester: Group for Large Local Authority Museums, 2000), p.18.

[102] Eilean Hooper-Greenhill and others, p.23.

[103] MLA, 'Generic Learning Outcomes', in *Inspiring Learning AN IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR MUSEUMS, LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES,* (Birmingham: Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2010).

[104] MLA, 'Generic Learning Outcomes'.

Under the Labour government, further support for local and regional museums was established in the form of the *Renaissance in the Regions* scheme set up in 2001 by the MLA Council.[105] The aim of this scheme was to enhance levels of community regeneration through the transformation of regional museums.[106] *Renaissance* funding was provided to support the development of initiatives that meet government priorities such as making services to the public the central feature of work.[107]

The third area of similarity identified is the focus of academic research on both museum studies and criminology.[108] In museum studies there has been an increased awareness that museums 'are about objects and for people', which has highlighted the need for a stronger link to be established between the theory developed through academic studies and the practical work of museum practitioners.[109] In criminology, there has been an increased awareness of the danger that prisoners can be viewed as the object of research rather than the subject, and a renewed interest in considering the effect of imprisonment on individuals through researching aspects of life

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[105] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.25; MLA, 'Renaissance in the Regions: Realising the Vision', (London: MLA, 2009)

[106] MLA Council, 'An Introduction to Museums, Libraries, Archives' (London: MLA Council, 2008).

[107] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. pp.25-26; MLA, 'Renaissance in the Regions: Realising the Vision', (London: MLA, 2009)

[108] *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. by Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011). p.6; *The Effects of Imprisonment*, ed. by Alsion Liebling and Shadd Maruna (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005)

[109] Lang, Reeve, and Woollard. p.22; Macdonald. p.6.

inside prisons.[110] In both fields of study the emphasis has shifted to a focus on transparency in the aims and processes behind aspects of the institutions previously hidden from public scrutiny.

Museum ethics, as a field of study, calls into question the social responsibilities museums have and the need to identify with the people to whom they are morally accountable, their local communities.[111] Eilean Hooper-Greenhill suggested in 2006 that this change in focus meant, for the first time in almost a century, that museums were changing the way they operated in order to involve their local community and develop a closer, more effective relationship with them.[112] Although museums have always been understood to have an educational and social role, research into the way people learn throughout their life in informal settings has show that previous approaches, such as the idea that learning simply requires objects to be on view, are out of date.[113]

Despite there being a considerable amount of research emerging into the factors that contribute to desistance from crime, until recently little of this included the voice of prisoners, when considering the effects of imprisonment

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[110] Liebling and Maruna; Ben Crewe, *The Prisoner Society: Power, Adaptation, and Social Life in an English Prison,* ed. by Alison Liebling, Clarendon Studies in Criminology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); *The Prisoner*, ed. by Ben Crewe and Jamie Bennett (London: Routledge, 2012) p.xiv.

[111] Tristram Besterman, 'Museum Ethics', in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. by Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 431-441 (p.431).

[112] Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, ed. by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill and Flora Kaplan, Museum Meanings (Oxon: Routledge, 2006). p.1.

[113] Eilean Hooper Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*. p.2.

or life inside prisons.[114] As Loic Wacquant highlighted in 2002, at a time when prison populations are increasing, it becomes even more important to understand the everyday world of inmates and remember that the prison as an institution is not merely an external social space. Therefore it is insufficient to only study it as a world unto itself.[115] Research by Ben Crewe has provided a new emphasis on understanding how prison as a society functions and the value in considering individual prisoner's accounts of their experience in prison.[116] Equally research into the effects of imprisonment has highlighted the negative effect it can have on a person's wellbeing and ability to function in life once released from prison.[117] My own experience has led me to believe that every prison has its own society rather than there being a single society across the whole prison system. At local prisons this seems to be an extension of life outside due to the short sentences being served. Within the dispersal system, however, this is more about establishing a community solely within the establishment as a way of coping with and accepting the length of time being served.

The final area of similarity stems from the changes made to prisons and museums since the election of the Coalition government in 2010. Under this government, prisons and museums have both been hit with significant

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[114] Crewe and Bennett, *The Prisoner*; Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*; Liebling and Maruna.

[115] Loic Wacquant, 'The Curious Eclipse of Prison Ethnography in the Age of Mass Incarceration', p.371; As of October 2015 the prison population in England and Wales was 85,106. This is the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe. For more detail see: Prison ReformTrust, 'Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile', (London: Prison Reform Trust, 2012)

[116] Crewe and Bennett, *The Prisoner*; Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*:

[117] Liebling and Maruna.

funding cuts and, as a result, have had to rethink their role and place in society if they are to be sustainable in the future. The 'Spending Review 2010' saw cuts proposed for the Justice sector of twenty-three percent and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) of twenty-four percent over the following four year period, making them two of the hardest hit areas.[118] In 2010 the Secretary of State for Justice, Kenneth Clarke, published the consultation paper *Breaking the Cycle* in which he outlined proposals to change the delivery of rehabilitation programmes to a 'payment by results' system.[119] In this paper, it was proposed that this approach would open up the market to new providers from the private, voluntary and community sectors and encourage a new, innovative response to the rehabilitation needs of prisoners.[120] It is therefore the intention of my research project to ascertain whether establishing a long-term, collaborative partnership between a museum and a prison can offer a new and effective option to enhance the existing range of rehabilitation programmes currently delivered to prisoners in custody.

Discovery Centre

The purpose of Leeds Museums and Galleries (LMG), which includes the Discovery Centre as a key site, is to collect, study, preserve and interpret historic and cultural collections, and to use these as inspiration for educating,

[118] HM Treasury, 'Spending Review 2010', ed,by HM Treasury (London: Crown Copyright, 2010). p.10.

[119] Ministry of Justice, *Breaking the Cycle*. pp.10-11.

[120] Ministry of Justice, *Breaking the Cycle*. p.11.

entertaining and informing the residents of Leeds as well as visitors to the city.[121] Prior to this research, the service already had a long and recognised history of successful educational programmes, both aimed at National Curriculum learning and Life Long Learning, working with diverse visitor groups. This had included experience of working with Faith Groups, the charity Leeds Mind, Asian Women's Groups, Social and Adult Care Services for people with physical disabilities, mental health issues, learning difficulties and Older Peoples Services. In recent years the service has sought to engage with people with more challenging needs and has collaborated on two pilot studies with the local charity 'Stretch' which involved working with St. Anne's Community Services and the Youth Offending Service. From this perspective it had been the intention for my research to build on the experience gained from these pilot projects and develop this to include work in a closed prison environment, in order to consider the value of this work where the usual incentives of engaging with a museum were not necessarily available or immediate.

HMP Wakefield

HMP Wakefield was approached to be the collaborating prison for this project for the primary reason that my own experience of working within a prison environment was from working there. As it was always going to be a challenge to get a research project such as this approved at a closed

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[121] Leeds City Council, 'Leeds Museums and Galleries', Leeds City Council, (2011) <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries/> [Accessed 10th February 2011]

establishment due to the understandably high security restrictions in place, it was felt that approaching an establishment where I already had a sound working knowledge of the regime, the facilities on offer and more importantly a good working relationship with staff, would offer the best chance of success.

HMP Wakefield is one of eight high security or dispersal prisons in England and typically holds up to 750 male category A and B prisoners, many of whom are serious sex offenders.[122] The prison is comprised of four wings that hold approximately 185 prisoners each in single cell accommodation. A further reason for selecting HMP Wakefield was that, due to the nature of offences committed, many of the prisoners are serving long sentences. This suggested that the idea of using the museum to provide a link to the local community, as adopted by previous projects, was not appropriate here as the primary aim. Instead it was felt that the idea of looking at the prison as a community in its own right would be of more relevance. This idea stems from Nick Flynn's work, where he suggests that 'prison is often described as a microcosm of society' and that social critics have 'referred to the similarities between prisons and other institutions such as hospitals, schools and small towns'.[123] Significantly, when evaluating the findings of previous prison projects, the Arts Alliance also highlighted this as an area for future research, stating that 'another aspect of undervalued consideration was the notion of focussing on prisons as communities, where

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[122] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 'Report of an Unannounced Full Follow up Inspection of HMP Wakefield' (London: HMCIP, 2012). p.5.

[123] Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment*. p.67.

the built environment and prison staff are fundamental to the success of any sustainable interventions'.[124] As the Her Majesties Chief Inspector of Prisons (HMCIP) report for HMP Wakefield concluded that the prison was reasonably safe and that overall relationships between staff and prisoners were positive, this tended to support my use of HMP Wakefield to explore this concept.[125]

Value as a Theme

The theme of value developed from a multitude of different avenues as a result of the wide range of subject areas covered in the development of the project, not least the underlying question of what value the project could have to both the prison and the museum as institutions. In relation to the use of museum objects, the theme initially came from the 'Heritage in Hospitals' project which found that the 'patients repeatedly picked up the objects and then asked about their value and what made them museum worthy'.[126] This emphasised the way people still view the museum as a reliable form of authority. Bennett describes this as the original purpose of museums, on which the publics' own opinions and perceptions should be based in order to be seen as a socially acceptable member of society.[127] Although the 'Heritage in Hospitals' research was concerned with the wellbeing and effects of institutionalisation on patients in a hospital, the term 'institutionalised' is

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[124] Angus McLewin, 'Arts Alliance Evidence Library' (Whitstable: Arts Alliance & Clinks, 2011). p.36.

[125] HM Chief Inpector of Prisons. p.5.

[126] Helen Chatterjee, Sonjel Vreeland, and Guy Noble, 'Museopathy: Exploring the Healing Potential of Handling Museum Objects', *Museum and Society*, 7 (2009), 164-177 (p.174).

[127] Bennett. p.23.

more commonly associated with prisoners and this seemed to be an area

that would be relevant to explore in my research. One of the key findings

suggested that, where patients used the objects to spark a sense of

reminiscence, the sessions seemed to 'help to reinforce a sense of identity of

patients who may feel they are on a conveyor belt of care'.[128] This

highlighted a second reason for selecting the theme of value as raised by the

'Gallus Glasgow' and 'Inspiring Change' projects in Scotland.[129] Both of these

projects considered the idea of using objects to explore personal values and

improve a sense of identity as an element of rehabilitation.[130]

When evaluating the 'Inspiring Change' project, The National Galleries

of Scotland explained that 'having a sense of a self that can be described,

that can be affected by, and that can affect others, is crucial to acting

socially'.[131] Previous research suggests that a person's identity is built up

from the different categories in which they place themselves and the

characteristics or features associated with those categories.[132] If the feeling

from serving prisoners is that the number of categories into which they

appear to fit is limited to that of 'criminal' or 'prisoner', they can lose sight of

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[128] Helen Chatterjee, Sonjel Vreeland, and Guy Noble. p.172.

[129] Alastair Callaghan, 'Gallus Glasgow', in *Out There- The Open Museum: Pushing the Boundaries of Museum's Potential* ed. by Fiona MacLeod (Glasgow: Culture and Sport Glasgow, 2010), pp.116-19; Kristin Anderson *et al*, 'Inspiring Change: End of Project Report of the Evaluation Team' (Motherwell: Motherwell College, 2011).

[130] Kirsten Anderson *et al*, 'Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team' (Motherwell: University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow, University of Strathclyde, 2011); Callaghan, *Gallus Glasgow*.

[131] Robin Baillie, 'Mirrors: Prison Portraits', ed.by National Galleries of Scotland (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2010), p.3.

[132] *Identities in Talk*, ed. by Charles Antaki and Sue Widdicombe (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1998), p.3.

the things that are valuable to them on a personal level.[133] Consequently, the

aim of 'Inspiring Change' was to invite the participants to 'begin to rebuild

their sense of self' and their 'ability to project a positive future'.[134] A key

feature of my research was that it should be to provide opportunities to open

up new or re-establish previous categories that have existed for the

participants from their own past experiences in order for them to make

positive changes in the future.

For the 'Gallus Glasgow' project the Glasgow Open Museum worked

with prisoners at HMP Glenochil and used the 'objects as an aid to focussing

and inspiring' the work being created in the existing art and creative writing

courses.[135] The facilitators found that, by 'taking confidence from the days

chatting over museum objects, the men had found their own way to tell their

story'.[136] This informed a third reason for selecting value as a theme as it is

important to acknowledge the value of the existing skills and interests the

individuals have and provide opportunities for them to be given the autonomy

to utilise them.

When looked at collectively, all of the reasons for selecting the theme

of value refer to the concept of 'affect' as described by Brian Massumi. He

explains that

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[133] Baillie. p.2.

[134] Baillie. p.2.

[135] Callaghan. p.117.

[136] Callaghan. p.119.

> in affect, we are never alone. That's because affects..... are basically ways of connecting, to others and to other situations. They are our angle of participation in processes larger than ourselves. With intensified affect comes a stronger sense of embeddedness in a larger field of life – a heightened sense of belonging, with other people and to other places.[137]

The concept of 'affect' has also been adopted by Charlotte Bilby *et al* and applied to the exploration of the impact of arts interventions on desistance from crime.[138] They found that many of the areas linked to an affective experience, such as community cohesion and a sense of self satisfaction and achievement, can be linked to the 'intermediate steps in an individual's journey to desistance from crime'.[139]

This introduction has provided a general overview of the historical and social context relating to prisons and museums within which my research is positioned. The underpinning theoretical framework considered in addressing the research questions is therefore presented in the subsequent chapters. Chapter two provides a review of the literature considered in the development of research and highlights the broad subject areas and experiences on which it was necessary to draw. Chapter three outlines the methodology developed for the project and discusses both the theoretical and practical requirements posed by working between the museum and the prison. Chapters four to seven provide a break-down of the key findings from

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[137] Brian Massumi, 'Navigating Movements: A Conversation with Brian Massumi', in *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*, ed.by Mary Zournazi (Annandale: Pluto Press, 2002), 210-243 (p.214).

[138] Charlotte Bilby, Laura Caulfield, and Louise Ridley, 'Re-imagining Futures: Exploring Arts Interventions and the Process of Desistance' (London: Arts Alliance, 2013).

[139] Bilby, Caufield and Ridley. pp.5-6.

each of the four stages of the research, using quotes from the prisoner

participants to frame the discussions. Chapter eight considers the areas

highlighted as making an immediate impact on the participants before

chapter nine considers the longer term impact felt by two of the participants

as a result of participating. This chapter also begins to consider any lasting

impact felt by the other parties involved in the research including the

museum objects themselves. The final chapter aims to pull together the key

findings from the research overall in order to make several recommendations

about how this field of study can be taken forward and developed in the

future.

Chapter Two. Literature Review

This chapter considers the literature that has informed the development of the research project. The limited information available regarding previous collaborations between prisons and museums is discussed, plus I will provide an analysis of the literature on the effectiveness of arts-based projects in prisons, to highlight areas that my research aims to address. The need for the research is discussed from both a prison perspective and a museological perspective, using policy documents and research reports, to ensure that the potential of such work by both institutions is realised.

  The Prison Service Journal and the *Howard Journal of Penal Reform* are the key journals for work relating to the criminal justice sector and contain some analysis of the potential impact arts projects can make on prisoners. This includes evaluations of the long term impact of the Gamelan music project by David Wilson, and a wider review of the place of arts and spiritual activities in prisons by Rose Parkes and Charlotte Bilby. The Gamelan music project is the only arts project found that had been delivered in a wide range of different category prisons and had a formal evaluation carried out on the immediate and long-term benefits felt by participants.[140] The aim of this week-long project is to use Indonesian percussion music to 'inspire and empower people through creative involvement in music

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[140] David Wilson, Laura Caulfield, and Susie Atherton, ' Good Vibrations: The Long Term Impact of a Prison- Based Music Project', *Prison Service Journal* (2009), 27-32; Cathy Eastburn, 'Gongs Behind Bars' (Lincoln: Arts Council England, 2003); Laura Caulfield, David Wilson, and Dean Wilkinson, 'Continuing Positive Change in Prison and the Community: An Analysis of the Long Term and Wider Impact of the Good Vibrations Project' (Birmingham: Centre for Applied Criminology, Birmingham City University, 2010).

making'.[141] The study into this project concluded that many of the immediate

impacts reported, such as improved social skills and self confidence, were

sustained and still evident six months after the project had ended.[142] A

further evaluation of the project by Lèon Digard and Alison Liebling can be

found in *The Arts of Imprisonment.* They praised the way it focussed on

privileging participation rather than observation and described 'processes

and experience - not just pre-defined outcomes'.[143] This evaluation also

noted the difficulties in measuring results of projects of this type and

suggested that generic measures of wellbeing can be misleading as the

individual circumstances of participants mean that they will experience things

differently. This is particularly in reference to the fact that participants will

remain in prison after the end of the project and the way they cope in the

environment more widely will impact on results.[144] Another chapter in the

same volume provided a review of another music-based project that had

been delivered at HMP Wakefield. The Irene Taylor Trust 'Music in Prisons'

programme is a week-long project that aims to improve the wellbeing and

behaviour of prisoners through learning the processes involved in creating

and collaborating on musical pieces with support from a professional

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[141] Wilson, Caulfield, and Atherton. p.27.

[142] Wilson, Caulfield, and Atherton. p.32.

[143] Lèon Digard, Alison Liebling, 'Harmony Behind Bars: Evaluating the Therapeutic Potential of a Prison-based Music Programme', in *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control,Resistance and Empowerment,* ed. by Leonidas K. Cheliotis (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012). pp. 277-301.

[144] Digard, Liebling. p.298.

musician.[145] The findings from the project suggest that the most widely reported effects participants felt were connected to an improved sense of self, their wellbeing and their relationships to others. Significantly, a number of participants also spoke about the project giving them a sense that they were recognised as individuals with potential.[146] Building on the ongoing success of the intensive programme a longer-term 'Musician in Residence' scheme has been piloted at HMP Wakefield and it is believed that this will help to sustain the impact of the shorter project.[147] Although there has not been a published evaluation on this specifically, the Musician in Residence at HMP Wakefield, James Dey, reports progress in the personal skills required to make the sessions work and has seen significant changes in the levels of self-confidence in participants as a result of prolonged engagement.[148] In their article 'The Courage to Create: The Role of Artistic and Spiritual Activities in Prison', Rose Parkes and Charlotte Bilby explored the value of creative practices within prisons and concluded that they were a vital component of the regime due to their ability to encourage a change in focus

[145] Alexandra Cox, and Loraine Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters: Whatever Happened to the Arts in Prisons?', in The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment, ed. by Leonidas K. Cheliotis (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012).

[146] Cox, Gelsthorpe. p.268.

[147] Irene Taylor Trust, 'Musicians in Residence', Irene Taylor Trust, (2014) <http://irenetaylortrust.com/what-we-do/our-projects/music-in-prisons/musicians-in-residence/> [Accessed 15th March 2015]

[148] Irene Taylor Trust, 'A Cup of Tea with Musician in Residence James Dey', Irene Taylor Trust, (2014) <http://irenetaylortrust.com/2014/11/26/a-cup-of-tea-with-musician-in-residence-james-dey/> [Accessed 15th March 2015]

that values humanity and seeks wellbeing.[149] However, they also highlighted

that there is a lack of empirical research in this area which means the impact

of this type of activity is still widely under-valued and unreported.[150]

Interestingly, there has been no discussion of projects that directly relate to

the potential role of museums in the criminal justice sector. As such, from the

start of this AHRC project, I needed to use my experience as a member of

teaching staff at HMP Wakefield to begin to explore projects which I already

had knowledge of, such as the 'Anne Frank Prison Project', to find any

existing literature. The only material available about this project was located

on the Anne Frank Trust website, which suggested that, despite the strong

anecdotal evidence in support of the project from both prison staff and

prisoners, the value of the project had not been formally evaluated.[151] This

highlighted the need for a more formal research project that could explore

why such activities have been developed and the potential impact they can

make.[152]

By widening my search for literature to include work written

specifically for those working in the museums sector, it was possible to find

projects relating to prison work. Several museums have established strong

partnerships with prisons, including the British Museum, Glasgow Museums

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149 Rose Parkes and Charlotte Bilby, 'The Courage to Create: The Role of Artistic and Spiritual Activities in Prisons', *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 49 (2010), 97-110 (p.97).

150 Rose Parkes and Charlotte Bilby. p.106.

151 Steve Gadd, 'The Anne Frank Project - In Depth' Anne Frank Trust UK, (2008) <http://www.annefrank.org.uk/node/203> [Accessed 15th October 2010]

152 Steve Gadd, 'Work With Offenders: Anne Frank Prison Project' Anne Frank Trust UK, (2008) <http://www.annefrank.org.uk/node/50> [Accessed 15th October 2010]

and the Fitzwilliam Museum.[153] The British Museum delivered several

projects at HMP Pentonville in London between 2005 and 2007. These

projects included the exhibition of objects from the British Museum's

collections and were developed to encourage discussion around issues

highlighted as relevant to the demographic of prisoners held at HMP

Pentonville.[154] The main themes chosen for exploration through these

projects were drug use, wellbeing, gun crime, conflict, peace and resolution.

Glasgow Museums have delivered several projects in prisons, although the

literature available only covered the 'Gallus Glasgow' project at HMP

Glenochil that ran for three months in 2009.[155] The project was set up to

enhance an existing creative-writing course in the prison and involved using

objects from the Open Museum as sources of inspiration for stories that

could be developed into artwork, poems or prose. The Fitzwilliam Museum

have used their Egyptology collections and exhibitions to enhance the

existing provision within the prisons they have collaborated with.[156] This has

included regular workshops and lectures about their collections which relate

to the curriculum based learning needs of individual prisoners as well as

connections to wider events such as Black History Month and supporting the

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[153] Jane Samuels, 'The British Museum in Pentonville Prison: Dismantling Barriers through touch and Handling', in Touch *in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling*, ed. by Helen J Chatterjee (Oxford: BERG, 2008), pp.253-260; Callaghan. pp.116-119.

[154] Samuels. pp.253-260.

[155] Callaghan. pp.116-119.

[156] Sally-Ann Ashton, 'Report on PrisonProject 2013' (Cambridge: Fitzwilliam Museum, 2013).

Psychologically Informed Planned Environment (PIPE) programme.[157] Unlike the other two museums, the Fitzwilliam Museum has begun to consider issues and challenges specific to those serving long sentences. This has led to the development of a 'Virtual Museum Gallery' that the prisoners can access on the computers in the prison.[158] All three Museums reported strong levels of engagement and enthusiasm for their projects from the participants which was believed to result from the opportunity for physical interactions with the museum objects being used.[159] However, in all cases the projects have been evaluated almost solely from the museum's perspective rather than from how they also fit with the Prison Service expectations. 'Inspiring Change' was the only research project that was designed to integrate the aims of the Prison Service alongside those of the museum in a formally-evaluated programme of work.[160] Therefore, in order to develop a critical framework for this project, I have had to look much more widely across literature produced in fields as diverse as law, education, sociology, art history, philosophy and museology.[161]

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[157] Sally-Ann Ashton, 'Report on PrisonProject 2013'. pp.1-3.

[158] Sally-Ann Ashton, 'Accessing Virtual Egypt: Museums in Prisons', Arts and Humanities Research Council, (2010) <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/research/casestudies/virtualegypt/> [Accessed 16/08/2015]

[159] Callaghan; Samuels

[160] *Anderson et al*, 'Inspiring Change: End of Project Report of the Evaluation Team'; *Anderson et al*, 'Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team'.

[161] *Prison(er) Education Stories of Change and Transformation*, ed. by David Wilson and Anne Reuss (Winchester: Waterside Press, 2000); Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*; Gwen Robinson and Iain Crow, *Offender Rehabilitation: Theory, Research and Practice* (London: Sage, 2009); Pierre Bourdieu, *Disctinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge, 1986);

It was vital to establish a critical space for a museum project within the criminal justice system as presently conceived, to ensure that the project would be acceptable within the framework of Offender Management Strategies as well as meeting the aims of the Leeds Museum Service. I first had to consider the current literature emanating from government reports and penal reform policies. The Coalition government introduced the idea of a 'Rehabilitation Revolution' in their report 'The Coalition: Our Programme for Government', before explaining the details of it in 'Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders'.[162] Unfortunately these reports make little mention of long term prisoners and instead focus on improving the employability skills of prisoners serving short sentences. Consequently it was essential to look to the literature offered by the 'HMCIP' reports written about individual prisons and the 'Activities in Prisons PSI' to draw attention to the gaps in the current regime that the proposed research could aim to address.[163] As my own experience of the prison system was based around working at HMP Wakefield, it was the intention to deliver the research within that establishment and, consequently, necessary to focus specifically on the regime and the activities offered there. At HMP Wakefield the key issues were a lack of suitable opportunities for the

John Field, *Social Capital and Lifelong Learning* (Bristol: The Policy Press, 2005); Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 3rd edn (London: Harper and Row, 1970).

[162] 'The Coalition: Our Programme for Government' ed. by HM Government (London: Cabinet Office, 2010); Ministry of Justice, 'Breaking the Cycle'.

[163] PSIs are policy documents specific to the prison environment. They outline specific rules, regulations and guidelines by which prisons are run; HM Chief Inspector Of Prisons, 'Report on an Announced Inspection of HMP Wakefield', ed. by HMCIP (London: HMCIP, 2008); HM Chief Inspector Of Prisons, 'Report on an Unannounced Inspection of HMP Wakefield', ed. by HMCIP (London: HMCIP, 2012); Ministry of Justice, 'Activities in Prisons PSI 38/2010 ' (London: Ministry of Justice, 2010).

prison population as a whole and a generally negative atmosphere in the establishment due to the high concentration of prisoners denying their offences and consequently not engaging fully with the system.[164] These findings demonstrated that there was a potential place in the current system at HMP Wakefield for the proposed research project, although more background information was required about the current education provision on offer, and information about the existing offending-behaviour programmes being delivered. To develop a more accurate picture of prison education, it was important to look at the current strategy set out by the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS), which funds all courses in prison, and reports by OFSTED who inspect the quality of educational provision delivered by all providers.[165] In the same vein as the government reports, the key focus of OLASS funding is short term prisoners and basic skills courses, with little emphasis on the needs of long term prisoners.[166] In contrast, OFSTED acknowledges this as an area for improvement and suggests that prisons should have a separate strategy in place in order to address the educational needs of long term prisoners. However, it does not suggest how this could be funded.[167] It also highlights as a key area for improvement the lack of

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[164] HM Chief Inspector Of Prisons, ' Report on an Unannounced Inspection of HMP Wakefield'.

[165] National Audit Office, 'Meeting Needs? The Offenders' Learning and Skills Service', ed. by National Audit Office (Norwich: The Stationary Office LTD, 2008); OFSTED, 'Learning and Skills for the Longer Serving Offender', ed.by OFSTED (London: Crown Copyright, 2009).

[166] National Audit Office, 'Meeting Needs?'

[167] OFSTED. p.5.

provision for prisoners who have already attained a level two qualification.[168]
This suggested the potential for prisoners who fall into this category to be a
target group for my research project.

From analysing the literature, the expectation seems to be that the
skills deficits relating to personal and social skills, previously addressed by
the education provision, now fall under the remit of the formal Offending
Behaviour Programmes (OBPs) developed by the National Offender
Management Service (NOMS) and delivered by the psychology department
within the prison.[169] The PSI for accredited programmes explains that these
programmes are designed to target four key areas that relate to specific
aspects of offending behaviour, one of which is defined as 'cognitive and
motivational'.[170] The most widely-delivered OBP with a focus on cognitive
skills is reported to be the Enhanced Thinking Skills Programme (ETS),
recently renamed the Thinking Skills Programme (TSP). The selection
process to assess the suitability of individual prisoners emphasises that
consideration is given to the 'readiness of the individual to benefit from the
programme'.[171] This can rule out prisoners who do not take responsibility for
their index offence, which, at a prison such as HMP Wakefield (where a high
proportion of prisoners are listed as deniers) can drastically reduce the

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[168] Under the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), a level 2 qualification is equivalent to a GCSE.

[169] Ministry of Justice, 'Implementation of the Deliver Accredited Programmes Specification', ed.by HM Prison Service (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012).

[170] Ministry of Justice. p.2.

[171] Greg Sadlier, 'Evaluation of the Impact of the HM Prison Service Enhanced Thinking Skills Programme on Reoffending Outcomes of the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction Sample', ed. by Ministry of Justice (London: Ministry of Justice, 2010). p.3.

number who could access the skills they require to progress further in their

rehabilitation journey. This gap in the existing provision of social and

personal skills highlights an area that could be filled successfully by my

research project.

   In addition to investigating the existing activities provision, a further

area of literature that required consideration focused on learning styles, with

particular reference to how and why prisoners learn and the value of informal

learning methods. As the delivery of prison education is contracted out to

Further Education colleges, it was necessary to look at research from this

area to highlight the approaches that are being adopted within the system.[172]

In their 2004 report 'Learning Styles and Pedagogy in Post-16 Learning',

Frank Coffield *et al* carried out a review of thirteen of the main learning styles

models currently used in Further Education colleges.[173] Many of these

models focus on how people learn most effectively, through the types of

activities or personal preferences relating to personality traits. This does not

seem entirely appropriate for use in a prison establishment, where the

motivational factors for learning are more often linked to aspects of the

environment itself. One particular approach reviewed is the model and

instruments for discussing learning style preferences developed over the last

thirty-five years by Rita and Kenneth Dunn. This model is used by

practitioners around the world in a variety of contexts, from elementary

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[172] Wilson and Reuss. pp.19-20.

[173] Frank Coffield and others, 'Learning Styles and Pedagogy in Post-16 Learning: A Systematic and Critical
Review' (London: Learning and Skills Research Centre, 2004).

schools to teacher training courses.[174] The analysis of the Dunn and Dunn

Model suggests that there are five strands that significantly influence how

people learn.[175] While one of these strands includes the physiological factors

employed by other models, this particular model also acknowledges

preferences relating to the learning environment, learning group and

motivation for learning, all of which can be significant factors in prisoners

undertaking learning in prison.[176]

As part of a research project into why long term prisoners engage with

education in prisons, Petra MacGuinness has highlighted the four main

reasons that prisoners give for participation in education programmes, which

appear to support the use of this learning-styles model. They stated that they

wanted to catch up, keep occupied, improve employment prospects and

survive prison and manage the given time.[177] All of these factors suggest that

the motivation behind why prisoners learn is clearly linked to developing an

ability to cope with the environment they are in. Several pieces of literature

can be seen to support and explain this idea. Psychologists Stanley Cohen

and Laurie Taylor highlighted that methods for marking time and the fear of

mental deterioration are major issues for prisoners serving long

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[174] Frank Coffield and others. pp.20-21.

[175] Frank Coffield and others. pp.20-21.

[176] Frank Coffield and others. p.21.

[177] Petra MacGuinness, 'Dealing with Time: Factors that Influence Prisoners to Participate in Prison Education Programmes', in *Prison(er) Education Stories of Change and Transformation*, ed. by David Wilson and Anne Reuss (Winchester: Waterside Press, 2000), pp.84-105. (p.91).

sentences.[178] While in *Asylums,* Erving Goffman looks more specifically at the types of activities undertaken and describes them as 'removal activities' which can encourage the individual to focus on something outside of the physical space they are in for a period of time.[179] Both of these ideas can be seen as having an awareness of and reducing the effect of, what Gresham Sykes referred to as the 'Pains of Imprisonment'.[180] While participation in activities can only directly impact on some of these factors, such as deprivation of liberty and autonomy, having the distraction of focussing on something else can also temporarily reduce the effect of the other factors.[181]

Developing an awareness of the value ascribed to positive spaces within the prison provides a connection to the emerging field of study of carceral geography and more specifically emotional geography. Dominique Moran states that carceral geography focuses on prison as a space, an individual's movement in and out of that space and his or her experience within it.[182] Her research into prison visits and their effect on recidivism introduced the concept of liminal spaces, which are spaces of

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[178] Cohen and Taylor, *Psychological Survival.*

[179] Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (London: Penguin Books, 1961)

[180] Gresham Sykes, *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison* (Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press, 1958)

[181] The five Pains of Imprisonment as described by Sykes are: Deprivation of liberty, deprivation of goods and services, deprivation of autonomy, deprivation of hetrosexual relationships and deprivation of security.

[182] Dominique Moran, 'Carceral Geography and the Spatialities of Prison Visiting: Visitation, Recidivism and hyperincarceration', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 31 (2013), 174-90. p.175.

'betweeness'.[183] As this can either be in terms of between being inside and
outside the prison or between aspects of identity, this term could also apply
to other spaces within a prison. This concept has been taken a step further
by Ben Crewe *et al* who explore the ideas of emotional geography and
emotion zones within a prison.[184] These are defined as marginal spaces or
intermediate zones where the normal rules of prisoner society are
temporarily suspended and a display of a wider range of emotions is
acceptable. These include visits rooms, classrooms in the education
department and the chapel. In both liminal spaces and emotion zones, it is
the way the spaces are made as uncarceral as possible that makes them
work, and the ability of those in the spaces to treat the individual as someone
other than just a prisoner.[185] In visits this may be as a partner, friend or
parent, as a worshipper in the chapel or as a student in the education
department.[186] In many cases it is the spaces where there are civilians
present, not wearing a uniform, that this concept applies most strongly.

Having established the space for the project within the criminal justice
sector, it was then essential to locate a corresponding space within the
museums field. To achieve this, it was important to consider the research
from two key organisations, the Museums Association (MA) and the Arts
Council England (ACE). In their 2005 publication 'Collections for the Future',

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[183] Moran, p.182.

[184] Ben Crewe and others, 'The Emotional Geography of Prison Life', *Theoretical Criminology,* 18 (2014), 56-74.

[185] Moran, p.184.

[186] Ben Crewe and others, pp.67-68.

the MA highlighted three areas for development that are of relevance to this

research project. These related to 'engagement', 'dynamic collections' and

'strengthening the museums sector', all of which suggest that a project that

collaborates with a new organisation and provides opportunities to enable

new audiences to access collections would fit well with these demands.[187]

ACE took over responsibility for museums from the Museums, Libraries and

Archives (MLA) Council in 2011 and has subsequently published two reports

that are also useful to frame this research project within the existing field. In

their review of the current museums landscape, ACE drew from the key

research carried out by the MLA Council to conclude that the role of

museums had changed and was now explicitly aimed at helping people to

learn about society in order to support lifelong learning and the creation of a

sense of self.[188] The subsequent report from ACE, 'Culture, Knowledge and

Understanding: Great Museums for All', emphasises the need for museums

to widen opportunities for different audiences to access museum objects and

to encourage sustainable, collaborative partnerships with other

organisations.[189] In order to build on the information gained from ACE

publications, it was essential to look to relevant aspects of the theoretical

research into museology that have emerged in the last thirty years, with a

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[187] Museums Association, 'Collections for the Future: Report of a Museums Association Inquiry' (London: Museums Association, 2005).

