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THE COURAGE TO CREATE¹: THE ROLE OF ARTISTIC AND SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES IN PRISONS

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Abstract

Artistic and spiritual activities should be considered as important elements in varied and diverse responses to offenders' needs: they value humanity and seek well-being. This paper examines the role of interventions delivered to prisoners that do not fit within the categories of psychology, education or training (for example, pastimes such as visual and performance arts, meditation and yoga), and maps an alternative terrain to traditional concepts of rehabilitation and treatment. Whilst acknowledging the need to evidence effectiveness in order to satisfy policy-makers, victims, and the wider public, we explore the constraints of quantifying the impact of these activities.

Key Words

prison, intervention, creativity, artistic and spiritual activities

This paper examines the role of artistic and spiritual activities with prisoners. In particular, it is concerned with the way in which calls for evidence-based policy and practice may undermine diverse and responsive work that occurs beyond the realm of accredited offending behaviour programmes. For a number of years, activities facilitated by the arts sector have been successfully taking place with prisoners; however, limited empirical evidence exists in relation to their outcomes. This may

partly be due to the ideological conflict between the arts and sciences but, equally, as a result of government funding prioritising interventions of a psychological nature. But, as a result of increasing acknowledgement of the role that voluntary and charitable organisations play in the criminal justice sector, it is possible to see an emerging recognition of the need to evaluate this work. This paper initially sets out the links between spirituality, creativity and affect before moving on to consider the way in which affect is integral to the commission of, and response to, crime. A review of government policy which focuses on partnership approaches with the voluntary and charitable sector is then explored, which is particularly pertinent for artistic and spiritual practitioners as they predominantly originate from this region. The latter section of the paper highlights the merits of these approaches for prisoners, drawing on some of the limited research currently available in this area, before concluding with some reflections on both the ideological and methodological difficulties of seeking to evaluate artistic and spiritual activities. We finish by challenging both researchers and policy-makers to consider a more democratic and empowering approach to evaluation which will require the courage to move beyond what may be politically acceptable.

During the early spring of 2009 a paper sculpture entitled 'Bringing Music to Life' was put on display in the South Bank Centre. The piece used the cut and folded sheet music of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to represent an orchestra and choir, and was considered to be an exquisite piece of art - until the identity of artist was revealed. The Royal Festival Hall had bought the piece of work from the Koestler Trust which had been made by the double rapist and child murderer, Colin Pitchfork, whose legal team were in the process of questioning his sentence length (Purves, 2009). To the Koestler Trust the offence committed by the artist is not of concern; it is the artistic value (both

intrinsic and extrinsic) of the work which is significant. To some readers of the *Guardian, Times, Sun, Independent, Daily Mail* and *Leicester Mercury*, the value of the artwork was inextricably linked to Pitchfork's offences. The media furore over the sculpture raises questions as to why creative activities with prisoners are negatively regarded by some sections of the community. If Mr Pitchfork had been celebrating achievement in an academic examination or an accredited programme, it is hard to envisage that this emotionally heightened reaction would have ensued. Pitchfork's creative act can be viewed as the manifestation of his being; something of which his victims' families did not want to be reminded. Perhaps it is because the creative act embodies the living, breathing essence of the Self, what Negus and Pickering (2004, p. 2) call 'the external manifestation of divine creation' that this negative reaction arose.

Spirituality, Creativity and Affect

The term 'creativity', with its origins in Judeo-Christian culture, still invokes concepts of religious practice, but it was not until the 18th Century that this word was linked to the processes of 'doing art'. Even when the word was used to explain the role of artistic endeavour, it often had overtly religious or spiritual overtones. The concept of creativity changes over temporal and cultural space, much as crime and culture do, and in the modern era creativity is considered to be an indicator of, for example, individuality, sub-cultural attachment or non-consumerism. This leads to the suggestion that some have replaced the quest for spiritual or religious meaning with artistic activity (Negus and Pickering 2004; Misra *et al.* 2006). The link between creativity and spirituality is the concept of affect; the feeling which is promoted by worshiping, creating or doing something risky. Affect is something more than the

emotional response to a particularly involving activity. Massumi (2002, p. 214) further explains that:

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 (italics in original).

