

Changing the Record: Reassessing Effectiveness and Value in Prison Music Projects

Sarah Doxat-Pratt

Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham
School of Humanities, Department of Music
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2018

Abstract

This thesis proposes a new approach for understanding and articulating the value of prison music projects. It responds to a report from the Arts Alliance (now National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance), which stated that ‘arts organisations had still not managed to unpick what the arts does and how it does it’ in a prison context (Arts Alliance, *Evidence Library* (2011), 35). This suggests that much attention has been focused on the ‘effects’ of musical interventions, but not enough on the critical attendant questions: how, why, and for whom? Funding demands and political and cultural developments have meant that the pressure to prove results and satisfy legislators is felt by researchers, practitioners and participants.

The data for the research come from over a year of fieldwork with the Irene Taylor Trust, conducted in a medium security, adult, male prison. The thesis problematises current notions of effectiveness, arguing that they do not adequately capture what prisoner participants themselves value in their musical activities. Decisions about what constitutes a ‘good’ effect in a prison music project tend to be made by those other than the participants themselves, meaning the voices of the participants are often left out of the discourse. This thesis therefore prioritises the hopes, experiences and values of prisoner participants in the Irene Taylor Trust projects. It aims to provide a clear account of *what happened* in an Irene Taylor Trust music session, and *what mattered* to the participants. From this, it provides a suggested list of criteria which might be put forward if it were the prisoner participants themselves who were in charge of evaluating the projects. I suggest that these can be used in conjunction with other notions of success, in order to ‘change the record’ with which we articulate the value of prison music projects.

Acknowledgements

This doctorate would have been impossible without the funding I received from Midlands3Cities. I am grateful to M3C for awarding me a studentship and for providing the additional funds necessary to conduct the fieldwork.

I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my supervision team. My heartfelt thanks go to Robert Adlington, whose undergraduate module was the inspiration for many of my academic and professional pursuits since. His dedication to this project has gone beyond the call of duty. Many thanks likewise to Kate Gooch, whose experience and encouragement was a constant inspiration, and whose generous feedback helped hone my ideas. Thanks also go to Yvonne Jewkes, whose expertise at the start of the project took it off the ground, and to Lonán O'Briain, who came on board at the end and saw it through to completion.

I am more grateful than I can say to Sara Lee, and to all the musicians and office staff of the Irene Taylor Trust. Their hospitality, openness and support allowed this project to happen, and they have inspired me just as much as they inspire the participants in their projects. Likewise, I owe a debt of gratitude to the staff of the prison in which the fieldwork took place, and particularly the Addiction Recovery Organisation staff, who facilitated the fieldwork and were hugely generous with their very limited time.

Throughout the research I have been surrounded by a wonderfully supportive community, far too many people to list in full. I would, however, like to acknowledge Rachel Fenner and James Northfield, who accepted me as a lodger whenever I conducted fieldwork. I am enormously grateful for their hospitality. I am also hugely grateful to the postgraduate fellowship of the University of Nottingham music department, for their friendship, humour and proof-reading skills. Thanks go to my husband, friends and family for all that the support they have given to the research, and all that they bring to my life.

Finally, thanks must go to the men who shared their experiences and stories with me. I cannot mention their names, but I hope I have done justice to their words.

Contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Contents.....	iii
Introduction	1
The Prison Estate in England and Wales	3
The Arts in Rehabilitation.....	5
What Mattered and What Did Not: Key Findings	8
Outline of the Thesis	10
Effects and Effectiveness: A Review of the Literature	13
1.1 Music in Prisons: Project-Based Research	14
1.2 What Can Music Do? The Effects of Prison Music Projects	17
1.2.1 Engaging with further education	17
1.2.2 Developing social skills.....	19
1.2.3 Friendship and support	21
1.2.4 Finding a coping mechanism.....	23
1.2.5 Health and wellbeing	23
1.2.6 Identity	25
1.3 Research Gaps and Limitations	26
1.4 Instrumentalisation of the Arts.....	29
1.5 Measuring Charity	33
1.6 ‘What Works?’ in the Criminal Justice Sector	35
1.7 What’s Wrong with Finding What Works?	40
1.8 Desistance and Rehabilitation.....	46
1.9 Finding What Matters	51
Methodology and Research Reflections	53
2.1 Research Beginnings	53
2.2 Irene Taylor Trust	55
2.3 The Prison.....	57
2.4 Methods	59
2.5 Fieldwork.....	61
2.5.1 Access: getting in, getting around, getting along	61

2.5.2 Observations	64
2.5.3 Interviews.....	66
2.5.4 Ethics	71
2.5.5 Situating the researcher in the research	73
2.5.6 Leaving the field	76
2.6 Analysis and Write-up	77
Musicking in Prison.....	79
3.1 The Importance of Context	80
3.2 Musicking with the Irene Taylor Trust	82
3.2.1 Participatory.....	83
3.2.2 Group dynamics	85
3.2.3 ITT facilitators.....	90
3.2.4 Song-writing	95
3.2.5 Performance.....	101
3.3 The Prison Setting	105
3.3.1 Prison practicalities	105
3.3.2 Addiction recovery	109
3.3.3 Structural matters	114
3.4 What Happened: Just the Starting Point	117
Music in Prisons as an Educational Endeavour.....	119
4.1 Educational Motivations	121
4.2 Dissatisfaction: Barriers to Learning	124
4.3 Learning Outcomes	128
4.3.1 Technical abilities	130
4.3.2 Knowledge and understanding	134
4.3.3 Increased musical appreciation	137
4.4 Music in Prisons: Better Than All The Rest	142
4.4.1 General problems with prison provision	142
4.4.2 Motivations	146
4.4.3 Engagement	150
4.4.4 Self-directed learning.....	152
4.5 Lifelong Learning	156
4.6 Learners Becoming Teachers	160

4.7 What Mattered: The Opportunity to Learn	162
Relief and Repair: Music as a Sanctuary	164
5.1 Establishing Sanctuary	165
5.2 Occupied time	169
5.3 Positivity	174
5.4 Emotional Safety	180
5.5 Community	187
5.6 Connection to the outside	194
5.7 What Mattered: Relief and Repair	200
Effectiveness and Value: Measuring a Successful Project	202
6.1 The Rhetoric and the Reality for the ITT	203
6.1.1 The burdens of measurement	204
6.1.2 Institutional impediments and structural barriers	207
6.1.3 'Playing the game'	211
6.2 Effectiveness: Who Decides?	215
6.3 Valuing What Prisoners Value	218
6.4 Participants' Perspectives	222
6.4.1 A successful project	223
6.4.2 Provision of immediate relief	224
6.4.3 Maintaining interest	225
6.4.4 Opportunity to learn	227
6.4.5 Musical outcomes	228
6.4.6 Opportunity for personal improvement	229
6.4.7 Evidence that change is possible	231
6.5 Changing the Record	232
Conclusion	235
Changing the Record	235
What Comes Next	238
Bibliography	242
Appendix One: Interview Starter Questions	258

Introduction

The idea that music has the power to transform is as old as music itself. Who is being transformed, what they are transformed into, and how this process is understood to take place, are questions whose answers change across time and culture. From lullabies to war cries, torture to therapy, music has been variously used to comfort and frighten, unite and divide, heal and harm. In modern-day Britain, the discourse largely concerns the benefits of music rather than the harms, and particularly the myriad ways that musical activities have positive effects on individuals and society.¹ A conviction in the beneficial power of music-making lies at the heart of organisations that provide musical activities in prisons. The idea that music projects in prison might play a role in reducing reoffending is the starting point for this thesis.

The central argument of this thesis is that we need to 'change the record' of common rhetoric when it comes to articulating the value of prison music projects. My contention is that for any arts organisation aiming to bring about social good, there has been a preoccupation with proving effectiveness to funders and legislators, to the extent that the experiences and values of participants have inadvertently been side-lined. When it comes to music projects in prisons, my research shows that the dominant discourse does not adequately capture what matters to prisoners themselves in their musical activities. Paying more attention to what prisoners experience and value in their musical activities, temporarily laying aside the 'pressure to find evidence of the benefits',² will create a more balanced discourse and additionally might actually help us understand better how musical activity can contribute to desistance from crime.

¹ See Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska, *Understanding the value of arts & culture. The AHRC Cultural Value Project* (Swindon: Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2016) for a recent and detailed analysis of the literature.

² Stephanie Pitts, 'Discovering and Affirming Musical Identity through Extracurricular Music-Making in English Secondary Schools' in Lucy Green ed., *Learning, Teaching, and Musical Identity: Voices across Cultures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 231.

The focus of this research emerged as a response to a 2011 report by the Arts Alliance (now the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance).³ This *Evidence Library* provided a meta-analysis of evaluative research into the arts in prisons up to that point and identified notable gaps in the literature. Of most significance, it found that ‘there was a general consensus that arts organisations had still not managed to unpick what the arts does and how it does it in these contexts.’⁴ Additionally, it reported there was ‘a lack of “grey literature” identified to support the evidence’, that is, government and academic publications.⁵ These gaps suggest that much attention has been focused on the ‘effects’ of musical interventions, but little on the critical attendant questions: how, why, and for whom? Much research into prison music projects fails to take into account the musical processes involved in the activity being evaluated, the specific penal context in which they take place, or the value systems of the prisoner participants.

This thesis aims to address these gaps by assessing the value that prisoner participants place on their musical activities. The data for this thesis come from a collaboration with the Irene Taylor Trust (ITT), a relatively small charity that works around the UK in criminal justice and youth settings.⁶ I present findings from over a year of empirical research of the ITT’s projects in a case study prison. The aim of the research was to address two particular areas, both of which contribute to the general need for more clarity outlined in the Arts Alliance *Evidence Library*. Firstly, the research aimed to provide a clear account of the musical processes involved in an ITT project and the specific penal context in which they take place – in short, to explain *what happened* in the ITT projects. Secondly, it aimed to understand *what mattered* to the prisoner participants. The notion that music-making can have positive effects is not disputed, but evidently decisions about what constitutes a ‘good’ effect in a prison music project tend to be made by those other than the participants themselves. The thesis, therefore, prioritises the hopes, experiences

³ Angus McLewin Associates, *Arts Alliance Evidence Library* (Arts Alliance, 2011): online: <<http://artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/evaluation-downloads/arts-alliance-evidence-library-2011.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018].

⁴ Ibid., 35.

⁵ Ibid., 37.

⁶ Irene Taylor Trust website: <<https://irenetaylortrust.com/>> [accessed 26.09.2018].

and values of the prisoner participants. It is primarily interested in one organisation working in one specific context, but the findings have implications for the way in which musical activity is understood and valued more generally. Before providing an overview of what the findings are, it is necessary first to give some contextual information regarding the prison estate in England and Wales and the arts-based rehabilitative programmes working within it.

The Prison Estate in England and Wales⁷

The prison estate in England and Wales seems to be in a perpetual state of crisis.⁸ Evidence has been mounting for years of the dire state of prisons, along with warnings that the system is reaching breaking point. However, it has neither been fixed nor entirely broken; the prison system continues much the same, with concerning statistics becoming the norm.⁹ The numbers do indeed paint a bleak picture. In 2017, the rate of imprisonment in England and Wales was 146 per 100,000 people – the highest in Western Europe.¹⁰ At the time of writing, there are 82,939 people in prison in England and Wales,¹¹ the majority of whom are adult men.¹² Sentence lengths are increasing, as is the number of people sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.¹³

The reason these numbers are seen to constitute ‘crisis’ is usually because of overcrowding. The prison estate as a whole has been consistently overcrowded for

⁷ Criminal Justice is a devolved matter for Northern Ireland and Scotland.

⁸ Michael Cavadino, James Dignan and George Mair, *The Penal System – An Introduction* 5th edition (SAGE, 2013).

⁹ Official statistics from the Ministry of Justice can be found online: ‘Statistics at MOJ’, <<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/statistics#latest-statistics>> [accessed 25.09.18]. The Prison Reform Trust provide regular ‘factfiles’ compiling statistics on prison: ‘Bromley Briefings – Prison Factfile’, <<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/Factfile>> [accessed 25.09.18].

¹⁰ Prison Reform Trust, *Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile Autumn 2017* online: <<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Autumn%202017%20factfile.pdf>> [accessed 04.07.2018], 12.

¹¹ Howard League for Penal Reform, *Prison Watch* <<https://howardleague.org/prisons-information/prison-watch/>> [accessed 25.09.2018].

¹² For demographic information see Prison Reform Trust, *Bromley Briefings*, 34 (women) and 40 (young adults).

¹³ Prison Reform Trust, *Bromley Briefings*, 13.

over two decades, despite new prisons being built.¹⁴ According to the Howard League for Penal Reform, the prison estate houses many thousand more people than it is built to hold, with several prisons operating at over 150% of their operational capacity.¹⁵ There were huge cuts to budgets and staff between 2010 and 2017 (with a slight rise in staffing in the second half of this period), alongside a largely stable prison population in that period.¹⁶ The Prison Reform Trust summarise: 'Our desire to lock up more people for ever increasing periods of time has not been matched by the necessary resources.'¹⁷

These issues impact prison safety. Violence in prison has increased enormously;¹⁸ assaults on staff have risen by 143% in four years, with 798 serious assaults on staff in the year to June 2017.¹⁹ Rates of self-harm have also increased in the last few years.²⁰ Drugs cause significant problems in prison;²¹ 47% of men and 31% of women reported it was 'easy to get drugs' in prison.²² Due to the safety concerns and low staffing, prisoners reportedly spend very little time out of their cells.²³ In a meta-analysis of Inspectorate reports across the prison estate, an Observer investigation (published in the Guardian) found that '80 out of the 118 jails examined were providing insufficient or poor standards in at least one area [of investigation]. Only 7% of prisons – just eight – received a "good" rating across all four categories.'²⁴ The conditions within prisons in England and Wales are exceedingly poor.

¹⁴ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵ Howard League, *Prison Watch*.

¹⁶ Institute for Government, 'Prisons' *Performance Tracker Autumn 2017* online: <<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publication/performance-tracker-autumn-2017/law-and-order/prisons>> [accessed 04.07.2018].

¹⁷ Prison Reform Trust, *Bromley Briefings*, 10.

¹⁸ Institute for Government, 'Prisons'.

¹⁹ Prison Reform Trust, *Bromley Briefings*, 15.

²⁰ Institute for Government, 'Prisons'.

²¹ ²¹ The Centre for Social Justice, *Drugs in Prison* (London: Centre for Social Justice, 2015) online: <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CSJJ3090_Drugs_in_Prison.pdf> [accessed 04.07.2018].

²² Prison Reform Trust, *Bromley Briefings*, 42.

²³ Ibid., 16.

²⁴ Michael Savage and Mark Townsend, 'Exclusive: shock figures reveal crisis state of prisons in England and Wales' *The Guardian* (17 February 2018) online: <<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/feb/17/uk-brutal-prisons-failing-violence-drugs-gangs>> [accessed 15.05.2018].

Most prisoners do get released from prison at some point, and they generally seek crime-free lives: ‘nearly all prisoners (97%) said they wanted to stop offending’.²⁵ The reality is, however, that fairly consistently about half will return to prison: reconviction rates remain ‘stubbornly high’,²⁶ with 49% of adults released from prison being reconvicted within a year.²⁷ The Prison Reform Trust’s report on the social characteristics of prisoners shows disproportionately high levels of childhood instability and trauma, homelessness, mental health problems and drug use, and disproportionately low levels of educational achievement.²⁸ These factors all indicate the many barriers ex-prisoners face when trying to build a life for themselves in the community that avoids a return to prison, and point to a cycle of crime and destitution from which many struggle to escape.

A flurry of new policy initiatives emerged in the last decade, many ostensibly aimed at bringing down reoffending rates (specific policies are given in Chapter 2). Indeed, from the government, calls to reduce recidivism have been as persistent as the reoffending rates have been stubborn. With every change of government or Justice Secretary – and through the course of this doctorate there have been many – there is a renewed call to tackle the issue, with limited success. Throughout, arts organisations have proved tenacious in satisfying funding requirements and continuing to do their work in prisons.

The Arts in Rehabilitation

The hope of prison arts organisations around the country is that artistic activity may in some way contribute to prisoners ‘changing their record’, and in so doing help them to live crime-free, fulfilled lives in their communities once released. The work of the ITT may seem to be quite unusual, but it operates as one of many such organisations working in prisons in England and Wales. Providing a full list would be

²⁵ Prison Reform Trust, *Bromley Briefings*, 48.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 48

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

impossible and unnecessary here,²⁹ but an outline of the work of the ITT is given, followed by a small selection of organisations using music and other art forms in prison.

The Irene Taylor Trust has been working in prisons for over 20 years, providing musical activities for groups of prisoners. An explanation of the ITT's role in this research project is provided in Chapter 3, and a detailed account of its approach is given in Chapter 4; here, therefore, just an overview will suffice. The ITT began with just its 'Music in Prisons' project. Its work has now expanded to include a project with ex-offenders on a through-the-gate programme, 'Sounding Out', and a programme with young people who are not in education, employment or training, 'Making Tracks'.³⁰ These projects all use a similar approach that includes group work, creative and collaborative song-writing, and live instruments. Although the ITT has a number of one-off projects in prison, its main ones and the ones this research uses are the 'Music in Prisons' (MiP) week and the 'Musician in Residence' (MiR) scheme. In the words of the ITT, MiP weeks 'bring together groups of prisoners to collaboratively write original songs, form a band, perform live and record an album; all in 5 days.'³¹ The MiR scheme is intended to 'complement and extent the impact of [the] intensive projects', although in practice it often operates as quite a separate scheme. The MiR scheme involves a smaller group of prisoners in weekly music sessions, with a similar focus on working together to write songs, but without the recording or performance elements.