[188] Arts Council England, 'A Review of Research and Literature on Museums and Libraries'. ed. by Arts Council England (London: Arts Council England, 2011); Arts Council England, *Culture Knowledge and Understanding.*

[189] Arts Council England, *Culture Knowledge and Understanding.*

particular focus on museum ethics, the use of objects and museum education.[190]

A great deal of research on museum ethics has built on the areas defined by ACE reports but has additionally explored how museums can incorporate such aims into their service. In *Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century*, Janet Marstine highlighted three key areas that museums should develop in order to remain relevant at a societal level.[191] These were defined as 'social responsibility', 'radical transparency' and a 'shared guardianship of heritage'.[192] All three areas are seen as particularly relevant for this research, as they are seen as providing a way forward for museums to become more comfortable with dealing with social concerns when ethical issues arise, so that they can be considered and acted upon effectively.[193] As the usual aim of outreach work in museums is to encourage new parts of the community to visit and use the services offered at the museum, working with prisoners that are serving long sentences for this project meant consideration needed to be given to literature that could highlight why, from a museological perspective, this research project was valuable. An increasing amount of research proposing areas of crossover between social work and museum education was found. During the process of considering eight

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[190] Janet Marstine, 'The Contingent Nature of the New Museum Ethics', *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics - Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century Museum*, ed. by Janet Marstine (Oxon: Routledge, 2011) pp.3-21; Macdonald.

[191] Marstine. p.5.

[192] Marstine. pp.5-20.

[193] Marstine. p.20.

theoretical perspectives relating to social work, Lois Silverman highlighted

areas of wellbeing and social functioning to which she believes museums

can contribute.[194] The most significant areas for my research are;

'understanding the self', 'understanding the family' and 'understanding the

group'.[195] All of these can be seen to correspond to the 'Activities in Prisons

PSI' and bear relevance to the needs of long term prisoners.[196] This literature

highlighted the need to ensure that the activities developed for my research

included an awareness of all three of these areas of wellbeing. As an

example of museum social work in a closed environment, articles on the

Heritage in Hospitals project were also analysed.[197] This project aimed to

assess whether handling museum objects made a positive impact on patient

wellbeing.[198] It found two major themes of interest to my research. These

were that some patients preferred to work from an impersonal/educational

perspective, which meant they solely wanted to learn facts about the objects.

Other patients preferred to work from a personal/reminiscence perspective,

which involved using the objects as inspiration to share stories from their

own life with the facilitator.[199] Both perspectives were found to reinforce a

sense of identity in the patients and reduce the perceived impact of

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[194] Lois H. Silverman, *The Social Work of Museums* (London: Routledge, 2010).

[195] Lois H Silverman. pp.41-114.

[196] Ministry of Justice, 'Activities in Prisons PSI 38/2010 '.

[197] Chatterjee, Vreeland, and Noble. pp.164-177.

[198] Chatterjee, Vreeland, and Noble. pp.164-177.

[199] Chatterjee, Vreeland, and Noble. p.172.

institutionalisation.[200] As it was not possible for the researcher in the Heritage in Hospitals project to predict in advance which approach each patient was going to prefer, it seems important that opportunities for both approaches be incorporated when developing activities in my research with prisoner participants.

Before considering research specific to museum objects it was a logical progression to look at object theories in a more general sense, in order to highlight whether the use of them within the project would have theoretical value.[201] Based on my experience of the prison environment, two pieces of literature relating to objects seemed to have particular relevance. In *The Social Life of Things*, Arjun Appardurai explained that the value of an object is determined by how much we want it, or more importantly, what we would be willing to exchange in order to obtain it.[202] This concept seemed to bear more relevance to prisoners than other theories found, as objects take on a new level of value in a prison, given that the trade of objects is the most readily-available currency in use. In high security prisons, where the deprivation of goods is felt to be greater than in other types of prisons, prisoners develop extensive trade networks based around the transaction of objects in order to obtain things they may require for cooking, cleaning or as

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[200] Chatterjee, Vreeland, and Noble. p.175.

[201] Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* (London: Veron, 2005); Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1989); *Museum Objects: Experiencing the Properties of Things*, ed. by Sandra H. Dudley (London: Routledge, 2012).

[202] *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspectives*, ed. by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

a gift to send to a family member outside.[203] A second piece of relevant literature was the 2010 publication *Stuff* by Daniel Miller.[204] He explored the fact that objects signify or represent aspects of our identity, which seemed potentially significant in a prison environment where most of the objects possessed by prisoners are issued by the prison, meaning that items that are personal to an individual or brought in from outside are viewed as being more valuable.[205]

Two further pieces of research proposed interesting ideas about the different forms of relationship we can develop with objects. Alfred Gell argued that in certain social situations or under certain conditions we attribute some element of agency to objects.[206] This appeared to be an interesting concept to explore as it suggested that objects could be used to provide a degree of distance for prisoners to discuss ideas around themes that may be uncomfortable for them. In *Evocative Objects*, Sherry Turkle discussed the notion of objects as companions in our life experiences and suggested that we often remember experiences through these objects.[207] She proposed that when objects are considered in this way, people from all

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[203] Crewe. p.370.

[204] Daniel Miller, Stuff (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010).

[205] Daniel Miller. p.10.

[206] Alfred Gell, ''Things' as Social Agents', in *Museum Objects: Experiencing the Properties of Things*, ed. by Sandra H. Dudley (Oxon: Routledge, 2010). pp. 336- 343.

[207] *Evocative Objects: Things We Think With*, ed. by Sherry Turkle (London: The MIT Press, 2011).

walks of life can find common ground in everyday experiences.[208] As one of the key aims of this research was to consider whether access to museum objects increased the sense of community amongst prisoners, this seemed to be a significant area to explore further through the project.

A final piece of literature was considered which further supported the idea that objects can be used to reinforce a sense of identity in individuals. Susan Stewart proposed that, in the case of souvenirs, objects can serve to authenticate a past experience of its owner.[209] She suggested that, in this instance, it is our desire to possess something that links directly to an unrepeatable experience we have had that makes the object valuable. This highlighted the need within my project to encourage the participants to think about objects that were important to them, as well as exploring the museum objects provided. While this concept is clearly of value, it is important to consider that, for some of the individuals who may participate in my project, souvenirs may also link to their offending behaviour and specifically their victims. In such instances the purpose of a souvenir may be to relive or remember the event or reinforce the negative aspects of their identity associated with it. As it would be difficult to pre-empt this for all potential participants, consideration of this emphasises the need for strong working relationships with other departments within the prison for the effective delivery of a project of this nature.

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[208] Turkle.

[209] Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (London: Duke University Press, 1993).

Analysis of the value of handling museum objects has increased in recent years, with the most significant literature being published in *Touch in Museums* based on research conducted as part of the AHRC funded 'touch and object handling' series of workshops organised by Helen Chatterjee in 2006/7. Contributions to this literature came from a wide range of fields, from scientists to curators and anthropologists. From a psycho-neurological perspective, Francis McGlone suggested that people are more sensitive to the emotional rather than discriminative forms of touch when handling objects.[210] This idea could be central to viewing how the prisoners engage with objects as quite often the emotional response is unexpected and cannot be predicted. Hugo Critchley's work explained the value of emotional touch on the development of social interaction, which would be of particular interest in my research as touch is often only seen as negative in a prison environment.[211] It is an accepted aspect of prison life that physical contact between staff and prisoners is inappropriate as it suggests an over-familiar relationship. This is also often extended to contact between prisoners as it would draw attention to any relationship between them.[212] Therefore, the majority of physical contact prisoners have while in custody is limited to the searches for contraband items carried out by staff when moving prisoners to

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[210] Emotional touch refers to how pleasant and rewarding the experience is, whereas discriminative touch refers to whether touch confirms the expected weight, temperature etc of the surface being touched. Francis McClone, 'The Two Sides of Touch: Sensing and Feeling', in *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling*, ed. by Helen J. Chatterjee (Oxford: BERG, 2008) pp.41- 60.

[211] Hugo Critchley, 'Emotional Touch: A Neuroscientific Overview', in *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling*, ed. by Helen J. Chatterjee (Oxford: BERG, 2008) pp.61-71; Crewe. p.303.

[212] Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Health Patients and Other Inmates* (London: Penguin Books, 1961) pp.35-36.

different areas within the prison.[213] A further scientific area of relevance is tactile memory, an idea proposed by Alberto Gallace and Charles Spence.[214] As an area highlighted as having been subject to very little research, to date, tactile memory explores how people's memory of touch can be an effective means of recalling information that might otherwise be difficult to retrieve. In the somewhat sterile environment of a prison, which can be seen as limited in sensory experience, the concept of tactile memory could be of more significance than in other places where objects can be used.

As an example of how tactile memory can be explored, Laura Phillips from the British Museum and Bernie Arigho from Age Exchange, discussed different reminiscence sessions, and emphasised the key features of successful reminiscence work, some of which can be transferred or adapted for use with prisoners.[215] Laura Phillips's research highlighted that objects make projects more physically accessible through providing for different senses, which demonstrates the relevance of this approach as limited sensory experience within a prison can be a barrier to engagement in activities for prisoners.[216] Bernie Arigho suggested that successful reminiscence should help people to learn how to live and be, how to relate to

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[213] Goffman. pp.35-36.

[214] Charles Spence and Alberto Gallace, 'Making Sense of Touch', in *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling*, ed. by Helen J. Chatterjee (Oxford: BERG, 2008) pp.21-40.

[215] Laura Phillips, 'Reminiscence: Recent Work in the British Museum', in *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling*, ed. by Helen J. Chatterjee (Oxford: BERG, 2008) pp.199-204; Bernie Arigho, 'Getting a Handle on the Past: The Use of Objects in Reminscence Work', in *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling*, ed. by Helen J. Chatterjee (Oxford: BERG, 2008) pp.205-212.

[216] Phillips. p.204.

the world, how to conduct oneself in life, and how to feel about life.[217] This suggested that the aims of their project were similar to those of prison-delivered Offending Behaviour Programmes discussed earlier, but from a more informal perspective.

The proposed project was intended as a formal research project, that could be used to inform changes to enhance existing provision, rather than a one-off activity outside the regular prison regime. Therefore it was important that the project design met the requirements of both the 'Prison Service Research Application PSI' and the 'Ethical Review Board' at the University of Leeds, both of which emphasised the need for a focused and relevant methodology to be in place. This led me to investigate what research methods would be appropriate and effective when working in a closed prison environment and what models of evaluation could be used. There have been two reviews published in the last ten years that aim to collate the existing literature around the development of arts projects within prisons. 'Doing the Arts Justice', the first of these reviews, was published in 2004. This found that a major weakness was the insufficient attention given to the evaluation of projects, as the process was not fully embedded in their design.[218] This meant that the resulting publications were not able to explain what it was about participation in arts projects that made such a

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[217] Arigho. p.205.

[218] Jenny Hughes, 'Doing the Arts Justice: A Review of Research, Literature, Practice and Theory' (London: The Unit for the Arts and Offenders Centre for Applied Theatre Research, 2004) p.9.

difference.[219] Consequently the second review 'The Arts Alliance Evidence Library' (2011), included a more comprehensive breakdown of the methodologies and forms of evaluation that had been used successfully to assess the effectiveness of projects.[220] The Arts Alliance suggests qualitative research methods such as interviews, diaries and observation are generally appropriate as they allow for unexpected or additional outcomes to be recorded during projects.[221] These are particularly relevant for my project as I am exploring a new area of research where some of the more interesting outcomes could easily be overlooked or missed if other methods are adopted.

From an initial assessment of the methods of evaluation previously used, it was highlighted that most of them were not suitable for use on this project. Several methods had interesting aspects to them that could be useful to consider, but overall would not be practical to use. For example, having an awareness of the culture studied via ethnographic approaches within the prison, could be useful, but as Dance United in their evaluation 'The Academy' found, it is a time consuming and expensive approach.[222] Other evaluation models such as the Good Lives model and the Desistance

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[219] Hughes. p.9.

[220] McLewin. pp.31-34.

[221] McLewin. p.31.

[222] Miles, Andrew, and Paul Strauss, 'The Academy: A Report on Outcomes for Participants (June 2006 - June 2008)', (Manchester: ESRC Centre for Research on Socio-cultural Change University of Manchester, 2008); McLewin. p.32.

Model cover a wide range of factors affecting desistance from crime.[223]

These focus on the strengths of an individual rather than emphasising

deficits, which is in line with my own perspective. However it would be

difficult to use desistance from crime as a measure of success for my

participants, as they will remain in custody for considerable periods of time

beyond the end of my project.[224] Of all the models discussed in the Evidence

Library, Realistic Evaluation seems to provide the most useful approach.[225]

Ray Pawson and Nick Tilley explain that evaluation should be constructed

around three crucial ingredients: context, mechanism, and outcome.[226] They

suggest that

> Realism has a unique way of understanding the
> constituents of theory. Theories must be framed in terms of
> propositions about how mechanisms are fired in contexts to
> produce outcomes.[227]

This is important as it enables evaluators to form conclusions around

what works, for whom, and in what circumstances.[228]

One common theme that emerged from the literature on both prison

projects and museum studies was measuring subjective wellbeing as an

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[223] Tony Ward, and Clare-Ann Fortune, 'The Good Lives Model: Aligning Risk Reduction with Promoting Offenders' Personal Goals', *European Journal of Probation,* 5 (2013), 29-46: Mayumi Purvis, Tony Ward, and Gwenda Willis, 'The Good Lives Model in Practice: Offence Pathways and Case Management', *European Journal of Probation,* 3 (2011), 4-28.

[224] McLewin. p.33: Ward and Fortune. pp.29-46: Purvis, Ward and Willis. pp.4-28.

[225] McLewin. p.31.

[226] Pawson and Tilley, *Realistic Evaluation* (London: SAGE Publications, 1997) p.77.

[227] Pawson and Tilley. pp.84-85.

[228] Pawson and Tilley. p.85.

outcome.[229] In order to discover whether this was an appropriate measure of success that could be adopted within my project, it was necessary to explore the theory behind it.[230] Several government bodies have used different forms of wellbeing as a measure for overall national happiness. In 2008 the Foresight Programme developed by the UK Government Office for Science highlighted mental capital and mental wellbeing as the key components in enabling everyone to realise their potential.[231] Likewise The Office for National Statistics (ONS) used subjective wellbeing in their survey of National Wellbeing in 2011. As that study was for use with the general public, all three categories of subjective wellbeing were required to provide a balanced view.[232] However, for prisoners, the evaluative and experience approaches are not appropriate to use as they refer to overall life satisfaction and quality of life experiences, which raises difficult ethical concerns about the potential promotion of negative emotions.[233] As the eudemonic approach refers to the purpose and meaning an individual gains from specific activities, this seemed to be the most relevant for my research.[234] Carol Ryff proposed that this form of wellbeing could be measured against six categories that are

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[229] Sam Thompson and others, 'The Happy Museum: Re-imagining Museums For a Changing World' (Suffolk: Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2011); Caulfield, Wilson, and Wilkinson.

[230] Lucy Tinkler and Stephen Hicks, 'Measuring Subjective Wellbeing' (London: Office for National Statistics, 2011).

[231] Foresight Mental Health and Wellbeing Project, 'Final Project Report: Executive Summary' (London: The Government Office for Science, 2008).

[232] The Three categories of subjective wellbeing are evaluative, experience and eudemonic.

[233] Tinkler and Hicks. pp.4-5.

[234] Tinkler and Hicks. pp.4-5.

highlighted as key aspects of positive functioning, all of which could be measured within this research project.[235] These are 'self acceptance', 'positive relations with others', 'autonomy', 'environmental mastery', 'purpose in life' and 'personal growth'. Unlike the other methods of measuring wellbeing, Carol Ryff believes that with this method equal emphasis is given to short-term happiness and more enduring life challenges, which provide a more accurate assessment of an individual overall.[236]

A final area of consideration required is my own role in the project as a female, civilian member of staff already known to many of the prisoners through my teaching role. Research by Ben Crewe into the society established between prisoners suggests that there can be a somewhat polarised view of women amongst prisoners, ranging from moral saviours to untrustworthy sexual agents.[237] However, he also highlights how female teaching staff can be seen as a surrogate provider of feminine care, such as informal counselling and support for emotional issues, although he also explains that this has the potential to lead to some prisoners struggling to maintain appropriate boundaries with female staff.[238] Anne Reuss's account of working as a researcher in a high security prison supports this idea and highlights the need to be aware of how prisoners' behaviour, language and

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[235] Carol D. Ryff, 'Happiness is Everything, or is it? Explorations on the Meaning of Psychological Well-being', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57 (1989), 1069-81.

[236] Ryff. p.1077.

[237] Crewe. p.423.

[238] Crewe. pp.423-428.

demeanour can change in the presence of female staff.[239] She also

acknowledges the need for female researchers to be aware of how they

present themselves, such as the way they dress and if make-up or perfume

is worn, and how this could be perceived by both prisoners and prison

staff.[240] The issue of bias is another area raised by several researchers

including Stanley Cohen, Laurie Taylor and Anne Reuss. The general

consensus amongst these researchers is that, it is important to prevent

research being open to a criticism of bias when working with prisoners for a

prolonged period of time.[241] Therefore, while expressing a sense of empathy

towards them to encourage them to engage with the research is a positive, it

is not appropriate for that to turn into sympathy towards an individual.[242]

Louise Westmarland suggests that to reduce any potential harm to either the

researcher or the participants it is important to consider several areas: the

politics of the research, including how the research will be shared; any

physical or psychological danger to the researcher or participants; and the

sort of issues that may be confronted which could raise strong emotions.[243]

The last area seems particularly significant as Westmarland explains that

research of this nature can call into question whose side the researcher is on

based on what they observe in the relationships and interactions between

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[239] Anne Reuss, 'The Researcher's Tale', in Prison(er) Education: Stories of Change and Transformation, ed. by David Wilson and Anne Reuss (Winchester: Waterside Press, 2000), pp.24-47.

[240] Reuss. pp.24-47.

[241] Cohen and Taylor; Reuss.

[242] Cohen and Taylor; Reuss.

[243] Louise Westmarland, *Researching Crime and Justice: Tales from the Field* (London: Routledge, 2011) p.141.

those directly and indirectly involved in the research.[244] In the case of my research this could include staff attitudes towards the project and any impact this makes on their interactions with me as the researcher or the prisoner participants. Common amongst all accounts of prison research explored was the acknowledgement that key to the success of any research involving prisoners is the value of being open and honest about the aims and expectations of the research in order to gain the trust of those who are participating.[245]

Conclusion

As a result of my analysis of the core literature, I suggest that there is a strong theoretical basis to support the claim of potential benefits to prisoners of engaging in a project where handling museum objects is a central component. This particularly seems to be the case for prisoners serving long sentences where there seems to be a gap in the provision of purposeful activity in which they can participate. This review has also indicated that such a project would be within the existing remit of both the prison service and the museum service as presently conceived by government policy.

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[244] Westmarland. p.149.

[245] Crewe; Cohen and Taylor.

Chapter Three. Methodology

This chapter examines the research methods, their implementation and context. As the creation of the project was just as important to my research as the evaluation and analysis of the data produced, this is also considered and critically explored. Consequently, this chapter is longer than would usually be expected for a methodology as it contains aspects of my own experience that informed the development of my methodological approach and the subsequent project. Although the original intention behind the research was to develop a piece of action research, I believe it has become a piece of emancipatory research due to the opportunities for the participants' experience, and my own, to directly inform how some methodological aspects evolved.

HMP Wakefield

Nick Flynn from the Prison Reform Trust outlines that no two prisons are the same due to the difference in size, level of security, design and type of prisoner held.[246] Taking into account the fact that all previous projects between prisons and museums have taken place at lower category or local prisons, it was vital to start the process of developing a methodology for the project by considering what would be different about a high security/dispersal prison, specifically HMP Wakefield. Flynn proposes that 'the theory of dispersal suggests that it is both safer and more humane to accommodate high security prisoners amongst a larger group of prisoners, who pose less

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[246] Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment*. p.46.

threat to society and are less likely to present a serious control problem'.[247]

However, the most recent HMCIP report highlighted a serious flaw in this

theory. The report suggested that progress in behavioural changes and

rehabilitation of prisoners at HMP Wakefield is often slow and requires

enormous effort and resources due to the high proportion of prisoners who

are listed as denying their offences.[248] As there are currently no offending-

behaviour programmes available for prisoners listed as deniers, there is little

effective work being done to engage with them.[249] Consequently, the

negative attitude of these prisoners can be seen to undermine the positive

work achieved elsewhere in the prison by those prisoners who do

acknowledge the need to engage with the regime and work towards

rehabilitation outcomes. As the aim of this research was to look at levels of

wellbeing amongst prisoners, the impact of the negative attitudes of deniers

at HMP Wakefield on other prisoners at the establishment was one of the

main reasons why the prison was approached for this project.

In order to deliver a research project in a prison, it was essential to

gain ethical consent from the prison service in addition to the enhanced

approval from the University Ethics Committee. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ)

requires approval to be granted by the Governing Governor and the lead

psychologist at a specific establishment before any formal research projects

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[247] Flynn. p.51.

[248] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons. p.5.

[249] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons. p.5.

take place.[250] This aims to ensure that all approved research has clear links

to National Offender Management Service (NOMS) priorities and to prevent

cross-overs with other research being carried out nationally. The Research

Applications PSI outlines the guidelines for appropriate research projects.[251]

In addition to the areas covered by the University Ethical Review, the MOJ

research application includes other prison-specific areas of potential

concern. The specific areas that were relevant to this project related to the

equipment that was required, protecting the safety and wellbeing of

participants and researchers in a high security prison, and the financial

implications of participation on the prisoners.[252]

The University Ethics policy states that 'all reasonable measures must

be taken to protect the health, safety and psychological wellbeing of

researchers and all subjects', which emphasises the need to ensure the

safety of the researcher as well as the participants.[253] This is particularly

significant in a potentially dangerous environment such as a prison. This

area is also covered in the Research Application PSI as it sets out as a pre-

requisite that researchers must be fully security cleared and trained or

escorted by staff at all times to ensure their safety.[254] As an existing member

of staff at HMP Wakefield, I already had full security clearance in place to

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[250] Ministry of Justice, ' Research Applications PSI 41/2010 ' (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012). p.4.

[251] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 41/2010'.

[252] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 41/2010'. p.11.

[253] 'University of Leeds, 'Research Policy' (Leeds: University of Leeds, 2013) p.3.

[254] Ministry of Justice, ' PSI 41/2010'. p.10.

work at the establishment and had been issued with keys. This was a crucial

factor in gaining approval as it reduced the impact on prison staff resources

as they did not need to accompany me around the establishment.[255] This

also meant that I was up to date with all mandatory prison training and had a

good level of experience of the security arrangements within the

establishment.[256] Several areas of this mandatory training were essential

components in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the participants as well

as other staff members and prisoners within the establishment. This included

Safer Custody and Incident Reporting training.[257] The main areas of

relevance for this project in the Safer Custody guidelines set out in the PSI

relate to identifying the risks and triggers associated with violence, self harm

and suicide as well as the process in place for reporting and managing the

potential risk these can pose.[258] The Safer Custody PSI clearly states that

'the identification and management of prisoners at risk of suicide and/or self

harm is everyone's responsibility', which highlights the need for any

researcher having contact with prisoners to have a good level of knowledge

in this area.[259] Risk factors are personal characteristics or circumstances that

are linked to negative events. They can also include psychological or

[255] Ministry of Justice, ' PSI 41/2010'. p.7.

[256] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 41/2010'. p.7.

[257] Ministry of Justice, 'Management of Prisoners at Risk of Harm to Self, to Others and from Others (Safer Custody) PSI 64/2011', (London: Ministry of Justice, 2011); Ministry of Justice, 'Management and Security of the Incident Reporting System PSI 11/2011 ' (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012).

[258] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 64/2011'.pp.17-20.

[259] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 64/2011'.p.26.

psychosocial factors such as low self esteem or hopelessness; aspects of

the individual's clinical history such as mental health or personality disorder

diagnosis; personal historical background issues such as childhood

maltreatment or a family history of suicide or self-harm.[260] The PSI defines a

trigger as 'an event that sets a course of action in motion' and can refer to

events that have occurred in the past as well as current events.[261] These can

include anniversaries or other key dates, bereavement of family members or

close friends, or court appearances and sentencing.[262] If any member of staff

is concerned that an individual may be at risk of self-harm or suicide they are

required to open an Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork document

(ACCT) on that individual.[263] The ACCT procedures are described as 'a

prisoner centred and flexible care-planning system which, when used

effectively can reduce risk' and are designed to manage the risk factors

associated with self-harm and suicide by providing the individual with support

from the most appropriate services available to them.[264] Having a clear

understanding of the systems and strategies in place to safeguard prisoners

is important for the success of the project and sustained engagement of the

participants. Workshops delivered by the British Museum found that some

objects could unexpectedly trigger difficult or unhappy memories in some

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[260] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 64/2011'.pp.17-19.

[261] Ministry of Justice, ' PSI 64/2011'. p.19.

[262] Ministry of Justice, ' PSI 64/2011'. p.20.

[263] Ministry of Justice, ' PSI 64/2011'. p.26.

[264] Ministry of Justice, ' PSI 64/2011'. p.26.

individuals and, as a result, they recommend that facilitators are alert to this during any sessions delivered and that there is a source of sustained support, past the end of the project if required.[265]

Accurate incident reporting and intelligence gathering are key components of a well-run and safe prison establishment. As a result, it is important for anyone working in a prison to understand what events require reporting and how they should be recorded in order to keep themselves and others in the prison safe. The PSI relating to incident reporting explains that 'the Incident Reporting System (IRS) has been used to record events that undermine the safety of those within the establishment, and/ or subvert the authority or effectiveness of the establishment's regime or facilities'.[266] The perception could be that incidents requiring reporting are limited to serious events such as assaults or escape plans; however, my own experience of working in a prison has highlighted that as, a classroom environment can be seen as a safe space by many prisoners, it can be commonplace for information about offences or recent incidents within the establishment to be disclosed. It is important to pass this sort of information on to the security department to ensure they have all available intelligence in order to piece together an accurate picture of what is going on at any time and potentially prevent some situation arising.

A further potentially complex ethical issue is raised in the University Ethics Policy, as it states that it is important to 'consider the potential for

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[265] Phillips. p.203.

[266] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 11/2011 '. p.4.

reputational risk, to both individuals or institutions'.[267] Individuals were a straightforward area to address as all information about participants and work created by them was anonymised. This was to ensure they could not be identified as linked to the project once the work was displayed at the museum or discussed in any subsequent publications. This was achieved by providing an information sheet that addressed any questions or concerns participants may have had had prior to the start of the project. Informed consent was also obtained from all participants once they were confident in the procedures that had been put in place. However, this raised the particular issue of conducting research in a prison. Although confidentiality and anonymity could be guaranteed when the results of this work were taken out of the prison, it was not possible to ensure absolute confidentiality within the prison due to my obligation as a member of staff to report anything security or offence related to the security department. As all the participants had previously engaged with activities in the education department, they were aware this would happen.

The issue of reputational risk became particularly complex when applied to the different institutions involved in the project, as the museum service, the prison and the University are all organisations that are very aware of their public reputation due to the nature of their funding. An important aspect of this involved considering how and through what channels information about the project, and the results from the research, were disseminated in order to prevent any unnecessary negative publicity towards

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[267] University of Leeds.p.2.

either the prison or the museum service. The Research Applications PSI requests that all planned publications are made available to the NOMS National Research Committee (NRC) prior to publication.[268] Therefore, the most suitable solution to the problem seemed to be to provide copies of any information that was planned to be published to a member of each institution prior to it being placed in the public domain so that any relevant amendments could be made.

The University Ethics guidelines on paying or reimbursing participants suggest that the main issue with offering any sort of reward for participation is that it can override the principle of freely-given and fully-informed consent.[269] This issue is further complicated when working in a prison environment as the Research Applications PSI clearly states that 'taking part in research should not automatically lead to any financial benefits or losses to research participants'.[270] Consequently, the decision was made to run the project two days a week. This was to ensure that prisoners who were employed elsewhere in the prison could participate but still keep their current job on the other days in order to guarantee they would not find themselves unemployed at the end of the project. This meant that, as long as they attended the project sessions, they would still be paid the same amount as they received for their normal prison job and, as a result, not suffer any financial loss as a consequence of participating. Due to the fairly long length

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[268] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 41/2010'. p.13.

[269] University of Leeds, 'Protocol for Reimbursement of Research Participants' (Leeds: University of Leeds, 2011). p.1.

[270] Ministry of Justice, 'PSI 41/2010'. p.15.

of the project, it was felt that it was appropriate to reward the participants in some way for their commitment. However, the exact form of reward that would be acceptable was difficult to ascertain. The University acknowledges that sometimes vouchers, DVDs or other goods can be given as an acknowledgement of the contribution made to the research by the participants. However, in a prison this could be perceived as trafficking.[271] Prisoners are generally presented with a certificate to acknowledge their participation in a particular project. However, after discussion with the prisoners, it was found that this was not something of value to them, as certificates are not recognised as being of worth to the prison authorities/ sentence planning boards. During these discussions it was proposed by the prisoners that a more appropriate reward would be a positive 'Incentives and Earned Privileges' (IEP) referral. These are electronically recorded on their file and remain there for their whole sentence. It is possible to add as many detailed notes as required to explain specifically why the referral has been given. These referrals contribute to the IEP status of the individual which determines what privileges the prisoner can access. It was agreed that, for all those who participated for the full twelve weeks and contributed something for display in the final cabinet, a positive IEP would be submitted. This seemed a fitting reward as, while it is something of worth to the prisoners, it would not be enough of an inducement to undermine the principle of freely-given consent.

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[271] University of Leeds, 'Protocol for Reimbursement of Research Participants'. p.3.

Research Methods

In line with the Arts Alliance analysis of previous projects, a combination of qualitative research methods were adopted for this research project, in order to allow for a wide range of predicted and unexpected outcomes to be recorded.[272] Using a combination of methods could help to provide an insight into the thoughts of participants alongside behaviours that could be observed by the researcher. The specific range of methods chosen to record findings was a conscious decision made to attempt to reduce the potential bias which could occur from the participants trying to demonstrate the behaviours or changes in behaviour that they believed I, as a member of education staff, would want to see. This stems from Erving Goffman's observation that 'when an individual appears in the presence of others, there will be some reason for him to mobilize his activity so that it will convey an impression to others which it is in his interests to convey'.[273] As he explains, the reasons behind why an individual may want to convey a specific impression vary but there are two explanations he gives that seemed particularly relevant to prisoners. He explains that 'sometimes the individual will act in a thoroughly calculating manner' or 'sometimes he will intentionally and consciously express himself in a particular way, but chiefly because the tradition of his group or social status require this kind of expression'.[274] My previous prison training suggested to me that these were significant areas to consider as it is not

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[272] McLewin. p.29.

[273] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1969). pp.15-16.

[274] Goffman. pp.17-18.

uncommon for individuals to try to manipulate or 'condition' staff and that

other individuals may feel under peer pressure to behave in a certain way.

This highlighted the need to be aware of what Goffman calls defensive and

protective practices.[275] He defines defensive practices as the strategies an

individual uses to protect the impression he is conveying, whereas protective

practices are the strategies an individual employs to protect the impression

being given by another individual.[276] In a prison it is important for a

researcher or teacher to employ certain protective practices in order to

safeguard individuals, particularly when the impression they are trying to

portray aims to prevent others learning details about the nature of their

offence which could make them more vulnerable.

Yvonne Darlington and Dorothy Scott highlight the possibility that,

certain combinations of research methods, may result in contradictory

findings.[277] However, they suggest that this can be a positive aspect of some

research as 'discrepant findings can be a catalyst to carrying an analysis and

understanding forward and, as such, are best regarded as an opportunity

rather than a constraint'.[278] This was believed to be the case with this

research because so many elements involved piloting new ideas and it would

have been difficult to predict specific outcomes without using a multi-method

approach to recording findings. The methods selected were all qualitative

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[275] Goffman. pp.24-25.

[276] Goffman. pp.24-25.

[277] Yvonne Darlington and Dorothy Scott, *Qualitative Research in Practice: Stories from the Field* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2002). p.126.

[278] Darlington and Scott. p.127.

rather than quantitative research methods, as Monique Hennink has outlined that 'the purpose of qualitative research is to understand or explain behaviour and beliefs, identify processes and understand the context of people's experiences'.[279] By being aware of different learning styles and acknowledging that some of the activities may be outside the comfort zone of the participants, the use of a multi-method approach ensured that all participants could find a way of contributing their ideas in a format with which they were confident.[280] As suggested in my literature review, the categories of learning preference proposed by the Dunn and Dunn learning styles model were a key consideration for my research project. This emphasises the value of areas outside the usual focus on preferences to visual, auditory or kinaesthetic (VAK) learning activities and whether individuals prefer to work in groups or on their own.[281] These additional areas included having an awareness of the learning environment itself, such as the layout of the room, as well as attention being paid to the motivation of the participants and the level of responsibility for their own learning they expressed. As a consequence of these areas of consideration, the methods selected for the project were participant observation, participant diaries and focus groups. These are discussed in more detail below.

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[279] Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter and Ajay Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods* (London: SAGE Publications Lts, 2011). p.17.

[280] Coffield and others, p.1.

[281] Coffield and others, p.21.

Participant Observation

Participant observation was selected as the main research method as it has been demonstrated as encouraging the continual reassessment of initial research questions and facilitate the development of new questions as new insights occur.[282] It is also an effective research method for recording unexpected outcomes, as the researcher is always reacting to situations that unravel before them and interacting with others involved in the events.[283] By definition effective participant observation requires the researcher to undertake an element of participation as well as observation. In defining this method Kathleen Dewalt and Billie Dewalt emphasise the participation element by proposing that 'participant observation is a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture'.[284] Danny Jorgenson supports this definition and states that participation observation 'focuses on human interaction and meaning viewed from the insiders' viewpoint in everyday life situations and settings'.[285] The main advantage of this is that it allows the researcher to gain access to otherwise inaccessible aspects of these interactions. However, the form of participation possible for a researcher

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[282] Kathleen M. Dewalt and Billie R. Dewalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers* (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2002). p.13.

[283] Dewalt and Dewalt. p.17.

[284] Dewalt and Dewalt. p.1.

[285] Danny L. Jorgenson, *Participant Observation: A Methodology for Human Studies*, Applied Social Research Methods Series Volume 15 (London: SAGE Publications, 1989). p.23.

working in a prison environment is vastly different from other environments where participant observation could be used. As the intention was for the project to be a collaboration between myself as the researcher and the prisoners as participants, a key consideration was what level of participation was both achievable and appropriate for me to undertake in my role. The Arts Alliance recommends that where participant observation is used in a prison, a researcher should become an active participant in the culture in order to record extensive notes as part of the research.[286] Consequently it is important to acknowledge here what is meant by active participation and to outline the context within which the term applies. Based on the definitions of the different levels of participation outlined by Kathleen Dewalt and Billie Dewalt, it would be impossible for a female researcher, such as myself, to achieve active participation when working in a male prison environment as I would be unable to be present for some aspects of prison life and culture such as life on the wing.[287] Therefore, for the purpose of this research, active participation refers only to the events and activities that took place during the sessions in the education department as part of the project and not events that took place in the wider context of the prison.

Research suggests that when using overt participant observation it can be difficult to record information at the time it happens, as participants may feel they are being analysed or 'spied on' in some way as usually the permission for the research to take place will have been granted by people in

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[286] McLewin. p.32.