Halsey and Young (2006) use the concept of affect to explore and explain the feelings of graffiti writers and ask us to consider the visceral nature of the physical and emotional impact of committing this form of 'crime'. They note the pride and feeling of community spirit that is invoked through the process of creating a piece of artwork, and consider its importance in helping to explain the graffiti writers' behaviours. This conceit is wonderfully illustrated by a scene in *The Shawshank Redemption* when DuFresne, after barricading himself in an office, plays a piece from *The Marriage of Figaro* over the prison speaker system. The narration provided by Red highlights the beauty and transformative effect of the music, ending with '... every last man in Shawshank felt free'.

If affect, which is something more than simply an emotional response to committing an act of crime (Katz 1988; De Haan and Loader 2002; Karstedt 2002), is important in the commission of crime, might it play a role in the curtailment of offending? The association of affect to social capital (Freiberg 2001) and from social capital to theories of desistance (see, for example, Farrall 2004; Giordano *et al.* 2008) should be an avenue for further exploration, but in the climate of punitive attitudes towards offenders, combined with the demands for a primarily experimental evidence-

base for policy-making, the role of affect, and the artistic and spiritual activities which may ignite it, is often ignored by policy-makers.

Spiritual practices rarely feature in any criminal justice policy despite there being growing evidence of their ability to foster positive change. Rucker (2005) notes that a number of men with convictions for violence found yoga and meditation brought them 'self-mastery'. In essence, they learned to control their emotions, feelings and temper. The empowering practice enabled the men to take control, but in a respectful and peaceful manner. Winkelman (2003), who used shamanic drumming as part of a substance abuse rehabilitation programme, reports significant benefits on 'physiological, psychological and social' levels to aid the recovery process (p. 4). Derezotes (2000) reveals that the adolescent sex offenders who did yoga particularly valued the spiritual aspect of this activity. In addition, the practice allowed them to constructively channel their anger as a result of their increased levels of self-awareness and self-control. In her review of the arts, (whilst acknowledging some methodological limitations), Hughes (2005) found evidence of personal and social development. Relationships between prisoners and staff were enhanced as a direct result of the informal contact that these activities encouraged. This, in turn, helped to maintain good order, with a corresponding reduction in adjudications for problematic behaviour. Artistic / spiritual activities can have a 'humanising' effect on prison culture (Wrench and Clarke 2004) and, because prison work is highly demanding and emotional (Crawley 2004), practices like yoga can help prison staff re-engage with their feelings and release stress (Prison Phoenix Trust 2009). Recognising and working with emotion is highly significant in criminal justice, and public opinion concerning crime prevention policies is heavily influenced by feelings (Freiberg 2001). Denial of affect will only serve

to reinforce the lack of emotional intelligence pervading modern society leading to increased aggression, depression, social ineptitude and crime (Goleman 1996). Prisoners need to undertake activities that not only address their offending behaviour, but engage them holistically and enhance their emotional well-being. Acknowledging the role and impact of affect, therefore, must be at the heart of criminal justice policy, practice and research.

Government Responses and Third Sector Involvement

The history of punishment, the treatment model, 'nothing works', 'What Works?', popular punitivism and the effects of new managerialism on the criminal justice system (CJS) are well-documented. So, too, is the development of evidence-based, cognitive-behavioural interventions (CBT) which aim to reduce reoffending (see, for example, Hollin and Bilby 2007). These programmes may offer some success with some prisoners in some circumstances (Falshaw *et al.* 2003), but the lack of unequivocal evidence of recidivism (Chitty, 2005) has led to calls for a re-focussing of Ministry of Justice policy. Offending behaviour programmes should only 'continue to be offered as part of the range of interventions for prisoners but fitted into a much wider rehabilitation agenda' (Home Affairs Select Committee 2004, p. 234). Alternative practitioners have long understood that a 'one size fits all approach' does not recognise and value prisoners' diversity, and proponents of the 'Good Lives Model' assert that risk / needs approaches, such as CBT, are essentially negative, focus on the eradication of unacceptable behaviours rather than 'promoting pro-social and personally more satisfying goals' (Ward and Brown 2004, p. 245). A rigid reliance on accredited programmes may be misguided when evidence of effectiveness may

sometimes be considered elusive (Johnston and Hewish 2008). The goals of HM Prison Service include the duty to look after prisoners with humanity, as well as rehabilitating offenders to lead crime-free lives on release from prison. If we accept that an element of humanity is the need and desire to express ourselves in, sometimes, a non-verbal and creative manner, then we must also acknowledge that this interpretation demands the provision of artistic and spiritual activities within the prison estate. In addition, there is now an increasing indication that the government recognises the benefits of an eclectic approach to work with offenders because of its focus on partnerships with the 'Third Sector' (Ministry of Justice 2008), the creation of the Arts Alliance in November 2008 (Anne Peaker Centre 2008) and through running interventions that link CBT programmes with elements of drama-based approaches (Blacker *et al.* 2008).