There are several other music organisations working in prisons in the UK. Changing Tunes is a charity working in the south-west of England, providing regular music workshops of a similar nature to the ITT, working with small- to medium-sized groups of prisoners.³² The aim is that relationships built in prison with facilitators can continue upon release with their through-the-gate work. The charity Good Vibrations uses Indonesian gamelan music in prisons, secure hospitals and the

²⁹ See the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance for a substantial, though not exhaustive, list: <<https://www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

³⁰ Irene Taylor Trust, 'Our projects' <<https://irenetaylortrust.com/what-we-do/our-projects/>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

³¹ Ibid.

³² Changing Tunes, <<http://www.changingtunes.org.uk/>> [accessed 24.09.2018].

community.³³ Its approach is to provide week-long projects that are accessible to those with no background knowledge or skill. Using entirely different techniques, Pimlico Opera combines professional musicians, prison staff and prisoners to stage full-scale operas and musicals in prisons, taking many weeks or even months to rehearse and eventually perform to the prison and invited guests.³⁴

Beyond music, many organisations use diverse art forms in prison: Geese Theatre Company provides drama workshops in prisons;³⁵ Playing for Time Theatre Company is a drama organisation that stages plays with prisoners and undergraduate students working together;³⁶ Artists in Mind – AiM Inside provides visual art projects for patients in secure hospitals;³⁷ Create provides writing projects such as ‘Inside Stories’ where male offenders write and record stories for their children.³⁸ Some arts organisations operate as social enterprises: Fine Cell Work trains prisoners in needlework, paying them for their time and selling their products around the world;³⁹ the Handmade Alliance works specifically in London to train prisoners in textiles and merchandising, producing high quality products for sale.⁴⁰

The ITT’s programmes in one prison have provided a case study for this thesis. Its work exists within a wider context of many arts organisations around the country working for analogous aims, but also at times competing for contracts and funding. This reiterates the importance of clarity in terms of how and why these organisations are doing some good in prisons and for prisoners. As we will see, the claims made by these diverse organisations often bear much similarity. But given *what happens* in these projects will be so different, *what matters* to the participants will naturally vary project to project. It is only by understanding these elements that we can really understand the role these organisations can play in prisons and rehabilitation.

³³ Good Vibrations, <<http://www.good-vibrations.org.uk/>> [accessed 24.09.2018].

³⁴ Pimlico Opera, <<http://www.pimlicoopera.co.uk/>> [accessed 24.09.2018].

³⁵ Geese Theatre Company, <<http://www.geese.co.uk/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

³⁶ Playing For Time Theatre Company, <<http://www.playingfortime.org.uk/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

³⁷ Artists in Mind, <<http://www.artists-in-mind.org.uk/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

³⁸ Create, ‘Inside Stories’, <<https://createarts.org.uk/tag/inside-stories/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

³⁹ Fine Cell Work, <<https://finecellwork.co.uk/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

⁴⁰ Clinks, ‘Handmade Alliance’, <<https://www.clinks.org/partnership-finder/45021>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

What Mattered and What Did Not: Key Findings

From my research, there were very clearly two aspects of the ITT projects which mattered most to prisoners: firstly, the opportunity for music education (discussed in Chapter 4), and secondly, the feeling of being somewhere other than prison (discussed in Chapter 5). These findings provide the central topic for two chapters of the thesis. However, running through the data were some key themes which are worth highlighting in terms of how prisoners were valuing their musical activities, and what did not matter to prisoners.

Firstly, it was evident that prisoners were far more concerned about their current lives in prison than their potential life upon release. That is not to say they were not interested in what might happen once they were released, indeed, just the opposite for many. But the worsening conditions in the prison estate (outlined above) along with aspects of managerialism and risk prevention strategies create a psychologically 'tight' experience for prisoners.⁴¹ In this environment, immediate concerns seemed to be taking precedence over long-term goals – Liebling, for example, reports prisoners setting themselves 'smaller goals', looking at 'next week [instead of] next year'.⁴² Within this context, although life post-release is still a concern, the way in which the music projects compared to and interacted with life in prison was often the primary concern for the participants.

Secondly, what became evident through the research was that if prisoner participants did recognise longer-term benefits, these were more likely to be musical than extra-musical. Prisoners particularly valued developing musical skills and knowledge and having musical experiences. This was not about the intrinsic value of music as opposed to the instrumental (a dichotomy discussed in Chapters 2 and 6), but about the prisoners valuing the music projects as participants rather than as beneficiaries. Where there is no intention of social good from a musical

⁴¹ Ben Crewe, 'Depth, weight, tightness: Revisiting the pains of imprisonment' *Punishment & Society* 13/5 (2011): 509-529.

⁴² Alison Liebling, 'Moral performance, inhuman and degrading treatment and prison pain' *Punishment & Society* 13/5 (2011): 536.

intervention, the musical benefits of participating or learning are given at least equal weight to the extra-musical ones in discourse.⁴³ Prisoner participants likewise emphasised the musical benefits of the ITT projects.

Thirdly, when prisoners spoke of personal change, it generally related to being given opportunities to change themselves, rather than being changed by an external force. Common notions of effectiveness tend to imply that music is a tool to be used on passive recipients, rather than an activity that people do. Many of the prisoner participants in this study were convinced that the ITT projects had had a transformative impact on their lives, but the ways in which this happened was always linked to either their own efforts or the efforts of others in the project. This thesis seeks to recognise the agency of the prisoners, in keeping with the language they used to describe their experiences.

Finally, a reflection on one aspect that, surprisingly, did not matter to many of the prisoner participants. The ITT projects in my case study were facilitated through addiction recovery services in the prison, and participants were selected from those accessing addiction recovery programmes (more detail of this is given in Chapters 2 and 3). This research was not set up to be evaluative, but the initial hope was that the links between the music projects and addiction recovery would prove a fruitful avenue of inquiry. In the event, far more significant was how unimportant the connection was for most participants. While several suggested that music might be helpful for recovering from addiction, for instance by providing a distraction from cravings or an emotional lift to remove the desire for drugs, these suggestions were all given as possibilities rather than personal stories. Few claimed that the music projects had helped their own drug or alcohol problems. Given the official links between the ITT and the addiction recovery services, such findings seemed to be early and ongoing evidence of the failure of the project. It was immediately clear that far more attention needed to be paid to what prisoners were saying about their activities than to what officials hoped would result.

⁴³ Stephanie Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005).

The reasons for the insignificance of this link are discussed in Chapter 3, and it is important to point out that evaluative research may well find connections that the prisoners in my study did not consider. It should also be stated that prisoners often spoke exceedingly highly of the staff and programmes of the addiction recovery service. Addiction recovery could well be called ‘desistance from drug abuse’, and the processes of stopping crime and giving up drugs bear many similarities.⁴⁴ Although there was no evidence of a direct link between the music projects and participants’ addiction recovery, it is probable that the music programmes were helping the participants live drug-free lives as much as helping them live crime-free lives. But the purpose of this research was to discover what prisoners prioritised in their musical experiences, and evidently, other things simply mattered more.

Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 1, ‘Effects and Effectiveness’, reviews the relevant literature underpinning this thesis. The chapter details the findings of evaluations of music projects in prisons, particularly those connected to projects based in England and Wales, and suggests some of the limitations of the literature. It then provides a history of developments in the arts and culture, charity, and criminal justice sectors, arguing that notions of effectiveness for prison music projects have become intertwined with government agendas. Finally, it outlines current thinking about desistance from crime, focusing on the importance of understanding prisoners’ agency and individual narratives as part of the desistance process.

Chapter 2, ‘Methodology and Research Reflections’, provides an account of the research process. It overviews the qualitative methods used and discusses the extent to which my presence in the ITT sessions made a difference to the research process and data generated. I suggest that particular strengths of the research were the interdisciplinarity enabled by inter-institutional funding, and operating, to an extent, as an additional tutor on the ITT projects rather than a participant.

⁴⁴ Shadd Maruna, *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives* (Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2001).

Chapter 3, 'Musicking in Prison', provides an answer to the question, 'what happened', arguing that context is essential for understanding value. In order to 'unpick what [music] is doing and how it is doing it' in prison,⁴⁵ both the musical and penal context must be assessed and explained. Therefore, using the term *Musicking* popularised by Christopher Small,⁴⁶ the chapter provides a detailed account of the ITT projects. It outlines the core musical facets of an ITT project, suggesting that there are several features which link the two ITT programmes (MiP and MiR) and provide continuity for the participants. It then turns to look at the way in which the prison context shapes the activity, and the particular struggles of music-making in a closed institution. It provides a more thorough explanation of the link between the ITT and addiction recovery services, and the varied meanings attributed to that. The chapter finishes by suggesting that the ways in which prisoners value the music projects are intertwined with the attitudes they have towards their imprisonment and prison provision, as well as how they see the music projects as operating within prison life.

Chapter 4, 'Music in Prisons as an Educational Endeavour', is the first chapter addressing specifically 'what mattered' to the participants. It argues that prisoners primarily value the music projects for the educational opportunity they provide. Contrasting with the idea that a function of music in prisons is to encourage prisoners' engagement in further learning, this chapter explores how and why the projects were valued here as educational opportunities in and of themselves. Drawing on Chapter 3, the chapter shows that understanding the musical processes and the prison context are crucial in recognising the significance of the educational opportunity.

Chapter 5, 'Relief and Repair: Music as a Sanctuary', is the second chapter discussing 'what mattered' to the participants. Prisoners spoke of the projects in ways that emphasised the feeling of being separate to or outside of the prison whilst in the music sessions. It presents these claims in terms of 'sanctuary'. It

⁴⁵ Angus McLewin Associates, *Arts Alliance Evidence Library*, 35.

⁴⁶ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performance and Listening* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

argues that this sanctuary space provides a relief from the painful norms of imprisonment, and also an opportunity for personal change to be made by the prisoners. Once again, the chapter shows that the prison context is crucial for understanding this: it suggests that the prison context shapes and even inverts notions of sanctuary.

Chapter 6, 'Effectiveness and Value: Measuring a Successful Project', draws together the findings of the thesis. It shows the ways in which the rhetoric of effectiveness as outlined in Chapter 1 has an impact in practice on the ITT's work. The chapter problematises the notion of an 'intrinsic-instrumental dichotomy' in the arts, suggesting that we need to go beyond showing how the intrinsic value is a pre-requisite for instrumental value and take more seriously the question of according to whose terms we consider a 'good' effect. It ends by suggesting a list of criteria which might be used if it were the prisoners themselves who were responsible for evaluating the ITT projects. The thesis concludes by illuminating the themes that emerged in this research, and suggesting areas for further exploration.

Chapter 1

Effects and Effectiveness: A Review of the Literature

All arts organisations working in prisons will be aware of the pressure to prove results in order to satisfy funders' or legislators' priorities. Indeed, notions of effects and effectiveness are prevalent throughout the arts sector, the voluntary sector and the criminal justice sector. When it comes to musical activities, there is vast evidence indicating beneficial outcomes resulting from musical participation.¹ However, in research into music organisations, as into the work of any organisation intended for social good, there is an implicit rhetoric that activities are interventions whose value is understood only in terms of the effect they have on their beneficiaries, that all are agreed on what constitutes a good effect, and that there is consensus on how this will be measured and articulated. As we will see, this is both problematic and often untrue.

This chapter focuses on the effects music projects have been found to have in prisons and on the notion of effectiveness as it pertains to prison music projects. The chapter begins by reviewing the music in prisons literature. As a starting point, it presents key research in relation to the organisations involved, arguing that it is necessary to understand these links in order to contextualise the findings. It then presents findings regarding the benefits of prison music projects, drawing predominantly on project evaluations and reports. These benefits are presented as: engaging with further education, developing social skills, friendship and support, finding a coping mechanism, health and wellbeing, and identity change or development. The chapter then points to some relevant limitations of and gaps in the literature: the difficulty in linking the results with wider crime-reduction aims, the lack of specificity, and the neglecting of potential negative impact.

¹ See Susan Hallam and Raymond MacDonald, 'Introduction: Perspectives on the power of music' *Research Studies in Music Education* 35/1 (2013): 83-86 for an overview.

The middle part of the chapter aims to set these limitations in a wider context by discussing the ways in which cultural and political developments in three key sectors – the arts and culture, charity, and criminal justice sectors – have impacted research in the field of music in prisons. I suggest particular developments in these areas which are significant for the ITT, relating to the instrumentalisation of the arts sector, the metrification of the charity sector, and the ‘what works’ movement in criminal justice. The aim here is not to dismiss research into the effects of music in prisons so far, but to critically assess the notion of effectiveness as the dominant narrative for understanding and expressing value or success. The chapter then indicates some of the flaws of this rhetoric which signal the need for a new approach.

Finally, the chapter discusses desistance from crime as an ongoing process in which offenders are actively involved, arguing that the approach researchers have taken to understand desistance should also be used to understand the value of music projects. Just as rehabilitation cannot be ‘done to’ an offender, neither are prison music projects a tool which is used on prisoners to create certain effects. A new approach is needed for understanding and communicating the value of prison music projects, one which takes into account the specific activity in question, which recognises the experiences and agency of the participants, and which prioritises the participants’ notions of success.

1.1 Music in Prisons: Project-Based Research

Much of the evidence regarding the benefits of music-making in prisons comes from project reports and evaluations of the organisations providing the activities. This is understandable, even inevitable, as the majority of arts-based activity in prison is provided by volunteer or community arts organisations.² Before reviewing the findings in the literature, it is important first to outline the key studies associated with the principle organisations providing music projects in prisons in

² Kirstin Anderson et al., *Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team* (2011) online: <<http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/evaluation-downloads/mc-inspiring-change-april-2011.pdf>> [accessed 03.09.2018], 17.

the UK. In keeping with the idea that situational context is paramount for understanding value – that is, *what happens* will impact the ‘results’ – research must be understood within a specific organisational and operational context. While across the UK there are many organisations using various art forms in prisons,³ most of the music-specific research from England and Wales comes from evaluations of just three organisations.⁴ There is much overlap in the findings, but they must still be understood as coming from specific activities that are provided by different people using a variety of methods.

The Irene Taylor Trust (ITT) has been the subject of a number of evaluations. *Time Well Spent* is an early longitudinal evaluation covering the impact of various ITT projects over six years.⁵ Arguably the most influential publication is Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe’s *Beats and Bars*.⁶ MiP has also been used as a case study in investigations into the arts more generally in a prison setting, including *Re-Imagining Futures*, a joint arts investigation into whether there are links between involvement in arts programmes in prison or the community and desistance from crime.⁷ As yet, however, there has been no research published on the Musician in Residence (MiR) scheme. The ITT also works with ex-prisoners through the ‘Sounding Out’ project, which involves intensive series of rehearsals and performances in the community for those who have been released from prison; Jim Cartwright’s *Sounding Out* reviewed the impact of the pilot project.⁸ Although Cartwright’s evaluation is specifically about post-release provision, several of the participants were also involved in ITT projects during their incarceration. The research therefore provides new evidence regarding the longer-term impact of prison music projects for those who do manage to continue their involvement once

³ See National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance, ‘Our Members’ <<https://www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/membership/our-members/>> [accessed 23.09.2018].

⁴ Criminal justice is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

⁵ Angus McLewin Associates, *Time Well Spent: Lessons Learned from The Irene Taylor Trust Music in Prisons’ Evaluations of Music Programmes in Prisons* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2005).

⁶ Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars: Music in Prisons: an evaluation* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2008).

⁷ Charlotte Bilby, Laura Caulfield and Louise Ridley, *Re-imagining Futures: Exploring arts interventions and the process of desistance* (Arts Alliance, 2013).

⁸ Jim Cartwright, *An Evaluation of the Irene Taylor Trust’s Sounding Out Programme* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2013).

they are back in the community. Most recently, Sara Ascenso was commissioned to assess a pilot of The Lullaby Project, which the ITT ran in collaboration with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra to work with fathers incarcerated at HMP Wandsworth and with refugee and migrant mothers.⁹ Moving forward in evaluative approaches, this report took as its starting point the way in which the project was *experienced* by participants and by practitioners, and then assessed what, if any, changes had been induced by the project, and how such changes occurred.

The work of Changing Tunes has been the subject of research by both Shadd Maruna and Jo Cursley.¹⁰ Their approaches have differed from many other evaluations: they take a ‘grounded’ or ‘person-centred’ approach (similar to that of this thesis) whereby their findings are directly from the perspective of the participants themselves, rather than assessing specific project aims or outcomes. Maruna asserts that this gives a more ‘realistic rather than idealistic’ analysis,¹¹ which may explain why some of their findings differ from other publications (discussed below).

A substantial portion of the research into music projects in prisons comes from evaluations of Good Vibrations. Wilson, Caulfield and Atherton’s *Promoting Positive Change* sought to look at the longer-term impact of participating in a Good Vibrations project while in prison;¹² Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson’s work has taken this further, investigating the long-term impact 12-18 months after a project with those still in prison and with ex-prisoners.¹³ There have also been several

⁹ Sara Ascenso, *The Lullaby Project: Areas of Change and Mechanisms of Impact* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2017).

¹⁰ Shadd Maruna, *The Great Escape: Exploring the Rehabilitative Dynamics Involved in ‘Changing Tunes’* (2010), online: <<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57d94a1d5016e175c356668f/t/595b731617bffc06e04da9a0/1499165469859/The+Great+Escape+Prof+Shadd+Maruna+2010.pdf>> [accessed 02.07.2018]; Jo Cursley and Shadd Maruna, *A Narrative-Based Evaluation of “Changing Tunes” Music-based Prisoner Reintegration Intervention: Full Report* (Changing Tunes, 2015), online: <<http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/final-report-cursley-and-maruna-changing-tunes.pdf>> [accessed 02.07.2018].

¹¹ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 5.