[287] Dewalt and Dewalt. p.20.

authority.[288] If anything, the opposite was true with this research project. In my role as the researcher, I used the same style diary as the participants and explained that I would keep on-going notes in the same way as they were. This was particularly important when questions or suggestions about how things could be done differently in the future were discussed, as the participants saw that their contributions were being recorded in the notes I was making and, where possible, they could see how they were used to affect the course of the project within the wider prison environment.

Diaries

Although participant observation was the main method of collecting data, it was also necessary to use additional primary methods to support or build on those findings. The participants were asked to keep a diary to record their ideas, opinions and suggestions about the project. This was selected as a research method to complement the use of participant observation as the use of diaries provides a record of what the individual (rather than the researcher) sees as important or relevant.[289] One of the main advantages of using diaries alongside participant observation is that they allow for a greater level of insight to be recorded about how individuals interpret situations and ascribe meanings to events that take place.[290] Using diaries in this way can be described as 'naturalist research' in that the participants are the centre of

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[288] Jorgenson. p.45.

[289] Andy Alaszewski, *Using Diaries for Social Research*, ed. by David Silverman, Introducing Qualitative Methods Series (London: SAGE Publications, 2006). p.2.

[290] Alaszewski. p.37.

interest, with each person's story being valued in its own right.[291] In this sense both participant observation and diaries are inductive research methods, as they allow the researcher to generate theories rather than merely test existing ones.[292] Lauri Hyers *et al* suggest that a further advantage of using diaries as a method of data collection is that they offer a greater level of autonomy to participants than other methods as it 'entrusts respondents to report their experiences within the context of their daily living'.[293] If the most widely reported statistics on the low literacy levels of prisoners are to be believed, the use of diaries may seem like a poor choice of research method for a project of this nature.[294] However, my own experience of working at HMP Wakefield has led me to question the usefulness of data which only takes into account the results of the assessments carried out when an individual first arrives in custody, and not progress made since. This observation is supported by a recent article by the Prisoners' Education Trust who acknowledge that the statistics are

> not a reliable assessment for the snapshot population in
> prison at any one time, which has a higher proportion of

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[291] Alaszewski. p.57.

[292] Alaszewski. p.58.

[293] Lauri L. Hyers, Janet K. Swim and Robyn K. Mallett, 'The Personal is Political: Using Daily Diaries to Examine Everyday Prejudice-Related Experiences', in *Emergent Methods in Social Research*, ed. by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2006). 313-336 p.317.

[294] The last well publicised statistics published in 2002 by the Social Exclusion Unit reported that half of all prisoners had a reading below level 1. For more detail see: Social Exclusion Unit, 'Reducing Re-Offending by Ex-Prisoners', ed. by Social Exclusion Unit (London: Cabinet Office, 2002)

prisoners serving long sentences, many of whom will have progressed and have a higher level of education.[295]

As a result most individuals who request to participate in activities such as my project, are those who have exhausted the current provision of courses, and as such have significantly improved their literacy since first assessed. Many of these individuals are, therefore, looking for a new way of developing or practicing skills already gained.

Andy Alasewzski has identified that an important consideration when using diaries is the structure and format of the document itself.[296] In line with his recommendations, a commercially-produced, lined notebook was given to each participant for this project to encourage them to structure their diary entries in whatever way was appropriate for them.[297] While the suggestion is that ready-made diaries will emphasise the ordinariness of the process of keeping a diary and remove the pressure of what should be recorded, in a prison being given an item that would otherwise be unavailable for them to access actually provided a sense of kudos or privilege amongst the participants.[298] This is in part due to the limited number of truly personal items prisoners possess. Aside from photographs and letters sent by family, most objects in their possession are either standard prison issue or items purchased from the same lists and catalogues available to all other

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[295] Taylor, Clare, 'Prisoner Education in the Uk: A Review of the Evidence by Prisoners' Education Trust', *Prison Service Journal* (2016), 44-51. p.47.

[296] Alaszewski. pp.73-86.

[297] Alaszewski. pp.73-86.

[298] Alaszewski. p.73.

prisoners.[299] From the perspective of other prisoners, 'a prisoner who could accumulate goods in a world of deficit transmitted intelligence, self discipline, and an awareness of how to work the system' which demonstrates the value of objects outside of those that are readily available to the whole prison population.[300]

Focus Group

Previous research suggests that members of a focus group should not be known to each other prior to participation as this can limit the responses given as some participants may have a preconceived idea about what other participants believe.[301] However, in many ways the opposite is true in a prison environment because, until the participants develop a certain level of trust between themselves and the facilitator, their responses may be limited or within a perceived safe zone of opinions. As the focus group was used at the end of the project, the group had already worked together for twelve weeks and were confident enough with each other to ask questions about certain responses or raise new topics of discussion that they felt were important.[302]

One of the main strengths of using a focus group to evaluate this project was that, as group interaction produces the data, the focus is on the

[299] Goffman, *Asylums.* p.28.

[300] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society.* p.279.

[301] David L.Morgan*, Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*, ed. by John Van Maanen, Peter K. Manning and Marc L. Miller, Qualitative Research Methods, Second Edition (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 1997). p.37.

[302] Morgan*, Focus Groups as Qualitative Research.* p.37.

opinions of the group rather than the responses of individuals. This also

provided the opportunity for the participants to compare and share their

experiences and reflect on the success of each stage of the project

individually and collectively.[303] This focus on the quality of engagement was

developed from the findings of the 'Inspiring Change' project.[304] The

evaluation team found that the process of asking the participants to provide

feedback on what they had valued during the process of participating created

a sense of ownership of the work and ensured that participants felt they had

have some level of influence over the content of the project.[305]

David Morgan identifies focus groups as a good method to use as a

complement to participant observation, as they can provide a concentrated

insight into the participants' thinking on a particular topic and offer the

researcher more control due to the researcher defining the topics of

discussion.[306] The fact that focus groups are researcher led, however, can

potentially be negative, as the responses of participants can be limited to

those areas defined by the researcher and miss unexpected or unpredicted

areas of interest.[307] The structure of the session was planned to try to and

overcome this by using and initial set of five questions which would be asked

in relation to each stage of the project, before a final series of three

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[303] Morgan, *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*. p.15.

[304] Anderson *et al*, p.41.

[305] Anderson *et al,* p.96.

[306] Morgan, *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*. p.23.

[307] Morgan, *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*. pp.14-15.

questions would be used to discuss how future projects could be developed or improved.

Proposed Initial Questions

      1. What was your favourite object?

      2. What did you enjoy most?

      3. What did you find the most challenging?

      4. Did anything surprise you?

      5. Did you learn anything?

Proposed Final Questions

      1. What sort of objects would you have liked to have access to?

      2. Would you recommend similar projects to others?

      3. Would you participate in a similar project again?

A focus group team would normally include a moderator and a note taker; however, when planning the project I was conscious that I may be delivering the project on my own.[308] As I was concerned that I would not be able to take notes with an appropriate level of detail while facilitating the group, I decided to audio record the session to overcome this problem. As discussed by Michael Bloor *et al* the main advantages of this are 'when audio recording it is not necessary to have a second person and that it avoids the pitfalls of inaccurate and selective manual recording'.[309]

I proposed that we record the hour-long session using equipment from within the prison, and then transcribe the recording. On completion of the

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[308] Michael Bloor *et al*, *Focus Groups in Social Research*, ed.by David Silverman, Introducing Qualitative Methods (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2001). pp.154-155.

[309] Bloor *et al*. p.42.

transcription, the CDs would be destroyed by the security department in order to ensure the anonymity of the participants. This contradicts the process for transcribing focus groups suggested by Bloor *et al,* who recommend that all individual speakers should be identified in the transcription.[310] However, due to the ethical issues associated with allowing potentially high profile prisoner participants to be identified, this was not something which I believed was appropriate to do. The decision to use recording equipment from the prison was key to this aspect of the evaluation being approved, as external equipment would have had to be security cleared on entry to and exit from the establishment, increasing the impact on staff and resources within the prison.

Subjective Wellbeing

As subjective wellbeing has been recommended as a key area of focus by the Arts Alliance, it was selected as the main measure of success for this research.[311] Although there are three areas of subjective wellbeing commonly used, only one- the eudemonic approach- appeared to be of relevance here. The eudemonic approach is concerned with the purpose and meaning gained from specific activities rather than overall life satisfaction. This is closely linked to the idea of affect and secondary desistance as

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[310] Bloor *et al*. p.60.

[311] McLewin. p.39.

outlined by Charlotte Bilby *et al.*[312] Carol Ryff has raised concerns that many

aspects of positive functioning are not represented in other measures of

wellbeing and consequently she has highlighted six areas that can be used

as a measure of eudemonic wellbeing.[313] These are 'self acceptance',

'positive relations with others', 'autonomy', 'environmental mastery', 'purpose

in life' and 'personal growth'.[314] Unlike other measures of wellbeing, these

categories can clearly be linked to current issues at HMP Wakefield and

research into experiences of long-term imprisonment. As the category of self

acceptance places an emphasis on accepting past life events as well as an

individual's current situation, the potential impact for this as an area of

wellbeing could be significant at an establishment where a high proportion of

prisoners do not take responsibility for their index offence. The categories of

'autonomy' and 'positive relations with others' have more relevance to long-

term prisoners than other groups as their sense of community is often limited

by an over reliance on upholding existing stereotypical views held about

individuals based solely on the nature of their offence.[315] As areas of

wellbeing 'purpose in life', 'personal growth' and 'environmental mastery'

relate to fears of imprisonment, as has been demonstrated by Stanley Cohen

and Laurie Taylor. They suggested that finding an alternative way of marking

the passage of time is vital for prisoners and that the mental deterioration

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[312] 'Understanding the Value of Engagement in Culture and Sport', ed. by CASE (London: DCMS, 2010); Tinkler and Hicks; Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project; Bilby, Parkes and Ridley.

[313] Ryff. p.1069.

[314] Ryff. p.1071.

[315] Sim. p.111.

associated with not actively trying to do this is one of the biggest fears of most prisoners.[316]

In the Prison Reform Trust's report into the mental health of male prisoners, Erwin James concluded that prison life places intense mental pressure on prisoners and is not conducive to feelings of wellbeing.[317] Considering that many of the factors associated with poor mental health and the risk of self harm and suicide in prisoners can be linked to the eudemonic categories of wellbeing, the impact of increased levels of wellbeing could make a significant difference to the overall prison environment.[318] This is also supported by the findings of the report by Charlotte Bilby *et al* who found that arts interventions in prisons provided opportunities for participants to begin to redefine themselves, encouraged high levels of engagement, promoted co-operation with others, were responsive to the individual needs of participants and provided a safe space for positive experiences.[319]

In order to analyse the data collected from the prisoner and researcher diaries and the transcription of the focus group, the first step was to code the results against the six eudemonic wellbeing categories developed by Ryff and discussed earlier.[320] This was completed for each of the four stages of the project separately in order to highlight which categories

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[316] Cohen and Taylor. pp.93-95.

[317] Dora Rickford and Kimmet Edgar, 'Troubled Inside: Responding to the Mental Health Needs of Men in Prison', in *Troubled Inside Series* (London: Prison Reform Trust, 2005). p.v.

[318] Rickford and Edgar; Ministry of Justice, *PSI 64/2011.*

[319] Bilby, Parkes and Ridley. p.6.

[320] Ryff. pp.1069- 71.

were particularly significant and evaluate any potential impact of the different

activities. As the New Economics Foundation (NEF) recommend, both

positive and negative comments were recorded and coded as it was felt that

this demonstrated the value of the different areas to that individual and would

allow for any patterns or changes in perception during the project to be

identified.[321] The categories with the most recorded entries at each stage

were then considered to highlight specific themes. In the same way that

previous research for other arts based projects have found, generic

measures of wellbeing were of limited value, as the most significant factor

affecting participants' wellbeing was being in prison, which was obviously still

the case after the end of the project.[322] In order to take this into account, the

findings from the four separate stages were also analysed collectively. This

was to draw attention to any recurring themes or areas of concern and move

beyond generic indicators of wellbeing to areas more specific to the prison

environment.

Participant Recruitment

The first phase of the research involved recruiting a core group of six to eight

prisoner participants by identifying those willing to participate. This number of

participants was selected as this is the average number of people in a class

within the education department at HMP Wakefield. It was important to

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[321] Juliet Michaelson, Sorcha Mahony, and Jonathan Schifferes, 'Measuring Wellbeing: A Guide for Practioners' (London: NEF, 2012). p.9.

[322] Lèon Digard, Alison Liebling, 'Harmony Behind Bars'. p.298.

recruit a group specifically for this project rather than use an existing group as a key aspect of the project was dependent on the participants feeling a sense of ownership over the work, which would not be possible if a group was 'borrowed'.

The original intention was to display posters advertising the project on the wings and in different work areas, with information about the project and instructions on how to contact the researcher to express interest in participating via the prison application process. The pre-requisite for participation as a member of the core group was the attainment of level 2 English/Literacy. As this is the highest level available as standard in offender learning, it means there is very little opportunity to participate in any education programmes once this level has been achieved. The application process was established to enable prisoners to contact particular departments or individual staff members within the establishment, either to request information or make a complaint. Wing applications can also be used to express interest in or apply for places on education courses, workshops or other purposeful activities. It is a requirement of the prison service that every individual establishment has an application process in place.[323] Prisoners are required to complete the top section of the form and submit it to a member of staff in their wing office. From there the form is sent to the correct department or person via the internal mail system. The expectation is that the application should be answered within two weeks of it being sent. This

[323] Ministry of Justice, ' Residential Services PSI 10/2011', ed. by H M Prison Service (London: Ministry of Justice, 2011). p.10.

can be in person or in writing. However, it soon became clear that the posters were not being noticed and only one application was received. It was evident that many of the prisoners would not be willing to participate unless they knew the project was being run by someone who was already known to them and in whom they had confidence. Consequently, as more prisoners heard from their peers and teachers who was delivering the project, more expressions of interest came in.

As it was always the intention to be open about all aims of the project and not use any element of deception, all potential participants were visited on the wings and provided with an information sheet detailing what the research was about and how they were expected to participate. This also provided them with the opportunity to ask any questions or express any concerns. This was an important element of the recruitment process as it ensured all those who chose to participate were aware of the purpose of the project and were not worried that they were being analysed individually, as they would be when participating in Offending Behaviour Programmes.

Object Selection

The selection of the museum objects to be used was central to the research and as such was an important part of the project design. The process of selecting the objects raised issues around potential bias or choices made based on existing stereotypes of prisoners. One key issue was that, as a female researcher, I was attempting to choose objects that I thought would interest the adult male prisoners. While it was possible for me to use my own

experience of working in a prison to develop some areas of interest or choose materials that I know are not available in prison, such as decorative fabrics and ceramic or china objects, it was not possible for me to be much more specific. This was further highlighted by the fact that the majority of the museum curators with whom I was liaising were also female and had no previous experience of working in prisons. Some of these staff expressed concerns about how safe the objects would be in the prison environment and whether the prisoners would treat the objects with respect which in turn made an impact on what objects, if any, were suggested to be used.

Leeds Museums and Galleries does not have a designated handling collection of objects as they believe all the objects should be available to use where appropriate.[324] Therefore an important aspect of the project design centred around putting together a collection of objects from the main collections at the Discovery Centre that would allow the research questions to be explored successfully. The objects were selected to reflect a cross section of the collections at the Discovery Centre. This was to establish whether certain objects or collections are more effective at engaging and inspiring prisoners in order to inform object selection for future work. In order to create a collection of objects each of the curators were asked to suggest objects they thought would be appropriate to use and would represent different meanings of value. From the short lists of objects provided, a provisional collection was put together which included objects that were

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[324] Leeds City Council, 'Leeds Museums and Galleries', Leeds City Council, (2011)
<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries/> [Accessed 10th February 2011]

deemed valuable for a wide range of different reasons. The intention was

also to include objects from different periods in time and based on different

aesthetic qualities in order to explore concepts set out by previous

researchers. Hugo Critchley believes objects that are pleasant or satisfying

to hold have the greatest impact, while Bernie Arigho has stated that objects

that encourage re-enacting or recreating how previous owners of the object

would have engaged with them stimulate a stronger response.[325] It was

hoped that some objects would be seen as immediately valuable while

others would increase in value the more of the story behind it was learnt.

The objects had to be selected and approved before the participants

were recruited as the object list was required as part of the Research

Application submitted to the prison. This meant that I had the responsibility of

considering any potential negative responses to objects, based on the range

of possible offences the participants may have committed, before getting as

far as the security department. Consequently, during the initial stage of

selecting objects, I ruled out several objects suggested by curators for this

reason. Very early on in the selection process I expressed concerns about

including any form of animal skull or other bones. From my own experience

of working in a prison I am aware of several prisoners who suffer from mental

health issues or personality disorders who have committed violent offences

while suffering from psychotic episodes or breakdowns. I was concerned that

an object so closely linked to the death of a living creature could bring back

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[325] Critchley. p.69; Arigho. p.207.

negative or distressing memories for these prisoners, which was not the intention of the project.

One of the objects proposed from the Customs and Excise collection was a woman's crocodile skin shoe. Based on the knowledge that a large proportion of prisoners at HMP Wakefield are sex offenders, I felt that a shoe could potentially be interpreted as a trophy taken from a victim. The challenge was to find more appropriate customs-seized object that would still emphasise the ideas I was hoping to achieve. I think my particular objection to the shoe stemmed from the fact that I knew I would be delivering the majority of the project on my own and that certain prisoners had previously (or still do) demonstrate a lack of respect for women. I felt this object must not reinforce these negative attitudes. In addition to helping to decide what objects to exclude from the final collection, my previous experience of working in a prison environment also informed some suggestions of what could be included. I made several requests for specific materials and aesthetic qualities based on my understanding of what prisoners can access in prison.

One of the key materials I wanted to include was some form of ceramic item. As all cutlery, plates and cups in a prison are plastic I felt it would be interesting to include an item of this nature. Due to the fragile nature of these sorts of items, I was aware that my the choice of potential objects would be limited due to the risk of damage.

I also wanted to include some form of currency within the collection of objects as prisoners do not handle money directly. All the financial payments

and transactions they make are carried out by the finance department in the prison on behalf of the individuals. Consequently, the only contact the prisoners have with money is the balance sheet they receive weekly. This lists how much they have available to spend based on what they have earned by working in the prison or money that may have been sent by family members. While a formal form of currency has essentially been removed from the day to day transactions the prisoners can make, this does not mean to say that there is not an informal one in place. Any object that may be wanted by other prisoners is used as a currency that can be traded for another object equally valued. As a result Mars bars, tobacco or cartons of milk are regularly traded between prisoners or used as payment in return for artwork commissioned to be sent out to family members as gifts.

Based on my knowledge that many prisoners at HMP Wakefield enter a wide range of decorative craft items into the annual Koestler Prison Arts Competition, I thought it was important to include objects of a decorative nature in the final selection.[326] I was aware that, as a result of the skills gained though participating in Fine Cell Work, many of the artefacts created by prisoners included intricate needle work to produce items ranging from cushions and bags to greetings cards.[327] I thought objects from the museum that could be linked to these skills the prisoners have, and might consider as prison related, would provide a link to different periods in history and

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[326] *Doing Time with the Arts: The Koestler Trust at 50*, ed. by Ariance Bankes (London: Koestler Trust, 2012).

[327] Fine Cell Work, 'Stitching a Future' (London, 2013); Fine Cell Work is a social enterprise that trains prisoners in paid, skilled, creative needlework to foster hope, discipline and self esteem, in the long hours spent in their cells. The prisoners are paid for their work, which is then sold around the world.

geographical locations in the outside world. When this idea was discussed

with staff at the museum, it became clear that their preconceptions of what

might interest male prisoners most definitely did not include these sorts of

objects.[328]

The provisional object list was submitted to the security department at

the prison in order to minimise any potential risks. The security department

only asked for two objects to be removed. These were two toy cars, one

immaculately presented in its original box, while the other chipped and

scratched from years of play. These had originally been selected as it was

thought they might encourage the prisoners to think about their own

childhood or the different value between toys that have been loved and

enjoyed versus toys that have been kept to ensure their monetary value. The

security team felt that, in light of the number of offenders at Wakefield who

have committed offences against children, there was the possibility these

objects may remind them of their offences and their victims.

Final Object List

Through consultation with the prison security department, the final object list

was approved, along with a clear procedure for storing the objects once on

the premises. It was agreed that the objects would be brought into the

establishment in lockable, and easy-to-carry cases to which only I had keys.

This was to ensure that I could bring them in at an agreed time and not make

any impact on staff resources by requiring assistance. Once in the

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[328] Marek Romaniszyn, Meeting with Rachel Forster, (Monday 28th November 2011)

establishment it was agreed that the cases containing the objects would be

stored in a locked cabinet within the education department. The agreed

storage method for the objects in part informed the final object selections due

Figure 1 - Object Storage Cases

to the restrictions posed on size and weight. All of the objects in the final

collection were selected based on the findings from the Stretch Story Book

research trip, or to explore different theories relating to objects highlighted in

the literature review.

As the projects discussed in the literature review generally placed

more emphasis on the end results, rather than any specific interactions with

objects, I felt it was important to gain more first-hand experience of how

objects could be used in a prison as part of the process of selecting objects

for use within this project.[329] Therefore, in order to develop a greater

understanding of what objects or collections could be used within the project

being developed, I accompanied the charity Stretch to Hustad Fengsal, a

prison in Norway, to observe how they used museum objects as part of the

Stretch Story Book digital storytelling project. Digital storytelling is built

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[329] Anderson *et al*, 'Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team'; Callaghan, 'Gallus Glasgow';
Samuels, 'The British Museum in Pentonville Prison: Dismantling Barriers through Touch and Handling'.

around the premise that we constantly explain our identities to each other by sharing the small stories from different contexts that have made us who we are.[330] If all our small stories and memories, are seen as jumbled up in an incomprehensible fashion in our mind, digital storytelling is a process of giving value to those stories by recording them to create a different method of sharing them with others.[331]

In the project I observed, two groups of museum objects were used to inspire the participants to recall stories that could be used to create their digital story. The first group was provided by the Romsdalmuseet, a local folk museum, and the second group was objects from the old Molde Prison. Interestingly, the Stretch facilitator was not involved in the selection of either group of objects, as a curator at the museum chose the Romsdalmuseet objects and a prison teacher selected the objects from the old Molde Prison. A vast difference in the type of interactions that could be seen between each group of objects and the prisoner participants was taken forward to inform the object selections for my own research project.

The objects from the Romsdalmuseet were selected due to the perceived familiarity that the prisoners would feel to them, as all of the objects were chosen to reflect aspects of Norwegian culture within the lifetime of the prisoner participants. While this worked well as an icebreaker as all the prisoners had stories to tell that related to some of the objects, the 'everydayness' of the objects seemed to devalue them in the eyes of the

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[330] Joe Lambert, *Digital Storytelling: Capturing Lives, Creating Communities*, 3rd edition (Berkeley: Digital Diner Press, 2009). p.14.

[331] Lambert, p.15.

prisoners. While they were all able to engage instantly with the project due to the fact that they all had a personal story or memory to share that related directly to one of the objects, once the first of these stories had been shared some of the participants lost interest in the activity as it began to seem somewhat repetitive. This led me to think that it is important not to limit any chosen theme to a focus on a particular collection or subject that is stereotyped as being of interest to prisoners, as it would be difficult to maintain a high level of engagement from the participants over a prolonged period of time. As a result of this observation I selected several objects for

Figure 2 - Verge Watch and Edwardian Locket

use in my own research that I believed would appear familiar to the participants and encourage them to recall personal memories that would provide a connection to the objects. However, I also ensured that these

objects had something about their history that would hopefully surprise the participants and spark their continued interest in the project.

The verge escapement watch was selected for this reason. As the watch is broken it is possible to see the intricate mechanisms inside that would not be possible if it was working. This provides an additional value to the object as an appreciation of the craftsmanship required to create it. As Neil MacGregor suggests 'things do not need to survive intact to yield enormous amounts of information', which raises the idea of discussing whether the object is still 'museum worthy' when it is broken and consequently no longer fulfils its original function.[332] The watch was also selected for the wider themes it could represent. As prison sentences are a time-bound form of punishment, time in a prison can be perceived differently from time outside. Roger Matthews suggests that 'because the present is placed in suspension, the ability to link the past to the future is limited since the meaning of time itself is lost'.[333] He also explains that often 'time served in prison is not so much 'spent' as 'wasted'.[334] This provided one of the key reasons for selecting this object as I believed that challenging the idea of how they perceive time could help prisoners see the value of engaging in a more active way with the activities they are required to do during their sentence.

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[332] Neil MacGregor, *A History of the World in 100 Objects* (London: Penguin Group, 2010). p.xx.

[333] Roger Matthews, Doing Time: An Introduction to the Sociology of Imprisonment, 2nd Edition (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). p.39.

[334] Matthews. p.38.

An Edwardian locket was selected to challenge the idea of taking all information one is given as completely factual. At some point during its history in the museum this locket had been labelled as 'cheap' due to the material from which it is made. The intention was to see whether the participants would look past the label and see other values in it. This seemed to be an interesting idea as prisoners themselves are labelled based on their perceived security risk and the nature of their offence.[335] This theme of feeling defined by a label was raised by participants in the *Inspiring Change* project as being and inhibiting factor in developing self confidence and beginning to change as a person, and this seemed to have a strong resonance with the aims of my research.[336]

A Farnley Fireclay brick was selected as something of a mystery object as I did not think the prisoners would perceive this as having any immediate value. I felt the story behind the object would demonstrate how a negative situation can be turned into a positive one by being flexible and open to alternative avenues in life when things do not work out as one planned.

During the Stretch StoryBook project, the idea of the museum as an authoritative voice emerged as a potential barrier to levels of engagement by the participants. As non-Norwegians, neither the Stretch facilitator nor I knew anything about some of the objects that were specific to Norwegian culture. This provided the prisoners with the opportunity to take on the role of the

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[335] Sim. p.111; Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment*. p.49.

[336] Baillie. p.4.

'expert' and explain the purpose and value of the objects to us in an active

way. However, where the objects were not specific to Norwegian culture, the

participants instantly sat back in a passive way and looked to the curator for

information as though there was nothing they as 'non museum staff' could

add that the museum would not already know.

I did not believe that it would be possible to guarantee the objects I

Figure 3 - Farnley Brick, Cypriot figure and Shabti

chose for my research would have the same cultural connections to the

participants, as the objects were chosen before the participants were

recruited. However, it did seem realistic to assume that at least some of the

participants would have previously studied certain historical periods at school and consequently would be able to share any facts and stories they remembered in a similar 'expert' role if objects from those periods were included. This was also an area where I felt my lack of a museum studies background would benefit the research, as I thought the participants would have fewer concerns about sharing questions or information they had about the objects with me, than with someone who they believed would already know that information.

As Ancient Egyptian history is studied as part of the National Curriculum in England, it seemed that an object from this period would be familiar to most people who have been through the education system in this country.[337] The Shabti itself was selected as a result of its connection to the pyramids, which I believed would provide a strong visual point of reference for most people and give the object a more solid context. A second figurine, which was of Cypriot origin, was selected to partner the Shabti to encourage the prisoners to consider how different cultures interpreted life events as both figurines were believed to be grave goods but with different historical contexts. In Ancient Egypt, the Shabti was expected to become a servant in the afterlife for the person being buried, whereas the Cypriot figure was a musician who it was believed would welcome a fallen warrior into the afterlife. This particular Cypriot figurine was selected due to a label that was found with it, which stated that the figure was believed to be a woman

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[337] Department for Education, 'National Curriculum in England: History Programme of Study - Key Stages 1 and 2', ed. by Department for Education (London: Department for Education, 2013).

praying, rather than a woman playing a tambourine as is now the interpretation suggested by the curators. This seemed to provide a starting point for discussion around how knowledge is not a fixed state and that, as Neil MacGregor has highlighted, an important aspect of the biography of objects is how they change over time as new technologies allow us to ask and answer new questions.[338]

It was clear during the *Stretch Story Book* project that some of the objects inspired reminiscences from some of the prisoners, which sparked different methods of interacting with the objects based around their own past experiences. For example, when explaining how several objects should be used, some prisoners mimicked the action of using it as a way of reinforcing or authenticating what they were saying. This was particularly the case with the berry picker. Other objects evoked a different sensory response, for example, when handling the cigar tin one participant carefully lifted it to his face before opening it as though hoping the smell of the original contents would still be there. Both of these examples relate to the arguments put forward by Constance Classen as to why early visitors valued the opportunity to handle museum collections. She proposed that handling man-made objects provided a sense of coming into contact with the original creator or even a feeling of what it would be like to be the original owner of the artefact.[339]

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[338] MacGregor, *A History of the World in 100 Objects*. p.xxii.

[339] Constance Classen, 'Touch in the Museum', in *The Book of Touch*, ed. by Constancee Classen (Oxford: Berg, 2005). p.277.

Figure 4 - Berry Picker

This idea was one that I felt was important to include within my own selection of objects and consequently inspired me to select the Neolithic hand tool and the World War One postcard. The hand tool was selected as a mystery object as its value derives from the story behind it rather than its appearance this form of stone is the first example of man-made tools. It is not until one holds it that one realises how it is shaped to fit the human hand and recognises how it would have been used.

With the World War One postcard, my intention behind selecting it was slightly different, as it was the connection between what the postcard represented to both the original owner and the prisoners that I thought would be interesting. Maintaining contact with family members even when one cannot physically be with them was an idea about which I thought the prisoners would feel strongly. The second reason for selecting this object was the aesthetic value of the needlework on it, which I believed would interest the participants due to the culture of producing embroidered items in the prison.

Figure 5 - Hand Axe and World War 1 Postcard

The objects from the old Molde Prison encouraged a completely different way of working and indeed thinking from the prisoners. There was not much information about many of these objects, which allowed for possible interpretations as to who owned them to be put forward. In many ways it was the interactions with these objects that were the most interesting to observe. Initially none of the prisoners was particularly interested in handling any of the objects. However, once a possible story was proposed, they became more intrigued as though handling it themselves would allow them to have the insight to confirm or deny the story suggested. This became apparent when their prison teacher showed a digital story he had produced about the small wooden wheelbarrow. The story told the fictitious tale about a prisoner at the Molde prison who made the wheelbarrow in his cell as a present for his son who was coming to visit. The story ended with the question as to why the wheelbarrow was still there. The story sparked something in several of the prisoners and the previously-ignored wheelbarrow was handled and examined closely as though it could reveal the answers to them. In this case, it was the mystery of the object that drew them in. In some ways the prisoners seemed to feel a more personal connection to this unknown object than to any of the folk museum objects that they knew well from their own lives. They seemed to empathise with the object's creator and consider the different possibilities as to why it was there, based on their own experience of life in prison. Most of all, it encouraged conversation and debate between the prisoners around something other than what they would discuss day after day. Unlike the folk museum objects

where each person's experience was quite similar, the mystery behind the

wheelbarrow seemed to open up possibilities for a story that was entirely

owned by the individual and could never be proven wrong or taken over by

others.

Figure 6 - Wheelbarrow

Although many of the objects from the Customs collection could fit

within other collections, I thought it would be interesting to see how the

prisoners responded to items that were categorised in the museum's

collection based on the knowledge that they had been brought into the

country illegally and then seized by the authorities. Unlike objects from other

collections where more information could be known about the original owner,

less information was available about these objects outside of what could be

surmised from evaluating them based on their appearance. Two objects

were selected to allow the prisoners to compare the level of impact man had

had on them in the way they had been manufactured or processed and the

ethical issues that accompany this. The elephant skin wallet was selected as

a mystery object as, on initial inspection, it seemed similar to any other

leather wallet. This level of mystery is not the case with the crocodile skin as

it instantly recognisable. Both of these objects were selected to explore the

concept of the souvenir as outlined by Susan Stewart, as she suggests that

the value of such objects stems from the 'romance of contraband, for its

scandal is its removal from its natural location'.[340]

Figure 7 - Elephant skin wallet and crocodile skin

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[340] Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. p.135.

Three different currencies were selected for inclusion as mystery

objects. These were chosen to represent different periods throughout history,

different geographical regions and were selected as they are not instantly

recognisable as a form of money. The Canoe money was selected as it looks

more like a souvenir or small toy than the 18th Century Southeast Asian

currency that it is. The West African Manilla, or 'slave money', was selected

as it looked more like an item of jewellery and appeared to have been

intended to display wealth in a more obviously visual way than the other

currencies. The Chinese Spade or Pu money was selected because it

represents one of the first attempts to use token money in the same way as

we have now, despite being used nearly 2000 years ago during the Wang

Mang period of the Han Dynasty. This provided an area of contrast to the

other two currencies, which were both worth the weight of their constituent

metal. While discussing the historical reasoning behind the development of

money, Michel Foucault proposed

> the two functions of money, as a common measure
> between commodities and as a substitute in the
> mechanism of exchange, are based upon its material
> reality.[341]

As none of these currencies are in use today, it was hoped the

participants would look for different forms of value in these objects rather

than the original value they were intended to represent.

To ensure the potential avenues for discussion that could be explored

through the objects were as wide ranging as possible, the remaining objects

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[341] Foucault, *The Order of Things*. pp.183-184.

were selected for their connection to current social and political issues as a

way of offering a link to the outside world, and areas that my research

suggested are relevant to prison life.

Figure 8 - Manilla, Spade Money and Canoe Money

The Votive cup was selected as an alternative to a ceramic item as it

was less susceptible to damage caused by movement to and from the

classroom. Due to the small size of the cup, I thought the participants would

be interested in working out what the purpose of it could be.

The Palestinian Wedding Jacket was mainly selected for the aesthetic

quality of its colours and needlework, which provided a link to the work

created by some prisoners through collaboration with Fine Cell work.[342] It was also chosen to provide a link to memories of family members and friends through its connection to weddings as an occasion. It was hoped that it would not be instantly recognisable as an item of wedding attire to most of the prisoners but would serve as a reminiscence tool once the story behind it was revealed. As an item of clothing, there was a further reason for selecting this item. Daniel Miller suggested that 'clothes don't so much change us as reveal us, even to ourselves: reveal the true inner and relatively constant self within'.[343] In a prison environment, it can be difficult for prisoners to express any sense of individuality or identity through their clothing, as many items are standard issue to all prisoners or are bought from a limited selection of suppliers. As this jacket is clearly handmade and personalised by the embroidery, it was hoped this would appeal to their need to express their own identity through their appearance.

The Tibetan Buddhist bronze statue was selected to raise the idea of religious value, particularly in relation to how valuable these objects are perceived as being, when they are not from one's own religion. It was hoped this object would provide an indirect link to the ongoing problem within prisons about discrimination, intolerance and prejudice, from a similar perspective to that adopted by the Anne Frank Project.[344] Their belief is that it is possible to challenge some forms of hate crime and aspects of gang

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[342] Fine Cell Work, 'Stitching a Future'2013) <http://www.finecellwork.co.uk/about_us/mission_and_vision> [Accessed 15th October 2013]

[343] Miller, *Stuff*. p.39.