The strengths of the Third Sector (defined by the Ministry of Justice as voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises, co-operatives and mutuals) lie in its ability to be 'flexible, non-bureaucratic and responsive' and to 'offer holistic provision to deal with multiple needs and disadvantages' (Ministry of Justice 2008, p. 16). The fact that the Third Sector is able to draw on local networks, including minority and faith communities, is an added advantage in the work it undertakes and the social capital it reinvests (Ministry of Justice 2008). However, a number of Third Sector organisations feel nervous about the government's call to partnership (Silvestri 2009). Johnston and Hewish (2008) argue that the spontaneous and emotional nature of their work does not sit well with the 'What Works?' programme and Prison Service Order 4350, which governs the accreditation of interventions. The reconfiguration of

activities to meet accreditation requirements will, they fear, eradicate the very essence of what makes them successful: sensitivity, adaptability and variety.

In the winter of 2008, a course facilitated by The Comedy School at HMP Whitemoor was cancelled by the Justice Secretary Jack Straw (*The Guardian*, 21 November 2008) after being successfully run for ten years (Dugan 2009). Straw believed that a comedy course was not a justifiable use of taxpayers' money, despite the fact that it seemed to address elements demanded by the decency agenda and had been running with a Third Sector organisation for a considerable amount of time. On the back of the press coverage of this story, Prison Service Instruction 50/2008 was issued to help governors decide what constitutes acceptable activities in prisons; 'the public acceptability test'. This guidance places victims and the public at the heart of these decisions in that governors must 'avoid those which would generate indefensible criticism and undermine public confidence in the Service' (NOMS 2009, p. 1). How they are to establish what the public thinks is not included.

Greater community engagement is at the heart of the government's agenda to respond to victims and the wider public in matters of crime and disorder (Casey 2007) and, whilst this aim is laudable, provocative media campaigns that seek to elicit emotive and punitive responses, (illustrated by the Pitchfork and Comedy School cases and the inclusion of Part 7 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 on criminal memoirs), often prevent well-informed public debate on crime and disorder issues. It is pertinent that creativity is often regarded as resistance to the 'excessively bureaucratic and manipulative' (Fisher 2002, p. 1) and that artistic and spiritual activities require space;

space to take risks and be impulsive (Ashmore 2008). This is supported by Matarasso (1997, p. 59) who notes that:

encouraging people to take risks may not seem to be the most useful impact the arts could claim, but risk is fundamental to the human condition, and learning to live with it is a prerequisite for growth and development ...

But prisons are known for neither risk nor impulse and, whilst it is not suggested that they could successfully operate without some level of discipline within a well-organised regime, the lack of space for prisoners to demonstrate *any* control and self-direction is concerning. If dependency is to be avoided, prisoners need to be empowered to take some degree of responsibility over their daily lives (Prior 2001). Indeed, many accredited programmes aim to build such agency and self-efficacy (McGuire 2005; Clark 2000) but are often blighted with high attrition and a lack of enthusiastic participants (Kemshall and Canton 2002). Alternative approaches of a spiritual and / or artistic nature can provide the necessary motivation to engage the most disaffected prisoners and empower them to take part in other prison based interventions and programmes (Hughes 2005; Digard et al. 2007; Cox and Gelsthorpe 2008; Wilson et al. 2009). Indeed, a document produced by the Department for Education and Skills (2004, p. 30) clearly recognised the importance of the arts curriculum in learning and skills provision for adult offenders. Arts-based and informed activities illustrate the importance of creativity in social movements, by allowing learners to improve their levels of self-esteem and enabling them to develop a set of skills of import in both personal and professional lives. These forms of activities not only have an impact on their own, but we must also consider the importance of sequencing artistic / spiritual interventions with, for example, CBT-

based programmes as well as the inclusion of creative elements in other forms of empirically evidenced interventions with offenders (Blacker *et al.* 2008).