¹² David Wilson, Laura Caulfield and Susie Atherton, *Promoting Positive Change: Assessing the Long-Term Psychological, Emotional and Behavioural Effects of the Good Vibrations Gamelan in Prisons Project* (Birmingham: Centre for Criminal Justice Policy and Research, 2008).

¹³ Laura Caulfield, David Wilson and Dean Wilkinson, *Continuing Positive Change in Prison and the Community* (Birmingham: Centre for Applied Criminology, 2010); Laura S. Caulfield, Dean John

studies into the work of Good Vibrations coming from particular research angles, including education for young prisoners;¹⁴ as a therapeutic intervention;¹⁵ for older prisoners;¹⁶ with vulnerable women in prison;¹⁷ and with sex offenders.¹⁸

1.2 What Can Music Do? The Effects of Prison Music Projects

There is a broad consensus amongst researchers about the benefits that musical activity can bring to prisoners: the findings from studies largely show that participation in music projects contributes to so-called ‘soft skills’, which in turn are thought to encourage desistance from crime. These findings are supported by literature into the benefits of musical activity in a variety of individual and community settings. What follows is a summary of the findings of key research into predominantly UK-based projects, supported by international findings where pertinent, suggesting the main ways in which music projects have a positive effect on participants.

1.2.1 Engaging with further education

Project evaluations commonly claim that participating in a music project can act as a catalyst for further engagement with education or training, an idea that is now

Wilkinson and David Wilson ‘Exploring alternative terrain in the rehabilitation and treatment of offenders: Findings from a prison-based music project’ *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* 55/6 (2016): 396-418.

¹⁴ Jennie Henley, ‘Musical learning and desistance from crime: the case of a ‘Good Vibrations’ Javanese gamelan project with young offenders’ *Music Education Research* 17/1 (2015): 103-120; Jennie Henley, *Good Vibrations: Music and social education for young offenders* (London: Institute of Education, 2012).

¹⁵ Leon Digard, Anna Graf von Sponeck and Alison Liebling, ‘All Together Now: the therapeutic potential of a prison-based music programme’ *Prison Service Journal* 170 (2007).

¹⁶ Dean J. Wilkinson and Laura S. Caulfield, ‘The Perceived Benefits of an Arts Project for Health and Wellbeing of Older Offenders’ *Europe’s Journal of Psychology* 13/1 (2017): 16-27.

¹⁷ Laura Caulfield, *Exploring Good Vibrations projects with vulnerable and challenging women in prison* (Bath: School of Society, Enterprise and Environment, 2015), online: <<http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/goodvibrationsprojectswithvulnerableandchallengingwomenfinal.pdf>> [accessed 02.07.2018].

¹⁸ Belinda Winder et al., *Evaluation of the use of ‘Good Vibrations’ percussion courses to improve motivation to change and treatment readiness with convicted sexual offenders embarking on treatment programmes* (Nottingham: Sexual Offences, Crime and Misconduct Research Unit, 2015), online: <<http://artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/goodvibrations-nottinghamtrentuniversity.pdf>> [accessed 02.07.2018].

standard for music education more generally.¹⁹ Given the proportion of prisoners who have had bad experiences of traditional education, in a prison context the focus is mostly on improving attitudes towards learning rather than improving intellectual or cognitive abilities outright.²⁰ Cox and Gelsthorpe's investigation, for example, was specifically interested in how much participating in a music project could encourage further involvement in education, and found that the MiP course could indeed spark an interest in learning or training whilst in prison.²¹ Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson cite enhanced engagement with further learning as a result of Good Vibrations participation as one of their key findings.²² Developing perseverance is a key factor in this: Wilson, Caulfield and Atherton report that several participants had had difficulty in completing projects they had started in the past, but having been in the Good Vibrations workshops and completed the week, they had a sense of achievement and confidence that they would be able to complete other programmes too.²³

However, much research also found that participants rated music favourably compared to other rehabilitation interventions, which brings into question the notion that prisoners perceive music as a stepping stone into another course. As was the case in my study (see Chapter 4), there is evidence that some prisoners find the music projects far more engaging and challenging than education classes. Maruna found that prisoners involved in Changing Tunes were unimpressed by much of the education on offer and suggested that the level of motivation in the music projects would be the 'envy' of other prison programmes.²⁴ There is, then, the possibility that rather than encouraging further engagement with education the music programmes are occasionally deterring prisoners from engaging further in education, because other options are considered easy or boring in comparison.

¹⁹ For a review, see Susan Hallam, 'The power of music: Its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people' *International Journal of Music Education* 28/3 (2010): 269-289.

²⁰ See, for example, Julia Braggins and Jenny Talbot, *Time to Learn: Prisoners' Views on Prison Education* (Prison Reform Trust, 2003). This is discussed further in Chapter 4.

²¹ Cox and Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars*, 32-33.

²² Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson, *Continuing Positive Change*.

²³ Wilson, Caulfield and Atherton, *Promoting Positive Change*, 19.

²⁴ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 27.

It is possible to speculate on some reasons for the differences in research outcomes in this area. The ITT and Good Vibrations may have tended to engage with more vulnerable or disengaged prisoners who are more likely to need encouragement into education. Alternatively, perhaps the results are skewed by the fact that evaluations of these organisations include findings from Young Offender Institutions (YOI), where engagement in education is likely to be a higher priority. It is also possible that Maruna's 'grounded theory' approach allowed for more honest or unfiltered feedback from his participants. Further, given that both the ITT and Good Vibrations aim to have an impact on prisoners' engagement in further education and training, it is unsurprising that this is included in their findings. Clearly for *some* prisoners engaging in music programmes does lead to further engagement with educational or training activities whilst in prison, but, as Chapter 4 will discuss further, this is not always the case.

1.2.2 Developing social skills

The nature of many projects as both collaborative and compositional has been found to be beneficial for developing social skills. Bilby, Caulfield and Ridley found that 'Working together as a group throughout the week supports team working and positive communication skills, as do the negotiations that are needed to create new music, with members of the group taking different roles for each of the pieces.'²⁵ Cursley and Maruna found that Changing Tunes participants 'were challenged both by the learning of new musical skills, but also by a variety of social skills required to work "in harmony" with others in a group.'²⁶ Cox and Gelsthorpe found that 'the inherent nature of the music group [as collaborative] dictated that the participants had to listen to each other and make eye contact in order for a song to be successful.'²⁷ Thus, the projects necessitated prisoners working as a group and cooperating. It is the simultaneity of personal goals and group ambition which provides a context for the development of many of these social skills, as Sparks and Anderson found in their research into the arts in various Scottish penal institutions:

²⁵ Bilby, Caulfield and Ridley, *Re-imagining Futures*, 34.

²⁶ Cursley and Maruna, *A Narrative-Based Evaluation of "Changing Tunes"*, 38.

²⁷ Cox and Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars*, 23.

participants benefited from ‘the experience of making an individual contribution towards a final group goal’.²⁸

Music projects also provide an opportunity for cooperation in the face of conflict. Because of its capacity to bring people together, music has often been found to be beneficial around the world in contributing to conflict transformation efforts.²⁹ In a smaller scale, this has been the case in prisons as well by providing alternative and nonviolent methods for dealing with disputes. Cartwright asserts that MiP challenged prison behaviours such as interpersonal conflict and lack of willingness to take responsibility ‘through allowing a certain amount of conflict, disorder and risk.’³⁰ Henley’s findings support this – in a Good Vibrations project in a YOI the participants ‘were able to disagree with each other without confrontation’, showing that ‘disagreement can be productive’, such that by the end of the Good Vibrations week, the participants ‘were able to discuss, actively disagree and resolve situations.’³¹ Although there are few studies into whether these results are sustained post-release, there is some evidence that these skills continue to be used by prisoners and noticed by prison staff while the individuals remain in prison.³²

Following this, the collaborative nature of the musical activities has also been found to result in participants seeing others in a more positive light. Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson found that participants had their minds opened to see people as individuals (as opposed to according to certain demographics or social affiliations), and cite one participant as becoming more tolerant even to the point of seeing some positive potential in sex-offenders, traditionally the most reviled category within the prison estate.³³ The researchers report that ‘these greater levels of tolerance and openness...continued both in prison and on the outside.’³⁴

²⁸ Richard Sparks and Kirstin Anderson, ‘Inspiring Change: Evaluating Arts and Justice Initiatives’ *Scottish Justice Matters* 2/1 (2014): 6.

²⁹ For various cases, see Olivier Urbain ed., *Music and conflict transformation: harmonies and dissonances in geopolitics* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008).

³⁰ Cartwright, *Sounding Out*, 18.

³¹ Henley, *Good Vibrations: Music and social education for young offenders*, 45.

³² Wilson, Caulfield and Atherton, *Promoting Positive Change*, 17-18; Cox and Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars*, 35.

³³ Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson, *Continuing Positive Change*, 22.

³⁴ Ibid.

One group potentially seen in a new and more tolerant light was prison officers. While prisoners often speak of individual officers who they like and respect, there is often a degree of antipathy towards uniformed staff as a collective.³⁵ Some projects allow for the involvement of prison staff in the music-making, enabling relationships of trust between staff and prisoner to develop. In the case of Good Vibrations, prisoners reported that the change of perception of staff as 'human' and not 'just a uniform' was transferred onto staff who had not been present for the project, and sustained beyond the length of the project: 'Seemingly once prisoners begin to see past the uniform, they are able to judge all prison staff as individuals.'³⁶

The requirements of making music together certainly enabled these developments, but the facilitators also play a key role in demonstrating the sorts of behaviours encouraged in the participants. Maruna asserts that the most important role of the facilitators is in 'prosocial modelling', by demonstrating appropriate behaviours in all circumstances,³⁷ a finding echoed by Henley, who notes that part of the facilitator's role is in 'modelling the behaviours that the student developed during the week.'³⁸ Although the social interactions were displayed by the practitioners there is no evidence that these behaviours are ever enforced or even actively coached by them. This suggests that social skills, therefore, are also developed organically through both project necessity and genuine affinity amongst the group.

1.2.3 Friendship and support

As well as social *skills*, the music projects are often valued for the relationships developed. Musical activities around the country are generally considered to have a social dynamic – Stephanie Pitts, for example, found that for some music participants the 'social network provides a context for individual learning',³⁹ while

³⁵ For discussion of staff-prisoner relations, see Alison Liebling, David Price and Guy Shefer, 'Staff-prisoner relationships: the heart of prison work' in Liebling, Price and Shefer, *The Prison Officer* 2nd Edition (Cullompton: Willan, 2011), 83-120.

³⁶ Wilson, Caulfield and Atherton, *Promoting Positive Change*, 17.

³⁷ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 11.

³⁸ Henley, *Good Vibrations: Music and social education for young offenders*, 44.

³⁹ Stephanie Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005), 38.

for others music provided ‘a shared experience that fostered memories and friendships among a diverse group of people.’⁴⁰ Amongst prisoner participants the music projects encourage camaraderie which is often lacking in prison life. Maruna suggests this camaraderie is the ‘inevitable’ outcome of creating and performing songs together; he observed in a women’s Changing Tunes project that there was ‘clear friendship’ amongst the participants, with hugging and other physical signs of affection common.⁴¹ Cox and Gelsthorpe observed male participants frequently teaching one another instrumental techniques and supporting each other in tougher sections of songs.⁴² They report one MiP participant saying that ‘the project had given the men “new opportunities for friendship, support and encouragement”’.⁴³ Prison choirs have been found to provide a context for developing ‘a sense of group cohesion, camaraderie, and interconnectedness, irrespective of skin colour, religious affiliations, or class.’⁴⁴

The facilitators also provide valuable support for the participants, both musically and personally. Cox and Gelsthorpe note that several participants ‘took the project as an opportunity to learn more about music from the leaders, talk to them about opportunities to get involved in musical projects outside of the prison, and aspire to their professionalism and success.’⁴⁵ For some prisoners this is particularly important in feeling that they are ‘worthy of receiving such training and guidance.’⁴⁶ Maruna wrote of the strong personal connection participants forged with the Changing Tunes practitioners: ‘participants reported feeling deeply bonded to the Changing Tunes facilitators, with a level of praise and devotion that is probably unheard of elsewhere in the prison system.’⁴⁷ This support has been found

⁴⁰ Ibid., 53.

⁴¹ Maruna *The Great Escape*, 10.

⁴² Cox and Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars*, 23.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Mary L. Cohen, “‘Safe Havens’: The Formation and Practice of Prison Choirs in the US’ in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 231.

⁴⁵ Cox and Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars*, 25.

⁴⁶ Bilby, Caulfield and Ridley, *Re-imagining Futures*, 38.

⁴⁷ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 11.

to be a particularly valuable feature of through-the-gate work by arts organisations.⁴⁸

1.2.4 Finding a coping mechanism

Although expressed in different ways, several studies suggest that music provides prisoners with a way of coping with their incarceration and a temporary escape from the monotonous and often painful reality of everyday life in prison.⁴⁹ Maruna found that Changing Tunes participants referred to their musical activities in terms of ‘escape’ from prison – a temporary distraction or feeling of being elsewhere, framed ‘in terms of “one bright point” in an otherwise, very difficult and punishing environment.’⁵⁰ Mary Cohen suggests that prison choirs ‘provide a safe refuge from the pervasively antagonistic day-to-day life in prisons’.⁵¹ Some prisoners have made parallels between the use of music for temporary distraction or escape and the use of drugs for the same purpose: Maruna notes the similarity of the descriptions, such as music giving a ‘buzz’, or being ‘better than any drug’.⁵² Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson found that for female prisoners in particular not only did the music function as a temporary distraction from incarceration, the participants learnt skills that enabled them to stay calm and cope emotionally when faced with difficult circumstances at a later date, even up to twelve months after the end of a project.⁵³

1.2.5 Health and wellbeing

Many studies show that as well as ameliorating some of the painful aspects of imprisonment, the music projects have a positive impact on participants’ health and

⁴⁸ Leonidas Cheliotis and Aleksandra Jordanoska, ‘The Arts of Desistance: Assessing the Role of Arts-based Programmes in Reducing Reoffending’ *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice* 55/1-2 (2016): 25-41; Cursley and Maruna, *A Narrative-Based Evaluation of “Changing Tunes”*, 36-39; Cartwright, *Sounding Out*.

⁴⁹ For a reasonably recent overview of some of the harm inherent to the prison environment, see Alison Liebling and Shadd Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 2005). The pains of imprisonment and the ways of escaping them are discussed further in Chapter 5.

⁵⁰ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 18.

⁵¹ Cohen, ““Safe Havens””, 232.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson, *Continuing Positive Change*, 27.

wellbeing. The links between music, health and wellbeing are well-documented.⁵⁴ However, given the immense difficulties in defining wellbeing,⁵⁵ and the many different ways the term is used by professional and 'lay people',⁵⁶ it is a term that should perhaps be used with caution. But evidence suggests that music projects in prison are beneficial for a holistic sense of health. Cox and Gelsthorpe, for example, suggest that the ITT projects are conducive to wellbeing 'in terms of autonomy, competence and relatedness'.⁵⁷ The Good Vibrations project especially seems to be connected with health and wellbeing: Wilson, Caulfield and Atherton note the 'sustained and positive emotional and psychological impact on participants',⁵⁸ Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson observed improved relaxation resulting from participation;⁵⁹ and Henley found that many participants slept better as a result of participating.⁶⁰

There has also been an emphasis on the therapeutic qualities of music projects. Lucy O'Grady has written about the 'therapeutic potentials' of making music in a women's prison, linking it with community music therapy approaches;⁶¹ and Catherine Wilson suggests there is a therapeutic dimension to song-writing with incarcerated men.⁶² Maruna's findings show that some of the therapeutic benefits of Changing Tunes participation went as far as countering thoughts of suicide and providing substantial relief from depression and other mental health disorders.⁶³

⁵⁴ See, for example, Raymond MacDonald, Gunter Kreutz and Laura Mitchell eds., *Music, Health, and Wellbeing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁵⁵ Rachel Dodge et al., 'The challenge of defining wellbeing' *International Journal of Wellbeing* 2/3 (2012): 222-235.

⁵⁶ Pam Schickler, 'Achieving health or achieving wellbeing' *Learning in Health and Social Care* 4/4 (2005): 217-227.

⁵⁷ Cox and Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars*, 16. See also, Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, 'Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-being' *American Psychologist* 55/1 (2000): 68-78.

⁵⁸ Wilson, Caulfield and Atherton, *Promoting Positive Change*, 25.

⁵⁹ Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson, *Continuing Positive Change*, 18-19.

⁶⁰ Henley, 'Musical learning and desistance from crime'; Henley, *Good Vibrations: Music and social education for young offenders*.

⁶¹ Lucy O'Grady, 'The Therapeutic Potentials of Creating and Performing Music with Women in Prison: A Qualitative Case Study' *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy* Vol. 6 (2011): 122-152.

⁶² Catherine Marie Wilson, 'If you listen, I'll tell you how I feel: incarcerated men expressing emotion through songwriting' (Ph.D., University of Iowa, 2013), online: <<https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/4978/>> [accessed 02.07.2018].

⁶³ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 16.