[344] Gadd. p.1.

culture by encouraging respect for the self and others through highlighting

the dangers of racism and prejudice.[345]

Figure 9 - Buddhist Figure and Palestinian Wedding Jacket

The tray of honey bees was selected to highlight the current concern about

the decline of bee populations in the UK. The British Beekeepers Association

(BBKA) suggests that, by considering the social life of a honey bee colony, it

can be possible to encourage people to think about the structure of our own

society. When that is combined with an understanding of the many different

ways we use the products bees create, in nutritional, medical and

manufacturing applications, honey bees as an object can provide an

introduction to the idea of social responsibility and citizenship.[346]

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[345] Steve Gadd,'The Anne Frank Prison Project', in *Prisoner' Education Trust: Learning Matters* (Surrey: Prisoners' Education Trust, 2010). p.1.

[346] The British Beekeepers Association, 'Importance of Bees' (Warwickshire: Whiteroom Web Design, 2014).

Figure 10 - Tray of Honey Bees

Project Design

The project was designed with four stages delivered over a twelve-week period. Drawing inspiration from existing research relating to objects, these stages encouraged the participants to use the museum objects in different ways in order for the researcher to observe which forms of interaction were most successful in engaging the participants, in addition to highlighting if a particular object or collection of objects worked particularly well. The aim of the project was to design a combination of activities that encouraged participants to produce work either from a personal/reminiscence perspective or an impersonal/educational perspective, in order to establish which approach would be most effective at engaging prisoners with museum

education.[347] These categories refer to those found in the Heritage in Hospitals project, which suggest that some people were happy to just learn about the objects while others used the objects as inspiration to discuss stories about themselves.[348]

In order to facilitate these different methods of interacting with museum objects, inspiration was drawn from two of the three forms of touch and handling used as key components in the project delivered by the British Museum at Pentonville Prison, London. The initial form of handling adopted was to encourage the prisoners to interact with the central exhibit or collection being displayed as a way of sparking an initial enthusiasm and interest in the themes of the project. The final form of handling included the use of art materials and other technical equipment as a means of facilitating the participant's ideas. The combination of these approaches was found to help the facilitators gain the trust and respect of the participants in addition to helping the prisoners open up and communicate with each other.[349] By entrusting the prisoners with such objects of value, it was possible to create a unique environment of respect that allowed the participants the opportunity to 'drop their guard' and work as a team towards achieving a common goal.[350] As the project at HMP Pentonville was the main example of previous work using museum objects within a prison setting, it was believed that these

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[347] Chatterjee, Vreeland, and Noble. p.171.

[348] Chatterjee, Vreeland, and Noble. pp.171-173.

[349] Samuels. pp.259-260.

[350] Samuels. pp.259.260.

two approaches could be particularly useful in the development of my project, especially as research by Gabriel Josipovici has suggested that the relationship prisoners incarcerated for long periods of time have with the objects and spaces they inhabit is different from those of the general population in the outside world.[351] He found that the general public find safety in the objects and spaces they know staying the same while, for prisoners, the limited number of objects and spaces they access can have an oppressive effect, which could have a detrimental effect on a project like mine.[352]

Each stage was relatively open in design, working towards an objective rather than a rigid session-by-session structure. This format allowed the participants to work towards achieving the prescribed objective by whichever route they decided was most appropriate, thus encouraging a level of autonomy they did not experience often. This allowed for the researcher to observe and support the preferred learning styles of the individual participants to ensure that all participants remained actively engaged in the project throughout the duration. The project also provided opportunities for the wider prison population to have some level of participation through object handling sessions in the education department, access to the final cabinet of curiosity and collaborations with different work areas in the prison.

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[351] Gabriel Josipovici, *Touch* (London: Yale University Press, 1996). pp.28-29.

[352] Josipovici. pp.28-29.

Stage One - Initial Museum Object Handling Sessions

Objectives:
Discuss the story behind each of the museum objects

Identify and explore different meanings of value.

Classify the objects based on an initial perception of which is most and least valuable.

The aim of this initial stage was to introduce the participants to the ideas behind the project and provide them with the opportunity to handle the museum objects for the first time. For this stage of the project all three objectives were designed to elicit immediate responses around the second research question outlined earlier which is, which objects or collections will engage prisoners, and what are the processes involved in the interactions between the prisoners and the museums objects?

The intention was not to provide any information about the objects at this stage as it was believed this would demonstrate the need for them to participate actively and highlight the potential levels of autonomy participation could offer. From considering what early museum visitors gained by being able to handle objects, Constance Classen highlighted several benefits to adopting the active form of engagement provided to those early visitors that seemed relevant to this project.[353] Firstly, handling objects allows people to confirm or correct the judgements they have made about the physical qualities of an object by just looking at them, such as the weight

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[353] Classen. 'Touch in the Museum'. pp.276-280.

of an object or the texture of its surface.[354] Secondly, the difference between

what is gained from sight and touch is significant as the distance required

from an object for sight to be employed successfully tends to make people

participate in a passive way, whereas the direct contact with an object that

touch requires encourages an active form of participation.[355] Thirdly, in the

case of manmade objects, handling can give people a sense of connection to

the original owner of the object regardless of whether that transcends

different geographical areas, cultures or periods in time.[356] By being required

to recall information from their own past experience to explore the reasons

why each of the objects could be perceived as valuable, it was hoped the

participants would see the value in the knowledge each of them could offer

and understand the benefits gained by working together and utilising each

other's strengths. This early stage of the project was developed from the

work of Daniel Miller and Pierre Bourdieu. Miller argues against the

traditional view that objects serve as representations of aspects of ourselves,

in favour of the concept that in many respects objects actually create us in

the first place.[357] He proposes that as we grow up we learn about culture,

society and how to behave appropriately through our everyday interactions

with objects.[358] This theory of the power of objects can be related to

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[354] Classen. p.276.

[355] Classen. p.277.

[356] Classen. pp.277-278.

[357] Miller, *Stuff.* p.10.

[358] Miller. p.53.

Bourdieu's earlier concept of '*Habitus*', in which our values, dispositions and expectations as members of a particular social group are created through our everyday life experiences.[359]

At this stage the group was asked to rank the objects based on their own perception of which were the most and least valuable. The same activity was then repeated when each object was interpreted via the museum's information to determine whether participants' perceptions changed when they knew more about the objects.

Stage Two – Peer Museum Object Handling Sessions

Objectives:
Select the key information or 'hook' required to engage others with each object.

Design and deliver an object handling session to groups in the education department.

Evaluate and reflect on the impact of the peer object handling sessions.

Building on the experiences from the first stage, the purpose of the second stage was to begin to transfer the knowledge gained to other prisoners and staff within the prison. By considering what it was about the objects that captured their interest, the group was required to develop a format for an object-handling session and deliver sessions to groups of their peers in the education department. The first two objectives for this stage

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[359] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge, 1986).

continued to focus on the second research question, while the third objective was intended to begin to provide a response to the first question which is can access to museum objects, and activities drawn from them, lead to an increased sense of wellbeing and establish a sense of community in prisoners?

.   This aspect of the project was developed from the format of the Anne Frank Prison Project, which trained prisoners as guides to show all visitors around the project's central exhibition. These visitors could include prison staff as well as other prisoners. Although the Anne Frank Trust has found multiple benefits to this approach to delivering their project, there were two areas that seemed of particular relevance to my project. Firstly, it found that prisoners visiting the exhibition were more likely to engage with the information provided when it was presented to them by their peers rather than by someone perceived as a figure of authority.[360] Secondly, when provided with opportunities to improve their own communication skills and interact with other prisoners to whom they might not ordinarily speak to, the guides can increase their ability to empathise with the experiences of others. This is understood to be an important step towards desistance from future offences.[361]

This stage was influenced by the work of Alfred Gell and his concept of 'things' having the ability to act as social agents. Gell argues that in various contexts we attribute agency to objects and consequently make

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[360] Gadd, *Work with Offenders: Anne Frank Prison Project.*

[361] Shadd Maruna, 'Understanding Desistance from Crime' (London: Rehabilitation Services Group, NOMS, 2010); Bilby, Parkes, and Ridley.

ourselves the 'patient' in that social relationship.[362] For this stage, my aim was to explore whether using the objects as agents within the handling sessions, would facilitate positive interactions between prisoners who may not usually engage with each other. In other words, whether the story of the object would offer valued areas of common interest between prisoners that could be developed within the wider context of the prison. This idea is particularly important in an environment where the hierarchy from which relationships are established is often based on the nature of offences committed. Joe Sim defines this hierarchy further in reference to long-term prisons and states:

> The armed robber and the professional criminal, the epitomes of masculinity, stand at the apex while their antithesis, the child sex murderer, flounders at the bottom. Normal manhood and abnormal perversion live together in the same institution.[363]

A potential impact of this form of hierarchy is discussed by Erving Goffman, who identifies that in some situations an individual will intentionally and consciously express himself in a particular way because his social status or group tradition requires him to do so.[364] Therefore, the impact of challenging this existing hierarchy could lead to an increase in a sense of community between prisoners based on something more positive. As Eileen Hooper-Greenhill suggests, the specific meaning or story of an object is

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[362] Gell. p.340.

[363] Sim. p.111.

[364] Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. p.18.

constructed from a person's previous knowledge and cultural experience.[365]

Consequently, a particular object can mean completely different things to

different people.[366] Based on this concept it was believed that, within the

format of the handling sessions, the museum objects could serve as

inspiration to spark discussions and ideas that would highlight normally

unseen areas of interest that were important to the individuals involved.

Stage Three – Personal Projects

Objectives:
Identify objects from their own life that represent areas that are
important/of value to them.

Create an artefact to be displayed in the final cabinet of curiosity.

For this stage of the project, there was a change in emphasis from a

focus on the museum objects to objects of personal value to the participants,

which also signified a change in focus to addressing the first research

question. Sherry Turkle has argued that as companions to our life

experiences 'we think with the objects we love; we love the objects we think

with'.[367] As such, the purpose of this stage of the project was to challenge

the participants to consider what objects from their past represent the

aspects of their own life most valuable to them. This would lead to the

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[365] Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture.* p.112.

[366] Hooper-Greenhill. p.112.

[367] Turkle. p.5.

creation of an artefact to be displayed in the museum that demonstrates an element of how they would like to be represented. Mary Jo Maynes *et al* suggest that it is through the telling of personal narratives or life stories that people make sense of why they do what they do and what motivates or instigates emotions and imagination in them.[368]

The intention of selecting objects from their own life was for the participants to begin to reflect on what was important to them in a much more abstract way than Offending Behaviour Programmes encourage them to do. Unlike previous projects that teach new artistic or creative skills, the aim here was to change the value the prisoners ascribe to the creative skills they already possess. It was also a means of focussing their attention back on themselves so that the autonomy offered from creating their own artefact would be viewed by them as an opportunity to make a positive contribution. Alfred Gell has explained that, through the process of creation, all manufactured artefacts represent some aspect of the maker's identity.[369] Therefore, the act of choosing to create something for the project could reinforce positive aspects of identity and contribute to an increased sense of wellbeing. By considering that in relationships between objects and people there is always an agent (active role) and patient (passive role), the

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[368] Mary Jo Maynes, Jennifer L. Pierce, and Barbara Laslett, *Telling Stories: The Use of Personal Narratives in the Social Sciences and History* (London: Cornell University Press, 2008). p.3.

[369] Gell. p.341.

autonomy required by the participants to create their artefacts places them in the agent role as without them their objects could not exist.[370]

Stage Four – Curating the final cabinet

Objectives:
Write a museum style label to accompany the artefacts produced.

As a group, curate the final cabinet of curiosity.

As a group, plan the content of the project catalogue.

Individually write and design a page of the catalogue.

As a group, evaluate the impact of the project.

As one of the most effective features in the design of previous projects has been a final performance or exhibition, I felt it was important to include this in the design of my research project. This created a further shift in emphasis in the design of this stage of the project, from the participants considering what objects and ideas were valuable to them to how this could be presented to the public that would visit the exhibition in the museum. As the final stage of the project, the objectives were designed to give equal emphasis to both research questions. It was always the intention to exhibit the cabinet in the prison library so that the group's peers and staff could see it, before moving it to the outside visits centre at the prison where family and friends could access it and finally to take it to the Discovery Centre museum.

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[370] Gell. p.341.

Previous evaluations of prison projects such as Inspiring Change suggested that an exhibition element is a powerful component that can contribute to a sense of wellbeing, because it affords the participants the opportunity to see themselves in a different, more positive light.[371] A second reason is that, where family, peers and prison staff can attend the final exhibition, there is the potential for the participants to be seen differently by those around them and empowered by that sense of occasion.[372] This supports the theory of respect set out by Michelle Butler and Deborah Drake, who suggested that 'respect as esteem' needs to be earned and, as a result, is mainly associated with people who are independent, hard working and successful.[373] As the prison environment limits the opportunity for prisoners to act autonomously, this type of respect can be difficult to achieve; therefore, these opportunities are valued highly by prisoners.[374]

The first intention in this stage of the project was for the participants to write a museum-style label for their individual artefacts, in order to attempt to convey the message they wanted the audience to receive. The second task was for them as a group to develop the text panel that would accompany the cabinet and serve as an introduction to the project. The final challenge in this stage was for the group to create a catalogue to accompany the cabinet

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[371] Anderson, Colvin, McNeilland and others, 'Inspiring Change: End of Project Report of the Evaluation Team'. p.15.

[372] Anderson, Colvin, McNeilland and others, 'Inspiring Change: End of Project Report of the Evaluation Team'. p.15.

[373] Butler and Drake, 'Reconsidering Respect: Its Role in Her Majesty's Prison Service'. p.119.

[374] Butler and Drake. p.119.

which would offer a more in-depth account of what had been achieved during the project. These steps were intended to offer a different approach to thinking about objects and evolved from Alfred Gell's work, in which he suggested that, 'art objects lead very transactional lives, in that they are made by an artist but created for an audience. It is not normal for them to be created for no reason'.[375]

Conclusion

Unlike other projects, the aim of my research was to change the value the prisoners ascribed to the creative skills they already possessed, rather than to teach new artistic or creative skills. Aside from taking the museum objects into the prison, the intention was for everything created to be made by the prisoners themselves. This idea aimed to provide opportunities for prisoners to utilise the existing skills they have and work as part of a community towards achieving a shared goal. It also provided a greater number of opportunities for participation in the research project and, through collaborating with different work areas in the prison, created a wider interest in what was going on from staff and prisoners.

The development of this methodology has examined the requirements of this project from both a criminal justice and museological perspective. The validity and relevance of all proposed research methods have been discussed, with particular reference to reducing any potential bias associated with working with prisoners. An exploration of the specific issues and

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[375] Gell. pp.341-342.

limitations associated with working within a high security prison environment has been demonstrated and the justification for selecting the participants and museum objects chosen have been explained with reference to previous research projects and theories. The overall framework developed to structure the project design has also been outlined with clear objectives for each stage set out.

Chapter Four. Stage 1 - Initial Object-Handling Sessions

This chapter discusses the results of the first stage of the research project including the challenges faced during the process of recruiting the participants. It offers an overview of what happened during this stage, before providing an analysis of the findings that emerged from the participant diaries, focus group transcription and facilitator field notes. In order to maintain the anonymity of the participants throughout my thesis they have all been allocated a pseudonym. It is hoped this will allow their individual stories, opinions and progress to be easily tracked and compared without making them identifiable to any reader. For the remainder of the thesis the participants will be identified as follows:-

- Matt - 30's - Buddhist - 10 years into his sentence.

- Mohammed - 20's - Muslim - 4 years into his sentence.

- Steve - 40's - Christian, Church of England - 12 years into his sentence.

- Terry - 50's - Buddhist - 8 years into his sentence.

- Hasim - 20's - Muslim - 6 years into his sentence.

- Michael - 60's - Catholic - 3 years into his sentence.

- Asif - 30's - Muslim - 16 years into his sentence.

The recruitment process for the project started in January 2012 with a provisional list of participants being submitted to the security department for consideration in February. When applying to participate, all potential recruits were asked to provide a reason why they wanted to join the project. This is not something that is part of the normal application process. My own

experience of working in a prison environment is that many prisoners prefer

to be in the education department than in workshops so often apply for any

course, regardless of whether they have any interest in the subject. Quite

often these prisoners are a disruptive presence in a class as they see

education as an easy option and have little intention of engaging in any

meaningful sense. It was my belief that asking potential participants to state

why they wanted to participate could filter many of these problems out as

most would not put in the effort to apply. Of the prisoners eventually cleared

to participate, three adhered to this aspect of the application process

although Hasim simply stated that he thought he would learn a lot from the

project.[376] The other two participants made clear links to how they felt the

project would enhance activities they already undertook, and how they felt

the skills they already had would be of benefit to the project. Matt outlined

the activities he currently participated in, and asked questions about whether

the project would interfere with his ability to continue with these. He also

asked if the fact that he was not a visual artist was a problem or whether his

interest in creative writing was an adequate link to the arts.[377] In his

application Steve outlined his recent education history. He stated that he felt

he would benefit from the project as he had studied Archaeology through a

distance learning course and would like to have physical access to objects

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[376] Application form submitted January 2012 by Hasim.

[377] Application form submitted January 2012 by Matt.

that related to areas he had studied as part of that.[378] Initially this participant

list was not accepted because there were concerns about dynamics

between several of the prisoners listed.[379] As the project was not being

delivered by the prison directly and did not link to specific sentence plan

targets set, it was not viewed as a priority for any particular individual

prisoner to participate even if they were a suitable candidate.[380] However,

following a meeting with a member of the security department team, several

names were removed and the remaining group was cleared to attend.[381] The

project started in March 2012 and ran two days per week for twelve weeks,

with a core group of six participants at any time. Asif left the project mid way

through because he was transferred to another establishment, and Terry,

who had been on the initial group list was temporarily at another

establishment at the start of the project so joined the group during week

six.[382] This is a common occurrence within high security prisons as individual

prisoners can be moved at any time, for example if intelligence is received to

suggest they pose a imminent threat, or if they are required in another area

of the country for a court case. Over the course of the project attendance

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[378] Application form submitted January 2012 by Steve.

[379] Ministry of Justice, 'Activity Allocation PSI 03/2012' (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012), p.4. 'Output 3: Prisoner risk, need, and suitability is confirmed and taken into account when allocating to activities'

[380] Ministry of Justice, 'Activity Allocation PSI 03/2012' (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012), p.4. '2.1 Prior to allocating a prisoner to an activity their risk and sentence planning requirements should be taken into account.'

[381] Amy Stubbs Security Governor, meeting with Rachel Forster, (Monday 27th February 2012).

[382] Nick Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment* (Winchester: Waterside Press, 1998).p.51. '

from most of the participants was fairly high with Matt and Hasim missing

fewer than three sessions. Of the remaining four participants, any absence

was generally excusable due to other commitments within the prison or

errors on prison lists. Only Steve had particularly low attendance as he was

present at only twenty two of the forty sessions run with very little valid

explanation to justify why.

The room designated for use for the project was within the education

department in the prison and consequently was bound by the same core

daily hours available and the same regime closures for bank holidays.[383] The

layout of the classroom was set out with a central table that ensured the

group would need to interact with each other during all sessions. As Amedeo

and Dyck suggest, this type of layout is preferable to traditional rows as it is

more conducive to 'learner generated' as opposed to 'teacher directed'

activities.[384] It also instils the expectation that participants will have active

involvement in the activity and be given time to examine and explore

something rather than listen to and observe something being delivered.[385] As

the classroom was previously used for arts and crafts groups there was a

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[383] The core day regime consists of a morning work session from 8.20- 11.45 and an afternoon work session from 14.00 - 16.30. For more detail of the full core day see: http://insidetime.org/hmp-wakefield-prison-regime-info/

[384] Douglas Amedeo, James A. Dyck, 'Activity-Enhancing Arenas of Design: A Case Study of the Classroom Layout', *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research,* 20 (2003), 323-43. p.332.

[385] Amedeo and Dyck. 'Activity-Enhancing Arenas of Design' p.332.

shadow board tool cupboard containing scissors that the prisoners were cleared to use when required during the third stage of the project.[386]

Participant Demographic

The age range for the participant group recruited was between twenty five and sixty five, which represented a strong cross section of the overall population at HMP Wakefield. The length and type of sentence being served by the participants varied widely, with three serving life sentences, one serving at least twenty-one years and two serving fixed tariff sentences. At the time of the project all the participants had served at least four years of their current sentence and three of the participants had already served longer than nine years. Significantly, three of the participants, Mohammed, Hasim and Steve, were listed as not taking responsibility for their index offence which reflected the high proportion of deniers within HMP Wakefield.[387] There was also a strong religious affiliation felt by most of the participants, with Hasim, Mohammed and Asif being practising Muslims, Michael being Roman Catholic and Terry and Matt being Buddhists. All the participants had previously engaged with the education provision in the prison in some form during their sentence, and all had achieved the pre-

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[386] The use of tool shadow boards provides an immediate visual aid to identify if tools are missing or out of place due to the painted silhouette under each each tool. Each tool is also etched with a number that has a corresponding metal tally.When a tool is issued to an individual that tool tally is put on a hook against the individual's name.
[387] The 2012 Inspection of HMP Wakefield reported that nearly half of the prisoners held at the establishment were currently listed as deniers. For more information see: H M Chief Inspector Of Prisons, 'Report of an Unannounced Full Follow up Inspection of HMP Wakefield', (London: HMCIP, 2012)

requisite level two literacy prior to the start of the project. Two of the participants had also studied to degree level, with Steve completing an Open University degree in prison and Matt completing a degree prior to being in custody. Four of the participants were already known to the facilitator and had previously been members of groups that I had taught. Terry had been in the Level 2 Creative Techniques course, Asif on the Level 2 Business Administration course, Matt on the Level 3 progression course and Michael had worked as a mentor in several classes I had covered.

The first stage of the project lasted approximately two weeks and focussed on interactions between the prisoner participants and the museum objects, in order to establish whether certain objects or collections were particularly effective for engaging the prisoners. This stage was the one most affected by unavoidable prison issues such as participants being unable to attend due to being missed off activity lists, or having unexpected appointments with other prison departments, and became somewhat disjointed as a result.[388]

The first session formed an introduction to the project and aimed to provide the participants with a clear understanding of the purpose of the research as well as sharing the research questions with them. Based on the findings of Westmarland's research it was felt that it was important to be overt about the purpose of the project in this way in order to reduce any

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[388] All prisoner movements around the prison must be planned and checked for any potential security issue. If a prisoner is not on a list at a particular department they will not be admitted. For more detail see: Ministry Of Justice, 'National Security Framework Control of Internal Movement Function - Management and Security of Communication/Control Rooms and Internal Prisoner Movement PSI 13/2011', ed. by HM Prison Service (London: Ministry of Justice, 2011)

concerns amongst the prisoners about 'whose side' I was on and what I was actually researching.[389] It also provided an opportunity for the participants to sign their consent form and to be given their diary and a pen. It was hoped this would motivate the prisoners to engage with the project and feel a sense of ownership of how it would develop. Unfortunately, as a result of the delay between the recruitment process and the prisoner group being cleared to participate, two participants had decided against participating, thus reducing the group to four participants on the first day.

To introduce the museum objects to the group, the objects were unpacked from the storage case and unwrapped individually. They were then placed on the table in front of the group for participants to investigate and discuss without any information or interpretation being offered. The decision was made to introduce the objects in this way rather than laying them out in advance or in a box for the participants to explore themselves, as it was felt the value of these objects would be enhanced if the prisoners could see that they were packaged so carefully.

Following the initial investigation of the objects and accompanying discussion, the participants were asked to individually rank the objects based on their personal perceptions of value. This task was then repeated as a group although, due to a lack of willingness to compromise from some of the participants, it was only possible to create a list which included four levels of value. Each participant selected the object they perceived as the most

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[389] Louise Westmarland, *Researching Crime and Justice: Tales from the Field* (London: Routledge, 2011) p.149. pp.165-66.

valuable and the least valuable to make up the top and bottom levels of the list. The remaining objects, about which the participants were more slightly willing to compromise, were split between the two middle levels. Although it was not possible to achieve the original aim in the way planned, highlighting this lack of willingness to compromise on the part of some of the participants provided a base measurement from which evidence of any progress made in developing these skills during similar activities throughout the project could be seen and recorded.

The next session started with information being provided about the objects by Liz, the Education and Outreach Officer from the museum. During a discussion prior to the session we decided to start by focussing on the objects the group had listed as least valuable to attempt to encourage the participants to challenge their perception of those items first. This was again informed by the Stretch Story Book Project and the impact the introduction of different people's perspectives on certain objects made on those objects that were initially dismissed or overlooked by the participants.[390]

The remainder of the first week was severely affected by aspects of the wider prison regime and consequently was not able to build on the momentum achieved during the first day. Two of the group had applied to attend a family day event on the second day and another participant was not allowed to leave the wing to attend because his name was missing from the wing list. As it is against the prison policy for education staff to work in a classroom with just one prisoner, this meant that the remaining participant

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[390] Notes made by the facilitator during the Stretch Storybook Project, Norway 2011.

and I had to share a classroom with another education group until additional participants were recruited.

By the second week, two additional participants had been cleared and the core group was back to six participants. The intention behind the main task in the second week was for the participants to have the opportunity to research the objects further, in order for them to find additional information of interest about the objects beyond what the museum had provided. This in itself posed a challenge within the prison environment as it is not possible for prisoners to access the internet. This meant that a large proportion of the information required needed to be found and printed in advance for them to use. By this point of the project, some of the prisoners had visited the library as part of their usual evening prison routine and found a range of books to help with the research process. It had originally been the intention to schedule a library visit during one of the sessions this week, however, this did not seem necessary once the prisoners brought the books they had borrowed to share with the rest of the group.

During the process of researching the objects one of the prisoners made the comparison between the categories of value of the objects they were discussing, and the concept of the game Top Trumps. The group decided that creating their own version of the game would provide a good way for them to review the changes in their opinion of the objects since the first session and offer an alternative way for the objects to be ranked against each other. The discussion to create the scoring for the objects took a whole day, and at times became heated, however this was the first time that some

Figure 11 Top Trumps Cards

of the prisoners seemed prepared to consider beliefs or opinions that differed

from their own. This is particularly significant as previous research by Mann

suggests that a high proportion of sex offenders, particularly those of higher

intelligence, are often quite arrogant and lack a sense of empathy towards

their victims or others generally.[391] While not all the participants fall into this

offence based category, this does suggest that discussing the story behind

the objects could be used as a strategy for encouraging the development of

levels of empathy and awareness of others, in some cases as part of

Offending Behaviour Programmes. Many of the group were shocked that

from their final scoring most of the objects could be seen as the most

valuable in at least one of the categories they had created: 'sentimental',

'historical', 'cultural', 'religious', 'aesthetic', 'scientific' and 'rarity'. From the

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[391] Natalie Mann, 'Ageing Child Sex Offenders in Prison: Denial, Manipulation and Community', *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice,* 51 (2012), 345-58 p.350.

scoring agreed by the group, the categories of value they rated most highly overall were cultural, religious and sentimental value, suggesting that objects that have a strong connection to these areas have the potential to be successful at engaging prisoners. However, when the scores for individual objects are considered, the objects that scored the highest were generally ones that were particularly old, such as the Shabti, the Cypriot figurine and the verge watch. This suggests that the privilege of having the opportunity to access these objects was valued greatly.

From the data collected from the participant diaries and the evaluation transcript about this section of the project, it is apparent that three areas of wellbeing were referenced most frequently. These were broadly categorised as 'autonomy', 'environmental mastery' and 'personal growth' however, each theme manifested itself in a multitude of ways in different participants.

Autonomy

Before any information about the objects was revealed during the first session, it was interesting to see the method by which the prisoners ascribed value based on their own personal assessment. Where an individual made reference to their perception of an object as shaped by a personal memory or event, these comments were recorded as an example of autonomy as they demonstrated the personal standards by which value was judged or evaluated by that individual and how they tried to establish a personal

connection to that object.[392] This provided a practical demonstration of Daniel Miller's explanation of the value of material culture, as the participants were referring to the objects and cultural practices with which they were familiar as their point of reference for value.[393]

Despite the general consensus among the group that the brick was one of, if not the least valuable object at the initial discussions, Terry recorded in his diary the personal memories the brick inspired in him: 'I remember seeing the same brick face and other colours while going swimming in the old Darlington public baths'.[394]

Although this was never discussed or shared with the wider group, it was clear that he assigned a high level of sentimental value to the brick based on its connection to events and people of significance to him. If anything, the fact that this connection was not shared demonstrates the level of autonomy evident, as the participant did not want or require the approval of others to substantiate this object's value for him.

For Steve the opposite was almost true, as he shared the personal connections with particular memories he had made with the objects but then made no reference to these in any diary entries. His initial response to the watch prompted him to share with the group that he owned a similar watch that had previously been part of his grandfather's collection.[395] He went on to

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[392] Ryff. p.1071.

[393] Miller, *Stuff*. p.53.

[394] Extract from Terry's diary.

[395] Notes from the facilitators diary.

explain what the watch would look like if it was not broken and expressed

sadness that the watch had clearly not been looked after and ended up in its

current state. This supports one of Constance Classen's findings that early

museum visitors felt a strong connection to an object's original owner as a

consequence of handling that object.[396] When reflecting on the same session

in his diary, the prisoner chose to focus on the inclusion of the hand tool in

the collection of objects and its connection to a recent area of study he had

covered.[397] This suggests that, for this individual, his internal locus of

evaluation places a higher value on connections to academic achievements

and the perceived status that comes from these, rather than connections to

family members or life outside the prison.

The role religion played in the decisions made by Mohammed was an

unexpected factor encountered early on in the project. He seemed to be

having an on-going internal battle between what he found personally

interesting to explore and worrying that others would perceive his interests

as showing a lack of dedication to his faith. Consequently, he seemed to feel

the need to justify and explain many of the choices he made, and was quick

to seek the approval of the other Muslims in the group despite being a

practising Muslim prior to being imprisoned unlike many others who had

converted to Islam while in custody.

> In my childhood years Egyptology was something that
> really fascinated me, and the whole thing about
> Tutankhamen and all that. Obviously everyone recognises

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[396] Classen. p.277.

[397] Comments from Steve's diary.

> Tutankhamen do you know what I mean? So for those
> reasons it was something I looked at and straight away I
> fell in love with it. Obviously for my own religious
> convictions I had to be careful how I perceived it because
> in Islam idolatry is not allowed. However, just for historical
> reasons, and the fact that this little Shabti has stood the
> test of time it made it historical gold.[398]

As research by the HM Chief Inspector of Prisons suggests that Muslim prisoners report more negatively on their prison experience, and particularly on their safety and their relationships with staff, it was a concern that this participant's personal conflict might limit the potential experiences open to him during the lifetime of the project.[399] As the same research highlighted the positive relationship many Muslim prisoners felt with the prison Muslim Chaplain, the decision was made to visit the prison imam, in order to clarify any potential issues with the proposed activities. This meeting was discussed with the participant by both the facilitator and the imam and the effect of knowing that his imam supported his participation seemed to ease some of the tension he had felt and allowed him to engage fully with the project.[400]

Where no information about an object was offered, it was clear that some participants own assessment of the value of an object was informed by how much desire they had to own it, rather than any memory associated with

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[398] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[399] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 'Muslim Prisoner' Experiences: A Thematic Review' (London: Ministry of Justice. 2010). p.4.

[400] Ilyas Dalal, Conversation with Rachel Forster. (March 2010); HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 'Muslim Prisoner' Experiences'. p.4.

it. Research by Hugo Critchley helps to explain this response from the

prisoners, as he proposes, that from a neurological perspective,

> the process of object handling to derive a sense and feel
> for the item can imbue the object with character,
> significance and emotional colour in a manner perhaps
> independent of functionality.[401]

He also suggests that the impact of handling objects that are

intrinsically pleasant to hold can be a more satisfying experience, which

seems to be the case with the examples evident in this project.[402] There

were two examples of this concept during the first stage of the project

although they were prompted by very different reasons for each participant.

When discussing the watch, Terry expressed interest in owning the

object out of respect for the craftsmanship involved despite the object being

broken.

> Terry 'I found the mechanism of the verge watch
> fascinating, and I liked the workmanship. I mean the other
> items were as interesting as that but it was the beauty that I
> liked.'
>
> Liz – 'Were you annoyed that the watch was broken?'
>
> Terry – 'No. No I just valued it for what it was. I would love
> to own it just as it is.'[403]

This suggested that, for him, owning an object like that was a

measure of personal achievement that did not require sharing with others to

prove its value. This was in contrast to Michael who, during discussions

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[401] Critchley. p.69.

[402] Critchley. p.69.

[403] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

about the wedding jacket, made it clear that for him owning an object was more about how others would judge it than any internal assessment of value.

> Liz – 'So the reason that the jacket first attracted you was because you thought 'that's what I would want?'
>
> Michael – 'Yeah because of the colours, its shapes, its patterns and its beauty if you like. Something that you could show to your friends or your family 'look what I've got!'[404]

For Michael it seemed clear that the driving force behind his idea was to have something that no one else possessed, so that it could serve as a status symbol or make others envious. In this sense, the value of the object was dependent on the perceived level of approval others felt in his choice of possession than any personal assessment made. Jean Baudrillard discussed this desire to collect and own objects for reasons outside of their functionality and found that 'the everyday passion for private property is often stronger than all the others, and sometimes even reigns supreme, all other passions being absent'.[405] This would seem to suggest that, for Michael, the idea of collecting and owning unusual objects became more appealing in the absence of many aspects of material culture in his day-to-day life. His choice of objects also seemed to be led by a desire to have things he felt were aesthetically beautiful as though it was important that there is an obvious value in addition to any deeper meaning. As Alfred Gell discusses 'decorated objects please people because they confer aesthetic pleasure, and that is

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[404] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[405] Baudrillard, *The System of Objects*. p.91.

why they are desirable'.[406] This would seem to offer one perspective on Michael's attribution of value to the jacket.

As a result of the information provided about the objects during the second session, many of the participants drastically changed their approach and perception of the value of the objects. Some of the participants made particular reference to the difference the information provided by the museum made to the value they assigned to the objects. In the same way as Constance Classen suggests early museum visitors found value from instances where handling objects and learning about them contradicted the initial perceptions they had made about them, this also seemed to be true for the prisoners where the information provided contradicted their original interpretation of an object.[407]

> The World War 1 postcard was mine [favourite object].
> Right at the very beginning because as soon as I found out
> it was from a refugee not a soldier, because most World
> War 1 artefacts are from soldiers that have made things in
> the trenches and this was from a refugee...... I sort of
> identified and empathised with the suffering and sort of how
> that person was moved away from home, away from loved
> ones.[408]

This supports Matt's perception of the museum as an authoritative voice and suggests that many of them still hold the view of the museum as an

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[406] Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). p.81.

[407] Classen. p.277.

[408] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

institution established to 'raise the level of public understanding'.[409] This can most clearly be seen in the results of the second round of ranking the objects' value, where the objects with the most information available rated the highest. This suggests that the participants believed that an object was of great cultural value because the museum had a considerable amount of knowledge about it.