The Value of Artistic and Spiritual Activities

The value of engaging prisoners in 'purposeful activity' has long been recognised and is part of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons criteria against which prisons are assessed (HMIP 2008). Prisoners should not only engage in education and training but also have time and space to foster and develop positive relationships, enhancing the 'dynamic security' of the prison (HMIP 2007). Therefore, artistic and spiritual activities *should* constitute purposeful activity as they produce these type of benefits but, with the current economic downturn and the Prison Service facing budget cuts of at least £80 million per year (*Times Online*, February 9 2007), it is easy to see how creative activities that are viewed as lacking practical utility may be the first to be cut. The Government's Green Paper Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment (Department for Education and Skills 2005) made only the briefest acknowledgement of the arts in work with offenders and activities of a spiritual nature are conspicuously absent; the main focus being on training for jobs such as 'welding, carpentry, metal work or fork-lift driving' (p. 24). Industries, it should be noted, that are currently facing increasing levels of unemployment as a result of economic downturn (Fitzgibbon 2009). Yet, Robinson (2001, p. 41) reminds us that 'in 1998 the Government estimated that the[se] creative industries had generated annual revenues of £60 billion, a tenfold increase in ten years'. It is concerning, therefore, that the Green Paper failed to consider this sector as a serious contender for the future employment of prisoners.

Recently, however, the government seems to have reassessed the role of creativity and the arts in all aspects of education for children and adults. At the Royal Society of the Arts, the Minister for Higher Education and Intellectual Property, David Lammy (2009) noted that not only did an understanding and practice of arts and creativity enable us to understand the development of our society and culture, but it taught people 'soft skills' which were valued by employers. While the speech mainly focussed on concepts of a liberal arts tertiary education, the point being made is still the same; the arts are acclaimed, but only in relation to the economic benefit that they might bring to the country. Creativity, art and their associated skills are, in the current climate, neither 'acceptable' nor 'purposeful' unless they can be commodified and are seen as having economic value. Identifying the extrinsic value of artwork, and the skills needed to create it is, at the very least, problematic and is, in itself, a defining feature of this form of endeavour. But this leads us to further question the role of any activity which is not defined in terms of its ability to produce artefacts for consistent and continual consumption (Loader 2009) nor identifies the creators as legitimate or illegitimate consumers (McCulloch and McNeill 2007). The attribution of value only to activities that generate consumables in this way fails, of course, to encompass spiritual practices whereby the inward development of Self is often hidden or difficult to verbalise. Similarly, music projects in prison have also found that participants felt 'a sensation of peace and connection that they could not do justice to through verbal description' (Digard *et al.* 2007, p.5). But, interestingly, there has been a recent change of emphasis where subjective well-being is a key driver for economic policy-making.

The Government Office for Science (2008), in light of the UK's changing economy, commissioned a project which sought to examine how to make best use of the UK's material and mental resources. The Foresight project sets out a number of key challenges facing the UK due to the shifting demographics, global economy, science and technology, and nature of society. The report proposes that policy-makers harness and promote 'mental capital' in order to foster well-being in place of traditional economic policies which emphasise monetary wealth. This, more sustainable and holistic model of well-being has been promulgated by the new economics foundation (Aked *et al.* 2008). Within the findings, prisoners are acknowledged as one of the groups at high risk of poor mental health and, in order to increase their 'mental capital', they need to build resilience. Resilience being the development and sustention of protective factors which lead to 'positive adaptation in the face of significant adversity or trauma' (Sutherland *et al.* 2005, p. 15) and help to deter crime. Aked *et al.* (2008, p. 1) note that well-being 'comprises two main elements: feeling good and functioning well' and that '[E]xperiencing positive relationships, having some control over one's life and having a sense of purpose are all important attributes of well-being' (p. 2). Artistic and spiritual practices can achieve these aims (Hughes 2005; Rucker 2005), enabling prisoners to build resilience and an array of protective factors which can lessen the negative impact of imprisonment and reduce the risk of recidivism. But this well-being cannot be created through the actions of dedicated practitioners alone. An environment conducive to creativity also has to be cultivated, and the role of prison staff in cultivating this safe space has been identified as an important component for personal growth and transformation to occur (Digard *et al.* 2007). Fisher (2002, p. 14) argues that 'we live in a world whose

institutions are increasingly dominated by “competence control””. He avers that, as a result of this regulation, it becomes increasingly difficult to take risks and move beyond required performance indicators. This over-emphasis on control and predictability eliminates the necessary space for innovation and creativity.