1.2.6 Identity

Prison music projects have been found to contribute to prisoners being able to construct a new self-identity, which is seen as an important part of ongoing desistance from crime.⁶⁴ Bilby, Caulfield and Ridley argue that the impact of MiP ‘suggests a change in self-identity’,⁶⁵ and Cursley and Maruna suggest that ‘the changes involved in Changing Tunes participation seem to ‘occur’ at the level of self-identity.’⁶⁶ Henley has helpfully expressed this in slightly more nuanced terms, suggesting that while it would be difficult to assess a change in identity, there were certainly shifts in ‘self-concept (what they think of themselves) and self-efficacy (what they believe they can do)’ in ways that could contribute to a change of personal identity.⁶⁷ This change is seen to come partly through the expressive dimension of music and song-writing: Wilson found that song-writing provided an opportunity for self-expression rarely found in a prison context,⁶⁸ and Cursley and Maruna found from several interviews that ‘individuals began to understand themselves and their lives differently *through* the medium of musical engagement.’⁶⁹

More specifically, several researchers emphasise the role of the music projects in helping participants develop a non-criminal identity. Cartwright, for example, asserts that involvement in music workshops both in and post-prison helps participants to ‘reaffirm an identity other than that of an offender’.⁷⁰ Maruna correspondingly argues that ‘Crucial to this newfound sense of self was the assumption of a new social identity as a “musician” rather than “just a prisoner”’.⁷¹ Cheliotis and Jordanoska link arts projects in general with ‘changes in self-

⁶⁴ See, for example, Shadd Maruna, *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives* (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 2001); identity change as part of desistance is discussed below in this chapter.

⁶⁵ Bilby, Caulfield and Ridley, *Re-imagining Futures*, 37.

⁶⁶ Cursley and Maruna, *A Narrative-Based Evaluation of “Changing Tunes”*, 38.

⁶⁷ Henley, *Good Vibrations: Music and social education for young offenders*, 19-20.

⁶⁸ Wilson, *If you listen I’ll tell you how I feel*.

⁶⁹ Cursley and Maruna, *A Narrative-Based Evaluation of “Changing Tunes”*, 30 (emphasis in original).

⁷⁰ Cartwright, *Sounding Out*, 29.

⁷¹ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 22.

perception that function to challenge and disrupt prior offending behaviour' which can contribute to ongoing desistance.⁷²

Part of allowing changes in self-perception involves enabling participants to reconnect with their own humanity after the dehumanising experience of imprisonment. Cox and Gelsthorpe refer to one participant saying the MiP project made him feel “human again”,⁷³ and another who ‘appreciated being given the sense that he could have a “normal” conversation with people from the outside world.’⁷⁴ The sense of being ‘normal’ is widely seen as significant, because it is juxtaposed against the environmental realities which label them ‘criminal’ or ‘prisoner’. Sparks and Anderson also cite the feelings of being a ‘normal’ person again as being beneficial,⁷⁵ and Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson write, ‘The feelings of freedom and being “normal again” engendered by the project appear to give some offenders the “head-space” to begin making a positive change.’⁷⁶ This suggests an idea key to desistance (discussed below), which is that it is the prisoners themselves who are actually making the change; the music projects are simply providing the opportunity.

1.3 Research Gaps and Limitations

Prison music projects clearly have the potential to be beneficial in myriad ways. Still, however, there are gaps and limitations in the research. There is general agreement across research into prison music projects that participation is an opportunity to develop skills and experience personal transformation, but often the links between these developments and actually reducing reoffending is not so clear, a limitation which has been found across the arts-in-prisons field. As Cheliotis and Jordanoska argue, ‘What remains ambiguous...is the degree to which, and the ways in which, the “hard” prospective outcome of abstinence from crime is mediated

⁷² Cheliotis and Jordanoska, ‘The arts of desistance’, 26. See also Shadd Maruna and Stephen Farrall, ‘Desistance from crime: A theoretical reformulation’ *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 43 (2004): 171-194.

⁷³ Cox and Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars*, 17.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p18.

⁷⁵ Sparks and Anderson, ‘Inspiring Change’, 6.

⁷⁶ Caulfield, Wilson and Wilkinson, *Continuing Positive Change*, 23.

through the “soft” conditions arts-based programmes are thought to generate during imprisonment’.⁷⁷ There are vast methodological challenges to measuring ‘soft’ outcomes and linking these to ‘hard’ outcomes, including the lack of control groups and the difficulties in conducting longitudinal studies. It seems that despite a lot of research, the field is still lacking somewhat in rigour.⁷⁸

One methodological challenge is in proving that *music* is the cause of the outcome, and particularly that the same outcome or ‘soft skill’ could not be induced by any other art form. Indeed, it appears that most art forms are able to bring about most of the changes suggested by the research outlined above. Gardner, Hager and Hillman present an annotated bibliography of evaluations of US-based arts-in-prisons programmes, demonstrating clearly that the development of interest in further learning, of social skills, of supportive relationships, of wellbeing, of coping mechanisms and of pro-social identities are all possible from different arts programmes.⁷⁹ If this is indeed the case, then it is entirely possible that no single arts project does anything that is unique or could not be done by another, and cheaper, project. I would argue, therefore, that research into music projects in prison must pay more attention to the *musical* processes involved, and concurrently that other arts programmes should assess the specific arts medium in question. As argued in Chapter 3, the musical event (and, in this instance, the penal context) must be adequately taken into account before the ‘results’ can be fully understood. In other research projects, this could be aided by including more musicologists in research teams alongside the many other scholarly disciplines represented. A multiplicity of research backgrounds is recommended by Sparks and Anderson, who found that their research into the arts in Scottish prisons was enhanced by having an evaluation team comprising researchers from criminology, musicology, literary analysis and adult education.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Cheliotis and Jordanoska, ‘The arts of desistance’ 32.

⁷⁸ See Cheliotis and Jordanoska, ‘The arts of desistance’; Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012).

⁷⁹ Amanda Gardner, Lori L. Hager and Grady Hillman, *The Prison Arts Resource Project: An Annotated Bibliography* (US National Endowment for the Arts, 2014).

⁸⁰ Sparks and Anderson, ‘Inspiring Change’, 5.

Further, there is little consideration in the current literature of how music projects in prison may in fact cause *harm* to the participants. Few studies provide any real criticism of the objectives, outputs or claims of organisations or projects. As Cheliotis and Jordanoska argue, the supposed benefits of arts projects are ‘not always explored in adequate scope or depth.’⁸¹ In many other spheres in which music is used as a means of social change, amidst the very positive publications are small pools of research critiquing more thoroughly the work of such ensembles or organisations. For example, Rachel Beckles Willson and Solveig Riiser have both presented in-depth accounts of the rhetoric surrounding the hugely acclaimed West-Eastern Divan Orchestra (WEDO),⁸² and Geoff Baker has given a highly critical account of the much-emulated Venezuelan music education system *El Sistema*.⁸³ Such criticisms have occasionally been made of the arts in prisons – Áine Mangaoang, for example, has written about the damaging control mechanisms used by the state in a music and dance rehabilitation programme in a Filipino prison which became an internet phenomenon after the release of a video of the prisoners dancing to Michael Jackson’s *Thriller*.⁸⁴ Cheliotis reminds his readers that music has been used as a means of control and humiliation throughout history and around the world, such as in Nazi concentration camps and as torture in Guantanamo Bay.⁸⁵

Such criticism, however, is largely missing from the music in prisons literature outlined above. This may well be because the prison-based music organisations in England and Wales do not hold the same place in global musical life as do WEDO and *El Sistema*. But the focus of critical literature on the extreme end of the music in prisons scale (concentration camps, torture and ‘viral’ internet phenomena), rather than what we might call more ‘regular’ music in prisons activities, is notable. It is possibly a sign that researchers feel that the benefits of music in prisons

⁸¹ Cheliotis and Jordanoska, ‘The arts of desistance’ 32.

⁸² Rachel Beckles Willson, ‘The Parallax Worlds of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra’ *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 134/2 (2009): 319-347; Solveig Riiser, ‘National Identity and the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra’ *Music and Arts in Action* 2/2 (2010).

⁸³ Geoff Baker, *El Sistema: Orchestrating Venezuela’s Youth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁸⁴ Áine Mangaoang, ‘Dancing to Distraction: Mediating “Docile Bodies” in “Philippines Thriller Video”’ *Torture* 23/2 (2013): 44-54.

⁸⁵ Leonidas K. Cheliotis, ‘The Arts of Imprisonment: An Introduction’ in Cheliotis, *The Arts of Imprisonment* (2012), 1-26.

projects are not yet well-established enough to risk critiquing in depth. More likely, it may reflect fear that much-needed funding will be withdrawn.

The need to provide evidence of satisfactory results in order to ensure further funding is an ongoing problem for the Irene Taylor Trust, and indeed for charitable arts organisations across the board. Although there is much to be encouraged by in terms of the effects music and the arts can have on society, the very notion of effectiveness must be explored more critically. The ITT lies at the intersection of three sectors: the arts sector, the charity sector, and the criminal justice sector. In each of these there is an underlying rhetoric of effectiveness: the dominant discourse prioritises proving results, providing evidence and finding 'what works'. There is a pressing need to understand the value of music projects in prison from the perspective of the participants themselves, away from the demands of funders and legislators. Yet such a process is challenging, because the rhetoric of effectiveness is 'so engrained as the only reasonable reality' that it is hard to imagine there ever was or could be a different way of operating.⁸⁶ The following sections provide an overview of the developments in each sector the ITT belongs to in order to show how deeply engrained the effectiveness rhetoric is, and the reasons it is so difficult to present information in any other way.

1.4 Instrumentalisation of the Arts

As shown above, music (and indeed the arts more generally) has been found to be beneficial in many ways in prisons, as well as in all sorts of areas of public and private life. However, it is easy to see the similarities between the claimed benefits of the arts and the focuses of governments of the time of writing. Several scholars trace the shifts in culture and the strengthening links between the arts and public policy through the twentieth century: Eleonora Belfiore has provided some useful critiques of the issue in general,⁸⁷ and she and others have looked at more specific

⁸⁶ F.S. Michaels, *Monoculture: How One Story is Changing Everything* (Canada: Red Clover Press, 2011), 9.

⁸⁷ Eleonora Belfiore, 'Auditing culture: The subsidised cultural sector in the New Public Management' *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 10/2 (2004): 183-202; Eleonora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett, *The Social Impact of the Arts: An Intellectual History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan Ltd, 2008);

arenas of social life such as urban development,⁸⁸ social exclusion,⁸⁹ healthcare,⁹⁰ and local government.⁹¹ The perceived 'effects' of the arts are frequently linked to matters of funding and public policy, and the language used to define these effects echoes the language used by government.⁹²

The twentieth century saw a change in the perception of what the arts are for in society, which eventually led to the firm links between government policy and the arts. In particular, the rise of postmodernism as the dominant cultural theory in the arts in the latter part of the twentieth century problematised notions of value and moved society away from previously-accepted concepts of 'high' and 'low' arts and culture.⁹³ Belfiore writes: 'The concept of "cultural relativism" thus entered the cultural discourse, undermining – at the theoretical level – the possibility of justifying any longer cultural policy decisions grounded on uncontroversial principles of "excellence", "quality" and "artistic value".'⁹⁴ While the notion of 'art for art's sake' had long been disputed, the assumption that the high arts had 'civilising' potential due to their unquestioned inherent value began to be rejected more forcibly, leaving society to question what the arts were there for. As the arts redefined their merits and objectives, organisations of all kinds within the sector had to look elsewhere to define the value of their activities.

The answer they found was to define their value extrinsically, and in terms dictated by other sectors of public and political life. This is known as 'attachment' politics, whereby 'policy development in certain policy areas takes place through the

Eleonora Belfiore, 'Impact', 'value' and 'bad economics': Making sense of the problem of value in the arts and humanities' *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education* 14/1 (2015): 95-110.

⁸⁸ Loretta Lees and Clare Melhuish, 'Arts-led regeneration in the UK: The rhetoric and the evidence on urban social inclusion' *European Urban and Regional Studies* 22/3 (2015): 242-260.

⁸⁹ Eleonora Belfiore, 'Art as a means of alleviating social exclusion: Does it really work? A critique of cultural policies and social impact studies in the UK' *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 8/1 (2002): 91-106.

⁹⁰ Roasia Lelchuk Staricoff, 'Arts in health: the value of evaluation' *Perspectives in Public Health* 126/3 (2007): 116-120.

⁹¹ Clive Gray, 'Local Government and the Arts' *Local Government Studies* 28/1 (2002): 77-90; Clive Gray, 'Local government and the arts revisited' *Local Government Studies* 43/3 (2017): 315-322.

⁹² Belfiore suggests, 'What was once referred to as "social order" is now preferably spoke of in terms of "social inclusion" and "social cohesion", but this does not alter the identical substance of the various claims' (Belfiore, 'Auditing Culture', 186).

⁹³ Belfiore, 'Auditing culture'.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 188.

attachment of that area to other policy concerns.’⁹⁵ This trend has had significant implications for the arts sector as a whole. As notions of value changed, arts organisations defined their value in terms of policy priorities, rather than artistic output or other of their own priorities. Thus the arts’ very existence in public life became attached to other policy areas, and their public funding dependent on their contribution to these areas.

The political landscape has also changed in a way that has impacted the arts and culture sector. The election of Tony Blair’s New Labour government in 1997 brought with it a huge increase in public spending, but with the wide-scale introduction of ‘evidence-based policy’ initiatives, an approach which had started in healthcare but became widespread. The drive towards evidence-based policy making was ‘intended to signal the end of ideologically driven politics and to usher in a new era of pragmatism. Policies would be based on whatever worked best rather than on any predetermined political preference.’⁹⁶ For arts organisations, no longer able to secure public funding by promoting traditional ideas of artistic excellence, this meant they had to frame their value in terms of wider government priorities and find ways of proving their claimed effects.

Undoubtedly the drive towards evidence-based policy making has led to far more research into what music and the arts can do, hence the broad range of publications on the effect of music and arts programmes. These findings, however, should always be understood within the distinct political priorities of their time. As Belfiore and Bennett have argued, studies have:

...identified an enormous array of impacts, often coinciding with the priorities of whichever governments are in power at the time. The arts have therefore been variously represented as an expanding sector of the economy, a major export earner and a stimulant to tourism. They have been seen as a catalyst for urban renewal, a business asset for a region and a cost-effective means of employment. They have been said to promote social cohesion and community empowerment. They are supposedly

⁹⁵ Gray, ‘Local Government and the Arts’, 80.

⁹⁶ Belfiore and Bennett, *The Social Impact of the Arts*, 5.

able to reduce the prison population and improve health...and they have even been seen as agents of social stability and the renewal of civil society.⁹⁷

The ubiquity of studies making bold claims of the effectiveness of the arts raises important questions about the methodologies used and validity of this evidence, which are returned to below. Here, it is important to note that the rhetoric of effectiveness is not just a response to a particular Party or policy; the desire to prove results is a trend that goes deeper than any one iteration of government. As Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska state, 'The need to demonstrate impact led to the cultural sector's objectives and value becoming entwined with other agendas, as governments of whichever party required that cultural funding help deliver other policy priorities.'⁹⁸ The cuts to public spending in response to the financial crash of 2008 have increased the pressure on arts organisations to attach their value to other policy priorities, solidifying the notion that the arts have distinct and measurable effects.⁹⁹

That is not to say that the idea of 'art for art's sake' has been abandoned entirely. There is still much debate on the subject, often framed as the 'intrinsic-instrumental dichotomy', and some arts scholars and practitioners have pushed back against the instrumental turn in the arts. Belfiore and Bennett argue that 'impact studies...do not actually engage with the real purpose of the arts' because the effects 'are not the primary characteristics of the aesthetic experience.'¹⁰⁰ The notion of there being a 'real' purpose of art is contentious, but the point is that for those involved in artistic activities there is an aesthetic purpose before there is an instrumental one. The attempts to counter the intrinsic-instrumental dichotomy have largely focused on the intrinsic value of the arts as a necessary precursor to any instrumental value such activity may have.¹⁰¹ This view opens up a renewed focus on the way in which artistic activity is experienced and valued by those

⁹⁷ Belfiore and Bennett, *The Social Impact of the Arts*, 6.

⁹⁸ Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska, *Understanding the value of arts & culture. The AHRC Cultural Value Project* (Swindon: Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2016): 16.

⁹⁹ See also: Douglas Lonie, 'Measuring Outcomes and Demonstrating Impact: Rhetoric and Reality in Evaluating Participatory Music Interventions' in Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Lee Higgins eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Community Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 281-298.

¹⁰⁰ Belfiore and Bennett, *The Social Impact of the Arts*, 7.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Crossick and Kaszynska, *Understanding the value of arts & culture*.

involved, but still with a view to eventually showing its effectiveness in areas of public policy. The arts, therefore, are still generally valued for what they can do and largely funded according to their ability to prove their effects on areas prioritised by those outside of the activity.

1.5 Measuring Charity

The ITT is not just an arts organisation, however – it is also a charitable organisation. The changes in the status and position of the charity sector within broader public life have also played a part in how arts organisations, and the ITT specifically, understand and discuss their work. Recent decades have seen a huge growth in the charity arts sector – that is, organisations dedicated entirely to using the arts for the good of society. However, at the same time the distinction between these and more traditional arts organisations has become blurred, as nearly all prestigious arts organisations are ‘organized as nonprofits’.¹⁰² Within the music sector, for example, most orchestras, opera houses and concert venues have expanded their educational programmes and social outreach work as part of justifying their right to public funds and spaces. But as professional arts organisations became charitable, simultaneously the charity sector itself has adapted to look more like the private sector.

Particularly important is the way in which the charity sector has been professionalised in the last few decades. Hwang and Powell argue that there has been an expansion of professionalism across society, including the nonprofit sector, such that what was once the realm of volunteers and amateurs is now done by professionals.¹⁰³ Hanvey and Philpot assess the place charities have in modern UK life, showing the ways in which charities have begun to operate more like corporations: the voluntary sector is affected by commercial interests; although still

¹⁰² Joni Maya Cherbo, Harold L. Vogel and Margaret Jane Wyszomirski eds. *Understanding the Arts and Creative Sector in the United States* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 17.