Hasim seemed to need to connect an object to a specific person and period in time during the process of handling and investigating the objects in order for a greater sense of value to be felt. On discovering the engraving that named Henry Brough Worthington as the maker of the watch, Hasim discussed his assessment of the watch as though evaluating Worthington's work personally.

> This person (Henry) was extremely talented and dedicated
> to his craft. I could sense his passion through his work. The
> watch looked complicated to put together, let alone design,
> every piece was intricate, it made me appreciate the time
> (man hours) and effort Henry must have put into this piece
> of art.[410]

For Hasim, it was the point of origin rather than any subsequent owners or life events of the object that provided value. This contradicts the theory set out by Alfred Gell, who suggests that 'often an art object indexes, primarily,

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[409] Stephen Weil, 'The Museum and the Public', in *Museums and their Communities*, ed. by Sheila Watson (London: Routledge, 2007). p.32.

[410] Extract from Hasim's diary. Bracket comments from the original diary.

not the moment and agent of manufacture, but some subsequent, purely transactional "origin".[411]

The interest in this different point of the object's history seemed to stem from the fact that, for most of the other objects, it was the identity of the owner rather than the maker that appealed to the rest of the group because of what the museum knew about it. In the case of the watch the engraving provided a link to the maker. For Hasim, acknowledging the skills of the person who he perceived as the unsung hero was more important within his personal value system.

Previous research by Helen Chatterjee found that in order to establish a connection to museum objects, some people focused on the intrinsic qualities, while others were more concerned with the extrinsic qualities.[412] When looked at collectively, it is interesting to see that all the examples of autonomy from this stage of my project support these findings. This is particularly interesting as it is often cited that many prisoners, particularly sex offenders, lack the ability to empathise.[413] However, as my results clearly demonstrate that the participants started to feel an emotional connection to some of the objects, this would tend to support research which claims this

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[411] Gell. p341.

[412] Helen Chatterjee, Sonjel Vreeland, and Guy Noble, 'Museopathy: Exploring the Healing Potential of Handling Museum Objects', *Museum and Society,* 7 (2009), 164-77.

[413] Nicholas Blagden, and Sarah Pemberton, 'The Challenge of Conducting Qualitative Research with Convicted Sex Offenders', *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice,* 49 (2010), 269-81; Natalie Mann, 'Ageing Child Sex Offenders in Prison: Denial, Manipulation and Community', *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice,* 51 (2012), 345-58.

lack of empathy is only in relation to their victims.[414] In these instances it can be the result of attempts to 'neutralise' the offence through 'denial of a victim', 'denial of responsibility' or 'denial of injury'.[415] If this is the case it implies that many prisoners do have the ability to empathise on some level and that this skills could be developed through the use of museum objects, before any offence related work is attempted.

Environmental Mastery

For two of the participants, the project provided a method by which they could assess their existing routine within the prison, and consider ways of adapting this to actively create an environment they felt was more conducive to their needs.[416] Each of these participants seemed to have a different motivation behind why they were doing this. One was from a very personal perspective, almost through fear of mentally deteriorating if this was not achieved. The other was more concerned with how he would be perceived by others in the prison and a desire that others respect him and see him as a knowledgeable figure. Both of these methods correspond to observations made on long-sentence prisoners by Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor as tools used to mark time and create a sense of structure in the life of the individual. While the sense of achievement felt from the completion of

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[414] Tony Ward, and Russil Durrant, 'Altruism, Empathy, and Sex Offender Treatment', *International Journal of Behavioural Consultation and Therapy,* 8 (2013), 66-71 p.68.

[415] Gresham M. Sykes, and David Matza, 'Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency', *American Sociological Review,* 22 (1957), 664-70

[416] Ryff. p.1071.

courses or activities can serve as a positive measure of how much time has been served, the impact of such an event ending can mark the re-entry to a period of unstructured time. As a result, prisoners may look to extend or expand areas of interest in order to prolong the positive feeling felt from participation.[417]

From the first session, Matt began to make reference to the inspiration he felt the experience of handling the museum objects could make to enhance his existing activities. For him, it was not necessarily a priority for him to find new activities, but rather to improve his ability to carry out those he already undertook, or feel that he could make more effective use of facilities to which he had access, such as the library.

> I note that in attending the 1st day of the museum project I have already found areas of new/rekindled interest – and that my reading/thoughts have had a direction and focus that they wouldn't otherwise have had today.[418]

In an environment where so many factors that could lead to progression through the system are influenced by different agencies, and not automatically predictable within prescribed timescales, this participant sought to involve himself in activities that could remain constant in spite of everything else around him. These activities and areas of interest were something he could control and develop at a pace set by him in a logical and ordered fashion with which he felt comfortable. This highlighted a common

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[417] Cohen and Taylor, *Psychological Survival,* pp.95-96.

[418] Extract from Matt's diary.

area of concern amongst prisoners noted by Stanley Cohen and Laurie

Taylor that they call 'ontological insecurity'. They suggest that

> this insecurity can take the form of a dread of the possibility
> of turning, or being turned, from a live person into a dead
> thing, into a stone, into a robot, an automaton, without
> personal autonomy of action, an *it* without subjectivity.[419]

For Steve, the project provided an opportunity to revisit a subject he

had previously studied, in order to consolidate his previous learning and

remind himself of the amount of knowledge he had retained. This provided

an example of the value of marking time as described by Cohen and

Taylor.[420]

> The concept of object handling was brilliant as far as I was
> concerned because for me, personally having studied
> archaeology, being able to handle certain objects that I had
> studied but never seen or been close up to while doing it
> was immensely rewarding.[421]

Although this initially appears to be a personal motivation behind

participating, it actually differed greatly from the approach of the other

participants. Steve placed considerable emphasis on educational

achievements and felt they could be used to raise his status amongst his

peers within the prison, by setting him apart from others that were educated

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[419] Cohen and Taylor, p.109.

[420] Cohen and Taylor, p.96.

[421] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

to a lower level: 'I knew I was going to be able to re-educate people and that alone changed their perception, and I think that worked quite well'.[422]

From this perspective, Steve aimed to use the project to demonstrate his knowledge to others with the hope that this would earn their respect and allow him be perceived as a valuable member of the community on the wing. In this sense, it could be viewed as an attempt to provide an alternative hierarchy to the one usually discussed in reference to long-term prisons. In this new hierarchy, knowledge and academic achievement could provide a higher level of status instead of this status being given to those who have committed 'masculine' offences.[423] This could be of significant value in a prison such as HMP Wakefield, which has a high proportion of prisoners that are considered as low status within the usual hierarchy as a result of the sexual nature of offences committed. This may help explain why so many of them are listed as denying their offences. However, as Natalie Mann explains, for prisoners whose offences have a sexual element to them, this alternate hierarchy proposed may have more to do with their lack of empathy toward their victim and the resulting feeling that they are superior to other types of offender in the prison.[424] This level of arrogance can result from what Sykes and Matza refer to as techniques of neutralisation whereby

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[422] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[423] Sim, p.111.

[424] Natalie Mann, 'Ageing Child Sex Offenders in Prison: Denial, Manipulation and Community' ,*The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 51 (2012), 345-358. p.349.

responsibility for deviant actions are lacking in an individual.[425] They suggest five main reasons for this; the denial of responsibility, the denial of injury, the denial of a victim, the condemnation of the condemners and the appeal to higher loyalties.[426] It would be interesting to see if more focus on, and reward for positive achievements, even if they did not relate directly to offence-related work, could result in a greater sense of community within the prison.

Personal Growth

The category of personal growth is closely linked to the motivating factors behind why an individual chooses to engage with a particular activity, based on the opportunities they feel it offers for them to expand their potential.[427] Within the first stage of my project, many of the prisoners seemed to use the objects as a stimulus for an assessment of their existing opinions and attitudes towards different subjects with the intention of highlighting new areas for personal development, research or creative skills and ideas.

For two of the participants, these areas were viewed purely as activities to enhance the experience of participating in the project and help them plan possible tasks for later. The sense of interest and intrigue some of the objects brought about in the participants served to inspire one of them in particular to want to research the answers to questions he had beyond the information provided by the museum. This is revealed in his diary entry:

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[425] Gresham M. Sykes and David Matza, 'Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency', *American Sociological Review* ,22 (1957), 664-670.

[426] Sykes and Matza, pp.667-668.

[427] Ryff, p.1071.

'historically it seems alien as a recognisable shape for money, why the canoe?'[428]

This highlighted the willingness of Terry to continue developing and to see all experiences as part of an on-going journey to expand his existing knowledge, rather than believing that information he was given provided a definite answer to all questions and problems. This also provided him with a sense of direction, or at least a starting point, for the rest of the project. As an area of personal growth, this is particularly significant as this could lead to the participant having the confidence to take responsibility for exploring the wider options available to him within the prison, and thus allow him to progress through the system during his sentence. Since the Woolf report of 1990, it has been suggested that the rehabilitation process should encourage prisoners to make choices and take responsibility for the consequences of those choices.[429] Terry's diary entry would seem to demonstrate a small step towards that idea being achievable for this participant, and could be developed within other areas of the prison to focus on working with him to highlight potential areas of future personal growth required for him to make progress.

For Matt, the process of evaluating how he had rated each of the museum objects was used to reinforce the sense of value he gave to his own skills and interests to inspire new ideas he could develop later in the project.

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[428] Extract from Terry's diary.

[429] Woolf.

As I viewed (and thought about) the pieces, I found my
thoughts/feelings attracted most strongly to the ones at the
top of my list. I also began having ideas for creative
opportunities such as: short stories, songs, poems.[430]

Prior to participating this prisoner had expressed concerns about whether his preferred outlet of creative writing would be appropriate for the project or if visual arts were being given preference. His willingness to develop personal ideas despite the negative preconceptions he had about the value others would give to them marked an early step in the personal growth for him.

As a consequence of interacting with the objects and participating in the resulting discussions with others in the group, some of the participants made connections to the wider world outside the prison and showed an awareness of the skills and behaviours that had been significant to them prior to their incarceration which they felt were still valuable to be maintained and, where possible, developed further within the prison environment. Matt focussed on the value of maintaining good communication skills, particularly active listening skills, by acknowledging what may be missed from others when these are not demonstrated.

At times this was very frustrating and a bit like groundhog
day – but the subjective nature of the assigning values
meant group agreement was necessary. However as time
progressed and I heard several alternative views on each
piece, I began to really enjoy and value this activity.[431]

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[430] Extract from Matt's diary.

[431] Extract from Matt's diary.

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Matt was conscious of a deterioration in skills he may once have had, and feared the prison environment would leave him insular and less inclined to look for and be open to new experiences and opinions. His awareness of this meant that, during some of the group discussions, he was clearly frustrated by the dismissive attitudes of some of the group and he set himself the personal challenge to change these people's attitudes without resorting to confrontation.

Matt not only made connections to the world outside the prison but also to the different developmental phases in his life in order to explain the process he felt the group had experienced when considering the value of the museum objects.

> It was a bit like having friends as a kid. It was a bit like
> when you were really small sort of going 'he's my friend'
> and then growing up and trying to think about who you like.
> It's far more complicated, there are far more factors
> involved.[432]

He was clearly considering the objects from the perspective proposed by Sherry Turkle. She suggests that objects can be companions to our emotional lives or can be responsible for provocations of thought.[433] For Matt, the process of recognising the connection between making friends at different phases of life and the way the group assessed the objects served to help him make sense of some of the more abstract connections to the

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[432] Extract from Matt's diary.

[433] Turkle, p.5.

objects felt by some of the group.[434] This seemed to allow him to look beyond some of the initial conflicts between members of the group and encourage him to entertain the possibility of constructive relationships developing within the group as they got to know more about each other through the project. As one of the key areas addressed by Offending Behaviour Programmes is around improving individual's cognitive and motivational understanding of their actions, it would appear that Matt used this stage of the project as a way of practicing and embedding the skills he had learned on such programmes.[435] As the controlled daily regime of a high security prison can be seen as reducing opportunities prisoners may have for practicing these skills regularly, it is positive to observe how easily Matt felt this activity lent itself to that task. This could be particularly significant for prisoners serving long sentences, as such activities could help to sustain any impact made by Offending Behaviour Programmes over a longer period of time.

For Michael, the most notable change in attitude at this stage of the project was evident from his reaction to the Farnley Fireclay Brick. During the initial object-handling session, he had been immediately dismissive of it based on its appearance. However, as more research into its history was carried out by other participants and shared with the group, his opinion changed completely. By the end of the first stage of the project, it was evident that he was using his new-found knowledge as a conversation tool to

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[434] Turkle, p.308.

[435] Ministry of Justice, 'Implementation of Deliver Accredited Programmes Specification PSI 07/2012', ed. by HM Prison Service (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012) p.2.

fascinate prisoners who were not part of the programme and demonstrate

the value of the more unusual information he had learned.

> I tend to look at anything now and realise there is a story
> behind it. It doesn't matter what it is, it has been made by
> someone for a reason and is usually a lengthy in depth
> story behind it. Some things I want to know about now. I'm
> not bothered about other things, but some things I've learnt
> to take an interest in.[436]

From a theoretical perspective, Michael's response seems to map

against the index of individual objects as defined by Alfred Gell.[437] This

shows that he is not merely concerned with the object as it is now, but also

its previous history including why and for whom it was created in the first

place. This increased awareness and acknowledgement of the value of

subjects outside his own interests demonstrates an openness to new

experiences that could have potentially significant wider implications. These

could include a greater level of cooperation and community between

individual prisoners within the prison, and also a greater willingness to

engage with ongoing changes being made to the prison regime, that are

often viewed with scepticism.

Conclusion

From the content of the findings taken directly from the prisoner diaries, the

first stage can clearly be seen as successful at capturing the interest of the

participants and setting the scene for what was to come in the next stages of

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[436] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[437] Gell. p.341.

the project. The range and depth of the findings that directly relate to the

categories of wellbeing highlighted as the measure of success suggests that

the selection of objects and chosen theme were relevant for the participant

demographic and that the pace and structure of the project was pitched

appropriately.

Chapter Five - Stage 2 – Development of Peer Group Object Handling Sessions

Building on the findings from the first stage of the project, this chapter provides a discussion of the results of the second stage. This stage of the project lasted for two weeks and focussed on the group working together to plan and deliver object-handling sessions to other prisoners and staff within the education department. As discussed previously, in my methodology, the intention behind this stage was to focus on which museum objects were most effective at engaging the participants, whether this involved the participants engaging with others more, and what processes were involved in these interactions. Where the first stage of the project had been mostly led by myself and Liz, as the facilitators, it was important during this stage that the participants could begin to take ownership over the way the work developed. A consequence of this was that I was able to become a more active participant in the group, in line with the definition proposed by Dewalt and Dewalt.[438] I was also able to spend time observing interactions between group members.[439] The first week involved the group developing an appropriate format for the proposed sessions, which included discussions around how the sessions could be differentiated to make them relevant to the

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[438] Kathleen M Dewalt, and Billie R Dewalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers* (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2002) p.20. - Active participation is when the ethnographer actually engages in almost everything that other people are doing as a means of trying to learn the cultural rules for behaviour.

[439] Dewalt and Dewalt. p.77.

sessions.[442] Unfortunately, due to the specialised nature of much of the research that was required, the library could not provide books that had specific information about most of the objects. Therefore, as it is not possible for prisoners to have internet access, it fell to me as the facilitator to find all the information they requested in the time outside of the sessions. Interestingly, at this stage, two of the Muslim participants decided against championing the objects they had highlighted as being the most interesting in favour of different objects. They were concerned that if other Muslims attended the sessions they would be accused of idolatry, as their initial object choices were both figurines.[443] Most of the participants chose objects which they had not instantly been drawn during their first session at the start of the project. They all felt that it would be more interesting to try and convince the other prisoners of the value of the objects especially where the value came from the story behind the object rather than its appearance. This approach was inspired by the way the facilitators had introduced the objects on the first day and how this had impacted them personally.

During the second week of this stage, the group delivered object-handling sessions to six different classes within the education department that ranged from entry level English classes to the higher level vocational groups studying Business Administration, Art and Catering. In total, thirty-four of the ninety-seven prisoners who were in the department at the time and seven members of staff attended and participated in the sessions.

[442] The objects selected for use in the object-handling sessions were: The verge watch, the Palestinian wedding jacket, the Manilla, the Farnley brick, the tray of bees, the World War 1 postcard, and the spade money.

[443] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 'Muslim Prisoner' Experiences' p.22.

Several adjustments were made to the initial design of the sessions as problems were encountered, including increasing the amount of time each person had to spend with each object from one minute to two minutes and ensuring all the participants were not still sitting at a table where an object had been presented to them at the time they voted. This adjustment was made after the first session as it was found that most people just voted for the object nearest to them as their favourite, rather than giving any thought to whether a different object may have been a more 'honest' choice.

Not all of the museum objects were selected for inclusion in these sessions, however. Out of those that were used, the most popular was the verge watch which received eight votes. The other most popular objects were the postcard, the manilla and the Farnley brick which each received seven votes. The biggest shock result amongst the group was that the Wedding Jacket only achieved one vote as they had all expected that to be a popular choice because of the colours, needlework and connection to a family event.

As with the first stage of the project, the data collected from the participant diaries and the evaluation transcript was analysed to reveal the areas of wellbeing referred to most frequently. At this stage these could broadly be categorised as 'positive relations with others', 'personal growth' and 'environmental mastery'.

Positive Relations with Others

In much the same way as was reported by the British Museum when discussing its Pentonville Prison project, the use of objects here helped to dismantle barriers between everyone and encouraged the prisoners to drop their guard a little and communicate with each other.[444] As a result, many of the comments made by the participants related to positive relations with others and materialised after a negative stereotype they had held about others was found to be untrue during the process of delivering the object-handling sessions. Many of the participants recognised that, generally speaking, they only engaged in any meaningful way with others from their social circle on the wings. Consequently they did not necessarily know much about anyone who did not fit immediately into those groups, as it was often deemed better to keep some sense of social distance and not offer more than basic mutual consideration.[445] The most common assumptions made in this way appeared to link to their belief that they would not have anything in common with prisoners who could not read and write, or with some prisoners based on the publicised details of the nature of their offences.

Two of the participants made direct reference to how their expectations of peoples' responses to the sessions were enforced or differed from what actually happened. In both cases this demonstrated the role that each participant had adopted to deliver the sessions and highlights the

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[444] Samuels.

[445] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. p.335

difference between those that were participant-led or facilitator-led.[446] Steve

seemed to view his role as that of an expert, as though he was an

authoritative voice tasked to pass his knowledge on to his audience. The

comments recorded in this participant's diary reflect more about how he

thought people reacted, based on his own preconceptions about each group,

rather than acknowledging anything that was actually shared by them.

> We found that each group found challenging their
> perception of value difficult at first but once explained in
> context were able to challenge their own interpretation of
> value.[447]

The amount he held on to his own stereotypes was further evident in

his opinion on how the educational level of people would affect their ability to

engage fully with the sessions. This highlights the method by which he

seems to assign respect or admiration to others, believing that higher levels

of education equates to a greater level of respect being deserved. This also

suggests how he expects his status to be viewed by others. Because he had

exceeded the average level of education most prisoners achieve, he seems

to believe that they should admire his achievement and listen to what he has

to say.[448]

> Steve - I was quite surprised at how well groups coming
> into the handling sessions adapted to that quickly.
>
> Liz - Adapted to?

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[446] Arigho. p.205.

[447] Extract from Steve's diary.

[448] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. p.288.

> Steve - The story behind it, and once getting the story that then caught their attention. For some of the guys with the learning levels they have, to be able to capture their attention on something like that is quite an achievement.[449]

This demonstrates that Steve saw the sessions as a way of earning respect from others by demonstrating his knowledge rather than wanting to help his fellow inmates, get something out of the experience.[450] This approach was in stark contrast to Matt who adapted the focus and level of information he gave about the object he was championing, based on the reaction of the person he was talking to and the questions or comments they shared: 'What surprised me - the interest and pre existing understanding/knowledge of some of the people on handling sessions'.[451]

Matt was more concerned with ensuring the audience had gained something from the experience rather than feeling like he had transferred knowledge to them. This suggests that he viewed his role as a facilitator in the way described by Bernie Arigho.[452] This emphasises a person-centred approach with a focus on active listening and a non-judgemental attitude, amongst other skills, in order to allow the object to stimulate the different associations and connections that stem from the life experiences of the individual interacting with it.[453] His rationale behind behaving this way seemed to stem from a desire to help others to stave off the effects of

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[449] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[450] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. pp.248-249.

[451] Extract from Matt's diary.

[452] Arigho, p.207.

[453] Arigho, pp.207-209.

institutionalisation, by encouraging them to participate actively and, as a

result, break up the monotony of the everyday routine within the prison.[454]

> I've got down as my most challenging thing, the range of
> interest and attention span from certain people in the
> groups that were coming round, and that was why the
> speed dating worked because those individuals would have
> just been lost in a group. Some of them would sit and listen
> to the facts you were telling them in a group and would just
> curl up in a corner and stare at the wall. So you were
> provoking interest in people that maybe wouldn't have got
> interested. It was really nice, you could see that they were
> getting interested because of you having time to spend with
> them on their own.[455]

For Matt it seemed to be a measure of success of the sessions if he

elicited some level of engagement from those to whom he was talking, which

in turn helped to create a positive effect for all concerned. This can be seen

as an example of countering the effect of imprisonment that Ruth Jamieson

and Adrian Grounds call the 'insidious processes that attack personal

identity' by providing an opportunity to 'maintain an authenticity of self'.[456]

This may have been an example of 'Behavioural Altruism', which Tony Ward

and Russil Durrant describe as an act where someone seeks to 'further their

own self-serving interests while seeming to act in ways which promote others

interests'.[457] However, as the focus is still on interacting with others, a

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[454] Cohen and Taylor, p.105; Ruth Jamieson and Adrian Grounds, 'Release and Adjustment: Perspectives from Studies of Wrongly Convicted and Politically Motivated Prisoners', in *The Effects of Imprisonment*, ed. by Alison Liebling and Shadd Maruna (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005) 22-65. pp.52-53.

[455] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[456] Jamieson and Grounds, p.52.

[457] Tony Ward, and Russil Durrant, 'Altruism, Empathy, and Sex Offender Treatment', *International Journal of Behavioural Consultation and Therapy,* 8 (2013), 66-71. p.68.

consequence of this could contribute to increased levels of social and human capital and create a greater sense of community. Both of which are areas recognised as factors of significance in secondary desistance.[458]

Initially, Hasim was reluctant to participate in the delivery of the object-handling sessions to the other education classes, as his perception of those who had committed sexual offences meant he did not normally interact with anyone he suspected of fitting into this category. This reinforces Ernst Van De Wetering's claim that 'our readiness to see what we expect to see causes us to overlook a lot' when it comes to our assessment of the surface of both objects and people.[459]

> At first I really didn't want to speak to anyone as I already had a pre judgement view on people within the establishment. Although my views haven't changed as such, that was a challenge enough on its own. I thoroughly enjoyed it.[460]

This clearly showed Hasim's awareness of the hierarchy within the prison, and his concerns that associating with those generally perceived as being lower in the hierarchy could impact on the way other people viewed him.[461] Van De Wetering suggests that, perhaps unconsciously, we make instant judgements on objects and people based on our visual memory bank, even when we do not have the opportunity to handle objects or choose not to

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[458] Charlotte Bilby, Laura Caulfield, and Louise Ridley, 'Re-Imagining Futures: Exploring Arts Interventions and the Process of Desistance', (London: Arts Alliance, 2013) p.25.

[459] Ernst Van De Wetering, 'The Surface of Objects and Museum Style', in *Museum Objects: Experiencing the Property of Things,* ed. by Sandra H. Dudley (London: Routledge, 2012). p.104.

[460] Extract from Hasim's diary.

[461] Sim, p.111.

engage further with people.[462] However, when given the time to inspect an object closely, a more accurate assessment of it can be made and false assumptions can be corrected. The same theory seemed to apply to this participant's perception of certain prisoners as, during the process of delivering the object-handling sessions, he seemed to realise that he could talk to any individual without it making a negative impact on his own status.

For two of the participants, their attitudes to the relationships they had with the prisoners who attended the sessions, were more closely linked to how those individuals' opinions of the museum objects either supported or contradicted their own. As Matt recorded, he was 'surprised no one voted for wedding jacket as their favourite'.[463]

As the group themselves had viewed the jacket as one of the most valuable objects during the first stage of the project, Matt seemed shocked that other prisoners did now view it in the same way. As neuroscientist Hugo Critchley explains, 'the process of object handling to derive a sense and feel for the item can imbue the object with character, significance and emotional colour in a manner perhaps independent of functionality'.[464] This would appear to be the case here. In the same way as there was a sense of shock and disappointment when people could not see the same character and value in an object, there was an equal or greater sense of pride when an unexpected object was viewed as valuable.

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[462] Wetering, p.104.

[463] Extract from Matt's diary.

[464] Critchley. p.69.

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Michael, who chose to champion the Farnley brick, did so as something of a challenge, as that was an object the group had initially viewed as being of the lowest value. Consequently, when the brick was received well during the object championing sessions, there was a sense of achievement felt across the group. This seemed to be explained in the diary entry of Mohammed, in which the brick itself was described as an active agent, and that the sense of character attributed to it by its champion had been responsible for changing people's perception of it: 'the brick achieved 2 votes which really was the wildcard or the dark horse, it's done really well up to now'.[465]

A consequence of attaching character to the objects in this way was that Matt seemed to develop an increased awareness and tolerance of the different opinions and values others in the prison may have: 'it was as if a whole new understanding of how things could be of value to a person/community/society took hold'.[466]

This is particularly significant in a dispersal prison as, unlike a local prison where prisoners may have some connection to each other in terms of a geographical location outside, dispersal 'prisoners range considerably in their backgrounds and values, and they may feel bonded neither by their current situation nor by their future expectations'.[467] It seemed that, for Matt,

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[465] Extract from Matt's diary.

[466] Extract from Matt's diary.

[467] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, p.301.

by considering the character and history of an object the same could then be applied to the people around him.

Personal Growth

At this stage of the project references to the category of personal growth appeared to manifest in two different ways. The first was instances where a participant acknowledged improvements to skills they felt they were lacking previously and the second area focussed on instances where a participant acknowledged a change in attitude or perception of something.

Hasim avoided the first session of championing the objects. From his diary it was clear that this was due to his perception that other prisoners would notice his lack of confidence in his presentation skills and see this as a weakness.

> At first I was quite nervous - you could call that a lack of presentation confidence as it wasn't my field. Once my confidence shone through I wanted to keep going as I used my personality to get me through.[468]

Whereas in most situations in the prison he would attempt to avoid activities where he lacked confidence, because he viewed the project as an experiment he seemed more inclined to push himself to participate in things outside his comfort zone. In the same way as Ben Crewe suggests that there are certain spatial areas in the prison where it is permissible to exhibit

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[468] Extract from Hasim's diary.

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emotions, it would appear this participant viewed the classroom as a safe

zone in which to practice new skills.[469]

For two of the participants an increased awareness of other people,

established through their interest in the objects, stimulated a change in

attitude that highlighted the personal benefits of becoming more open

minded. In both instances this related to a change in understanding of how

respect can be defined and applied to relationships within the prison

environment.[470] Alison Liebling proposes an explanation of what is meant by

'respect' in prisons that seems to be applicable for the areas of personal

growth experienced by these two participants. She states that 'respect

incorporates an acceptance of difference. Awareness of, or respect for, the

other as a person requires the avoidance of stereotypes, fear, suspicions,

and discrimination'.[471] For Matt, the focus was around being prepared to

change the assumptions he quickly made about others, while for Mohammed

it was more about how he viewed himself by comparing himself to the

judgements he made about others.

For Matt, this change in attitude emerged during the process of

reflecting on the results of the object-handling sessions directly after the final

one had been delivered.

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[469] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. pp.438-439.

[470] Alison Liebling, *Prisons and their Moral Performance: A Study of Values, Quality and Prison Life*, ed. by Alison Liebling and Manuel Eisner, Clarendon Studies in Criminology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). p.207.

[471] Liebling, p.207.

> People will value (choose as their favourite) the item with a good story - not necessarily the most beautiful or monetary valuable - as the brick clearly displayed.[472]

By his own admission, he found it difficult to accept that everyone did not hold the same values as he, and was aware that on occasions he could be dismissive of others if their opinions contradicted his own. To this end it was a significant change for him to be willing to give more thought to the choices of others. By appreciating that objects have different meanings and connections for individuals, in relation to their own life experiences, the participants could develop a new understanding of ideas and value systems can be raised.[473]

Mohammed was a less confident member of the group. His change in attitude stemmed from the realisation during the object-handling sessions that, rather than trying to share a vast knowledge of facts relating to an object in a well practiced pitch and with confidence, it would be more effective to demonstrate that the participants were being treated as individuals with the ability to appreciate the different interpretations of an object.

> I don't know what previous occupation or profession most of you guys had before you ended up in prison but I had a sales background, so for me pitching was like my bread and butter. But then I found out as we went on it wasn't about my pitch, you could be the most eloquent of speakers, I mean for example the brick, it's just a brick. But I thought to myself its either Michael's a fantastically eloquent speaker or it's just the brick that's selling, but it wasn't, it was the value that was attached to that certain

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[472] Extract from Matt's diary.

[473] Arigho, p.209.

item in terms of whether it could be sentimental, cultural or historical and I think that was the main thing.[474]

Environmental Mastery

Research by Ben Crewe into social culture within prisons has highlighted the value of being perceived as 'genuine' or 'authentic' in order to be accepted by other prisoners.[475] Developing, maintaining and displaying a clear mastery of this skill was evidently an underlying concern for many of the participants at this stage of the project, as several of them made reference in some way to traits associated with presenting an 'authentic self'.[476]

In the case of Hasim, the persona he exhibited was assured and confident, although he also seemed reserved and somewhat indifferent when it came to any expression of emotion. It became apparent from his diary that this was all a conscious part of the self he wanted to display within the environment on the wings. However, Crewe suggests that different areas within a prison permit different behaviours to be viewed as acceptable and, as a result, the classroom environment provided a space where Hasim was willing to express different aspects of personality.[477] As he recorded in his diary: 'It was a good day, selling was fine and I was able to be myself. I use this to my strength as this place drains me a lot'.[478]

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[474] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[475] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. p.432.

[476] Crewe, pp.432-436.

[477] Crewe, pp438-439.

[478] Extract from Hasim's diary.

This seemed to highlight that a key aspect of environmental mastery in a prison centres around knowing the situations in which it is permissible to exhibit certain behaviours and what coping strategy can be applied most effectively to support this. For Hasim it appears that, until he decided that it was a safe environment, he would not express certain aspects of his personality that he believed others might perceive as a weakness or 'inauthentic'.

Rather than commenting on how he adopted different strategies of ensuring he displayed an authentic self, Mohammed seemed more interested in reflecting on the success others had at achieving this.

> Well I think the story was very important and if a man was able to deliver a story or reasoning behind an object he certainly made the viewer more interested in it.[479]

For him, the measure of the level of authenticity demonstrated by an individual could be seen from the level of interest and attention given to that person during their pitch; the perception being that only a genuine person who is not putting on a front or hiding any insecurities could hold the attention of someone for any length of time.[480] This seemed to be a skill this participant did not feel he had yet mastered himself, but was something he was saw value in developing.

Matt had a very different reason behind mastering the environment as, rather than wishing to fit in with the existing social structures, it was his

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[479] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[480] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. p.432.

intention to understand them well enough to enable him to begin to challenge and change them.

> We weren't actually trying to prove that that object we were delivering was the best in the world, we were trying to prick some interest out of the person. So it didn't matter, in a way, that everything wasn't the truth.[481]

Through conversations with him, it was clear that one of his biggest frustrations was the limited topics of conversation within the prison, which focussed almost exclusively on prison experiences and the most recent gossip. Therefore, during the process of delivering the object-handling sessions, he was hoping to create some level of interest in new topics of conversation that could then be continued in the wider prison environment.

When reflecting on this stage during the focus group evaluation, Michael suggested that he felt the group object-handling sessions had become competitive. This highlighted an alternative form of mastering the environment where the perception that one had beaten someone else, or not performed an activity in unison with others (as is often expected in prison activities), provided evidence of success.[482]

> Michael - But weren't we trying to score points ourselves to see who has got the best? Who got the most?
>
> Matt - Yeah but that wasn't the bigger picture though was it.
>
> Michael - But it did develop into that.
>
> Matt - It was more of a by-product of what we were doing.

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[481] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[482] Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Health Patients and Other Inmates.* p.46.

> Michael - I'm not sure it wasn't developing into that towards the end of the handling sessions because 'who had got what?', 'how many?', 'I'm going to win this!'[483]

In part, this competitive element seemed to emerge from the fact that all the participants were strong characters of a similar educational level, but from different social groups within the prison. Attempting to introduce a competitive aspect seemed to offer a way for some of the participants to battle for what they perceived as a higher status within the group, in much the same way as some prisoners achieve through competitive activities such as weightlifting or other sports activities.[484]

Audience Feedback

In addition to voting for their favourite object at the end of the handling session, everyone who attended was given a feedback sheet which asked them to explain why they selected their favourite object. This was completed when they were back in their own class after having a group discussion. The aim of this was to encourage them to reflect on what they had enjoyed about having the opportunity to participate, and discuss what they had found interesting about the objects.

As soon as the audience feedback was collected, it was collated and printed in the form of a book, that was then displayed in the library so everyone who had participated could see which objects people had selected as their favourite and the different reasons for their choices. The intention

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[483] Extract from the Evaluation session transcription.

[484] Cohen and Taylor, *Psychological Survival*, p.173.

with this was to show the prisoners that they had contributed to the project

and that what they had thought about the objects was a valuable component

of. It was also hoped that the book would create interest in the project from

other prisoners and encourage on-going discussions around the topics

raised through the objects.
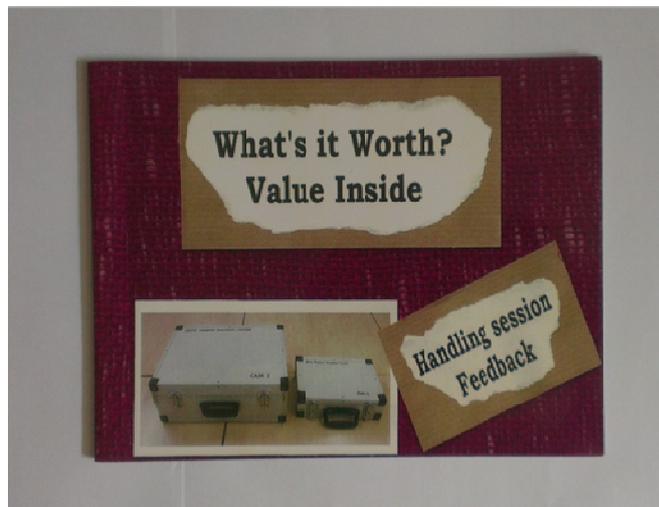
Figure 12 - Handling Session Feedback Book

The results from the feedback sheets completed by those who

attended can be used to outline three themes that contributed to the level of

value the prisoners assigned to each object. Hopefully this can be used to

select appropriate objects for future projects. It was possible to broadly

categorised these themes as relating to personal connections felt with the

objects, recognition or appreciation of the skills of the object's maker, and the

lasting impact an unexpected or interesting story behind an object can make.