Evaluation and Evidence of Effect

The current re-emergence of experimental criminology reflects attempts to predict and control the world around us (Hope 2009). This desire to predict and control is prevalent in prisoner activities and demonstrates the preoccupation for knowledge based on reason and scientific evidence, often to the detriment and exclusion of the spiritual or artistic. This duality is by no means recent, Negus and Pickering (2004) note that, since the concept of creativity has been used to mean the endeavour of artists, science, logic and reason have been set against creativity and spirituality. We certainly now exist in a political environment where ‘Science is the largely unquestioned source of authoritative knowledge in the modern world’ (Robinson 2001, p. 142). Creativity and spirituality might thrive in an environment driven by a decency agenda, but given budget constraints, human resource, and prison estate issues, this may be more problematic than arguing for interventions which are primarily focused on reducing reoffending and are ‘proven’ to work. Research which illustrates the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of criminal justice (as well as, for example, education and healthcare) policies is required before interventions become provided nationally (McGuire, Mason and O’Kane 2000; Wrench and Clarke 2004). ‘What Works?’ is, of course, the guiding principle for offending behaviour programmes delivered in the Prison Service, however, this raises questions for artistic / spiritual

interventions, which might not easily fit into research paradigms or evaluation models acceptable to policy-makers. The need to evidence effectiveness, in conjunction with the methodological complexities of evaluation (Hollin 2008), often act as a barrier to creative environments and the provision of alternative activities with prisoners. How might researchers provide robust evidence about the efficacy of interventions that sometimes do not identify reduction in reoffending rates as a key outcome (Hughes 2005)? This is particularly problematic when aims are ephemeral and do not lend themselves to investigation via traditional evaluation methodologies (Matarasso 1997), or where those delivering activities have a theoretical objection to the basis of evaluation objectives and ideals (Miles 2004).

There is much written about the impact of creativity and artistic interventions with school children, harmed social communities and patients in hospitals (see, for example, Hewitt 2004), but there seems to be little robust evaluative or research work carried out on artistic or spiritual endeavours within criminal justice settings. Whilst there is increasing interest in researching the effects of spiritual practices from a health perspective (see, for example, Daaleman and Frey 2004), little exists in relation to the criminal justice setting. In her literature review of practice and theory of the arts in the criminal justice sector, Hughes (2005) found 'an abundance of success stories' (p. 7), but the ability to explain the reasons behind this success is still outstanding. Methodological rigour was often missing in evaluation reports, perhaps not surprising given Matarasso's assertion that 'people, their creativity and culture, remain elusive, always partly beyond the range of conventional inquiry' (1997, p. 72). Miles and Clarke (2006) also reveal that many factors have prevented the arts from evidencing their effectiveness to the required standard of 'What Works?' Time, space,

differing cultures, inadequate funding, limited group sizes, access to information, and 'a general reluctance among arts practitioners to break down and specify aims and objectives' (p. 61) were all difficulties to be overcome. To ensure that artistic and spiritual programmes do not continue to be the piecemeal, short-term funded projects, not only within the criminal justice system but within social, community settings too, (Matarasso 1997; Hughes 2005; Miles and Clarke 2006) a research base, outlining the positive impact of these interventions needs to be developed (Hewitt 2004). Discovering the mechanisms of effectiveness and positive outcomes is important as Matarasso (1997) found that that incomplete interventions and poorly-conceived and facilitated community arts projects, tended to have negative impacts on the people and environments they were supposed to help and support. This finding mirrors research that shows offenders who took part in offending behaviour programmes and did not complete them, were more likely to reoffend than those who had never started a programme in the first instance (Hollin *et al.* 2008).