¹⁰³ Hokyung Hwang and Walter W. Powell, ‘The Rationalization of Charity: The Influences of Professionalism in the Nonprofit Sector’ *Administrative Science Quarterly* 54/2 (2009): 268-298; see also Noel Hyndman and Danielle McMahon, ‘The hand of government in shaping accounting and reporting in the UK charity sector’ *Public Money and Management* 31/1 (2011): 167-174.

largely driven by volunteers the charity sector is now a 'major employer'; some charities have huge budgets and fundraising has become a 'professional activity'; and the government is 'demanding a degree of accountability and sophistication' from trustees and managers.¹⁰⁴ Charities, though generally employing a workforce driven by the altruistic desire to bring positive change in some way or another, have increasingly been called upon to operate like businesses.

Alongside this, the charity sector has also been influenced by the wider culture of metrification. Emily Barman has traced the development of measurement attitudes in the charity sector to the changing nature of the welfare state: 'the prevalence of measurement for the UK voluntary sector waxes and wanes over time in response to shifting understandings of which social sphere is responsible for the public good.'¹⁰⁵ When the government is paying less for social change, the charity sector is considered to hold more responsibility. During times of a shrinking welfare state, 'measurement arose as the nonprofit sector held far larger responsibility for addressing social problems'.¹⁰⁶ The charity sector was responsible for bringing about social change desired by government, and simultaneously held to professional operating standards.

Such developments undoubtedly had many positives: more accountability and transparency, and better employment conditions for charity personnel, for example. But they brought substantial challenges as well, as charities were mandated to measure their effectiveness in acceptable ways. One particular challenge was how to measure: measurement techniques were, and still are, borrowed from the corporate sphere, but the aims and objectives were different. One approach was to copy exactly from the private sector and measure the financial efficiency of the organisation: 'nonprofits were being judged for goodness based on their financial efficiency – the ratio of fundraising costs to total

¹⁰⁴ Chris Hanvey and Terry Philpot, 'Introduction' in Hanvey and Philpot eds., *Sweet Charity: The role and workings of voluntary organisations* (London: Routledge, 1996): 1-6.

¹⁰⁵ Emily Barman, 'What is the Bottom Line for Nonprofit Organizations? A History of Measurement in the British Voluntary Sector' *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 18/2 (2007): 104.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 108.

income.’¹⁰⁷ The difficulty with this approach is that in the voluntary sector there is a ‘lack of any suitable overall performance measure analogous to “return on capital” in industry’;¹⁰⁸ across the voluntary sector there was no ‘single and shared criterion for success’.¹⁰⁹ At a foundational level, therefore, it was not clear precisely what effect was to be measured, or how it was supposed to be measured – but measurement was nevertheless expected, and continues to be so today. For the ITT, the expectations of the charity sector add to the pressure they are under to measure and provide evidence of results.

1.6 ‘What Works?’ in the Criminal Justice Sector

As the voluntary sector became professionalised, similar things were happening in public services; indeed, given they often serve the same purpose the boundaries between the two are often blurry.¹¹⁰ The criminal justice sector, like all other government bodies, has been affected by evidence-based policy measures and a focus on value for money since the economic crash of 2008. Most significantly for the Irene Taylor Trust, the CJS has been influenced by the ‘what works’ movement in rehabilitation and its consequences for criminal justice policy and practice.

Robert Martinson’s 1974 article ‘What Works’ set the debate that would shape rehabilitation research and practice for decades to come.¹¹¹ Presenting as a series of questions and answers a ‘comprehensive survey of what was known about rehabilitation’, incorporating 231 ‘acceptable’ studies, Martinson emphasises the ambiguity, inconsistencies and methodological insufficiencies within much of the research up to that point. This leads him to his final question: ‘*Do all of these*

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 109.

¹⁰⁸ Charles Handy, *Improving effectiveness in voluntary organisations* (London, National Council on Voluntary Organisations), 3, quoted in Barman, ‘What is the Bottom Line for Nonprofit Organizations?’, 104.

¹⁰⁹ Barman, ‘What is the Bottom Line for Nonprofit Organizations?’, 104.

¹¹⁰ Judith R. Sidel, ‘Dimensions of Interdependence: The State and Voluntary-Sector Relationship’ *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 18/4 (1989): 335-347; Amanda Little, ‘Crossing the Great Divide: Dilemmas of U.K. Voluntary-Sector Leaders Who Move into Government’ *Public Administration Review* 64/5 (2004): 618-624.

¹¹¹ Robert Martinson, ‘What works? – questions and answers about prison reform’ *The Public Interest* vol. 35 (1974) 22-54.

*studies lead us irrevocably to the conclusion that nothing works, that we haven't the faintest clue about how to rehabilitate offenders and reduce recidivism?*¹¹² His answer is not as negative as the question suggests: although he states that there was 'very little reason to hope that we have in fact a sure way of reducing recidivism through rehabilitation' he points out that something *might* work, but that further research was necessary for determining this.¹¹³

This nuance, however, has often been overlooked by both scholars and practitioners,¹¹⁴ and Martinson has been blamed for the 'nothing works' movement' which shaped academic debate and political practice for justice matters around much of the Western world.¹¹⁵ The idea became necessary for rehabilitation researchers to refute, and 'what works?' became the question that dominated discourse and practice in criminal justice.¹¹⁶ Desistance research (discussed below) has attempted to move the conversation beyond 'what works' but politically the rhetoric has remained one of effectiveness. From 'nothing works' to 'what works', from then Home Secretary Michael Howard's famous claim that 'prison works' to current Justice Secretary David Gauke's renewed ambition to find out and implement 'what works',¹¹⁷ the notion of criminal justice interventions being something that is implemented on offenders to bring about desirable effects is palpable. The idea that people and organisations working in rehabilitative fields had to prove their contribution to rehabilitative aims has become firmly entrenched.

That being said, their job is not even so simple as to find out what is successful in producing the desired results. Richard Garside, director of the Centre for Crime and Justice Policies, has made the salient point that 'criminal justice is, at heart, a

¹¹² Martinson, 'What Works?' 48 [Italics in original].

¹¹³ Ibid., 49

¹¹⁴ Although see Shadd Maruna, Russ Immarigeon and Thomas P. LeBel, 'Ex-Offender reintegration: theory and practice' in Shadd Maruna and Russ Immarigeon eds., *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 11 for more nuanced discussion.

¹¹⁵ Rick Sarre, 'Beyond "What Works?" – A 25-year Jubilee Retrospective of Robert Martinson's Famous Article' *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 34/1 (2001): 38-46.

¹¹⁶ See Francis T. Cullen and Paul Gendreau, 'From Nothing Works to What Works: Changing Professional Ideology in the 21st Century' *The Prison Journal* 81/3 (2001): 313-338.

¹¹⁷ David Gauke, 'Prisons reform speech' (Royal Society of Arts in London, 6 March 2018) full text online: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prisons-reform-speech>> [accessed 16.06.2018].

political project.’¹¹⁸ He clarifies: ‘criminal justice policy-making is a product of governing priorities, philosophies, ideologies and imperatives, rather than of short-term positioning (appealing to the tabloid media for instance) or a pragmatic drive to, say, fight crime or reform offenders.’¹¹⁹ In England and Wales, Garside argues, the criminal justice policy developments under the Coalition Government elected in 2010 are part of the wider programme of extension of privatisation and marketisation, and devolution of decisions to local commissioners. Of course, alongside this the financial crash which preceded the election has had a huge impact on policy, with austerity measures becoming the backdrop against which all other policy measures were placed. These ideological underpinnings, and particularly the persistence of austerity measures over all else, are crucial in understanding how the approach to criminal justice, and prisons, has changed. It is necessary for organisations in the CJS not just to prove their success, but to frame their success in terms which reflect broader government priorities, *and* which satisfactorily prove that the limited funds are not better placed elsewhere.

Of all the government policies regarding prisons, this rhetoric is most evident in the move towards Payment by Results (PbR) mechanisms, whereby private, public or third sector organisations bid for contracts and the government ‘pay providers to reduce reoffending.’¹²⁰ Rather than paying according to work done or time spent, the Ministry of Justice would ‘reward and pay only for what works in delivering reduced levels of crime.’¹²¹ PbR is not new – like evidence-based policy initiatives it has its roots in the health service, and was first brought into the CJS under Blair’s Labour Government.¹²² The Coalition Government’s new approach to public services more broadly, including privatisation and austerity measures, meant that such schemes were extended hugely; the 2010 Green Paper *Breaking the Cycle* laid

¹¹⁸ Richard Garside, ‘Current criminal justice policy and the legacy of coalition’ (University of Kent lecture, 2015) full text online: <<https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/resources/current-criminal-justice-policy-and-legacy-coalition>> [accessed 15.06.2018].

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ministry of Justice, *Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders* (December 2010): 38.

¹²¹ Ministry of Justice, *Breaking the Cycle: Government Response* (June 2011): 2.

¹²² For a summary of the history, see Fraser Battye, ‘Payment by Results in the UK: Progress to date and future directions for evaluation’ *Evaluation* 21/2 (2015): 189-203.

out plans to extend from the one pilot programme to six, with promises to apply PbR principles to all providers by 2015. PbR was brought in as part of the 'rehabilitation revolution' promised by the 2013 *Transforming Rehabilitation* consultation document,¹²³ and was intended to incentivise providers to tackle reoffending rates. The Justice Secretary at the time, Chris Grayling, wrote in the Ministerial Foreword to *Transforming Rehabilitation*, 'if we are to keep a relentless focus on rehabilitation, providers must have a clear incentive to do so – that is why I am determined the taxpayer will only pay providers in full for those services that actually deliver real reductions in reoffending.'¹²⁴ Since the initial announcement, the PbR plans have been altered in response to consultations, in particular, to include a continued 'payment for delivery' aspect to pay mechanisms, but the effectiveness rhetoric surrounding prison and rehabilitation services in prison remains.

Arguably, in reality there has in fact been little but rhetoric. In a report questioning 'what happened to the rehabilitation revolution', Aitken and Samuels write, 'for all the ministerial support for the basic thesis of offender rehabilitation the reality of this so-called revolution has been a disappointment.'¹²⁵ Although the roll-out of PbR contracts has not been as widespread as intended, in the years since *Breaking the Cycle* was published successive Justice Secretaries, as well as former Prime Minister David Cameron, have continued to address the state of reoffending and the need for prison reform. In keeping with Garside's claims of criminal justice being a political project, Cameron's speech in 2016 laid out plans to apply general governmental priorities to prisons by giving more localised autonomy, bringing in new providers and ensuring transparency over outcomes.¹²⁶ In a speech introducing the Prisons and Courts Bill, which promised widespread reform, Liz Truss (Justice Secretary 2016-2017, under PM Theresa May) announced that the Bill would

¹²³ Ministry of Justice, *Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform* (May 2013).

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹²⁵ Jonathan Aitken and John Samuels QC, *What happened to the Rehabilitation Revolution?* (London: The Centre for Social Justice, 2017): 5.

¹²⁶ David Cameron, 'Prison reform: Prime Minister's Speech' (Policy Exchange, 8 February 2016) full text online: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prison-reform-prime-ministers-speech>> [accessed 16.06.2018].

‘enshrine in law that reforming offenders is a key purpose of prison and that the Secretary of State has a responsibility for delivering it.’¹²⁷ In a move emblematic of the broader attitude of measuring and proving effectiveness without entirely defining it, the Bill proposed league tables for prisons. However, and demonstrating again that prison policy is to an extent at the mercy of wider political objectives, the Bill was tabled by the Committee in the upheaval of the Brexit referendum and subsequent general election of 2017.

In the last year, the immediate safety concerns in prisons have largely taken precedence, as the need to reduce levels of violence has been seen as a necessary precursor to rehabilitative ambitions. Former Justice Secretary David Lidington said, ‘Making a prisoner less likely to reoffend when he is released starts with having safer and more secure prisons.’¹²⁸ David Gauke, current Justice Secretary at the time of writing, likewise argues that ensuring safe and secure prisons, including tackling the high levels of violence and the huge amount of drug abuse, are essential for the sake of staff who work there and for achieving rehabilitative aims.¹²⁹ The conclusion of his speech summarised his attitude: ‘if the third and final purpose of prison is for rehabilitation [the others being public protection and punishment], then we need to look again at what works.’¹³⁰

What these many speeches show is that regardless of a lack of clear and successful policy initiatives the rhetoric has not changed. The ITT are not on a PbR contract; indeed, an argument against PbR is that it creates substantial financial barriers to charities’ involvement.¹³¹ But the fact that PbR is not as dominant in practice is hardly the point. PbR’s continued usage shapes how organisations are perceived

¹²⁷ Liz Truss, ‘A speech on criminal justice reform by the Secretary of State for Justice’ (The Centre for Social Justice, 13 February 2017) full text online: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/a-speech-on-criminal-justice-reform-by-the-secretary-of-state-for-justice>> [accessed 16.06.2018].

¹²⁸ David Lidington, ‘Delivering safer and more secure prisons: the roots to rehabilitation’ (Reform, 18 December 2017) full text online: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/delivering-safer-and-more-secure-prisons-the-roots-to-rehabilitation>> [accessed 16.06.2018].

¹²⁹ David Gauke, ‘Prisons reform speech’.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ See Grace Wyld and James Noble, *Beyond Bars: Maximising the Voluntary Sector’s Contribution in Criminal Justice* (New Philanthropy Capital, 2017) online: <https://www.thinknpc.org/beyond-bars-executive-summary_npc/> [accessed 29.06.2018]; Rebecca Marples, ‘Transforming Rehabilitation – The Risks for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector in Engaging in Commercial Contracts with Tier 1 Providers’ *British Journal of Community Justice* 11/2-3 (2013): 21-32.

and the expectations of funders more broadly. The underlying rhetoric of proving effectiveness acts in a more insidious manner than bringing about any one policy. The effectiveness rhetoric impacts even those organisations who are not on PbR contracts, creating expectations and assumptions which are hard to move past.

1.7 What's Wrong with Finding What Works?

In many ways, there is an obvious and understandable appeal in reserving public funds for work which brings about public good. As Fraser Battye has pointed out, 'Few would argue against the logic of aligning providers' rewards with beneficiaries' outcomes.'¹³² Certainly within a culture that priorities economic principles and treats outcomes as measurable entities, he may be right. But many scholars and practitioners, including Battye himself, have argued against the ethics, the logic and even the efficacy of such an approach to understanding value. The myriad ethical and methodological problems of measuring effectiveness indicate that a new approach is called for.

Ethically, there is a concern that the demand to prove effectiveness is turning human behaviour into measurable and marketable traits. Philip Whitehead labels PbR 'the materialist reconstruction of criminal justice', arguing that 'we are seeing the economic colonisation of the public sphere by private interests and the material displacement of our ethico-cultural life by market forces.'¹³³ Michaels similarly argues that 'caring for the needy' and working for social change are now managed by 'market concepts'.¹³⁴ These concerns are represented well by language used by David Cameron when talking about his approach to criminal justice: 'we need a prison system that doesn't see prisoners as simply liabilities to be managed, but instead as potential assets to be harnessed.'¹³⁵ While the heart of the message may be about encouraging offenders to rebuild their lives in positive ways, the language is somewhat dehumanising. It indicates a top-down approach whereby prisoners

¹³² Battye, 'Payment by Results in the UK', 201.

¹³³ Philip Whitehead, 'Payment by results: the materialist reconstruction of criminal justice' *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 35/5-6 (2015): 292.

¹³⁴ See Michaels, *Monoculture*, 41-44.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

are passive recipients of change-inducing tools which will make them fit for purpose. Belfiore has condemned the tendency for organisations to comply with this rhetoric, referring, for example, to 'the worrying idea of a publicly funded body that explicitly sets out to manipulate and change people's sense of identity and purpose'.¹³⁶ The uncritical acceptance of notions of effectiveness is ethically problematic and leads to a fundamentally flawed understanding of the way in which prisoners interact with music and with the world at large.

That being said, there is still some value in trying to find out whether certain interventions are beneficial to prisoners. If organisations want to do some good, it is important that they have ways of finding out the extent to which they are. But there are several barriers to this. Methodologically, as already touched on, it is exceedingly difficult to prove the effectiveness of an event on human behaviour. Writing about the arts in healthcare, Rosalie Staricoff has asserted:

This is due to the difficulties of establishing satisfactory control groups, of getting an adequately sized and representative sample of participants, of establishing a collaborative team who would be able to take the measurements, and analysing and interpreting the data obtained.¹³⁷

Further, providing evidence that shows causality of effect is near impossible. Carol Hedderman has criticised PbR because of the difficulties in proving that the change being measured 'represents a genuine reduction in reoffending and can be attributed to the intervention being delivered'.¹³⁸ Even if it were possible to prove that desirable change had taken place, still that 'does not prove that the change was produced by the arts programme being evaluated'.¹³⁹ As Boyle writes, 'outcomes are not simple. Working out exactly which contractor is responsible for which outcome is almost impossible'.¹⁴⁰ The number of people and organisations

¹³⁶ Belfiore, 'Auditing Culture', 185.

¹³⁷ Staricoff, 'Arts in health', 118.

¹³⁸ Carol Hedderman, 'Payment by Results: Hopes, Fears and Evidence' *British Journal of Community Justice* 11/2-3 (2013): 48.

¹³⁹ Belfiore, 'Art as a means of alleviating social exclusion', 99.