Personal Connections

Unlike the other themes, where personal connections were made with an

object the information being offered by the person championing the object

was secondary, as it was about what the object meant to that individual as a result of their own life experience that counted. As Bernie Arigho explains, there can be no wrong answers when using objects as a reminiscence tool in this way; however, when people have the confidence to respond in this way, it demonstrates an awareness of life outside the prison and a personal identity beyond that of being a prisoner.[485] Several of the objects seemed to inspire a response that fell into this category, which highlights the strength of the value felt by the individual where such an association could be made. As Daniel Miller suggests, objects that appear familiar to us can be a powerful connection to the cultural environment in which we were raised, precisely because we generally take them for granted as being part of our life and do not consider the role they will have played in how we developed in the way we did.[486]

The Farnley Fireclay brick inspired the most comments that linked to this category, most of which reported a geographical connection for people who had lived near in where the bricks were made, or previous activities or occupations in which they had been involved.

> This comes from near the area where I used to live.[487]

> I know the area the brick was made in. I have also worked with visually impaired and blind students and the link to the RNIB was a surprise and very interesting to me.[488]

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[485] Arigho. p.209.

[486] Miller, *Stuff.* pp.53-54.

[487] Prisoner response to the Farnley brick.

For one participant, this connection seemed to inspire further reminiscence about a particular time in his life; 'I like ceramics - and the colour of this in particular. Years ago I used to pass the brick company and can remember it closing and being pulled down'.[489] While it is not clear from this comment what else may have happening to this person at the time, it does suggest that this object inspired him to think about that time, regardless of whether this was something he wanted to share with anyone else.[490]

For several participants the connection made with an object referred to an area of life that was clearly important to them, such as maintaining links to family or to a culture associated with their own family history.

> I like it because of the pictures and family links.[491]

> Because it is handmade and it is nice to get a card from someone at war to know he is alright.[492]

> Because I'm from an African descendant, I feel connected.[493]

Although it was outside the scope of this research to explore the potential of these connections further with these participants, this is clearly an area that could be the focus of future projects and suggests that the social

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[488] Prisoner response to the Farnley brick.

[489] Prisoner response to the Farnley brick.

[490] Arigho. p.206.

[491] Prisoner response to the locket.

[492] Prisoner response to the World War One postcard

[493] Prisoner response to the manilla

history and world cultures objects are particularly effective for engaging

prisoners.

Skills of Others

In the responses to some of the objects it was clear that the perspective the

participant presenting chose, made those viewing it see it differently. Both

the watch and the postcard were presented with a focus on the people who

had created them or been involved directly in where the object had been

throughout its history. In this sense by discussing the human relationships

associated with the object, the effect of handling the object while listening to

this information created a stronger connection between the participant and

the object's original owner in the same way as described by Constance

Classen.[494]

> It was an old watch which was full of small cogs and
> showed how skilled these old craft masters were.[495]
>
> It must have taken a lot of time to make and skill. It was
> beautifully made.[496]
>
> The art and design that has gone into this handmade card,
> the beautiful colours and the fact that it was made specially
> to send home to the family. A very strong, emotional piece
> of work.[497]

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[494] Classen. p.277.

[495] Prisoner response to the verge watch

[496] Prisoner response to the verge watch

[497] Prisoner response to the World War One postcard

> Because of the stories behind it. I have done cross stitching
> and know how hard it is.[498]

The impact of this established an emotional response from the audience and a level of acknowledgement of the skills of those who had been involved with the history of that object. This is similar to what Ben Crewe describes as 'appraisal respect' which 'involves the positive appraisal of a person's personal qualities of character'.[499] In this case, the qualities deemed worthy of respect are those associated with invention and creativity, as they signify a level of intelligence and autonomy and oppose the idea of institutionalisation.[500]

Despite the fact that the watch was broken and no longer able to fulfil its original purpose, two of the participants seemed to look past the damage and give additional value to the object precisely because they were able to see inside it.

> Love the intricate workings, so small, and the engraving on
> something so old and at that time they didn't have the tools
> or resources we have now.[501]

> I liked the intricate design on the back of the time piece,
> plus the way the mechanism on the back is also on
> display.[502]

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[498] Prisoner response to the World War One postcard

[499] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. p.249.

[500] Cohen and Taylor, Psychological Survival, pp.104-111.

[501] Prisoner response to the verge watch

[502] Prisoner response to the verge watch

This can be explained by Van Der Wetering's discussion of our knowledge of the natural aging of objects.[503] He defines this as an often unconscious evaluation we make about the meaning of an object, and to what extent it was valued or neglected, based on our perception of the surface of it.[504]

Surprising facts/ interesting story

In much the same way as previous research has reported, some of the prisoners found value in objects with which they were unfamiliar or where something about the history of a particular object surprised them.[505] As Wing Yan Vivian Ting explains, 'considering our established perception and prior knowledge, we cannot communicate with an object in an unbiased manner'.[506] However, this suggests that when our prior knowledge is contradicted a new, possibly greater, sense of value is attributed to the object as was the case for these participants. When discussing the case of bees and the spade money respectively:

> It told me good information and enlightened me to their way of life and to understand how vital they are to life and what they do when they are working.[507]

> I loved the story of the Emperor Wang Mang and how he tried to improve the lives of the ordinary people.[508]

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[503] Van Der Wetering. p.105.

[504] Van Der Wetering. pp.104-105.

[505] Helen Chatterjee, Sonjel Vreeland, and Guy Noble, 'Museopathy: Exploring the Healing Potential of Handling Museum Objects', *Museum and Society,* 7 (2009), 164-77

[506] Wing Yan Vivian Ting, 'Living Objects: A Theory of MuseologicalObjecthood', in *The Thing About Museums*, ed. by Sandra Dudley and Others (Oxon: Routledge, 2012).171-181. p.172.

[507] Prisoner response to the bees.

Two of the participants seemed to need to support their valuation of an object based on its story alone by reinforcing it with a comment about its visual appearance, possibly because they felt that was easier to explain.

> I liked the story behind the jacket also the rich colours of the thread.[509]

> The vibrant colours are nice, plus I like what it represents in regards to being involved in the journey of death.[510]

Interestingly, the comments made about the appearance of an object were solely about colour, which may suggest that they simplified how they attributed value to that object so that others would understand it, by referring to the perception that there are generally limited colours in the prison environment. Alternatively, it may be that the colours were perceived in a more vivid way as a result of the added attention given to the object due to the interest in the story. This idea is supported by Ting, who suggests that 'objects cannot be understood in our minds alone, and in some cases, our ignorance creates the novelty in such object-human encounters, to heighten our sensory pleasures'.[511]

Conclusion

The change in focus from comments on autonomy in the first stage of the project, to comments on positive relations with others in this stage,

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[508] Prisoner response to the spade money.

[509] Prisoner response to the Palestinian Wedding Jacket

[510] Prisoner response to the Shabti.

[511] Ting. p.172.

demonstrates the awareness the prisoners have of the community within the prison, and highlights the potential impact that can be gained by exploring this concept further. This is also supported by the continuing appearance of references to personal growth and environmental mastery throughout this stage, which emphasises the significance of these areas to the participants. The value of the museum objects as a tool to inspire and facilitate conversations between prisoners who would not normally interact cannot be underestimated and has been evident, in part, from the feedback given in response to the object-handling sessions. The immediate connection prisoners felt to some of the objects, particularly those from the social history collection, is also a significant finding from this stage of the project.

Chapter Six. Stage 3 – Personal Projects

This stage was by far the longest as it made up about half of the total duration of the project. It comprised of two main activities that aimed to change the focus of the project from the museum objects to objects that were of personal value to the participants. The first task was an activity I had called 'A Museum of Your Life' which required the participants to select up to five objects from their own life that would represent aspects of them that they felt were the most valuable. The intention had been that this task would take between one to two weeks leaving between four to five weeks for the next stage of the project. In reality this task only ran formally in the sessions for one day as the participants felt that this was something they wanted to develop in their own time away from the group.[512]

As this task required the participants to reveal personal aspects of their own identity, I felt it was important for the success of this task that I was prepared to do the same. This form of 'genuineness' is something discussed by Blagden and Pemberton as being a vital element for an empathetic relationship to develop between prisoner participants and researchers.[513] They state that, where this can be established, participants are more likely to be 'more comfortable and at ease in order for more credible research to

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[512] Notes from facilitator's diary.

[513] Nicholas Blagden, and Sarah Pemberton, 'The Challenge in Conducting Qualitative Research with Convicted Sex Offenders', *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice,* 49 (2010), 269-81

permeate'.[514] This in itself posed a considerable challenge as it is generally

not advisable to share personal details with prisoners, as this can put one at

risk of being conditioned or manipulated.[515] Therefore, any example I shared

needed to be specific enough that it was clearly about my own life but

general enough that no 'useful' information could be obtained from it. The

object I used was a tin of sweets that reminded me of spending time at my

grandparents' house. I was able to describe things that were in the house

that I did not encounter elsewhere, such as the coal fire and outside toilet, as

well as the contents of the pantry that had always amazed me. The key point

was that the object demonstrated a connection to people who were

important to me. My story helped to inspire a group discussion around

similar memories of objects that are no longer in regular circulation and the

family members with whom they associated these objects. This

demonstrated that the combination of a personal story and an associated

object provided a way for the participants to find a connection to me and

begin to feel some level of empathy. As Ward and Durrant discuss:

> individuals engage in acts of empathy when they imagine
> how someone else is likely to be feeling in certain
> situations, or alternatively, anticipate how they would feel
> in similar circumstances.[516]

Following these discussions some of the prisoners found it difficult to

translate these memories and ideas into their own objects selections.

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[514] Blagden, and Pemberton, 'The Challenge in Conducting Qualitative Research with Convicted Sex Offenders', p.275.

[515] Ministry of Justice, 'Conduct and Discipline PSI 06/2010'(London: Ministry of Justice, 2010). p.23.

[516] Tony Ward, and Russil Durrant, 'Altruism, Empathy, and Sex Offender Treatment', *International Journal of Behavioural Consultation and Therapy,* 8 (2013), 66-71 p.66.

However, all but one of the participants did manage to choose at least one object that could inspire further work. What this task did particularly successfully was to inspire all the participants to think of ideas for the second task of this stage, which was to work on personal projects to create artefacts for display in the final cabinet. The objects the participants selected ranged considerably, both in the type of object and the reasons behind why that object was chosen. Some of the participants opted to choose objects that related to a specific time in their life, while others made the connection to particular people they know associated with that object. In most cases the objects that were chosen were things that individual had owned at some stage; however, several participants selected a place as one of their chosen things.

During the personal projects task, the participants were mostly working on individual projects. This seemed to change the atmosphere amongst the group. As they were all working within different creative areas, there was a great deal of conversation about the length of time people had been practicing particular crafts and what they enjoyed about it. There was also an increasing amount of advice and encouragement offered as pieces of work developed.

During this stage the only change to the participants of the group happened. Asif was transferred to another establishment and Terry returned to the prison after temporarily being at a different establishment. All of the participants created at least one personal artefact, and most created at least three that could be included in the final cabinet.

Two of the participants created pieces that were directly inspired by the museum objects. Asif chose to paint a canvas with a design inspired by the colours and patterns on the Palestinian Wedding jacket. At first it seemed like this was selected purely to emphasise his commitment to his religion.[517] However, as research by Basia Spalek and Salah El-Hassan has discussed, many prisoners who go through religious conversion in custody, do so as a way of coping with prison life or as a response to personal problems prior to imprisonment.[518] Therefore, on reflection, due to the considerable length of time this participant has been within the prison system, and the fact that he converted to Islam during his sentence, it may be that he found it hard to connect to any aspect of his life before custody. Consequently, this piece does represent a key and constant aspect of his identity in recent years.

Matt decided to use the honey bees as inspiration for composing song lyrics. He was currently undertaking the Improvement Through Music course in the prison and, as a result, was continually on the look-out for unusual themes to use as inspiration to practice his new interest in music composition and song writing.[519] In addition to his motivation to develop his new-found skill, he was also open to the idea of presenting the music in a visual, aesthetically pleasing way as a means of encouraging viewers to take more time looking at his creation. This new sense of awareness about how

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[517] Observation noted in the Facilitator's diary.

[518] Basia Spalek and Salah El-Hassan, 'Muslim Converts in Prison', *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 46 (2007), 99-114. (p.101).

[519] Matt. Conversation with Rachel Forster (7th May 2012)

objects are viewed emerged as a result of the audience's responses to the museum objects during the previous stages of the project, as initially most people were drawn to the more beautiful or colourful items.[520] Helen Chatterjee *et al* made a similar observation when exploring how hospital patients responded to a selection of museum objects, as many of them provided visual or aesthetic answers as the reason behind their initial object selection.[521]

Figure 13 - Jacket Inspired Painting, Honey Bee Composition

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[520] Observations taken from Matt's diary entries.

[521] Chatterjee, Vreeland and Noble. p.174.

For several of the participants, this stage seemed to provide a sense of freedom and also a strong connection to the feeling of environmental mastery as defined by Ryff.[522] They felt confident to try new ideas and experiment with materials outside of their comfort zone. Mohammed initially chose to work entirely within his comfort zone and opted to write a poem. However, from observing the wide range of creative skills being demonstrated across the group, he decided to explore the possibility of trying new skills he had not previously considered.[523] Inspired by conversations between the facilitator and Michael, he asked for instruction on basic techniques in matchstick model making so that he could create a model himself. In a way, the resulting cricket set became a group project that evolved out of the on-going discussions between the group members and the positive and supportive atmosphere that had developed by this stage of the project. Mohammed received considerable help with the structure of the piece and Terry offered to design and paint a background stand for it to be displayed.

For Hasim it was the freedom to use creative materials he had not previously encountered to create artwork using a subject matter of personal interest to him that was of significance. He clearly valued the opportunity to feel that he had control or 'free reign' over what he created, and was more concerned about maintaining that feeling than on the appearance of final

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[522] Ryff, Carol D, 'Happiness Is Everything, or Is It? Explorations on the Meaning of Psychological Well-Being', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 57 (1989), 1069-81

[523] Observations noted in the facilitator's diary.

pieces.[524] If Goffman's concept of 'personal front' is used to explain the value of this for Hasim, it is clear that appearance was extremely important to him. For Goffman 'appearance' refers to 'those stimuli which function at the time to tell us of the performer's social statuses'.[525] From this perspective Hasim was in an interesting, possibly contradictory position. During any period of independent work throughout the project, Hasim chose to sit at a table with his back to the rest of the group. This tended to mean that unless he chose to interact with anyone he was often isolated. Using Goffman's definition of 'personal front' this demonstrates how Hasim used his bodily gestures to give the impression that he was separate and possibly of a higher status than the rest of the group. As Hasim made it clear in his diary, he did not want to engage with other prisoners because of the nature of their offences. It is possible therefore, that his visual separation from the group was more about how he appeared to other prisoners in the department from his wing peer group who may have walked past and seen him.[526] In contrast, his eagerness to experiment with materials and create multiple pieces of work demonstrated how he also wanted to be perceived as engaging fully with the activity.

For Terry the inspiration behind one of the pieces he created was an acknowledgment that he had the ability to adapt to the prison environment. In a situation where most goods are not readily available, having the vision to utilise and, where necessary, recycle what is around you to achieve what

[524] Hasim. Conversation with Rachel Forster (29th May 2012)

[525] Goffman, Erving, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1969) p.34.

[526] Observations taken from Hasim's diary.

you need is a highly valued skill. As someone who had been through the

criminal justice system several times in his life, starting from a young age,

there also seemed to be an underlying message behind this piece that

referred directly to the system itself. The act of taking something broken, in

this case the pair of glasses, and adapting it to create an alternative version

of itself, can be seen as a comment on how he feels the system processes

individuals as prisoners and attempts to change them as people by fixing

something deemed by society as broken. As Matthew Meadows discusses,

many traditional prison crafts can be characterised by the appropriation and

adaptation of ephemera, including carving designs into prison-issue blocks

of soap or melting the plastic handles of prison-issue razor blades to create

sculptures.[527] Although it is recognised that many of these traditional in-cell

activities are in decline because many prisoners prefer to watch television or

play computer games, the glasses sculpture demonstrates that some

prisoners still attempt to create something unique and aesthetically

interesting from the limited objects at their disposal.[528] For many prisoners

this will serve as an indicator that they are still capable of creative thought

and have not yet given in completely to the effects of institutionalisation. In

the case of each of these three participants, there was a strong willingness

to embrace the opportunity to experiment and try new things in order to

demonstrate to themselves that they still had some control over their

thoughts and actions. As Erving Goffman explains, for prisoners 'a failure to

retain this kind of executive agency, or at least symbols of it can produce in

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[527] Matthew Meadows, Insider Art (London: A&C Black Publishers, 2010). p.54.

[528] Meadows. p.54.

the inmate the terror of feeling radically demoted in the age grading

system'.[529]

Figure 14 - Mohammed's, Terry's and Hasim's Artefacts

In contrast to those participants who used the activities they chose to

complete as a positive indicator of the level of autonomy available to them,

two other participants appeared to make decisions and create objects that

ensured they were not pushed outside of their comfort zone. Michael and

Steve stuck rigidly to using the skills they already possessed, and seemed

less interested in the personal projects aspect of the programme because

when they felt there was no kudos to be gained as there was no longer any

interaction with other groups. For Michael, this involved the creation of two

matchstick models. As a hobby developed during his time in custody, his

[529] Goffman, *Asylums.* p.47.

decision to do this seemed to suggest that he was only willing to share

aspects of his identity and skill set because other prisoners were already

aware of it.[530] His subject matter was a Gaelic harp, which he felt

represented his own Irish heritage. Interestingly, this participant chose to

enter his pieces into the Koestler competition but requested that they were

sent out to a family members address after the judging process.[531] While the

pieces would be included in the exhibition in the prison where his family and

peers would see them, this meant they could not be included in the

exhibition at the museum. This provides and interesting insight into the value

Michael assigned to the different forms of exhibition. As he had no prior

Figure 15 Michael and Steve's pieces

connection to the Museum, Michael clearly felt that the Koestler competition,

where there was the potential of a financial prize, and the exhibition in the

prison, where his family could see his work, were of more value. If

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[530] Michael. Conversation with Rachel Forster (15th May 2012)

[531] Michael. Conversation with Rachel Forster (14th May 2012)

considered in reference to the 'Good Lives Model' of rehabilitation this shows that it cannot be assumed that all individuals will ascribe the same value to the same opportunities and that it is important to recognise the different attitudes and beliefs they have.[532] This demonstrates the significance of incorporating multiple ways of achieving the same outcome in any project design, in order to appeal to the needs of the greatest number of individuals. In this case if the only form of exhibition had been at the Museum, Michael may not have seen any value in creating any pieces of work.

Steve initially decided to create a visual memory book displaying photographs and images that represented things that were valuable to him. He planned to bind the book himself, demonstrating the skill of bookbinding he had developed in a previous job. However, when he realised the amount of work and research that would be required to complete the task effectively, he changed his project to a graffiti piece, that included a lot of stereotypical imagery relating to prisons.[533] While his justification for this change was that the graffiti represented the only crime of which he believed himself to be guilty of, the consensus among the group was that it was too easy an option.[534] This supports Ben Crewe's observation that topics of conversation amongst prisoners regularly include assertions about experiences from life prior to imprisonment and claims of achievements that would be difficult to prove or disprove in the prison environment, the purpose of these claims

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[532] Ward, Tony, and Theresa A. Gannon, 'Rehabilitation, Etiology, and Self-Regulation: The Comprehensive Good Lives Model of Treatment for Sexual Offenders', *Aggression and Violent Behavior,* 11 (2006), 77-94 p.80.

[533] Steve. Conversation with Rachel Forster (15th May 2012)

[534] Notes from the facilitator's diary.

being to boost self esteem and raise the individual's profile in the eyes of their peers.[535] However, when given the opportunity to substantiate the assertions he made and demonstrate the skills he claimed to have, Steve chose to back away, possibly out of fear that his skills had deteriorated or due to exaggerating the level of those skills in the first place.[536]

At this stage of the project the data from the prisoners' diary entries and evaluation transcription reveal that there were three areas of wellbeing highlighted as particularly significant. As with the previous stage positive relations with others continued to be widely referenced, however the other areas of 'autonomy' and 'self acceptance' emerged during this stage.

Autonomy

Based on my experience of teaching in a prison and from the findings of much of the research I have read, I had assumed that all the participants would thrive on the opportunity to have autonomy over what they produced for the project. In reality, I discovered that some prisoners found this to be a particularly negative aspect of the project.[537] This was the area that divided opinion amongst the participants more than any other as is evident in the rationale behind the creation of each of the personal artefacts and many of the diary entries recorded.

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[535] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. pp.422-423.

[536] Notes from the facilitators diary.

[537] Notes from the facilitators diary.

Steve, in particular, seemed to struggle with the freedom to create of his own design, although his comments suggest that this was a choice he made rather than something he was unable or scared to do.

> It was the part of the project that I struggled with most because I'm one of those sorts of people, particularly with art things, I've got to be in the right mood otherwise I just switch off to it and I found with what I originally planned to do I wasn't particularly happy with it so I switched off to it.[538]

As someone who had previously completed distance-learning courses, which Petra MacGuinness explains is often a way of exerting the limited amount of control prisoners can have over their daily routine, it seemed strange that he avoided any autonomy when provided with a similar opportunity in this stage of the project.[539] While this could be a sign that he has become more institutionalised in the years since he completed his distance learning course, it could also be the case that he was concerned and insecure about his work being compared with that of other group members.

This was in direct contrast to Hasim who thrived on the opportunity to have creative autonomy, almost to the extent that pieces of work were not completed because he was already moving on to the next idea he had.[540] He knew he was restricted to the timescale of the project and wanted to maximise the gains possible from the experience or, as Cohen and Taylor

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[538] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

[539] MacGuiness. p.88.

[540] Notes from the facilitators diary.

describe, 'find ways of increasing the content of the hours' and feel that he had achieved 'mastery over the impinging moment'.[541]

> Therefore, I would like to say that I appreciate the opportunity I've been given as I'm doing what I love doing again, "designing stuff", although it's not on a graphic computer based project, all the same it's still free reign and I thank Rachel and Allah.[542]

As a method of demonstrating autonomy this was particularly interesting as Hasim saw it as important that he recognised the role of the facilitator and his religion in providing him a safe space to behave autonomously. This suggests a level of awareness and understanding that there is more chance of being given future opportunities when the efforts made by others are acknowledged. This is an example of what Ben Crewe calls 'appraisal respect', which he defines as respect that 'involves the positive appraisal of a person's personal qualities or character, not just the recognition of their right to respect as a member of humanity'.[543]

It would seem that the internal locus of Hasim's evaluation was the attribution of appraisal respect to those he felt exhibited an act of kindness without any expectation of something in return, which is rarely the case in a prison.[544] When the obligation to return the kindness was removed, he was willing to invest more in the opportunity given to him, as a way of reciprocating the respect he felt the person involved had bestowed on him.

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[541] Cohen and Taylor, *Psychological Survival*, p.92.

[542] Extract from Hasim's diary.

[543] Crewe. *The Prisoner Society*. p.248.

[544] Crewe. p.418.

Mohammed chose to create a matchstick model after observing Michael working on his own pieces. For him it seemed to be important that he highlighted the level of risk he felt he had made in deciding to try something new, while still acknowledging the support others had given him during this process.

> I was inspired by Michael's clear mastery of matchstick modelling, I felt I had nothing to lose and much to gain thus consequently I became his apprentice and moved at neck breaking speed to complete what I initially perceived as a task that was beyond me. Although I had a great deal of assistance and guidance I feel proud now that I stepped into the unknown and gave myself a chance.[545]

This provided an interesting insight into the level of autonomy demonstrated by Mohammed. Unlike some of the other participants who were committed to following their own personal standards regardless of the opinions of others, he looked to others for approval and validation, and acknowledged the role they had played in his achievement.[546] While this may suggest that Mohammed struggled to behave autonomously, the different forms of respect highlighted by Ben Crewe helped me to see that he had a greater awareness of the value of others in the prison environment.[547] Crewe suggests that respect in prison is often 'offered for the sake of self protection', which would seem to be the case here.[548] Mohammed worked towards his own standards while maintaining an

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[545] Extract from Mohammed's diary.

[546] Ryff. pp.1069-81.

[547] Crewe. *The Prisoner Society*. pp.248-249.

[548] Crewe. p.249.

awareness of the advantages available from the commonly applied 'obligation to restrict one's own behaviour towards someone that is based not on moral consideration but rather fear, awe and other such sentiments.'[549] By being perceived by his peers as a respectful individual he draws less attention to himself and is less inclined to have his own actions questioned by others.

Self Acceptance

The act of thinking about their own objects appeared to bring about a greater sense of self acceptance for three of the participants. Matt and Terry used the activities in this stage of the project to reflect directly on their current position in prison and reach some level of acceptance of the offence they had committed and length of sentence they had to serve. As both of these participants are listed as either not taking responsibility for their offence or are registered appellants, this self reflection was a positive first step in the process of doing this that could be developed in the future. In Matt's diary entries he discusses how the process of reflecting on one's own past can be significant to prisoners as part of adapting to life in prison:

> It is not uncommon for a prisoner to realise with great weight – what he was denying, ignoring, neglecting or forgetting – either after imprisonment or soon after once things have settled and the past can take on a new flavour.[550]

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[549] Crewe. p.249.

[550] Extract from Matt's diary

Interestingly this quote seems to imply that he personally had been ignoring or denying something that he was now beginning to accept, but his comments were written in such a detached way that it was possible for him to dismiss them as being observations about others. One possible interpretation of this quote is that as a result of thinking about the objects and memories he holds dear, he was confident enough in his own identity that he could begin to deal with the circumstances around, and consequences of, his offence without feeling entirely consumed by it.

Terry selected a song as one of his five objects so that he could make the connection between music and the ability to use it to recall specific life events as a method of reminiscence.

> Often personal events, such as love etc, good days, bad days are remembered when music is played. A personal favourite is Johnny Cash's version of Sunday Morning Coming Down.[551] It makes me feel regret, yet strengthens my resolve to improve my life from what it has been at times.[552]

Although the different purposes of playing music in prisoners has seldom been the subject of academic study, Ben Crewe found that during periods of 'bang up' many prisoners played loud music in their cells because they found the 'music transported the self outside the walls of the prison' and 'reminded them of better times'.[553] However, Crewe's observations were based on prisoners in a lower category establishment where the end of their

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[551] Metrolyrics, 'Johnny Cash Lyrics: Sunday Morning Coming Down Lyrics', (Vancouver: CBS Interactive, 2013).

[552] Extract from Terry's diary.

[553] Crewe. The Prisoner Society. p.442; The term 'Bang up' refers to the periods of time when prisoners are locked in their cells.

sentence was in sight. In the case of Terry it would seem from the lyrics of his chosen song that the reasons behind listening to music were more reflective than merely a source of short-term escapism.

Hasim continually made reference to his family and his childhood memories as a way of reinforcing a positive sense of identity and as a attempt to avoid being defined solely by the offence that he had committed. His explanation of the selection of objects to represent him and the artefacts he created suggested a strong sense of belonging and connection to his family through his love of comic book characters.

> In the end I'm happy with 3 of the 5 projects – infact – feel
> they are brilliant and represent me superbly as most were
> from my childhood memories.[554]

For him, comic books serve as what Sherry Turkle calls a 'transitional object', in that they offer a sense of security and reassurance by providing a connection to family and friends even when he is separated from the people and places he knows.[555] As transitional objects allow people to progress in stages, during this stage of the project his connection to the comic books allowed him to revisit activities he remembered completing when he was younger and reflect on whether he felt he had changed as he had grown up: 'Tried drawing the Venom Marvel comic character but was a lot harder than I recalled. Plus I was rushing like a child'.[556]

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[554] Extract from Hasim's diary.

[555] Turkle. p.314.

[556] Extract from Hasim's diary.

In this instance it appeared that Hasim was using the exercise as a symbol of self determination and a measure of the impact, if any, he felt prison life had made on who he was. As Goffman explains a common feature of all 'total institutions', including prisons, is that they limit the number and frequency of actions available to an individual that allow him to demonstrate to himself and those around him that 'he has some command over his world'.[557]

Matt chose to take the 'Museum of your Life' task a step further and use it to reflect on why he seemed particularly drawn to the objects he had selected. His interest in this emerged when he realised that all of his object choices reminded him of relationships with specific people, but that he had not included any photographs in his selection. He discovered that all of his object choices provided a connection to the most important people in his life, but allowed him to focus only on the events and times he wanted to remember and not the overall picture or the memories of distressing events he felt a photograph could invoke:

> Most of the things I considered including as one of my 5 chosen items are things/places that I often return to in times of uncertainty or crisis. i.e. they act as anchors of continuity in a changing field.[558]

This suggests that he is particularly self aware when it comes to certain aspects of his life, but that there are still some areas with which he struggles to deal. Reminiscence work delivered by the British Museum in the closed environment of a care home reported examples of a similar use of

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[557] Goffman, *Asylums*. p.47.

[558] Extract from Matt's diary.

objects by their participants and found that their 'reaction to the objects animated them and revealed something of their personalities - and in some cases their needs'.[559] This would appear to be the case with Matt as the process of reflecting on his choices of personal objects highlighted areas of personal development that he could develop in the future.

Positive Relations with Others

In previous stages of the project most of the interactions observed were focused on how relationships developed within the core group. At this stage it became as significant to consider how both the facilitator and the prisoners engaged with other departments and individuals in the prison more generally. In most instances when participants made reference to others during this stage, it was to acknowledge an occasion where something had led them to challenge or change their opinion of someone else.

Hasim asserted in his diary that he had intentionally limited his interactions with others in the group. Interestingly, however he only recorded this once he had started to talk to some group members more, because he had seen the amount of thought and effort they were putting into the work they were creating: 'I purposely didn't want any help from others as I wanted it all to be my own, plus I really didn't want to mix with people as much'.[560]

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[559] Phillips. p.203.

[560] Extract from Hasim's diary

Matt recorded positive and negative interactions, stemming directly

from whether other people viewed something in the same way as he did.[561]

As part of one of his personal projects, it had been arranged that a member

of the Business Administration course would comb-bind his finished musical

composition to present it as a professional looking book. The development of

this book had been the result of weeks of work on the part of Matt himself, in

addition to several components requiring sourcing from other departments

by the facilitator. In light of the level of effort that had gone into it, the

participant was particularly disappointed and seemed to take it as a personal

insult when the book came back badly bound and with pages falling out.

> Interesting how this carefully put together bundle of honey
> bee music didn't occur to the careless person who badly
> attempted to bind/collate it. Just goes to show how relative
> value measures are and how people don't always see (or
> agree) on the value/worth of a piece of creative work.[562]

It became clear that Matt made judgments on others based on

whether they seemed to share the same values as he did. This left him

disappointed on a regular basis as he started any new relationship with the

unreasonable expectation that the other person would approach it with the

same level of respect and effort as he did. Understandably some people

failed to do this. Consequently, he was always trying to establish positive

relations with others but struggled to achieve many of the benefits that

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[561] Observations taken from Matt's diary.

[562] Extract from Matt's diary.

accrue from being part of trusting interpersonal relationships that ultimately improve wellbeing.[563]

 As a channel of communication had been established between the facilitator and the Imam earlier in the project, it was possible to utilise this relationship to pre-empt and solve potential problems before they escalated to the point that intervention from other departments was necessary. One of the artworks created was a piece of Arabic calligraphy designed to accompany a poem written by Mohammed. He informed the facilitator that the calligraphy read 'The Strangers' or 'Al Ghuraba', which was the title of the poem.[564] Because the final pieces would be displayed in the museum, it was important to check that this was an accurate translation, it was possible to liaise with the Imam directly to ascertain any issues he saw based on his knowledge and experience, rather than approaching the security department unnecessarily and risk damaging the rapport that had been established with the participant.[565] The Imam was able to confirm that, while the calligraphy did say 'The Strangers', he was also aware that the same word had been used previously as the name of an Al Qaeda training camp.[566] Due to the personal knowledge the Imam had of Mohammed, it was felt that this alternative meaning would have been unknown to him as he was not listed

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[563] Ryff, p.1071.

[564] Mohammed. Conversation with Rachel Forster (28th May 2012)

[565] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 'Muslim Prisoner' Experiences'. p.7.

[566] Ilyas Dalal. Conversation with Rachel Forster (29th May 2012)

as a TACT prisoner or highlighted as being at risk of radicalisation.[567] As a result of my contact with the Imam, it was possible to pass on the information to the security department within a wider context, rather than just snippets of information that could be misleading. Through discussions with the security department, it was felt that the best solution was to remove the calligraphy from the final cabinet and prevent any possible negative publicity from the public but without raising alarm or upset from the individual prisoner, who continued to engage fully for the rest of the project. While this obviously raised certain ethical questions in relation to whether it was appropriate to inform Mohammed about the decision, it was felt that this could potentially turn into a violation of the Research Applications PSI which states that 'Research participants must not be subject to intrusive or unnecessary investigations'.[568]

Conclusion

All the participants appeared to enjoy the level of freedom established from the opportunity to create something of personal interest to them, regardless of the motivation behind the decisions they made. Having the museum objects present as a source of inspiration clearly served as a safety net for some as they could be used as the central focus or theme when individuals did not feel confident sharing anything more personal about themselves.

[567] The acronym TACT refers to prisoners charged with offences under the Terrorism Act; Great Britain, 'Terrorism Act 2000: Elizabeth II. Chapter 11', ed. by Parliament (London: Stationary Office, 2000).

[568] Ministry Of Justice, 'Research Applications PSI 13/2012 ', ed. by Ministry of Justice (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012). p.11.

The categories of wellbeing referred to during this stage reinforce the impact

felt during the previous stage and recognise the value opportunities for

prisoners to have autonomy are in encouraging positive relations to be

developed and a community within the prison to be formed. In addition the

change in focus in the comments recorded, from environmental mastery to

an increase in self acceptance indicates that when prisoners feel the

environment meets their immediate needs it can be possible for them to look

inward and consider aspects of their life, they have been reluctant to revisit.