The methods associated with democratic evaluation consider public accountability to be at the core of the evaluative model. In this role, the evaluator becomes an information broker, passing the views of practitioners, participants and local organisations back to central government. However, this means that these views are filtered through the ideological and methodological lenses of the evaluators, which may act as a barrier to practitioner participation. Yet, Greene (2006) goes on to note there are people carrying out evaluation research that are committed to using the process as a form of liberation and empowerment for those they are evaluating. This takes the concept of evaluation to its very limit. She notes that these people move from a 'value-neutral' position to a 'value-relative' one and then beyond to a 'value-

committed' stance in evaluations. This suggests that they support the ideological basis of the researched programme. However, in carrying out research in a political environment which supports the pre-eminence of randomised control trials and value-free evidence, value-committed research will not be considered to be an acceptable resource which will influence policy-making. But, it might be possible to detect a more courageous government response to work with prisoners that is beginning to recognise 'the possibility of more than one path to truth' (Misra *et al.* 2006, p. 425). Miles and Clarke (2006) note that the Home Office / Ministry of Justice's insistence on randomised controlled trials as the only way of evidencing success is being reviewed. Perhaps the punitive era of penal policy is about to make way for a more creative, holistic and sensitive response to prisoners' needs for as May (1976, p. 20) tells us:

People who claim to be *absolutely* convinced that their stand is the only right one are dangerous. Such conviction is the essence not only of dogmatism, but of its more destructive cousin, fanaticism. It blocks off the user from learning new truth, and it is a dead giveaway of unconscious doubt. The person then has to double his or her protests in order to quiet not only the opposition but his or her own unconscious doubts as well (*italics in original*).

The Need for Courage

Those outside of the prison reform movement may find it difficult to accept the notions of creativity and spirituality within the criminal justice system, as they are often linked to negative perceptions and reactions. Prisoners taking part in comedy programmes, financially benefitting from memoirs of their offending or being radicalised rather than rehabilitated by their religious faith are viewed as unacceptable. So it is perhaps unsurprising that government attitudes to these are mixed and sometimes uncoordinated; a point made by Baroness Stern in the debate

on Part 7 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009. She noted that 'writing, painting and making films are all better activities for society than violence, robbery and theft. We should welcome such rehabilitation and not take away the lawfully earned money of the rehabilitated' (Lords Hansard 2009, cols 1288). This not only illustrates unease with creative processes in the criminal justice system, but underlines the notion of commodification of offenders' artistic endeavours. If the government continues to promote mixed messages about the role of artistic / spiritual interventions, for example, playing a significant role in the Arts Alliance while at the same time curtailing the promotion of non-traditional interventions with offenders through Prison Service Instructions, then how are practitioners and researchers to proceed in identifying, delivering and assessing the impact of this work?

We conclude by arguing that courage is needed to develop and maintain creative responses when working with prisoners just as methodological variety (Simons and McCormack 2007) is necessary to capture and evaluate those approaches and the 'transformative effects' they can have (Hewitt 2004). It is hoped that effective and meaningful Third Sector partnerships will provide the impetus for such courage and that cultural criminological ideals of having '... a healthy disrespect for the rules by which it defines itself' (Ferrell *et al.* 2008, p. 161) will enable us to move this corner of criminology forward too. To consider the effect of artistic and spiritual endeavour means to theorise these concepts, the practice and the outcomes and to consider their relationships with the traditional forms of intervention in prisons aimed at altering offenders' behaviour. Miles (2004, p. 109) notes that the attempt of theorizing the impact of artistic interventions seems to fall under one of five categories: pedagogy, approaches to learning, delivery methods / facilitation, teaching, and attitudinal

change. Some of these theoretical frameworks (delivery methods and attitudinal change) have relevance to criminologists, but there are still elements missing. Our proposition is that the impact of creativity may fit within the concepts of desistance and the related areas of social capital (Farrall 2004), for which we need to work outside of the normal, tightly-bound confines of conventional criminological thought (although we accept that for many criminologists there are no tightly-drawn boundaries). Those who are more comfortable with the terminology of evidence-informed policies and experimental methodologies, understanding and developing the links between the empirically informed psychological treatment programmes and creativity / spirituality should certainly be part of this debate, with continued support from umbrella organisations such as the Arts Alliance. Artistic and spiritual activity should not just affect participants, but researchers and the prison environment (Wrench and Clarke 2004). Initially researchers and practitioners should work together to develop methodologies that provide robust and meaningful data on the impact of interventions that are acceptable to research participants and the policy audiences of the reports. As with all approaches to crime and offenders, there will be continuing debate about the best ways to implement activities, as well as the ethics of providing these types of opportunities funded by central government. The goal in the medium term should not simply be to affectively feel creativity is a human good that should be extended to those who have committed even the most unacceptable of crimes, but to empirically demonstrate that it can change people's behaviour for the better.

Notes

¹With acknowledgement to Rollo May and his book of the same title 'The Courage to Create'.

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