¹⁴⁰ David Boyle, 'Target culture: back from the dead' *The Guardian* (8 Oct 2010) online: <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/oct/08/coalition-target-culture-payment-by-results>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

with a potential stake in offender management and rehabilitation is vast, thus the public consultation for *Transforming Rehabilitation* brought up several calls to clarify which sector or organisation would be taking responsibility for what activity or outcome.¹⁴¹ Were it possible to establish causality, using the evidence to predict results in the future is another thing entirely, as Cartwright and Hardie have argued: ‘It is a long road from “it works somewhere” to the conclusion you need – “it will work here,” and it is not an easy one to traverse.’¹⁴²

However, the problems are not merely methodological. A common criticism of the rhetoric of effectiveness is that it leads to ‘advocacy culture’, whereby organisations are incentivised to use research to justify and increase funding rather than to learn and improve.¹⁴³ Unsurprisingly, the links between arts research and government priorities, alongside the ambiguity and vagueness ensured by methodological challenges, has often led to overly-broad or romanticised claims in which any and every social good is seen as a possible result of artistic intervention. François Matarasso, for example, presented an ‘incomplete’ list of 50 social outcomes ‘which the study has shown can be produced by participatory arts projects.’¹⁴⁴ These kinds of all-encompassing claims lead to obvious questions as to the validity of evidence which is produced primarily to prove results. In a later publication Matarasso himself questions the ‘largely unsubstantiated claims’ made in earlier evaluations (although not specifically his own).¹⁴⁵ Belfiore similarly criticises ‘the use of statistics in the context of arts projects evaluation, and the often ambiguous way in which questions are phrased with bias towards getting a

¹⁴¹ Ministry of Justice, *Transforming Rehabilitation: Summary of Responses* (May 2013).

¹⁴² Nancy Cartwright and Jeremy Hardie, *Evidence-Based Policy: A Practical Guide to Doing It Better* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 6.

¹⁴³ Eleonora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett, ‘Beyond the “Toolkit Approach”: Arts Impact Evaluation Research and the Realities of Cultural Policy-Making’ *Journal for Cultural Research* 14/2 (2010): 121-142.

¹⁴⁴ François Matarasso, *Use or Ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts* (Comedia, 1997) online: <<http://www.artshealthresources.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/1997-Matarasso-Use-or-Ornament-The-Social-Impact-of-Participation-in-the-Arts-1.pdf>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

¹⁴⁵ François Matarasso, *The Human Factor: Experiences of Arts Evaluation* (Creative Commons, 2009) online: <<http://www.artshealthresources.org.uk/docs/the-human-factor-experiences-of-arts-evaluation/>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

higher proportion of the desired answers.’¹⁴⁶ It seems that showing evidence of success is quite easy if the findings are not subject to much scrutiny. As Douglas Lonie remarks, ‘The bias towards positive findings and evaluation as advocacy remains a clear barrier to the ideal standard of evaluation as providing reliable evidence on project performance and informing future planning accordingly.’¹⁴⁷

Wyld and Noble similarly see advocacy culture as a problem across the board for charities working in the CJS.¹⁴⁸ When aims or markers of success become targets upon which further funding is contingent, it is no longer fulfilling aims which matters but rather being able to *show* that aims have been met, which is not always the same thing. As Marilyn Strathern succinctly puts it, ‘when a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure.’¹⁴⁹ Toby Lowe has argued that payment by results (in various sectors) actually *incentivises* poor research and overclaiming: ‘payment by results does not reward organisations for supporting to people to achieve what they need; it rewards organisations for producing data about targets; it rewards organisations for the fictions their staff are able to invent about what they have achieved.’¹⁵⁰ In short, the need to prove results encourages organisations to ‘tell lies’ in order to ensure continued funding.¹⁵¹ Lowe’s words are extreme, but not to the extent that they are entirely removed from reality. Being a marker for funding, these targets are then no longer a way of measuring organisations’ success: they become aims, and the organisation will find a way of showing that it has achieved them.

Furthermore, the ambiguities in the evidence collected enable the government (or funding body) to be selective with the evidence they use and conclusions they make. Tim Hope probes ‘what might happen when responsibility for validating policy – that is, for establishing “what works” – is placed in the hands of (social)

¹⁴⁶ Belfiore, ‘Art as a means of alleviating social exclusion’, 99.

¹⁴⁷ Lonie, ‘Measuring Outcomes and Demonstrating Impact’, 283.

¹⁴⁸ Wyld and Noble, *Beyond Bars*.

¹⁴⁹ Marilyn Strathern, ‘“Improving ratings”: audit in the British University system’ *European Review* 5/3 (1997): 308. Her phrase is variation of Goodhart’s Law in economics.

¹⁵⁰ Toby Lowe, ‘Payment by results – a “dangerous idiocy” that makes staff tell lies’ *The Guardian* (1 Feb 2013) online: <<https://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/feb/01/payment-results-staff-fictions>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

science but the evidence produced is not, apparently, congenial to the particular “network of governance” that is responsible for the policy.’¹⁵² Using his research into the Home Office Reducing Burglary Initiative, Hope asserts that the government used data from the study for analyses, inferences and interpretations which ‘differ fundamentally’ from the research team’s conclusions.¹⁵³ According to Hope, when confronted with undesirable data the government responded with ‘denial, pretence and the selective presentation and use of evidence in support of political expediency.’¹⁵⁴ The government would, in short, ‘pretend it works’, to quote Hope’s title. Lees and Melhuish use the example of the arts and social exclusion to demonstrate that governments continue to put policy priorities above evidence, even in the midst of calling for evidence-based policies: ‘the instrumental role of the arts in combating urban social exclusion was embedded as *quasi-social fact*. [...] However, throughout New Labour’s three terms in office, little or no substantive evidence was gathered in support of this position.’¹⁵⁵ Evidence about effectiveness, then, can be easily manipulated, and evidence of *ineffectiveness* easily ignored.

All this is not to say that researchers themselves are deliberately conspiring to provide sub-standard evidence. Indeed, many researchers into arts projects in prisons are fully aware of the pressure to prove encouraging results whilst maintaining their academic integrity by representing honestly the data they have generated. Cox and Gelsthorpe have provided helpful reflections on this, which are illuminating as to the sorts of methodological compromises that researchers and organisations must make in order to prove their results.¹⁵⁶ In their *Beats & Bars* evaluation, a core quantitative indicator of effectiveness was adjudications – that is, numbers of disciplinary actions against prisoner participants within a certain timeframe before, during and after taking an MiP course.¹⁵⁷ Reflecting on this in

¹⁵² Tim Hope, ‘Pretend it works: Evidence and governance in the evaluation of the Reducing Burglary Initiative’ *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 4/3 (2004): 288.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 295.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 301.

¹⁵⁵ Lees and Melhuish, ‘Arts-led regeneration in the UK’, 242-3.

¹⁵⁶ Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, ‘Creative Encounters: Whatever Happened to the Arts in Prisons?’ in Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment* (2012), 257-276.

¹⁵⁷ Cox and Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars*.

their later publication, however, they assert that adjudications were not a good way to 'create a meaningful portrait of the impact of the project on men's behaviour.'¹⁵⁸ That is adjudications whilst in prison are a poor indicator for what behaviour will be like outside. Cox and Gelsthorpe therefore decided to combine adjudication measurements with other, more qualitative, approaches in order to create more 'meaningful' conclusions.¹⁵⁹ Their reflections are helpful for understanding how researchers respond to the pressure they are under to fulfil requirements that they may not deem meaningful or perhaps even academically appropriate.

In keeping with honest reflections of the academic scruples involved in arts-in-prison research, there has also been a turn in more recent publications away from uncritical advocacy and towards more speculation or even caution in the claims being made. Ascenso, for example, asks of the ITT's Lullaby Project, 'what are the areas of change elicited by the project, *if any*, as perceived by the participants.'¹⁶⁰ Anderson et al. 'maintain a degree of caution' in their discussion of the *Inspiring Change* programme, pointing out that 'We cannot in this sense *prove* the value of Inspiring Change.'¹⁶¹ Their response to the methodological difficulties sets a helpful precedent for how to approach researching notions of value in prison music projects: they write, 'we are not seeking to assert whether it [the intervention] 'worked' to somehow 'produce' once-and-for-all desisters, but rather to examine how and to what extent the arts projects contributed to opening up the possibilities of and prospects for desistance from crime.'¹⁶² Similarly, a central aim of this thesis is to move beyond a notion of the music projects being used on prisoners to produce desirable change, and rather seeks to understand if and how the projects provided an opportunity for prisoners to be agents of their own change.

¹⁵⁸ Cox and Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters', 265.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ascenso, *The Lullaby Project*, 18 (emphasis added).

¹⁶¹ Anderson et al. *Inspiring Change: Final Project Report*, 6.

¹⁶² Ibid., 7.

1.8 Desistance and Rehabilitation

As researchers have sought to show how prison music projects contribute to rehabilitative aims and encourage desistance, there have also been developments in understanding how and why offenders stop committing crime. A definitional point is in order here, as the terms used to describe the process of ‘going straight’ are themselves the subject of much debate – there are questions over whether what is being spoken about is *rehabilitation*, *desistance*, *termination*, or myriad other words.¹⁶³ For the purposes of this thesis, and in keeping with McNeill’s recommendation to move past such ‘paradigm conflicts’,¹⁶⁴ ‘desistance’ refers to the ongoing *process* of ceasing criminal activity, and rehabilitation refers to the work done by the desister themselves and by others to enable or encourage this.

Despite the continuing lack of firm evidence of what rehabilitation programmes do to reduce reoffending, a lack that remains even so long after Martinson’s article, still one of the most accepted truths within desistance research is that most offenders, however serious their crimes or prolific their offences, do eventually stop committing crime. As Maruna puts it:

The pessimistic notion of the irredeemable criminal simply does not fit one of the best established empirical findings in criminology: Almost everyone who is labeled as a superpredator eventually ‘goes straight’ – or desists – from crime.¹⁶⁵

The majority of crime is carried out by adolescents and young adults, most of whom then seem to ‘grow out’ of their criminal behaviour.¹⁶⁶ Looking retrospectively, however, most older adult offenders had early experiences of the criminal justice system. Ezell and Cohen summarise this as ‘the paradox of persistence’ which ‘refers to the consistent finding that when looking *in reverse* (or *retrospectively*) researchers find that most adult criminal offenders were juvenile delinquents, yet

¹⁶³ See John H. Laub and Robert J. Sampson, ‘Understanding Desistance from Crime’ *Crime and Justice* Vol 28 (2001): 1-69; Anthony Bottoms et al., ‘Towards Desistance: Theoretical Underpinnings for an Empirical Study’, *The Howard Journal* 43/4 (2004): 369-370; Tony Ward and Shadd Maruna *Rehabilitation: Beyond the Risk Paradigm* (London: Routledge, 2007), 2-7.

¹⁶⁴ Fergus McNeill ‘Four forms of “offender” rehabilitation: Towards an interdisciplinary perspective’ *Legal and Criminological Psychology* 17/1 (2012): 18-36.

¹⁶⁵ Maruna, *Making Good*, 6.

¹⁶⁶ Michael E. Ezell and Lawrence E. Cohen, *Desisting from Crime: Continuity and Change in Long-Term Crime Patterns of Serious Chronic Offenders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

when looking *forward* (or *prospectively*) in the lives of juvenile delinquents researchers find that most delinquents do not go on to become adult criminal offenders.¹⁶⁷ Reoffending is not a given, and much attention is given to why people stop committing crime and what factors might mean they do so earlier (or, indeed, are kept away from crime entirely).

However, it is also clear from the literature that rehabilitation cannot be something that is 'done to' an offender; rather, desisting from crime is something *done by* individuals. Indeed, arguably desistance is more accurately defined as something *not* done by anyone: as Maruna tells us 'Desistance from crime...is not an event that happens, rather it is the sustained *absence* of a certain type of event (in this case, crime).'¹⁶⁸ Desistance may actually include periods of offending amidst a general trend towards non-criminal behaviour.¹⁶⁹ Desistance from crime, therefore, should not be treated as a 'done (or not done) deal',¹⁷⁰ but rather as the ongoing process of maintaining a crime-free lifestyle. This maintenance process is one which rehabilitation interventions can be a part of but which may (indeed, often does) happen entirely independently of any programmes.

Asking 'does it work' of rehabilitative programmes implies a treatment-based paradigm of rehabilitation whereby criminal behaviour is considered analogous to a disease which can be treated and cured with the right combination of interventions.¹⁷¹ Understanding desistance as a journey taken by offenders allows and necessitates asking how interventions might *contribute* to a wider process which will, as a whole, reduce reoffending. Tony Ward and Shadd Maruna have therefore advocated a move away from Martinson's 'what works', and suggest asking instead, 'what helps?' in offender rehabilitation. Their assertion is worth quoting at some length:

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 6 [Italics in original].

¹⁶⁸ Maruna, *Making Good*, 17.

¹⁶⁹ Bottoms et al., 'Towards Desistance'.

¹⁷⁰ Anderson et al., *Inspiring Change*, 7.

¹⁷¹ A. E. Bottoms and William McWilliams, 'A Non-Treatment Paradigm for Probation Practice' *The British Journal of Social Work* 9/2 (1979): 159-202. For more recent discussion of their work, see Fergus McNeill, 'A desistance paradigm for offender management' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 6/1 (2006): 39-62.

Imagine, after all, that, rather than asking 'What Works', Martinson had asked 'What helps people go straight?' The difference in word choice is subtle enough. Presumably the phrases mean essentially the same thing. Yet the difference in impact between the two questions is substantial. [...]

[I]t is easy to declare that 'nothing works' when 'works' implies some degree of predictable consistency (i.e. 'reliably works every time'). Nothing 'works' for every offender in every circumstance. Yet it would require an extremely unusual view of the social world for someone to declare 'Nothing *helps* people go straight'. Although many things might hinder this progress...surely some things can help it.¹⁷²

The authors suggest that one advantage of altering the question to 'what helps?' is that it opens up a range of new investigative avenues. We might think to allow those involved in the process to contribute more to the discussion,¹⁷³ an approach also taken in this thesis.

Employment is commonly found to be helpful in reintegrating with the community, particularly for older offenders;¹⁷⁴ steady employment is also important for maintaining desistance.¹⁷⁵ Marriage and family life can also contribute to desistance, operating alongside employment to provide informal social controls which bring about conformity to social and legal norms.¹⁷⁶ Davis, Bahr and Ward found from in-depth qualitative research with a small group of offenders that there were six factors which predominantly affected the process of reintegration and desistance from crime: overcoming substance abuse problems, sustaining employment, family, some types of friends, motivation to change, and age.¹⁷⁷ Within all of these, support, access to pro-social elements of the community and distance from 'criminal elements' of life are often essential in helping the desistance process.¹⁷⁸ As McNeill points out, 'people do not simply desist; they

¹⁷² Ward and Maruna, *Rehabilitation*, 12.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁷⁴ Christopher Uggen, 'Work as a turning point in the life course of criminals: A duration model of age, employment and recidivism' *American Sociological Review* 65/4 (2000): 529-546.

¹⁷⁵ John H. Laub and Robert J. Sampson, *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives: Delinquent Boys to Age 70* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Celeste Davis, Stephen J. Bahr and Carol Ward, 'The process of offender reintegration: Perceptions of what helps prisoners reenter society' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 13/4 (2012): 446-469.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

desist *into* something. Desistance is perhaps best understood as part of the individual's ongoing journey towards successful reintegration within the community.¹⁷⁹

Recognising the importance of desisting *into* something, there is a growing body of evidence indicating that these desistance factors cannot be taken as discrete states or choices but must be understood within the broader context of the individual's life. Bottoms et al., for example, argue that desistance is in part contingent on an individual's social context, including friendships, lifestyle structures and assumptions about lifestyle and societal roles.¹⁸⁰ Weaver and McNeill assert that employment must be understood in terms of the individuals' relationships and the motivating factors towards desistance in the individual's own life, such as providing for a family – if the family relationships break down, employment may no longer be sufficient for desistance.¹⁸¹ Clearly there are things which are generally helpful for desistance from crime, but desistance is also an individual process. What matters to some desisters may not be what matters to others.

Part of this individualised process includes some degree of personal identity reconstruction.¹⁸² Maruna has argued that 'to desist from crime, ex-offenders need to develop a coherent, prosocial identity for themselves'.¹⁸³ This new identity is not a state of being: Maruna criticises the tendency in research to 'focus on the static differences between offenders and nonoffenders as if these were "types" of people'.¹⁸⁴ Rather, forming a new identity involves constructing a life narrative that helps them to make sense of their previous actions and their futures:

...they need to account for and understand their criminal pasts (why they did what they did), and they also need to understand why they are now 'not like that anymore'. Ex-

¹⁷⁹ McNeill, 'Four forms of offender rehabilitation', 30.

¹⁸⁰ Bottoms et al., 'Towards Desistance'.

¹⁸¹ Beth Weaver and Fergus McNeill, 'Lifelines: Desistance, Social Relations, and Reciprocity' *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 42/1 (2015).

¹⁸² Maruna, *Making Good*; Barry Vaughan 'The Internal Narrative of Desistance' *The British Journal of Criminology* 47/3 (2007): 390-404.

¹⁸³ Maruna, *Making Good*, 7.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

offenders need a coherent and credible self-story to explain (to themselves and others) how their checkered pasts could have led to their new, reformed identities.¹⁸⁵

Although Maruna refers to the formation of ‘new’ identities, he also points out that those who are successfully desisting from crime tend to refer to having found their ‘true selves’ – the ‘real me’.¹⁸⁶ The work of rehabilitative programmes, then, is not to produce new identities in prisoners so much as to help them create meaningful narratives for who they already are, and why criminal activity does not make sense for their real selves.