Chapter Seven. Stage 4 - Exhibition Curation

The final stage of the project not only covered the last two weeks of the sessions delivered but also the initial attempts to share the results through the exhibition of the cabinet of curiosity in the prison library and the prison visits centre. The main activities during this final stage were the development of museum interpretation that included object labels and the catalogue, the curation, the cabinet itself and the recorded evaluation session. Writing the contents of the catalogue and the labels to accompany their artefact, provided the participants with the opportunity to decide what information they felt was important to share with the people who would be viewing the final cabinet. This task also required the participants to reconnect with the Discovery Centre Museum and share their experiences, as the museum education officer delivered workshops on effective label writing and offered support for the participants on writing the content of their catalogue in an appropriate style for a museum audience. It was decided that each group member would be responsible for writing and designing the layout of at least one page, so that each participant's voice could be evident in the final catalogue.[569] As part of the plan to ensure that, where possible, all objects created for the project were produced within the prison, it had been arranged that the final catalogue would be created by a member of the Business Administration course. However, as the group completed their drafts copies of their pages so close to the last session it was not possible for the person creating the digital copy to complete it before the end of the project. This

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[569] Notes from the facilitators diary of a group discussion 14th May 2012.

posed something of a concern as the participants were unable to review the finished product as a group once they returned to their usual work activities after the project.[570]

The other main task for the group during this final stage was to curate the cabinet of curiosity. This included writing the labels they wanted to display with the objects as well as arranging their objects in the cabinet itself. This provided another logistical challenge as difficulties arranging who could transport the cabinet from the workshop to the education department caused considerable delay before the activity could be completed. This caused a great deal of frustration amongst some of the participants who felt that certain prison staff were being obstructive and trying to sabotage the project, although this was not true. This does, however, raise an interesting point as discussed by Digard and Liebling who found that 'when presented with a task or duty they previously knew nothing about, staff adopted a defensive and somewhat obstructive demeanour'.[571] They also found that when time was taken to explain more about the programme in question staff quickly became more than helpful.[572] This is an important consideration for any future project as, while senior management may be aware of the requirements of activities, if they have not sufficiently filtered the same information down to the staff dealing with the day to day implementation, this can cause unnecessary misunderstandings and confusion. The attendance

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[570] Notes from the facilitators diary of a group discussion 14th May 2012.

[571] Léon Digard, and Alison Liebling, 'Harmony Behind Bars: Evaluating the Therapeutic Potential of a Prison-Based Music Programme', in *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment*, ed. by Leonidas K. Cheliotis (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012) p.293.

[572] Digard and Liebling, p.293.

levels for some of the participants reduced during this time, which may reflect their frustration although this was never stated explicitly. Aside from these frustrations, the group generally worked well during this stage and were keen to see all the work they had invested in the project come together in an appropriate conclusion.
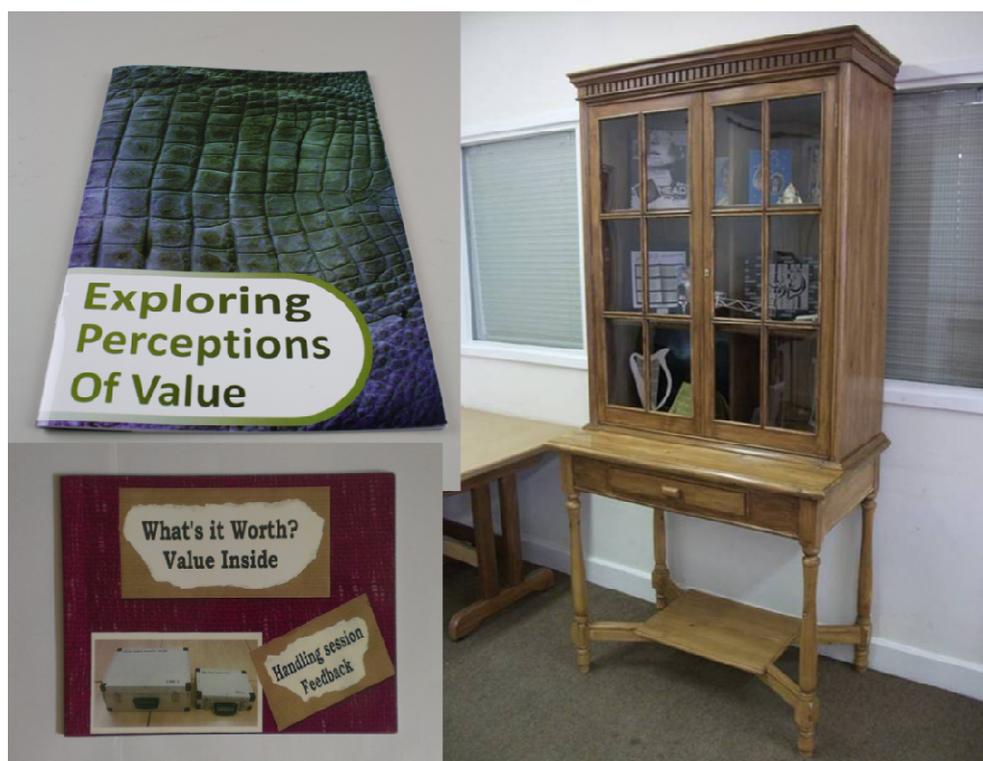
Figure 16 - Project Catalogue, Cabinet of Curiosity and Handling Session Feedback Book

As a result of the logistical problems experienced during this stage, there seemed to be added significance placed on the final session to provide an adequate feeling of closure for the participants. As previous projects in prisons have been criticised for not fully integrating an evaluation process that has resulted in extensive participant feedback, the final session of my project was planned to include an hour-long audio recorded focus group led by the museum education officer who had worked with the participants

throughout the project.[573] As the total length of a morning education session is approximately three hours, the evaluation was planned to take place in the first hour of the session. This would leave the remaining two hours for the participants and the facilitators to reflect on what they had achieved together over cake and coffee. This structure worked well as all the participants appreciated this gesture as an acknowledgement of the work they had put into the project and the facilitator had the opportunity to explain what would happen once the participants' part of the project had finished.[574] This was particularly important to some of the participants as it helped to frame their contribution to the project in a wider context outside the prison, and made them aware that work around it would continue in the future. By the end of the session it was evident that all of the participants had asked any outstanding questions they may have had, and were all comfortable that the project had reached its conclusion.

The cabinet was displayed in the prison library for six weeks immediately after the end of the project. During this time approximately three hundred and thirty prisoners per week visited the library, which suggests that just under half of the total prisoner population at HMP Wakefield had the opportunity to access the final exhibition.[575] Although no formal feedback was recorded during the exhibition, I was approached by several prisoners during this time and asked whether the project would be running again in the

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[573] Jenny Hughes, 'Doing the Arts Justice: A Review of Research, Literature, Practice and Theory' (The Unit for the Arts and Offenders Centre for the Applied Theatre Research, 2004). pp.71-72.

[574] Notes from the facilitators diary.

[575] Population figures taken from: H M Chief Inspector Of Prisons, 'Report of an Unannounced Full Follow up Inspection of HMP Wakefield', (London: HMCIP, 2012)

future and how they could apply.[576] This suggests that the feeling amongst

the prisoners was positive and the project was seen as being of value in

their eyes. Following the exhibition in the library, the cabinet was moved to

the prison visits centre to allow family and friends of the participants to see it

before it was finally moved to the Discovery Centre. Although the feedback

about the work that filtered through to the participants and the facilitator was

positive, the cabinet did sustain some minor damage during its time on

display. While the visitors of the project participants clearly recognised the

value in it, it seems that the same cannot be said for the other visitors, who

perhaps were unaware of what had been involved in the project due to the

lack of a personal connection with it.

From the diary entries and transcription notes, there were two areas

of wellbeing that featured most frequently at this stage of the project,

autonomy and positive relations with others. As this was the final stage of

the project, many of the comments made by the participants either focussed

on the project as a whole or on wider reflections made as a result of

participating, rather than about this stage of the project exclusively.

Autonomy

Throughout the project it was clear that some of the participants were

continually assessing the activities being completed against some internal

measure beyond the formal aspects of the research, and in a way they were

not always willing to share. Based on aspects of the definition of 'autonomy'

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[576] Notes taken from the facilitator's diary.

provided by Carol Ryff, this focus on personal standards and lack of

attention given to seeking the approval of others suggests the internal locus

of evaluation demonstrated by these participants signified autonomous

behaviour.[577] This was particularly the case with one participant who was

clearly committed to, and engaged with the project, but had struggled to

understand the attitudes of other group members when they had not wanted

to work in the same way as he did. As a result, Matt had often seemed

dedicated to making the most out of the project for himself but had reduced

expectations of what the group could achieve collectively.[578] It was

interesting, therefore, that during this stage of the project he made several

comments about the quality of work produced by the group and the overall

effectiveness of the cabinet of curiosity, for example, 'appreciation of the

artwork produced has increased today as I view and discussed the artwork

with others in the group'.[579]

      While this may at first appear to refer to how positive relations have

been developed, it actually means the adjustments he made to the personal

standards by which he judged others. By his own admission, Matt could be

dismissive of attitudes that conflicted with his own.[580] Therefore, his interest

in the work produced in the group, despite the very different approaches

adopted to create it, encouraged him to reassess his own system of working

and appreciate that allowing more flexibility can be beneficial. This became

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[577] Ryff. p.1071.

[578] Obervations made from Matts diary.

[579] Extract from Matt's diary.

[580] Matt. Conversation with Rachel Forster (28th May 2012).

more apparent in his reflections at the end of the project when he discussed
what surprised him most.

> How good/coherent as a collection of artefacts our cabinet
> of curiosity looks. How they are tied together by the theme
> 'exploring perceptions of value' and thus, how well it comes
> across all in one place.[581]

Although frustrating for Matt, this evidenced that the open structure of
the sessions, encouraged all the participants to have the confidence to work
in a way that most suited them and their learning style.[582] In Matt's case, the
level of autonomy he experienced stems from his awareness and
appreciation that the results of the project contradicted his existing
expectation of how things should work, and an openness to acknowledge
this and adjust his expectations in the future. As Goffman explains such self-
selected expressive behaviours can serve as a symbol of self determination
and a feeling that some level of command over one's actions still exists.[583]

During this stage of the project Matt also decided to reflect on the
wider role objects had in his life and, more specifically, on his sense of
identity:

> It was clear that many simple things held personal value
> (i.e. hot shower, taste of chocolate) and that there were
> many things that bore out a clear identity if someone else
> were to view it. Maybe my direction/purpose isn't as lost as
> my negative moods suggest.[584]

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[581] Extract from Matt's diary.

[582] Coffield and others, pp.20.21.

[583] Goffman, *Asylums*. p.47.

[584] Extract from Matt's diary.

Goffman discusses how a significant aspect of the reception process in a prison involves the removal of some personal possessions and the replacement of these with prison-issue items.[585] When this is combined with Daniel Miller's work on material culture and the formation of identity through objects, a greater insight into the importance of personal objects for prisoners can be gained.[586] Miller argues that an individual learns aspects of the culture in which they live through everyday routines and interactions with objects that help them learn how to act appropriately.[587] On an unconscious level these interactions guide the individual, providing a connection to the past at the same time as helping to adapt to the current environment. Therefore, when a prisoner no longer has physical access to the objects that made him who he is, but instead s surrounded by a new set of objects that represent a different culture it becomes essential for survival in this new environment to adopt a different identity.[588] However, as is evident with Matt, developing an awareness of this role objects can have, and consciously reflecting on what objects have value to them as an individual, can begin to reinforce a positive sense of identity and improving wellbeing.

During the evaluation session, Steve repeatedly tried to draw conversation back to a discussion around the lack of presence of the Senior Management Team (SMT) during the project, despite it being reiterated that they had approved the project and were in full support of it. He seemed to

[585] Goffman, *Asylums.* pp.28-30.

[586] Miller, *Stuff.* pp.53-54.

[587] Miller. p.53.

[588] Goffman. p.24.

need recognition and confirmation of the value of the activities he engaged with, for him to view them as worthwhile achievements.

> What would have been nice at the end when we had got our stuff together in the cabinet would be to do a handling session with senior management to show it could go towards our rehabilitation.[589]

Although Steve was keen to suggest that his preoccupation with the SMT was to ensure quieter or weaker prisoners received the support to which he felt they were entitled, this could also be seen as an example of how the prison's assertion of power is experienced by different prisoners. Ben Crewe argues that in any one prison, order and compliance are not achieved homogenously.[590] Instead, these basic forms of power are experienced differently by individuals depending on their perceptions of structure, safety and autonomy based on their previous life experiences.[591] In other words, some prisoners may comply out of fear, while others need to be enticed, coerced, persuaded or habituated into compliance.[592] In the case of Steve it would appear that the length of time he had already served meant he complied out of habit but tries to rationalise this to himself as an act of autonomous behaviour. Although only Steve seemed to need any sort of acknowledgement from the SMT, an evaluation of the Gamelan music project at HMP Wakefield did propose that prisoners who have a negative attitude towards the prison system might need a visual presence of

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[589] Extract from the evaluation session transcript.

[590] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. p.92.

[591] Crewe. p.92.

[592] Crewe. p.92.

members of the SMT to instil a sense of value in the work being carried

out.[593] This does suggest that, if a larger sample group had been recruited,

this may have been problematic. Consideration should be given to this in

any future projects.

Positive Relations with Others

At this stage of the project many of the comments made on developing

positive relations with others started to look at those beyond the immediate

environment of the prison, and included an awareness of the local

community that would visit the museum, and the wider public whose

opinions about the prison are based on what is reported in the media. Two

participants in particular focused on opinions and attitudes of the community

outside the prison. Steve was keen to highlight positive examples of how the

group had worked together, although interestingly this seemed to be to

prove something to people outside the prison rather acknowledging these as

having any worth within the prison community:

> I think one thing that came out from all of this was how
> when one person in the group was struggling with one
> thing others would go and help them. Again, because of
> the nature of this environment it is often seen as a selfish
> environment 'in jail everyone is out for themselves' but this
> group has proved that guys are quite happy to help one
> another out.[594]

He believed that the group had disproved a widely-held existing

stereotype about prisoners, although most research suggests that the lack of

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[593] Eastburn. p.22.

[594] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

positive relationships in prison is less attributable to prisoners being 'selfish' and instead stems from a sense of anxiety felt at the prospect of associating closely with people that have committed extreme acts of deviance.[595] It is clear that Steve's perception of how the public view prisoners is based on the media's portrayal of individuals held at HMP Wakefield and highlights the potential positive impact that could be felt if an alternative view could be shared in the future.[596]

Mohammed also chose to focus on his hope that the project would improve relations between the prison and the public, although he appeared to be looking for some evidence of public support of the idea of rehabilitation rather than dispelling anyone's beliefs.

> The cabinet is going to be in the museum for a while isn't it? It would be nice, particularly for us, as well to find out what the public thought of it when they see it and to get some feedback for it - particularly when they find out it's prisoners work to see if that changes their perception.[597]

Mohammed also chose to acknowledge the positive relationships that had developed among the group by sharing the sense of achievement and pride felt from the completion of the cabinet. Unlike those participants whose primary measure of achievement focused on the impact of their individual contribution, Mohammed wanted to recognise the achievements of others.

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[595] Cohen and Taylor, *Psychological Survival,* p.63

[596] Mirror.co.uk, 'Monsters of Monster Mansion' , MGN Ltd, (2007)<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uknews/monsters-of-monster-mansion-511393> [Accessed 9th August 2014]; McCarthy, James, 'Ian Watkins Will Be Considered 'God' by Fellow Prisoners, Warns Wrongly Convicted Man Who Spent 11 Years in Jail ', Media Wales, (2013) <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/ian-watkins-considered-god-fellow-6437418> [Accessed 8th August 2014]

[597] Extract from the evaluation session transcription.

It was truly amazing what human beings can do when we work together. The cabinet represents different experiences, skills and a uniqueness of talent.[598]

Butler and Drake suggest that celebrating success in this way and acknowledging people's skills and willingness to work hard are ways of allowing them to earn respect-as-esteem.[599] As this form of respect means more than treating people with courtesy, opportunities for prisoners to earn this kind of respect can be limited as 'prison by its nature, reduces the occurrence of respect-as-esteem by reducing the opportunities for inmates to act autonomously'.[600] This implies that for Mohammed, the opportunity to express the new level of respect he has for the other group members, as a result of the skills they have demonstrated, is something that may have been unexpected but turned out to be a highly valued outcome of participating in the project.

As a group, the participants decided to enter several aspects of the project into the Koestler Prison Arts competition.[601] While HMP Wakefield does have a strong history of success at this competition, it is generally something done on an individual basis, with group entries usually being proposed by staff following the collation of individual pieces of work. In this instance, the group wanted to submit the 'Museum Top Trumps' cards and the final project catalogue as they felt these items effectively represented the

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[598] Extract from Mohammed's diary.

[599] Michelle Butler and Deborah H. Drake, 'Reconsidering Respect: Its Role in Her Majesty's Prison Service', *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 46 (2007), 115-27. (p.118).

[600] Butler and Drake. p.119.

[601] The Koestler Trust, 'Koestler Trust: Art by Offenders' (London: The Koestler Trust, 2014); Bankes, Ariane, ed., *Doing Time with the Arts: The Koestler Trust at 50* (London: Koestler Trust, 2012).

level of collaboration and co-operation they had demonstrated throughout the project. Through discussion the decision was also made to enter the final Cabinet of Curiosity in the form of a series of photographs showing the cabinet itself and the individual artefacts contained in it.

Comments about the process of developing the catalogue made by two of the participants provided an example of a cross over between the themes of 'autonomy' and 'positive relations with others'. Both Michael and Hasim clearly did not feel confident during this activity but their attempts to avoid it differed in approach and the underlying reasons for their decision. It had always been the intention that responsibility for the form and design of the catalogue would be something over which the group would have full autonomy to ensure it would be their voice that came through in the end result. As a result, although examples of other museum catalogues were provided as inspiration, once the initial workshops on the style of writing were delivered, the onus was on the participants to develop the catalogue in their own way. Michael seemed to struggle with the level of freedom afforded to the group during this task, which highlighted a further example of institutionalisation due to his reluctance to be involved in group decisions without the safety net of the facilitator making the final judgement. He also made excuses as to why he was unable to write the text required for the page he was planning, although these excuses involved blaming others for things he felt were needed, rather than admitting any skill deficits he may have had. In the end, several group members offered him support, which ultimately meant very little of the page was actually developed by Michael himself. Interestingly he chose to discuss this in the evaluation session.

Michael - I was quite happy for Matt to sort of take the initiative as to the final design - not saying that Matt did. But I was more than happy for Matt to do some of my work if you like, or for someone to ask me questions and then they lay out from my answers.

Liz - Is that because the writing part was perceived as the real hard work?

Michael - Well not even so much the writing but the general layout because we all had an input and I think it may have been better if there would have a target we were aiming for regarding the layout, and we didn't have so much input.

Liz - Oh you mean if we had just said this is the layout.

Michael - Yeah. This is the sort of layout.

Liz - Ok so have you found the fact that we have tried, wherever possible, not to tell you what to do challenging?

Michael - Yeah. I think it should have been a part of you telling us what to do but that's just my opinion.[602]

His comments were intended to suggest that he had developed positive relations with the other participants, and was trying to claim it had been better for the group as a whole that he had taken a step back and let others take the lead in this activity. In reality, this merely emphasised his own reluctance to behave autonomously in a constructive or positive way. The approach adopted by this participant could be viewed as an assertion of 'negative liberty' as defined by Crewe. This can be explained as a sense of autonomy or freedom established by behaving in a way that works towards

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[602] Extract from the evaluation session transcript.

an individual's own agenda, and in opposition to the behaviours expected by the prison, without any interference or negative consequences being felt.[603]

This is in contrast to Hasim, whose reason for trying to avoid the written task stemmed from his lack of confidence in his own spelling and formal writing skills, and a fear that others would perceive this as an area of weakness. Unlike Michael who made it clear he did not want to engage in an activity, Hasim tried to focus on the activities he felt confident doing in the hope that, as long as he was constantly working, he would not be asked to complete anything else.[604] As he had been committed to the project throughout all the stages, it seemed important that he did not miss out on the opportunity to contribute to the catalogue solely because he did not feel confident in his literacy skills. Consequently, during the discussions around the design aspects of the catalogue, the other group members were encouraged by the facilitator to ask for his opinions and advice on decisions around the colour schemes and layout choices so that his skills and areas of confidence could be included and developed.

> I found this part fairly boring as I was so engrossed in my work I was trying to complete, so took myself out of it. I believe Rachel saw this and tried to include me with the colour/design of the booklet. That's where I feel comfortable and shine.[605]

The approach adopted by this participant can be seen as an example of 'positive liberty', and evidence that promoting opportunities for the

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[603] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society.* pp.140-141

[604] Notes from the facilitators diary.

[605] Extract from Hasim's diary.

'responsibilisation' of prisoners can make a positive impact on how they conduct themselves.[606] It was important to Hasim that he felt empowered to take responsibility for his own actions and that it is clear that when he engages with the prison regime it is because he chooses to and wishes to make progress, rather than because he is being coerced or forced to comply.

Conclusion

The highly reflective nature of many of the comments recorded by the participants suggests that the final stage was successful at closing the project in a such a way that the participants were satisfied with its conclusion and were left feeling it had made a positive impact on them.

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[606] Crewe, pp.138-141.

Chapter Eight - Immediate Impact

Before now, the outcomes of my research have only been discussed in reference to the individual discrete stages of the project; therefore, this chapter will discuss the potential impact of the results. I will examine the relevance of the research methods chosen and used, the significance of the role of the facilitator in such a project, and the value of participation as determined by the participants themselves.

Participant Observation

As the primary research method adopted during the project, participant observation was a useful method of capturing information that could not be determined from the participant diaries or evaluation session. This helped to highlight the difference between what the participants used their diary entries to emphasise as being important to them, and the reactions to the objects and to each other that I observed in the sessions. As highlighted earlier in chapter three, the biggest difficulty with using participant observation as a research method stemmed from trying to get the balance right between recording as much information as possible during the sessions to ensure the most accurate notes possible, and not increasing the participant paranoia that they were being analysed. In general, I found that the participants liked to see the facilitator making notes when positive action was being recorded, and often expanded on the concept being discussed when they realised this was happening. However, on these occasions, it was important that the I was aware that the individual involved may have a specific reason why they

were expressing a particular opinion and ensure that this awareness was factored into any analysis. Where negative opinions or behaviours were observed, these were recorded at the end of a session after the participants had left, to try to reduce the impact of any deliberate changes in behaviour the participants might try to make.

Project Diaries

Out of the core group, five out of the seven participants submitted a diary at the end of the project to feedback their thoughts and ideas, although the approach to the way the diary was written was vastly different between the participants. Steve used the diary solely as a record of what had taken place during each session, with little personal reflection on what he had thought about it until a brief evaluation at the end. This diary felt more like a tick box exercise or something that he was made to do rather than a project to be valued. Mohammed used his diary to record his ideas during each session, more as a prompt to future work he might do than a reflection on what was happening. This was an interesting approach as it clearly showed that the project inspired something creative in him even though this may have been on a subconscious level. Two of the participants used their diaries as a dialogue between themselves and the researcher. Matt included questions he wanted to ask, on-going reflections about what he felt he had achieved, as well as his immediate response to each stage of the project. This diary was written from a very positive and self-reflective perspective with all references to other group members acknowledging some positive change to his own preconceptions about them rather than to criticise or comment

directly about them. Hasim's diary was not as positive but was written from a very honest perspective. In addition to similar reflections about what he felt he had achieved personally, his diary also included observations regarding interactions between different group members, many of whom he felt were hindering the overall group dynamic. As this participant was a quieter member of the group, his diary provided a greater insight into his thoughts and opinions than I was able to achieve through the observations I made in my own notes. As Asif had been transferred out of the establishment mid way through the project it was not possible to know whether he had written a diary. Michael was the only participant present throughout the project who did not submit a diary.

Focus Group Evaluation Session

All of the participants attended the evaluation session despite some initial concerns about it being recorded. Michael, the participant that did not submit a diary did contribute considerably to the recorded session so his opinions were still recorded. The time for this session was restricted as the length of the CD we used was approximately seventy minutes. This meant that, on occasions, topics did need to be summed up in a concise manner to ensure all areas of interest could be discussed in the session. The session was limited in this way as the initial agreement had been that the recording would be transcribed by a prison audio typist and it was felt by the prison that more than one disc of recording would create an unfair amount of work for her.[607]

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[607] Amy Stubbs Security Governor, meeting with Rachel Forster, (Monday 27th February 2012).

The decision was made to give the participants the list of questions for the focus group the day before the session and, as a result, most of them arrived on the day focussed on the task in hand with notes about the key areas they wanted to include. This seemed to alleviate any concerns or nerves on the part of the participants, as they felt confident that they knew what would happen during the session and consequently were more relaxed about participating in it. The questions used were split into two sections. The first five questions referred to each of the four stages of the project and were intended to encourage the participants to reflect on the role of objects at each stage, as well as stimulate a wider discussion around what they felt were the successes and failures of each activity.

Questions

1. What was your favourite object?

2. What did you enjoy most?

3. What did you find the most challenging?

4. Did anything surprise you?

5. Did you learn anything?

Initially the first question was only intended to be asked at the stages where the museum objects were used directly, however, on reflection it was felt that for the other two stages the use of such open questions may encourage the participants to consider the objects each of them had created individually, as well as their overall opinion of the final cabinet of curiosity.

The following three questions were used to encourage the participants to reflect on the project as a whole and to provide a sense of

conclusion in the project, while highlighting the intention to use the lessons learned to develop new, similar projects in the future.

1. What sort of objects would you have liked to have access to?

2. Would you recommend similar projects to others?

3. Would you participate in a similar project again?

Interestingly the participants chose to use the final two questions to focus on the role and value of the facilitator in a project of this nature. This was also a theme that came up in the diary entries of three of the participants, which reveals that the choice of facilitator for a project can be as important as the content of a project.

The Facilitator

The participants highlighted several areas that help to draw attention to the importance of who the facilitator is to them. Previous research by Anne Reuss has explored the significance of the researcher, demonstrating how dress, demeanour and behaviour can have bearing on the success of a project in a high security prison, stating that 'if the researcher "gets it wrong", the whole project can be jeopardised on a number of levels, from simply gaining security clearance, to prisoners refusing to join the class'.[608] While such research is concerned with the factors affecting the facilitator's ability to portray a good first impression to potential participants, in my case many of the participants already knew me although this was as a teacher rather than as a researcher. From that perspective, an important requirement was to

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[608] Reuss. p.35.

discuss the relationship that developed between the facilitator and the participants, in order to make sense of any impact this had on the results of the project. The first area of concern was if the choice to participate was influenced by whether the facilitator was already known to the participants. Although this was something that had been discussed earlier in the methodology using Goffman's work on the intentions behind how individuals present themselves, for my research as an area of potential bias, it was not known whether this would have a positive or negative impact on who participated.[609] When asked whether they would participate again, Hasim explained that, for him, the deciding factor would be whether he thought the lead person would be difficult to work with.

> If someone I knew previously would be hard-work to work for then no. Bear in mind, although we're the test subjects, ultimately we are working for Rachel and Rachel alone so she can achieve her goals. So the question is, would you help if it was somebody else? i.e. another teacher. I don't know.[610]

The key point for Hasim appears to be that the facilitator was not a member of uniformed staff, and that the project was not funded directly by the prison or any organisation associated with the day-to-day running of the prison.[611] There is also a sense of giving something back, as an acknowledgement of the support or encouragement offered by the facilitator on previous encounters in the prison, although this was never something discussed during the project itself. This demonstrates the strong level of

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[609] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* pp.15-16.

[610] Extract from Hasim's diary.

[611] Reuss. p.35.

rapport that had been established between the facilitator and the participants, mapping against Kathleen Dewalt and Billie Dewalts criteria which states that 'the participants in the setting or event under study must come to agree to help the investigator, however they understand the project'.[612] However, it is also noteworthy that Hasim states he is working 'for' the facilitator rather than 'with' which suggests he is still aware of a divide between any member of staff and prisoners. This may be a deliberate choice of wording out of an awareness of or concern with appearing too informal or personal with a member of staff that could be construed as attempts at conditioning. This further emphasises the importance of Goffman's work within any research involving prisoners. In reference to how an individual wishes to appear 'front-stage', Goffman explains that the 'manner' they present can 'be taken to refer to those stimuli which function at a time to warn us of the interaction role the performer will expect to play in the oncoming situation'.[613] In Hasim's case there is a clear difference between the 'manner' he presented through his physical presence in the class and how he portrayed himself in his diary. This suggests he is trying to give the impression of compliance with the system through his diary. By trying to be seen as deferential, perhaps out of some level of mistrust of who may read the diary, he is trying to present a 'manner' which suggests to the

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[612] Dewalt and Dewalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. pp.43-44.

[613] Goffman, Erving, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1969) p.35.

audience that he 'expects to follow the lead of others, or at least that he can

be led to do so'.[614]

Developing rapport was also significant in the comments made by

Matt, who focussed on the personal attributes of the facilitator that he

respected and in whom he had confidence, as reasons for why he enjoyed

the project and would participate again.

> Participate again? Yes, without a doubt. I really appreciate
> the effort and enjoyment other's have put in, Rachel's
> energies, ideas and organisation (and sense of humour);
> without which the project could have been less rewarding
> or enjoyable.[615]

The most important aspect for Matt was to see the facilitator as a

genuine and authentic person. In the same way as putting on a front was

seen by other prisoners as hiding a weakness or insecurity, the same

standard seemed to be applied to interactions with staff.[616] The fact that the

objectives behind the research were made clear to the participants from the

beginning of the project, along with honest answers about what the facilitator

hoped to achieve, served to establish an open working relationship and

overcome much of the mistrust and suspicion that can underpin interactions

with new people.[617] This relationship was developed by ensuring that the

prisoners were treated as people first and foremost, and encouraged to

express their individuality, autonomy and humanity as part of each

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[614] Goffman. p.35.

[615] Extract from Matt's diary.

[616] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. p.432.

[617] Reuss. pp.29-30.

session.[618] It was also essential to demonstrate the diplomacy and tact required to expand this open working relationship to engage effectively with different groups of staff within the prison, some of whom may have differing opinions as to how prisoners should be treated. This became evident to the participants as each new element of the project which required a collaboration with another department was achieved, such as the delivery of the object-handling sessions in stage two and the creation of the final cabinet in the carpentry workshop. The effect of seeing all the promises made about what would happen actually materialise served to instil a sense of confidence in the facilitator from the participants. If this is explained using the principles of the 'Good Lives Model' outlined by Ward and Gannon, it can be seen as having the potential to support desistance.[619] The opportunity to participate, and the support of the facilitator provided 'external conditions', that many of the participants viewed as valuable.[620] This enabled those individuals to demonstrate and practice their 'internal capabilities' by utilising the skills, attitudes and beliefs they possess to contribute to the development of the project.[621] The importance of a facilitator from somewhere external to the prison is particularly significant, as Laura Caulfield found that prisoners participating in an Artist in Resident Programme, valued the professional status of the facilitator as someone from outside the criminal justice

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[618] Reuss.p.32.

[619] Tony Ward, and Theresa A. Gannon, 'Rehabilitation, Etiology, and Self-Regulation: The Comprehensive Good Lives Model of Treatment for Sexual Offenders', *Aggression and Violent Behavior,* 11 (2006), 77-94

[620] Ward and Gannon. p.80.

[621] Ward and Gannon. p.80.

sector.[622] This finding was also evident in the conclusions of the Inspiring Change Project, where it was stated that prisoners and staff placed considerable value in 'reputable, professional arts-practitioners offering their time, attention and skills to develop interventions in prisons'.[623]

In his comments made about the facilitator, Mohammed chose to focus on the level of consideration he felt was given to his religious beliefs outside of the formal delivery of the sessions.

> The fact that my religious beliefs were respected and considered was touching, as Rachel enquired about how images and statues in Islam are prohibited from Imam Ilyas, which showed that the course was not your average course but opened doors to an ocean of knowledge.[624]

The most recent report on the experiences of Muslim prisoners has found that they perceive that the knowledge staff have about their faith is solely focussed on preventing extremism and radicalisation rather than the culture and beliefs of the Islam faith.[625] Many Muslim prisoners have reported a distance in their relationships with staff. As such, this comment would seem to be particularly significant. This was only possible due to the fact that the facilitator was familiar with the prison establishment and known to many of the staff, including the imam. As a result, where potential

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[622] Laura Caulfield, 'Final Evaluation of the Artist in Residence at Hmp Grendon', (Bath: Bath Spa University, 2014).p.16.

[623] Kristen Anderson, and others, 'Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team', (Motherwell: University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow, University of Strathclyde, 2011). p.95.

[624] Extract from Mohammed's diary.

[625] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons. 'Muslim Prisoner' Experiences' p.7.

problems were predicted, it was possible to liaise with these contacts to find a solution to prevent problems escalating.

While none of the participants made direct reference to the facilitator being female, I felt that the absence of male staff in the project would have made the participants more willing to share personal memories and the feelings associated with them.[626] Of course the antithesis of this is that it was not possible to determine whether this actually deterred some prisoners from choosing to participate at all. This will need consideration in the development of future projects.

Institutionalisation

When considered in their entirety, the findings of this research project suggest that the use of museum objects as a tool to engage the prisoner participants and improve their levels of self-reported wellbeing was successful. Across the project as a whole, references to three categories of wellbeing were most frequently reported. These were connections to a feeling of 'autonomy', the benefits of 'positive relations with others' and a sense of 'personal growth'.[627] When considered collectively, these categories correspond to areas that prisoners use as a measure of the effects of institutionalisation. Research suggests that the fear of mental deterioration and institutionalisation has been, and still is, amongst the

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[626] For the relationship between gender and participation in prison programmes, see Crewe. *The Prisoner Society*.

[627] Ryff. pp.1069-81.

greatest concerns for prisoners serving long sentences.[628] Cohen and Taylor have proposed that this fear takes the form of an insecurity and dread of the 'possibility of turning, or being turned, from a live person into a dead thing, into a stone, into a robot, an automaton, without personal autonomy of action, an *it* without subjectivity'.[629]

As a result, activities within the prison regime that provide opportunities to counter these effects, by encouraging aspects of individuality to be expressed, are widely sought and valued by prisoners. Three particular areas were highlighted by the participants during the project that clearly evidence the level of value prisoners place on overcoming or staving off the effects of institutionalisation and the significance the use of museum objects played in this. These areas can broadly be defined as referring to the creation of a safe environment, the development of a sense of community and a feeling of escapism.

The ability to find a safe place in a prison is particularly important as it can help individuals to withstand the psychological stress of a total institution.[630] When an extreme or traumatic event happens in one area of life, normally we can turn our attention to a different area as a way of coping. However, this is not possible when the extreme event takes over the whole life of an individual, as with a long-term prison sentence.[631] Some prisoners find it a struggle to disclose emotion to other males as a result of their

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[628] Cohen and Taylor. pp.86-111.

[629] Cohen and Taylor. p.109.

[630] Goffman, *Asylums*. p.68.

[631] Goffman. p.68; MacGuiness. p.85.

awareness that personal disclosure is generally 'culturally discouraged as well as being potentially hazardous' in that environment.[632] Using museum objects as the central feature of my project proved successful in creating a safe environment for the prisoners to discuss personal opinions and beliefs that not always met with consensus, without fear of judgement or come-back within the wider prison environment. Research by Crewe suggests that many prisoners acknowledge that they do not express their full emotional range in prison for fear of how it may be used against them by other prisoners. Using the museum objects in this project, however, seemed to help the participants overcome this fear and begin to be more open minded about each other.[633]

> I think we got more relaxed with each other. We got to know each other, and we were able to be a little bit more honest.[634]

I felt that the objects themselves contributed to establishing this environment due to the degree of distance they offered the prisoners during the early stages of the project when potentially controversial topics were raised. It was possible for the prisoners to address such issues head on by discussing them almost from the perspective of the object, in order to gauge how it would be perceived by the rest of the group. Talking through the objects in this way allowed the participants the opportunity to detach themselves from an opinion if it was received badly. As time went on and confidence within the group increased, when similar topics of discussion

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[632] Crewe. p.312.