Crucially, the offender themselves must be in charge of their own change. The agency of the individual must be recognised: as Maguire and Raynor have argued: ‘A strong and clear thread running through all these newer perspectives is the implication that the individual offender is the centre of the change process’.¹⁸⁷ Although even agency itself must be understood as to some degree socially constrained,¹⁸⁸ still it is necessary for those trying to help offenders desist from crime to recognise offenders’ agency and allow them to be in control of their own narrative. Crewe likewise has argued that ‘Prisoners – like everyone else – need to feel that they are agents of their own change, and are making choices rather than being “reprogrammed”’.¹⁸⁹ Laub and Sampson similarly found that men who succeeding in desisting from crime ‘were “active” participants in the desistance process’.¹⁹⁰ Harris writes in some detail:

Many people who are currently or were formerly in prison embrace the self-change, empowerment, and desistance perspective. They hold negative attitudes toward the concept of rehabilitation and correctional treatment programs. In general, the distaste for such programs is linked to a sense that these interventions involve things being “done to” or “prescribed for” passive recipients who are characterized as deficient, ineffectual, misguided, untrustworthy, possibly dangerous, and almost certain to get

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 7-8

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 88.

¹⁸⁷ Mike Maguire and Peter Raynor, ‘Offender management in and after prison: The end of ‘end to end’?’ *Criminology and Criminal Justice* 17/2 (2017): 147.

¹⁸⁸ Bottoms et al., ‘Towards Desistance’.

¹⁸⁹ Ben Crewe, *The Prisoner Society: Power, Adaptation and Social Life in an English Prison* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 454.

¹⁹⁰ Laub and Sampson, ‘Understanding Desistance from Crime’ 50.

into trouble again. Although people who have been incarcerated often believe that some staff members or other outside parties and some types of programs can be helpful, their effectiveness stems from the potential they offer for empowering participants rather than trying to compel them to change. Most argue, “No one else can rehabilitate you. You rehabilitate yourself.”¹⁹¹

Rehabilitative programmes in prison, then, must recognise prisoners’ agency.

McNeill points out that ‘desistance-supporting interventions need to respect and foster agency’,¹⁹² indicating an obligation not just to recognise that prisoners’ are in charge of their own narratives but to actively support and encourage their agency.

Within this context, the hope of prison programmes, including music-based ones, is to contribute to those factors which might assist desistance. The research into music in prisons projects suggests that their ‘effect’ is to contribute to desistance by developing some of the ‘soft skills’ which might help, for example, employment, or by providing a context in which internal identity change can take place.

1.9 Finding What Matters

This chapter began by outlining the ways in which prison music projects have been found to be beneficial, showing that music has been found to have positive effects for further learning, fostering social skills and relationships, helping cope with prison and contributing to wellbeing, and even to constructing prosocial or non-criminal identities. Central to this chapter, however, has been the idea that the very notion of ‘effectiveness’ is problematic, and to an extent runs contrary to the central tenets of desistance. The various developments in the arts and culture, charity and criminal justice sectors all contribute to the dominant rhetoric for understanding the value of prison music projects being one of ‘effectiveness’. Chapter 6 will return to the ways in which this impacted the work of the ITT specifically. Research into the desistance process shows that any rehabilitative programmes can at best *help* offenders; it is the offenders themselves who do the

¹⁹¹ M. Kay Harris, ‘In search of common ground: The importance of theoretical orientations in criminology and criminal justice’ *Criminology and Public Policy* 4/2 (2005): 318.

¹⁹² Fergus McNeill, ‘A desistance paradigm for offender management’: 55.

desisting. Music projects may indeed be helpful, but music is not a tool used on passive recipients, it is an activity in which people participate.

The sum of this body of evidence indicates that to understand the value of a music programme in prison and the way in which it might contribute to desistance from crime, research too must engage with prisoner's personal narratives. It is not enough to treat 'rehabilitation' as a one-directional, one-dimensional process, nor a universal one. To understand music projects, therefore, we need to engage with the narratives that prisoners themselves are telling. We need to go beyond even asking 'what helps', but look into what *mattered* to the participants. The aim of the rest of the thesis is to prioritise the aspects of the ITT projects which were prioritised by the participants themselves, rather than those prioritised by funders or government. This required a different approach to research is called for, one which allowed more attention to be paid to the experience and less to the 'results'.

Chapter 2

Methodology and Research Reflections

2.1 Research Beginnings

Why do people do research in prison? Any research is usually driven by personal curiosity, but often the particular world selected (or landed upon) and the particular topic chosen resonates with some unconscious value or interest whose origins pre-date the research project.¹

The underlying interests behind this research project were, at least initially, primarily musical rather than criminological. I am a musician by training with an academic background in musicology, and the research idea came out of an undergraduate module that examined using musical activity in social action contexts. For my doctoral research, which built on theoretical research into music projects in prisons conducted for my Masters, I was interested in understanding musical *experiences* in areas where much research is aimed at understanding *effects*. The decision to do this in a prison context did not feel at the time particularly thought-through, just the obvious way to build on my previous research; but on reflection it probably was driven, as Liebling suggests, by some degree of subconscious ‘personal curiosity’ about the nature of crime and punishment and the experience of prison in this country.²

The research focus developed over time, becoming more defined as I increasingly encountered differences between how the prisoner participants spoke about their experiences and how the official rhetoric framed the value of the projects. Granted an unusual degree of access to inmates at my case-study prison, I therefore spent time focusing on understanding the prisoners’ views without my preconceptions as to what those views might be. As the project was intended to address the two gaps reported by the Arts Alliance report – that ‘arts organisations had still not managed to unpick that the arts does and how it does it in these contexts’ and a lack of ‘grey

¹ Alison Liebling, ‘Doing research in prison: Breaking the silence?’ *Theoretical Criminology* 3/2 (1999): 151.

² Ibid.

literature'³ – the research project was set up to be interdisciplinary, to combine empirical and scholarly evidence, and to partner with a leading organisation in the field.

Lesley Noaks and Emma Wincup point out (using an appropriately musical metaphor) that it is always important to acknowledge the extent to which 'he (or she) who pays the piper calls the tune'.⁴ The research was enabled by the AHRC-funded Midlands3Cities (M3C) studentship I was awarded which, as well as covering fees and living costs, provided funds for third party involvement (discussed further below) and interdisciplinary research, both of which have shaped the scope of project. However, beyond a general desire to fund projects with a degree of impact or engagement outside of the academy, the M3C in no way shaped the specific focus or direction of the research. Indeed, as Noaks and Wincup also suggest, as a postgraduate researcher free from other institutional constraints (such as contributing to the REF or to the general research focus of a department), I probably 'enjoy[ed] academic freedom to a far greater extent' than some more senior researchers in similar fields.⁵

From its inception, this research project was conceived as interdisciplinary. The research is to an extent ethnomusicological, in that it involved the 'study of people making music' in a particular context,⁶ and ethnomusicology has been said to 'enjoy the advantages of being an inherently interdisciplinary discipline', combining musicological, sociological, anthropological and other relevant approaches.⁷ Criminology likewise is 'multi-disciplinary in character'.⁸ Sparks and Anderson

³ Angus McLewin Associates, *Arts Alliance Evidence Library* (Arts Alliance, 2011): online: <<http://artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/evaluation-downloads/arts-alliance-evidence-library-2011.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018] 35, 37.

⁴ Lesley Noaks and Emma Wincup, *Criminological Research: Understanding Qualitative Methods* (London: SAGE 2004), 24.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁶ Jeff Todd Titon, 'Applied Ethnomusicology: A Descriptive and Historical Account' in Svanibor Pettan and Jeff Todd Titon eds. *Oxford Handbook of Applied Ethnomusicology* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 4.

⁷ Timothy J. Cooley and Gregory Barz, 'Casting Shadows: Fieldwork is Dead! Long Live Fieldwork! Introduction' in Barz and Cooley eds., *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives in Ethnomusicology* 2nd Edition (USA: Oxford University Press, 2008), <<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nottingham/reader.action?docID=415761&query=>> [accessed 04.07.2018] (no pagination).

⁸ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 4.

recommend using research teams from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds to research music programmes in prison.⁹ This research was not conducted as part of a team project, but my funding from M3C enabled inter-institutional supervision: the scheme unites six universities across three Midlands cities under one banner.¹⁰ Given my musicological background the first months of my doctoral studies were spent immersing myself in criminological and penological literature; this included auditing a MSc Penology module at the University of Leicester, part of the M3C consortium. My changing supervision arrangements have meant that throughout my doctorate I have had connections within musicology, criminology, and law and social policy departments, which has enabled a level of interdisciplinarity that, to my knowledge, is unprecedented in single-researcher studies of prison arts projects.

2.2 Irene Taylor Trust

In keeping with the provisions of my M3C funding, from the outset the hope was to partner with a charitable organisation. Making use of an existing (if somewhat minimal) professional relationship, I approached the Irene Taylor Trust (ITT) about the possibility of collaborating. The ITT was a prestigious choice for a collaborative partner: one of the leading and longest-standing organisations in the country providing music projects in prisons, the ITT is now gathering a national and international reputation, thanks in part to collaborative projects with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in the UK and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the USA.¹¹ The Music in Prisons project is its longest-running programme. A full explanation of what its work in prisons consists of is given in Chapter 3; in short, the projects involve working with groups of prisoners together to write new pieces of music.

⁹ Richard Sparks and Kirstin Anderson, 'Inspiring Change: Evaluating Arts and Justice Initiatives' *Scottish Justice Matters* 2/1 (2014).

¹⁰ These were: Birmingham City University, De Montfort University, Nottingham Trent University, the Universities of Birmingham, Leicester and Nottingham.

¹¹ See, for example: 'The Lullaby Project', <<https://irenetaylortrust.com/what-we-do/our-projects/special-projects/lullaby/>> [accessed 01.07.2018].

What was particularly appealing about the ITT's work in the case study prison (discussed below) was that they were running two types of programme: Music in Prisons (MiP) weeks and Musician in Residence (MiR) sessions. During my fieldwork some prisoners were able to do both, and some only one or the other. While the idea was never to directly compare and contrast one-off versus regular programmes, I wanted to conduct a study where I could understand the value of *music* in prisons, not just one particular type of intervention. The work of the ITT in no way encompasses all musical activity in the prison: although to my knowledge the prison was not simultaneously collaborating with other musical charities, still musicking was taking place everywhere in informal contexts. Nonetheless, using the work of the ITT – even just two types of project – enabled me to see past one particular intervention and investigate notions of value about the activity more broadly.

A decision made prior to the research beginning was to pay the ITT a fee for collaborating. This was requested by the ITT, in order to ensure that the work they put in to assisting the project was remunerated. This kind of financial arrangement is in keeping with the philosophy of M3C, which aims to increase links between universities and arts sector organisations. I therefore applied for, and was granted, additional funds with which M3C paid the ITT £1,000 for each year of its active involvement in the research (three). This is evidently an unusual arrangement. Paying participants is commonplace in medical studies, and the practice is becoming increasingly normal, though still the subject of debate, in social scientific research.¹² The idea of a 'research bargain' between researcher and researched, whereby there is something 'in it' for each party, has been discussed,¹³ but the formal or informal payment arrangements between researcher and a collaborating partner is less considered.¹⁴ However, given the specific aims of this research the

¹² Emma Head, 'The ethics and implications of paying participants in qualitative research' *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 12/4 (2009): 335-344.

¹³ C. Martin, 'Doing research in a prison setting' in Victor Jupp, Pamela Davies and Peter Francis eds. *Doing Criminological Research* (London: SAGE, 2000), 228.

¹⁴ Research into collaborative arrangements between universities and industry or charity partners mention the idea of payment only in passing: see, for example, Audrey L. Begun et al., 'Developing Effective Social Work University-Community Research Collaborations' *Social Work* 55/1 (2010): 54-

financial arrangements seemed advantageous. In general conversation with other researchers, and as has been discussed in Chapter 1, it is clear that researchers in the field of ‘social action music projects’ at times feel pressured to produce desirable results. In providing funds to the ITT for being involved in the project, I was better able to protect my independence – I was not beholden to the staff for their work, nor was I indebted to them such that I might feel obliged to omit certain findings or lean towards more favourable results. Payment also enabled the ITT staff to give me more of their time than they otherwise would: they helped me gain access to the prison,¹⁵ provided me with archival information from other projects, allowed me to observe some of their work outside of prison, and invited me to eat lunch with the project musicians during MiP weeks. None of these were provided as *quid pro quo*, but the fee simply enabled a small charity, much of whose time involves fundraising, to give some time and attention to my research project.

2.3 The Prison

It was decided that the work of ITT I would use was the ongoing work in one prison, a fairly standard approach for prisons research.¹⁶ The beginning of my doctorate also coincided with the start of three years of music projects run by the ITT in one prison. There were some particular advantages of using their work there as a case study. Firstly, their having ensured funding for three years meant that even if my securing access to the prison took time (discussed below) there was minimal danger that the project would have finished before I could conduct fieldwork. Secondly, the ITT’s work at this prison was organised through drug and alcohol addiction recovery

62, and Elizabeth Starbuck, ‘Optimizing University Research Collaborations’ *Research-Technology Management* 44/1 (2001): 40-44.

¹⁵ Importantly, however, they were not able to provide access to the prisoners themselves, and so were not operating as gatekeepers in this respect.

¹⁶ There are numerous examples of studies of prison life conducted as in-depth studies of one institution, see for example: Ben Crewe, *The Prisoner Society: Power, Adaptation and Social Life in an English Prison* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Victoria Knight, *Remote Control: Television in Prison* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016). Much music project research involves multiple institutions (see, for example, Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars: Music in Prisons: an evaluation* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2008)); an example of a single-institution study is Jennie Henley, *Good Vibrations: Music and social education for young offenders* (London: Institute of Education, 2012).

services, which I imagined would add an interesting angle to my research (although in the event, the more interesting finding was actually how little difference this made). Thirdly, focusing on one prison enabled me to become familiar with the prison, and the prison personnel with me, enabling depth of understanding of the way structural realities in the prison impacted the running of the programmes.

The prison has asked to remain anonymous, and so will be referred to throughout as the prison or the institution.¹⁷ In order to understand the context in which the music programmes took place, however, some description of the institution is necessary. The fieldwork took place in a large, adult male category C training prison housing over 1,000 prisoners. It is in a rural location a significant distance from the city from where most of the residents come, making family contact difficult. An unannounced inspection was conducted by HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) during my fieldwork; the Inspectorate found a similar picture to their earlier report: 'a complicated prison that was, in some ways, a microcosm of the issues in the prison system as a whole' but 'a prison that was working hard to sustain generally reasonable outcomes.'¹⁸ Overall, it was seen as 'a competent institution, much to the credit of the governor and his staff.'¹⁹ The report's largely positive review of the living conditions and quality of work and education in the institution contrasted sharply with many the views of many prisoners in my study, who asserted that this was 'the worst prison' they had been in and that the conditioner and activity provision were 'awful'. Some had more positive views of the prison, suggesting the prison was 'not too bad', 'pretty good' or even, in one case, 'not like prison'. I learnt not to magnify individual prisoners' views into a fully-formed critique, and accepted their comments as how they were experiencing their time. Evidently though, and

¹⁷ For an example of anonymity, see Knight, *Remote Control*. I largely agree with Crewe that 'in single-prison studies, guarantees of institutional anonymity are pointless' (Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 488) in that anyone familiar with the estate could identify an institution with very little descriptive information to go on. However, as the request was made I will keep the prison anonymous; it was suggested to me that the request was made in light of recent publicity problems (the specifics of which were unknown to me) and the underlying concern was to keep the institution's name unpublished.

¹⁸ References to the inspectorate report have been removed in order to protect the anonymity of the institution.

¹⁹ Ibid.

similarly to the way in which the rhetoric around prison music projects is framed, official discourse does not necessarily align with the experiences of prisoners.

The HMIP report, as well as evidence from staff, prisoners and the news, showed that drugs were a significant issue for the prison. This is true across the prison estate,²⁰ but was especially severe here. The prison was particularly concerned with New Psychoactive Substances – synthetic drugs intended to mimic the effects of other drugs.²¹ Though the prison had permanent drug and alcohol addiction recovery programme, testimony from the prisoners suggested that wings which were intended to be recovery units seemed no different from others in terms of the volume of drugs and ease with which they were passed around. The music projects were provided by the addiction recovery services, ostensibly as an added extra to the work they do. The contract with the addiction recovery organisation came up for tender during my fieldwork, and thus the organisation providing the services changed midway through. There was some personnel change but not significant for the research project; the aims and methods of the organisations were largely similar. Given the specific scenario, in order to maintain the anonymity of the institution and those involved, both organisations will be referred to synonymously as the Addiction Recovery Organisation (ARO).

2.4 Methods

The research methods used were entirely qualitative. As we have seen, there are many methodological challenges to quantitative research in the area of arts in prisons. Not the least of these is getting enough participants to draw usable conclusions: Cox and Gelsthorpe point out that their 71 participants constituted a comparatively large sample;²² Léon Diegard and Alison Liebling found their

²⁰ The Centre for Social Justice, *Drugs in Prison* (London: Centre for Social Justice, 2015) online: <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CSJJ3090_Drugs_in_Prison.pdf> [accessed 04.07.2018].

²¹ See Rob Ralphs et al, 'Adding Spice to the Porridge: The development of a synthetic cannabinoid market in an English prison' *International Journal of Drug Policy* 40 (2017): 57-69.

²² Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters: Whatever Happened to the Arts in Prisons?' in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 264.

quantitative data scores were 'not statistically significant' for drawing certain conclusions.²³ More importantly, however, is the view that for music programmes in prison, qualitative data helps to make sense of measurable results, to 'push the boundaries of what those "outcomes" might actually mean.'²⁴ As Crewe has argued, 'most standardised and quantifiable measures get us only so far in understanding the prisoner experience, which is far more nuanced than most metrics can convey.'²⁵ In being interested in experiences rather than results, I sought 'richness of meaning' and 'depth of understanding', which qualitative methods enable.²⁶

That being said, some numbers are helpful. I observed three intensive MiP weeks (all that ran during the time), which involved being present Monday to Friday for morning and afternoon sessions. I observed 20 MiR sessions of between two and four hours each; these took place on Mondays, with a different group mornings and afternoons. The membership of these groups changed on a regular basis. I encountered 48 prisoner participants in the music programmes during this time, of whom I was able to interview 29. I also interviewed four members of ARO staff in pairs, two ITT musicians and the ITT director.