[633] Crewe. p.434.

[634] Extract from the evaluation session transcription of a comment by Michael.

were raised, opinions were shared without the need for the objects as

support. This safe environment was also in part a result of the physical

space in which the project was delivered, as previous research has found

that there are several areas within the prison where the perception is that

'kindness, generosity and emotional disclosure are permitted and there is

some transient escape from the emotional side of penal domination'.[635] It is

significant therefore that the project was delivered in a classroom within the

education department as, along with the visits centre and the chapel,

classrooms are an area considered as one of these 'emotion zones' or

'liminal spaces'.[636]

Crewe's research suggests that many aspects of the prison regime

that are intended to individualise prisoners in a positive way, such as the

Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) scheme and the programmes

delivered by the psychology team, actually limit the involvement many

prisoners have with the social world of the prison for fear of how their

relationships may be viewed.[637] However, interacting with people in the safe

environment created during the project, seemed to support an opposing

argument proposed by Ben Crewe that states that the 'virtually inherent

pains and frustrations of imprisonment impel prisoners to identify with each

other's predicament and form friendships' where an appropriate space is

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[635] Crewe. p.439; Moran, Dominique, 'Carceral Geography and the Spatialities of Prison Visiting: Visitation, Recidivism and Hyperincarceration', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* 31 (2013), 174-90.

[636] Crewe. p.439; Moran. pp.174-190.

[637] Ben Crewe, 'Prison Culture and the Prisoner Society', in *The Prisoner*, ed. by Ben Crewe and Jamie Bennett (Oxon: Routledge, 2012) pp.37-38.

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provided for this to take place.[638] This became apparent by the sense of community that developed within the group as a result of an increased awareness of considering different methods of valuing the objects. The effect of this translated into a new-found confidence where it became acceptable to identify openly with specific aspects of each other's background without worrying about a more general comparison between people being made: 'You are sort of looking for what other people might find valuable and why, rather than just going for your own instinct'.[639]

This was most evident in the relationships that formed between the prisoners during the sessions spent creating the personal artefacts for the final cabinet. The different creative talents being demonstrated seemed to encourage the prisoners to look for value in the wider range of skills they possessed as individuals and celebrate the results of these being put together to create the final cabinet. As Matt expressed it: 'Appreciation of the artwork produced has increased today as I view and discussed the artwork with others in the group'.[640]

The impact of working together and expressing interest in the work each other was creating opened up a variety of new topics for discussion outside of the usual focus on upcoming appeals, the latest gossip on the wings or conspiracy theories about prison food.[641] This form of escapism

[638] Crewe. 'Prison Culture and the Prisoner Society'.p.38.

[639] Extract from the evaluation session transcription. Comment made by Matt.

[640] Extract from Matt's diary.

[641] Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*. p.424.

was widely noted by the prisoners as one of the most valued aspects of the

project.

> It challenges you to start thinking about other things.
> Particularly in this environment because all you ever tend
> to talk about is prison and therefore, it's an intelligent
> conversation outside of that. [642]

Many of the prisoners acknowledged that this escapism led to a

feeling of freedom and autonomy over planning what they were going to do

and a confidence to test new ideas rather than follow the crowd. As Michael

suggested: 'You tend to go along with it in here and nod 'yes' when you

mean 'no', but I think we stopped doing that'.[643]

Cohen and Taylor support this claim, as they found that events

requiring regular participation for a period of time, such as this project,

served to break up the monotony of the daily routine within the prison and

provided a way of marking time that did not simply refer to the unserved

years of their sentence.[644] Additionally, where participation involved a

connection to, and discussions around, life outside the prison, Cohen and

Taylor found that prisoners believed this 'provided some types of guarantee

that they could rejoin society without too great a strain upon their release',

which served as evidence to them that they were not yet completely

institutionalised.[645] Most of the literature around desistance focuses on

prisoners making and maintaining changes once released from prison,

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[642] Extract from the Evaluation Session transcription. Comment by Steve.

[643] Extract from the Evaluation Session transcription. Comment by Michael.

[644] Cohen and Taylor. p.99.

[645] Cohen and Taylor.p.99.

however many of the areas of secondary desistance can be as important for long-term prisoners as a form of self management and reducing levels of mental deterioration. Bilby *et al* acknowledge this and suggest that arts related activities can contribute to the ability individuals have to manage their own progression by providing space for them to 'reframe their own narratives', to value and be proud of their own work, and to build new relationships with each other and with staff.[646]

When considered collectively all the areas of immediate impact discussed contributed to an overall short-term increase in the sense of wellbeing felt by the prisoners, or, as Matt stated 'it was like coming back to life for a period of time'.[647]

This related directly to the initial interactions with the museum objects, as the process of looking for value in the story behind each object inspired the prisoners to consider what was valuable to them, thinking about objects they now owned or previously possessed, or simple acts, such as choosing a new brand of coffee or other simple tasks they had taken for granted outside, that now meant so much. Many of the objects in a prisoner's possession are standard prison issue, and even those that are owned by the prisoner are subject to compliance with strict guidelines and removal from their possession, either temporarily or permanently, if there is a change in the prisoner's IEP status as a result of bad behaviour.[648] As all personal

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[646] Bilby, Charlotte, Laura Caulfield, and Louise Ridley, 'Re-Imagining Futures: Exploring Arts Interventions and the Process of Desistance', (London: Arts Alliance, 2013) .p.25.

[647] Extract from the evaluation session transcription. Comment from Matt.

[648] Goffman, *Asylums*. p.28.

property must also fit into two standard size volumetric boxes during routine cell searches, the priority for many prisoners becomes what is necessary in day-to-day life rather than what they would like to have in their possession.[649] Consequently, when material possessions are essentially removed from the equation, it can be more appropriate for prisoners to focus on available simple privileges and actions that can help them to connect to the world outside and the identity they had in it.[650]

> It was about the values I had forgotten, things I had forgotten I valued came out and it was like my identity came back – parts of my identity were more clear again because you are thinking about what you value and not what someone else is telling you to value.[651]

Conclusion

Although the participant group for this project was a small sample in relation to the overall prison population, the effect of seeing the impact felt by them filter through to others in the prison suggests a strong argument for developing this area of research in the future. Overall the combination of the three research methods used was felt to be appropriate for the project as all participants found at least one method that they were confident using to share their experiences and opinions while still offering the facilitator the scope to highlight, and take into account, any areas of bias on the part of the participants. When considered in the wider context of the prison regime, the

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[649] Ministry of Justice, 'Prisoners' Property PSI 12/20122' ed. by HM Prison Service (London: Ministry of Justice, 2011). p.11.

[650] Goffman, *Asylums*. pp.51-52.

[651] Extract from the evaluation session transcription. Comment from Matt.

outcomes stated by the participants can be seen to enhance the regime

through alleviating some of the factors associated with prisoners feeling

institutionalised, that cannot otherwise by dealt with by the prison system.

Chapter Nine - Lasting Impact

With such strong responses to the museum objects and the project overall being recorded immediately after the project, an important aspect of my research has been to explore whether the impacts discussed have been sustained over a longer period of time and have continued in other areas of life in the prison. A major criticism of previous projects has been the lack of attention given to whether any of the reported gains are sustained beyond the end of the project.[652] Consequently, eighteen months after the delivery of the project and the display of the cabinet of curiosity at the Discovery Centre, it has been possible to reflect on the lasting impact my project has made. This has included considering the impact of the project in three different areas. The first is from the perspective of the prisoner participants, through discussions with them, and the resulting two case studies presented here. The second perspective considers any direct effect felt by the Museum and the objects used during the project. The final area considers how the project was received and interpreted by the public who visit the Museum.

Participant Case Studies

At the end of the project the facilitator offered all the participants an individual report/evaluation about the contribution each participant had made to the project if they felt it would contribute to their sentence plan review board. I felt it was important that each participant had to request this, rather than it automatically being submitted for them, so that some level of personal

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[652] Hughes. p.71.

responsibility was evident. Two participants subsequently requested that a report be submitted for them, so it was these two participants that were approached eighteen months after the project and asked to reflect on any areas where they felt the project had made a lasting impact. Both participants were category A prisoners and currently listed as not taking responsibility for their index offence. This is significant as it drastically reduces their opportunities for progression through the system, as most Offending Behaviour Programmes are not deemed appropriate for those who do not take responsibility for their offence.[653]

Case Study 1

Hasim applied to participate in the project because he thought he would 'learn a lot from it'. He already engaged with the education department regularly, although he was often a quieter group member and did not interact with others unless it was specifically required.[654] From his diary it was clear that this was due to his existing perception of the prison as housing sex offenders. He recorded that he generally chose not to interact with them as he was worried he would struggle to find any common ground with most prisoners, and did not want to be associated with the types of offences for which many prisoners were sentenced for.[655] As Crewe discusses, this is a commonly held opinion amongst many prisoners and suggests;

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[653] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 'Report of an Unannounced Full Follow up Inspection of HMP Wakefield' (London: HMCIP, 2012). p.5.

[654] Observations from facilitator diary.

[655] Extract from Hasim's diary.

as prison researchers have consistently noted, prisoners judge and classify each other in terms of crimes, morality, dangerousness and a range of factors, and they often express fear or disgust about the people with whom they are forced to co-exist.[656]

It was clear that Hasim saw the first two stages of the project as something to endure, before he could access the third stage and be given the opportunity to create his own personal projects.[657] He viewed this as a means to display absolute autonomy over what he would create.[658] However, on reflection, it was the lessons learned from the interactions with the museum objects that he has found to have made the most long-term impact.[659] He was initially reluctant to participate in the delivery of the object-handling sessions to other groups within the education department, however, once the object he championed achieved success in the votes and the other prisoners were showing a high level of interest in what he was presenting to them, he stated that he actually enjoyed the experience: 'once my confidence shone through I wanted to keep going as I used my personality to get me through'.[660]

In his own evaluation of the project he acknowledged that what had surprised him most was how much he had learned from others in the group and how much he had enjoyed their company. He also stated that he had learned he could have some sort of conversation with others in the

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[656] Crewe, *Prison Culture and the Prisoner Society*. p.32.

[657] Notes from the facilitator diary.

[658] Extract from Hasim's diary.

[659] Hasim's reflections September 20123.

[660] Extract from Hasim's diary.

establishment regardless of the nature of their offence, this is something he reiterated in his reflections eighteen months after the project.[661] This has opened up a variety of opportunities for him within the prison that his preconceptions had left closed to him.[662]

Since the end of the project Hasim has continued to assess the relationships he has with others in the prison, and whether he feels his own role has any value.[663] Due to his increased confidence and willingness to try new things that fall outside of his 'comfort zone', he went on to complete the mentoring course shortly after the end of the project. While it may be true that there were no other education courses available to Hasim, prior to the project he had been dismissive about the possibility of completing it.[664] He now attends a variety of classes within the education department, working specifically with learners who have some of the more challenging behavioural needs. In the reflections he has wrote eighteen months after the project, Hasim has discussed how

> tutors have asked the mentoring tutor for me specifically to help in their class. This has happened four times. I have received feedback from mentees and tutors, they state I have a good rapport, I am honest and have an up-front approach.[665]

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[661] Extract from Hasim's diary; extract from Hasim's reflections September 2013

[662] Observations from facilitator diary.

[663] Hasim's reflections September 2013.

[664] Conversation between Hasim and the facilitator December 2011.

[665] Extract from Hasim's relfections September 2013.

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Aspects of his personality that he had previously perceived as negative, such as his blunt and direct approach, are now being viewed as strengths by the teachers with whom he works.[666] By participating in the project Hasim has begun to look at the bigger picture and consider how pushing himself to do something with which he did not feel comfortable, could have potential long-term benefits.[667] In the same way as many Category A prisoners, Hasim has tried to engage with courses that will enable him to stay in the education department indefinitely, due to the limited options of work places available to prisoners of his category in other work areas of the prison. One potentially negative consequence of the introduction of the payment-by-results model introduced by the government is that in many cases it will not be possible for prisoners to stay in education on a long term basis as all courses are restricted to a certain number of guided learning hours.[668] However Hasim has started to carve out a longer-term role for himself by developing the skills required to enable him to work on a permanent basis in the department, rather that continually being subject to the ongoing uncertainty of the changes being made to education funding.

While Hasim still focuses on applying his change in attitude and opinion within the comfort zone or 'emotion zone' of the education department, he has also started to transfer elements of what he has

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[666] Feedback recieved by the facilitator from education staff September 2013.

[667] Hasim's reflections September 2013.

[668] For information about the proposed structure and purpose of payment-by-results see: Ministry of Justice, 'Breaking the Cycle' (London: Ministry of Justice. 2010).

developed to life on the wing. He has recently applied to become an Anti-Bullying Representative on his wing and been cleared to undertake this role. This has meant he has had to engage on a more regular basis with staff on behalf of other prisoners at the Safer Prisons meetings. While by his own admission he is still constantly concerned that he may express opinions in a way that is misinterpreted as negative, the number of positive comments made by staff about his attitude and support for staff suggest this is not as much of a problem as he may believe.[669]

As someone who made it clear he did not want to draw attention to himself, Hasim chose not to enter any of his work into the Koestler awards stating that he was happy with his work so he did not need anyone else's approval.[670] However when feedback from the museum received recently complemented the skills demonstrated in the drawings he had created, he seemed both pleased and proud at the acknowledgement of the effort he had put in.[671] Since then Hasim has enquired about attending the event being organised to celebrate the achievements of all the people who entered the Koestler awards, which is something he had previously dismissed. This suggests a change in attitude, as he appears more willing to be involved in community activities within the prison and publically recognise value in others. At the time of writing, Hasim continues to make positive steps towards his immediate target to be downgraded from category A to category B status as a sign of his progression through the system.

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[669] Hasim's reflections September 2013.

[670] Hasim's diary entry.

[671] Notes from the facilitator's diary.

Overall for Hasim the project appears to have served as a catalyst for wider changes in his attitude to life. Volunteering to participate suggests that, while he was keen to make the relevant changes that would hopefully help him progress through the system, he was still looking for ways to do this that he felt suited him as an individual. From that perspective it would seem that the twelve-week duration of the project and the range of activities included, were enough to ensure he had the confidence to sustain and build on the changes he made long after the end of the project itself. In that sense the project was a successful tool to support his work towards achieving his own personal targets.

Case Study 2

Matt had previously engaged with the education department prior to the project, however, as he had already studied to degree level there was a very limited number of courses that he could access. Consequently he regularly engaged with other departments in the prison as and when courses or projects came up. Matt's original expression of interest form contained more concerns and questions about participating than reasons for wanting to be part of the project group.[672] He was keen to make sure he could see value in the project before committing to it. Throughout the project itself, he engaged fully with all activities and carried out a vast amount of additional research and development work in his own time. He also used the project to develop ideas for the courses he was taking elsewhere in the prison and was

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[672] Application form submitted January 2012 by Matt.

instrumental in establishing some of the collaborations that were developed

with other departments. From his diary, it was clear that his intention was to

look for ways in which the project could make an impact on his life outside

the twelve-week timescale of the project. He particularly found value in the

idea of using objects from his own past to think about what was important to

him and how this could reinforce his identity. Within his diary he began to

formulate a comparison between prisoners and museum objects, which he

intended to use to reinforce how the sum of the person should not be based

solely on the crime they had committed and the progress (or lack of it) made

through the prison system. In the same way as he understood that the value

of the museum objects comes from the life of the object prior to being in the

museum, he felt that it is important for prisoners to recognise the same is

true of them.

> So, I am the artefact, I'm in an unusual context, and I'm
> now embarking on a process of raising awareness of the
> things that hold my value, and of the obstacles and
> problems that cloud this.[673]

As someone who suffers from periods of particularly low mood, that

have resulted in supervision on an Assessment, Care in Custody and

Teamwork (ACCT) document, this new approach to looking for the value in

and of his own life has potentially life-changing implications.[674] One of the

pieces of written work incorporating this idea that he created during the

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[673] Extract from Matt's diary.

[674] For information about the ACCT process see: Ministry of Justice, 'Management of Prisoners at Risk of Harm to Self, to Others and from Others (Safer Custody)', ed. by Ministry of Justice (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012).

project went on to win a gold award at the annual Koestler awards. He was surprised at this success and explained that he was shocked that what he thought may have been a potentially confusing or abstract piece had made more of a positive impression than he expected.[675]

When reflecting on any lasting impact or changes in attitude the project had made, Matt noted several areas he felt the project had influenced. Eighteen months after the project, he described the opportunity for physical contact with both the museum objects and the pieces created by the group as a standout experience. He explained, with great positivity, that this has lived on vividly for him since the end of the project and suggested that the experience had provided a powerful link to the real world in a way not normally accessible to prisoners, who otherwise rely on television programmes or books. When contemplating the lasting impact of this experience, he suggested that it had provided a stabilising effect which acted as a platform for a wider assessment of values to take place.

> I feel this sort of experience could provide some useful
> learning and anchoring, or maybe has just allowed some of
> us to more effectively re-assess the things we had (but
> forgot the value of) and the things others valued and lost
> because of their actions.[676]

By far the most significant change in attitude for Matt can be seen in the acknowledgement that the project has widened his willingness to be open to new ideas and experiences and increased his understanding and acceptance of the different value systems people have. As he described; '

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[675] Matt's reflections on the project September 2013.

[676] Matt's reflections on the project September 2013.

Less wishing "everyone should be exactly like me" or "do what I do" means less frustration and disappointment generally'.[677]

By his own admission, he was someone who can become isolated due to his battle with his mental health and tendency to over-analyse or over-think situations. His new-found willingness to withdraw his barriers has the potential to make a considerable impact on his life. Several notes recorded by staff about Matt prior to the project reveal that he was perceived as quiet and polite, but only associated with a small circle of other prisoners.[678] It was also recorded that he spent a large amount of time working on activities of personal interest in his cell. However, since the project he seems more interested in interacting with others, particularly those he may previously have dismissed as a result of his belief that he would have nothing in common with them.[679] Long term it is hoped that this new attitude may make a positive impact on his mental health by giving him a sense of belonging and purpose within the prison community, particularly during periods of low or unstable mood.

Towards the end of the project Matt set himself a task to create a mind map of his personal values that he intended to use as a visual prompt to reflect on what was important to him, particularly when trying to regulate difficult emotions or low moods. This included a focus on the simple things often taken for granted such as appreciating a hot shower or the taste of

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[677] Matt's reflections on the project September 2013.

[678] Case notes recorded by Matt's personal officer.

[679] Throughout the prison system HMP Wakefield is referred as 'monster mansion' by prisoners as a result of the high number of sex offenders held there. This often means that when individuals arrive they have a strong preconception about what people may be like.

chocolate.[680] This is a particularly interesting concept as Goffman reported that this level of awareness of, and appreciation for, simple privileges is not something usually experienced until the first days of release from incarceration.[681] However, for Matt, contact with the museum objects during this project was enough to bring the value of these things to the fore. His intention was to keep this mind map in his mental health symptoms journal as a permanent reference page. He has found this to be a useful tool that has helped him to keep a positive sense of perspective even when presented with unexpected changes or set-backs within the day-to-day prison regime.[682] Although his own notes regarding the areas of lasting impact participation in the project made on him paint a very positive picture, the comments recorded by staff during the same eighteen month period highlight the more complex situation he faces due to his ongoing struggle with his mental health.[683] Overall, it would appear that Matt has taken a lot of positives from the project but for someone like him, it would be more effective if future projects could be delivered over longer periods of time to provide more stability within the ever-changing and dynamic environment in the prison. This would ensure that the benefits of participating could provide a sense of continuity and connection to the real world that are otherwise difficult for him to achieve in the prison regime.

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[680] Matt's reflections on the project September 2013.

[681] Goffman, *Asylums*. p.70.

[682] Matt's reflections on the project September 2013.

[683] Case notes from Matt's personal officer.

The intention behind the case studies presented here is to demonstrate how the project was successful at facilitating the individual needs and targets of the participants while still fulfilling the wider aim of encouraging them to work together to achieve a collective goal. Although the participant group for this project was a small sample in relation to the overall prison population, the effect of seeing the range of impacts felt by those who participated have continued over a long period of time, filtering through to different aspects of life in the prison. This is a strong argument for developing more programmes based on this research in the future. The case studies also emphasise a point made throughout my thesis, that it is impossible to consider prisoners as a homogenous group. From the bare facts, both participants would appear to be very similar due to the nature of offence committed, time already served, and current security category. When considered as individuals based on their life story they could not be more different.[684] As demonstrated here, where the structure of a project allowed for greater levels of autonomy to be achieved, it was possible for participants to work towards areas highlighted as important to them personally. Consequently, this can make it appropriate for use by a wider group of prisoners, including deniers, than many existing courses or programmes by not being specifically offence related, but still falling into the 'cognitive and motivational' category outlined by NOMS.[685] The value of catering for the potentially wide range of individual needs of people is

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[684] Facilitator diary notes.

[685] Ministry of Justice, 'Implementation of Deliver Accredited Programmes Specification', ed. by HM Prison Service (London: Ministry of Justice, 2012). p.2.

recognised by Susan Pearce, who suggested that interactions with museum objects 'embody human purposes and experience, and they invite us to act towards them in ways which may give us what we desire'.[686] As both case studies highlight, if outcomes or objectives are too prescriptive the maximum benefit that could be achieved may be lost by trying to define the needs of individuals as some kind of generic, stereotyped prisoner.

Museum Objects

As the final cabinet of curiosity created during the project is now on display at the Leeds Discovery Centre, it has also been possible to reflect on any impact made on the museum objects themselves as a consequence of being used in the project and to consider public perceptions of the work created.

As discussed in earlier chapters, whenever a museum object is included in an exhibition, or used within a project, the story of that object and the interpretation of it is liable to change and develop. There have been several examples of this within this project. Firstly, from the results of some of the activities carried out as part of the project, it has been possible to feedback the prisoners' ideas and interpretations of the different objects to the museum. This has been the case with the museum Top Trump cards where the different value ratings given to each object were evident and often contradicted what the staff believed the prisoners would think about the objects.

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[686] Susan M. Pearce, *On Collecting: An investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1995). p.166.

By far the strongest example of this has been the response to the prisoners' feedback in the Object-Handling Sessions book. As it was evident from the handwritten forms that this feedback came direct from individual prisoners, and had not been edited or interpreted by the facilitator, there was a real sense that the prisoners' voices came through and it was easier to see the different value systems and beliefs held by those who had participated. Feedback explaining reasons for choosing their favourite objects surprised many of the museum staff. One comment in particular challenged any stereotypical views they might have held: ' All the objects symbolised important aspects of life, but the bees suggest something of our responsibilities towards future generations'.[687] The focus on the future, and the level of awareness of the needs of other people, were areas that the museum staff had not considered would concern prisoners in a high security prison.[688]

As some of the artefacts created by the prisoners were directly inspired by the museum objects, these prisoner artefacts are now displayed alongside the related museum object in the cabinet. These new objects are also recorded as 'derived objects' on the museum's online catalogue, meaning that a connection will be made with the prison whenever a search is made for the original artefact. Any search will thus contain an added layer of interpretation.

Unfortunately, the prison project can be seen to have made a more lasting impact on one of the objects. The Shabti was accidently broken

[687] Example of participant feedback from the Object-Handling book.

[688] Facilitator diary notes.

during one of the object-handling sessions. This particular Shabti had previously been used in several school projects and had suffered several small cracks as a result of repeatedly being handled. This recent 're-breakage' has been recorded and documented and the Shabti has since been repaired by a conservator.[689] However, the fact that it did break meant that the inner materials of the Shabti could be studied and analysed and recorded, offering further insight into its materials. This Shabti remains available for careful handling, but the visible break has become part of the narrative as has the circumstance of where, in a geographical sense, it was broken.[690]

The act of displaying the museum objects and the prisoners' interpretation of them, alongside the prisoner-created artefacts, has had a personifying effect by challenging the viewer to consider the value of each item separately, based on its own story and history, rather than solely as part of a collection. Overall, this has served to highlight the value of the ongoing yet hidden conservation work being carried out by museum staff, and publicised the intentions of the curatorial team to make the objects in their collections as accessible and significant to the local community through improvements in the interpretation available.

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[689] Elizabeth Knight, Email to Rachel Forster (28th February 2014).

[690] Elizabeth Knight, Email to Rachel Forster (28th February 2014).

The Public

When the cabinet was finally exhibited in the Discovery Centre, the project was presented as a case study alongside the work created by other community groups as part of the wider programme of outreach work delivered. This ensured more information could be given to the public about why the project had taken place and the potential value that could be gained from it. The museum management were proud of the collaboration with the prison so wanted to celebrate the success of the project and share it openly with the public, rather than hide it for fear of a negative reception.[691] Visits to the Discovery Centre are by appointment only and often involve a tour of the building, part of which includes the displays of the community project work. The staff delivering the tours were initially surprised at the level of interest many visitors had in the cabinet and the project itself and have consequently asked for more information about the work to enable them to provide a more detailed answer to the questions they get asked.[692] Unlike the feedback from the prisoner participants, where it was possible for the facilitator to revisit them to discuss their opinions and feelings about the project, the feedback from members of the public visiting the museum had to be recorded by Liz Knight, the Education and Outreach officer involved in delivering aspects of the project. From the initial feedback the museum has received regarding the cabinet, the overall reaction seems to be a sense of shock followed by a

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[691] John Roles, Conversation with Rachel Forster (16th January 2013).

[692] Elizabeth Knight, Email to Rachel Forster (20th January 2014).

great deal of intrigue.[693] Firstly the public appears to be shocked that the museum would actively seek to deliver outreach in a high security prison. This has then been followed by a sense of disbelief about the quality of the work created by prisoners with the reputation of those incarcerated at HMP Wakefield. Looking at the prisoner-created cabinet and artefacts displayed in the museum seems to have encouraged the public to consider prisoners from a different, more open-minded, perspective as there was also a sense of sadness at the perceived waste of talent.[694] This stimulated discussion about possible circumstances that could lead people to end up in prison, such as breakdowns, undiagnosed mental illness or as a consequence of 'one time crazy actions'.[695] In this sense the public seemed more conscious of the often complex events that could lead to an offence due to the fact that each artefact connected to the story of an individual prisoner rather than the homogenous group usually described by the media. Overall where people have had something to say about the cabinet or the project it has been to ask questions rather than make any sort of negative comment. As a result of this positive reception, the decision has been made to create a page on the museum's website to share additional information about the project that hopefully will answer some of the questions raised already and signpost the project to others using the website. This will also provide a platform to share how the findings from the research are being disseminated and received in both the criminal justice sector and the museum studies world.

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[693] Elizabeth Knight, Email to Rachel Forster (20th January 2014).

[694] Elizabeth Knight, Email to Rachel Forster (20th January 2014).

[695] Elizabeth Knight, Email to Rachel Forster (20th January 2014).

Conclusion

From the discussions presented here it can be seen that collaborations between prisons and museums raise interesting questions for each institution that can help to inform how their current practices develop to ensure they remain relevant to society today. In the second case study, the comparisons made between the museum objects and the prisoners offer an alternative lens for the public to consider how prisons are viewed and understood, to focus debate around the role they play in society and how this can improve. In both cases the most powerful component is the interactions with individual people and real objects, rather than judgements made based on previous knowledge, assumptions or stereotypes. Using museum objects as part of projects with excluded groups also emphasised the work of museums in an indirect way and highlighted how this is not just about understanding or learning about things from the past. Instead, the emphasis is on appreciating how the story of each object continues to evolve and that each time a new person interacts with it they become a part of that story. By taking inspiration from the process of creating museum object interpretation, and understanding that the life story of an object may not always be present in the exhibition information, it may be possible to see prisoners as more than just the crime they have committed. A change in focus to positive aspects of identity can contribute to the rehabilitation process.

Chapter Ten, Taking it Forward: Final Thoughts and Recommendations

The ability of this research to be successful in an environment with the high security level of HMP Wakefield suggests the strong potential for future work in this area to be developed for use in other prisons. However, it is important to recognise that this does not imply a repeat of the same project would create the same results in every prison. [696] Instead, there is a need for enhanced knowledge of the specific prison establishment being targeted, before appropriate objects and activities can be developed. Central to this is an understanding that the demographic of the prisoners held in a particular establishment can differ greatly, even within the same security category of prison.[697] From this perspective, this final chapter will outline some of the lessons learned during the project in order to make recommendations for how this area of research could develop in the future. This will include suggestions on how Leeds Museums and Galleries and HMP Wakefield can build on the partnership established during this project in addition to a series of general recommendations for Leeds Museums and Galleries to build on the project in a wider sense.

HMP Wakefield and Leeds Museums and Galleries

Since the delivery of the project a change in 'Governing Governor' at HMP Wakefield has signalled the introduction of a new initiative called 'Enabling

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[696] Flynn, *Introduction to Prisons and Imprisonment*. p.46.

[697] Flynn. pp.48-60.

Environments'.[698] The standards set out as part of this initiative provide a

clear link with the measures of wellbeing used within my project and the

goals set out for museums by Arts Council England.[699] The introduction of

the 'Enabling Environments' initiative outlines the effect the nature and

quality of the relationships we find and create, have on the way we behave

and the way we feel. This new initiative would seem to provide a great deal

of opportunities for Leeds Museums and Galleries to contribute to its

effective application in both the short and long-term future. As such, my

initial recommendation is for the museum to establish a channel of

communication with the prison and look to engage with the 'enablers' to

develop an appropriate, ongoing programme of activities that can be offered

within the prison on a longer-term, more permanent basis.[700] As so much of

the success of any partnership is dependent of establishing a relationship of

trust, it is recommended that this is achieved through the appointment of a

'Museum Worker in Residence', in a similar way to the existing 'Writer in

Residence' role works within the prison.[701] This will ensure it is possible for a

visual presence of the museum to be felt. From the results of my research I

believe that short-term, full-time projects would not be an effective use of

[698] HMP Wakefield,'Enabling Environments Standards' (Wakefield: HMP Wakefield, 2014).

[699] The ten standards are: Belonging, Boundaries, Communication, Development, Involvement, Safety, Structure, Empowerment, Leadership and Openess; For information on the goals for museums see: Arts Council England, 'Culture, Knowledge and Understanding: Great Museums and Libraries for Everyone' (London: Arts Council England, 2011).

[700] The 'enablers' are a group of prisoners who have volunteered to promote the initiative and act as representatives for the wider population at HMP Wakefield on areas concerned with the Enabling Environments initiaitve.

[701] 'Writers in Residence' are roles funded through the Writers in Prison Foundation.

resources in this environment due to the long sentence length of many of the prisoners. One recommendation would be to run any programme of work one day per week over a minimum of ten weeks. This could ensure that all prisoners have the opportunity to participate, if they desired, with minimal impact on the other work areas where they are employed.

The topics covered by any proposed work should be open and varied. This could include connections to current exhibitions at sites around the museum service, subjects highlighted as relevant by the prison 'Reducing Reoffending Team', or subjects of interest highlighted by prisoners that fall outside the current educational provision.

Leeds Museums and Galleries

The high profile nature of my research helps to position Leeds Museums and Galleries as one of the institutions at the heart of this expanding field of research, which in itself raises several recommendations for what should happen next. One suggestion is to continue to share the results of the project through the proposed section on the museum services' website dedicated to presenting its results and outcomes. It is also recommended that Leeds Museums and Galleries connect with other museum services interested in exploring this area of research to share examples of good practice and avoid unnecessary repetitions.

As HMP Wakefield is not the only prison in the immediate area of the Leeds museum service, a longer-term recommendation is to use the success of the work at HMP Wakefield to establish links with other prisons to develop the work further. HMP Leeds is a category B local prison that mostly

holds prisoners serving sentences under twelve months, or those held on remand.[702] Due to the transient nature of this prison population, a distinctly different approach would be required by the museum to be successful in this environment. The main recommendation here would be to look for opportunities to engage with the successful 'Restorative Justice Team' at HMP Leeds, to develop ways of enhancing the existing programme of work delivered by them and provide the participants access to museum objects at an appropriate stage during the Restorative Justice process.[703]

Although the value of using museum objects in a project of this nature has been demonstrated throughout this thesis, it is also possible to draw from this experience to make recommendations about which particular objects or collections should be considered for future work. During all four stages of my project, the objects from the social history and archaeology collections were consistently effective at engaging the participants. In both cases this manifested as an interest in the objects themselves, including the geographical origin and original purpose of each object. This was particularly evident in the interactions with the World War One postcard, the Verge watch, the hand-axe and the Shabti. The objects from these collections also encouraged some participants to use them as a reminiscence tool to act as a link to something completely different from their own life. The Farnley brick and the Verge watch are again strong examples of this. Two general themes emerged from the interactions with the objects which could be taken forward

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[702] HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 'Report of an Unannounced Inspection of HMP Leeds' , ed. by HMCIP (London: HMCIP, 2013). p.7.

[703] Emma Callaghan, 'Process Guidance: Manual for HMP Leeds Restorative Justice Conferencing' (Leeds: HMP Leeds, 2013).

when selecting objects for future projects. These themes can broadly be

categorised as relating to displacement or adapting to survive and human

development. Both these themes suggest a strong interest in objects that

serve as symbols of positive change. Support for these as potential future

themes can be drawn from the suggestions the participants made about

objects they would be interested in seeing. Michael and Terry both

suggested that a narrower range of objects would be of interest to them.

They felt that this would allow the history of a particular area to be explored

in more depth and suggested objects relating to farming or computing as

potential starting points.[704] Matt made two suggestions of categories of

objects. The first was items of clothing from around the world. He felt the

tactile nature of different fabrics would make it easier to feel connected to

the world outside, particularly the people that had owned the items

previously.[705] His other suggestion was to include diaries and manuscripts

as potential future objects. The seemed to be the most popular idea among

the group and Mohammed suggested this could be expanded to include

writing implements from different periods of time and consider how language

has developed.[706] Of all the questions covered in the evaluation, the topic of

future objects was the one that the participants seemed to have given the

most thought to. While I believe this demonstrates the level of interest and

freedom the participants felt from engaging with the objects, I do feel that

future projects would benefit from focussing on objects from a specific

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[704] Observations taken from the evaluation transcription.

[705] Observations taken from the evaluation transcription.

[706] Observations taken from the evaluation transcription.

collection per project. This may encourage a greater number of prisoners to participate, particularly those who are less confident or are not engaging with the education department, as it may reduce any concerns about what to expect which may arise, from more general, open themes.

As a final recommendation and closing thought it seems fitting to return to the research questions outlined at the start of my thesis. Through the course of this project, the range and depth of positive experiences felt by the prisoners and appreciated by museum staff, support the claim that there are mutual benefits to be gained through a collaboration of this nature. The final hope is that this is recognised by funding bodies and policy makers alike through the dissemination of my research so that it can be explored further in the future.

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