The particular qualitative methods employed were varied. Noaks and Wincup explain that 'most research projects in the social sciences are in a general sense multi-method because alongside the main method of choice, subsidiary techniques are used.'²⁷ They therefore 'advocate that researchers adopt a pragmatic and theoretically coherent approach to data collection, using appropriate methods to answer their research questions.'²⁸ My approaches principally included participant observation and interviews, but I also included the lyrics of songs written by participants in my analysis, as these included elements of personal testimony which may not have come out in interview. In many ways the research was a case study,

²³ Léon Diegard and Alison Liebling, 'Harmony Behind Bars: Evaluating the Therapeutic Potential of a Prison-based Music Programme' in Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment*, 296.

²⁴ Cox and Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters', 265.

²⁵ Ben Crewe, 'Inside the Belly of the Penal Beast: Understanding the Experience of Imprisonment' *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 4/1 (2015) 52.

²⁶ Allan L. Patenaude, 'No Promises, But I'm Willing to Listen and Tell What I Hear: Conducting Qualitative Research Among Prison Inmates and Staff' *The Prison Journal* 84/4 (2004): 70S.

²⁷ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research* 9.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

in that it was one particular activity being researched, which by nature limits the data collection possibilities to particular times and places.²⁹ However, as May points out, 'the distinctiveness of the case study lies in its bounding, while the methods (interviewing, participant observation, documentary analysis etc.) are generic across the social sciences.'³⁰ Borrowing to an extent from ethnography,³¹ the aim was to understanding the meanings prisoners attached to their musical activities; and thus required 'meaningful face-to-face interaction with other individuals'.³² Thus throughout the fieldwork, in observations and interviews, I strove not just to generate data but to have *meaningful interactions* with the people I encountered.

2.5 Fieldwork

What follows is an account of the field research, which took place between June 2015 and August 2016, involving substantial periods of observation interspersed with interviews. The different stages of the fieldwork are presented as separate and chronological sections, but this is largely for the sake of clarity rather than how the process actually occurred. Fieldwork is 'dynamic', involving continuous reflection and adaptation to circumstances.³³ The different stages by necessity impact the others: 'Negotiating access, data collection and analysis are not distinct phases of the research process but significantly overlap.'³⁴

2.5.1 Access: getting in, getting around, getting along

Given the general public are not usually allowed access to prisons it is perhaps unsurprising that securing access is given considerable attention in methodologies. Accessing prison is referred to as a 'negotiation',³⁵ '[a] problem which need[s] to be

²⁹ Stephanie Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005), 12.

³⁰ Tim May, *Social Research: Issues, methods and process* 3rd Edition (Open University Press, 2001), 228.

³¹ See Noaks and Wincup, 'Chapter 6: Ethnographic approaches to researching crime and deviance' in Noaks and Wincup *Criminological Research*, 90-105.

³² Cooley and Barz, 'Casting Shadows' (no pagination).

³³ Patenaude, 'No Promises': 75S-76S.

³⁴ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 72.

³⁵ Yvonne Jewkes, *Captive Audience: Media, Masculinity and Power in Prisons* (Cullompton: Willan, 2002), 72.

solved',³⁶ and even the 'greatest challenge facing qualitative researchers.'³⁷ In my experience, were the latter true of access then the fieldwork itself would have been exceptionally easy. In comparison to what these researchers report, and the many anecdotes brought up in conversation with other prison researchers, securing access was a fairly simple task. At the time, applying for permission to conduct research involved an application to the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), who approved in principle but left the decision in the hands of the individual governor. Formal approval was received just days before the first MiP week I observed. The relative speed with which my application was approved is perhaps explained in part because the seemingly benign nature of the research did not raise too many red flags.³⁸ The relationship with the ITT was also invaluable. The ITT were able to secure my 'guest' access as part of their team while I waited for approval from NOMS for the research itself, such that when approval was granted just days before the first MiP week I was due to attend much of the necessary paperwork had already been completed. The role of the ARO staff was also essential in securing access; throughout the fieldwork they were willing to help and often went considerably out of their way to ensure I could do what I needed.

Securing access is not a one-time occurrence but 'a continual process of negotiation and renegotiation in prisons which does not necessarily end when you are 'in'.³⁹ Physical access to the prisoners still had to be mediated through others, because neither the prisoners nor I were able to go wherever we pleased. Accessing prisoners for interviews required the prisoners to be released from their workplace and sometimes escorted to the interview office. This was always possible, but I was aware of the additional burden I was putting on staff who were already overworked. Further, until I was given keys I also required an escort in order to get around the prison. In a prison, keys are 'arguably the most resonant symbol

³⁶ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 56.

³⁷ Patenaude, 'No Promises', 73S.

³⁸ The advice I was given in applying to NOMS (now HM Prison and Probation Service) was to be 'as grey as possible', and avoid the appearance of research which would be of interest to lots of people. It is with some embarrassment that I realise I seem to have done that well.

³⁹ Jewkes, *Captive Audience*, 72.

marking out the powerful from the powerless, the keepers from the kept',⁴⁰ and so carrying keys is to an extent an ethical choice. There were times when my not carrying keys contributed to the rapport I established with the participants. For example, it came out during an MiR session that I was not able to take myself to the toilet but needed an escort, which elicited a delighted response from the group of 'miss, you're even more banged up than us!'⁴¹ While it would be an overstatement to say not carrying keys gave me a taste of incarceration, it did help me understand the lack of dignity there is in losing all autonomy and being dependent on someone else to perform even basic human tasks. The advantage of drawing keys, however, was pragmatic rather than personal. In many ways I would have preferred to continue without them, as I was very self-conscious as a keyholder, but the benefit it brought in terms of freedom to move around the prison, taking up less staff time, and interviewing in a variety of settings, was well worth it. The overwhelming advantage was being able to interview prisoners one-to-one, discussed below.

Physical access to the prison and the prisoners did not necessarily ensure successful research, as 'physical access is a prerequisite for social access but does not guarantee it.'⁴² Prisoners were not obligated to trust me nor talk to me, nor were most staff required to provide the level of physical access they did. Although to generate quality data I was most concerned with ensuring a good relationship with prisoners, establishing rapport was necessary with staff as well as prisoners. Some of the personal attributes which may have helped or hindered these relationships are discussed below, but in negotiating social access, I found that 'the most valuable research tools were sincerity and respect.'⁴³ According to Jewkes, because of the number of non-uniformed staff in a prison, 'both prisoners and prison staff get used to an "outsider's" presence very quickly.'⁴⁴ I tried to speed this process by friendly and proactive in making conversation, and particularly by engaging in

⁴⁰ Ibid., 68.

⁴¹ See Dorina Damsa and Thomas Ugelvik, 'A Difference That Makes a Difference? Reflexivity and Researcher Effects in an All-Foreign Prison' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16/1 (2017): 1-10. Damsa found similarly that not carrying keys meant 'she had to obey the officers and do as she was told much like the prisoners themselves' (p4).

⁴² Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 63.

⁴³ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 466.

⁴⁴ Jewkes, *Captive Audience*, 65.

casual conversation about hobbies and interests as well as things of interest to the research project. To help build trust I tried to allow some degree of the sorts of 'personal disclosure' that I was hoping for from the participants.⁴⁵

2.5.2 Observations

The fieldwork involved periods of observing the music projects, interspersed by interviewing the prisoners who had taken part at various points. My primary aim was to understanding the processes of the music projects and how they were experienced, so the observation times were always when there were music sessions happening. However, I was also interested in what the general world of prison was like. The fact that I mostly saw the prisoners only during music sessions (and possibly a combination of biological factors, see below) meant I probably saw them at their happiest, and was 'protected' from some of the worst aspects of prison life and prisoner behaviour. Prisoners pointed this out to me: Ben, for example, told me, 'you don't really get to see much, like, what goes on behind the scenes, in the cells. ... It's a dangerous, dangerous place.' I gained much of my understanding of prison life from conversations with prisoners rather than observations, but I found there was much to learn from walking around the prison and paying attention to the environment. This at times felt like committing 'social espionage', to use Crewe's term,⁴⁶ as many of those who approached me around the prison were not aware that the interactions were contributing to my understanding of their world, nor that I would later make notes of the conversation. As my understanding of the prison environment deepened, so my understanding of the way in which the music projects operated and were valued solidified.

Fieldwork began with observing an MiP week, which was apt as this is the most long-standing aspect of the ITT's work. Observations continued throughout the 14 months of fieldwork; some participants I observed only in MiP weeks or MiR sessions, but some I observed in both types of project. Liebling has argued that 'reserved participation' is a better term than 'observation' to describe the 'process

⁴⁵ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 470-471.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 269.

of being present in others' worlds.'⁴⁷ When it comes to the observation of music projects in prison, however, a more common approach seems to be entirely *active* and obvious participation. Researchers into prison music projects have consistently joined in with the musical activities taking place, and have found being 'participant observers' an invaluable position from which to understand how the music projects were experienced.⁴⁸ Anderson et al. suggest that 'embedded' observation, whereby the researcher is 'part of and accepted by the group', helps to avoid 'exacerbating prisoners' sense of being watched objects'.⁴⁹

My background and research methods enabled me to have an approach to observation which is far more unusual: rather than being a participant-observer, my own role was more often that of tutor-observer. As a trained musician, proficient enough in the relevant instruments to play and coach others, I operated largely as an additional tutor during the music sessions. This was not an intentional decision, but seemed to occur naturally as both ITT facilitators and the prisoner participants saw that it was a possibility. Operating as a tutor served as a way of legitimising my presence there by diminishing the significance my gender and other attributes that marked me as an 'outsider' (discussed below). It therefore normalised my role, and though I made it clear throughout that I was there as a researcher my legitimacy as a tutor allowed me to 'hide in plain sight'. Researcher-as-facilitator is unusual for music in prisons research. There is precedent for a music practitioner becoming a researcher of their activities,⁵⁰ or for practitioners to be collaborative members of the research team,⁵¹ but a researcher acting as a practitioner for the duration of the research without any ongoing links to the organisation is rare.

⁴⁷ Liebling, 'Breaking the silence?', 160.

⁴⁸ See Cox and Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters' and Diegard and Liebling 'Harmony Behind Bars'.

⁴⁹ Anderson et al., *Inspiring Change*, 81.

⁵⁰ See, for example, Mariko Hara, 'Music in Dementia Care: Increased Understanding Through Mixed Methods' *Music and Arts in Action* 3/2 (2011): 34-58. Stephanie Pitts also reflects on conducting research in her own institution – for discussion, see Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* and Stephanie Pitts, 'What do Students Learn when we Teach Music? An investigation of the "hidden" curriculum in a university music department' *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education* 2/3 (2003): 281-292.

⁵¹ See, for example, Ian Shaw and Neil Lunt, 'Forms of Practitioner Research' *British Journal of Social Work* 48/1 (2018): 141-157.

Crucially for the ITT, the facilitators are largely considered to be an equal part of the band (discussed further in Chapter 3) and extremely well-liked, and so my being identified as a tutor did not imply much of a hierarchical relationship. Indeed, my perception was that my role in the band meant I engaged in a similar emotional journey to that of the prisoner participants (I was learning how to be a tutor in this setting while they were learning their musical skills) and we went through a shared enjoyable experience which contributed to building rapport and developing trust. It would be overstating to say we were all friends, although certainly there were some with whom I thought friendship might have been possible had we met in different circumstances.⁵² But certainly there was a shared bond which contributed to the data I was able to gather in interview.⁵³

Of course, my being there as seemingly an additional tutor impacted the course of the projects themselves.⁵⁴ This must be taken into an account – particularly for the participants wanting an educational opportunity, having an additional tutor only increased the project’s ability to fulfil this desire. Scott (an ITT musician) commented that the projects I was involved in were particularly successful, and some other prisoners said they preferred the MiR sessions when I was there because it meant they could learn more. While my presence had an effect, though, it seems that it was at most *improving* the experience of the music project, rather than fundamentally *changing* it. The huge advantage of my being seen as an additional teacher was that the prisoners were able to act as they usually would in that context, rather than being under pressure by being observed by a stranger sat in the corner.

2.5.3 Interviews

The fieldwork was not structured as an observation phase followed by an interview phase. Interviews took place at various times throughout the fieldwork, but always after some period of observation. Interviews were usually scheduled in batches

⁵² See Jewkes, *Captive Audience*, 84.

⁵³ It would be interesting to map more deliberately the similarities between rapport-building between researchers and participants in musical contexts, and the various relationship-building effects musical activity is claimed to have.

⁵⁴ Liebling, ‘Breaking the silence?’: 156

across three or four days, timed to allow for some MiR observation as well.⁵⁵ Every interviewee was someone I had met during a music session. I interviewed MiP participants after one week and within three weeks of finishing the project. The aim of this was to allow the initial euphoria to wear off but remain within a period where they could reasonably be expected to have accurate memories. Scheduling interviews with MiR participants was slightly more complicated logistically, in that there was no set length of time after which they would have 'finished' so to speak. The decision of when to interview was mostly done in conversation with the ARO staff who were organising the interviews, to find times when there would be as little possible disruption to their work. Thus, some interviewees had attended many months of sessions, others only a few weeks; given the official model was that participants would attend four to six weeks of MiR sessions, it seemed in keeping with this that I interviewed some after only this many weeks, even if they had more to come. Some participants had been released or transferred before I had a chance to interview them, and I decided not to interview those who had only done one or two MiR sessions, or those whom I had not seen during my observations. There was only one participant whom I could have interviewed but did not: the ARO staff were uncomfortable arranging an interview for me with one because of his behaviour towards me (a decision which I whole-heartedly agreed with).

The interviews themselves were semi-structured. Starter questions (such as 'why did you sign up?', and 'what did you think of the project?') opened up discussion,⁵⁶ but after that I used follow-up questions to 'probe' their responses and as far as possible tried to allow the dialogue to flow naturally.⁵⁷ Wherever possible, I tried to use the interviews as what Hara terms 'smooth "extensions" of informal "chats" in the [music] sessions', and found the most useful interviews were those that built on rapport developed during the ITT projects.⁵⁸ In keeping with the view that 'interviewees may be "answering" questions other than those we are asking them,

⁵⁵ This was mostly due to the fact that I did not live near the prison, and therefore I tried to avoid travelling just for one interview.

⁵⁶ See Appendix One.

⁵⁷ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 79; May, *Social Research*, 134.

⁵⁸ Hara, 'Music in Dementia Care', 45.

and making sense of the social world in ways we had not thought of,⁵⁹ I welcomed seemingly tangential turns in the conversation. Occasionally I did steer the conversation back on topic, I avoided this as much as time allowed. I hoped that allowing them to discuss their own lives and experiences would reinforce that the study was not intended to be evaluative,⁶⁰ and I discovered early on that conversation often naturally returned to the music projects but reaching more depth than before the tangent. I also found that for prisoners who were less articulate, allowing conversation to develop slowly prevented them getting frustrated that they could not express their feelings adequately to allow them to speak about other topics for a time.⁶¹ The interviews were aimed at understanding participants' values, experiences and attitudes; I learnt quickly that attempts to find out what 'effect' the music sessions had induced would not be responded to well by most unless they emerged out of natural conversation.

Undoubtedly being able to build upon a relationship developed through us both participating in musical activities was beneficial for depth of conversation. As Diegard and Liebling found, 'Disclosure...was facilitated by the belief that there was some shared understanding between the interviewer and interviewee.'⁶² However, although shared experiences can encourage disclosure, it is also possible that they lead prisoners assume an expectation of positive feedback. This may have been particularly the case in this research, because my perceived position of tutor meant I was 'implicated in its [the project's] success'.⁶³ 'Interviews are "always performances in which respondents assume identities and manage impressions"',⁶⁴ and it is possible that occasionally the 'student-tutor' relationship of the projects will at times have been transported into the interview setting. It should be noted, though, that in ITT projects the 'tutor' status does not denote the same hierarchical

⁵⁹ Jennifer Mason, 'Qualitative Interviewing: Asking, Listening and Interpreting' in Tim May *Qualitative Research in Action*, (SAGE, 2002), ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nottingham/detail.action?docID=254691>.> [accessed 04.07.2018] (no pagination).

⁶⁰ See Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 466.

⁶¹ See Diegard and Liebling, 'Harmony Behind Bars', 296.

⁶² Diegard and Liebling, 'Harmony Behind Bars', 297.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ G. Murdock, 'Thin descriptions: questions of method in cultural analysis' in J. McGuigan ed. *Cultural Methodologies* (SAGE, 1997), 188, quoted in Jewkes, *Captive Audience*, 84.

dynamic true of school teachers. More likely, participants may have continued to respond to me as part of the ITT team, withholding more negative feedback with me for fear of causing offence. To mitigate this as far as possible, I pushed for more critical feedback and made it clear I welcomed their honest opinions.

The interviews took place in various locations around the prison, including offices, group therapy rooms, association rooms or workshop side-rooms. The workshops were the most difficult settings, both because of the noise levels and because of the amount of interest drawn by my requesting a prisoner on his own. Two interviews took place in the association room in one of the more open units (that is, residential units replicating minimum security conditions). This was interesting in that it gave me experience of another area of prison, but meant there were other prisoners around at various times which was somewhat distracting. The main hindrance to the interview quality early on was that without keys I was only allowed to be alone with the prisoners in a room attached to the ARO office. When interviews had to take place elsewhere a member of ARO staff was in the room with me. One interviewee used this as a rare chance to have a rant at a member of staff about the drugs policy, staffing problems and other such issues. I subsequently asked the member of staff to take a newspaper or some work with him, so that he could sit in the corner and be more obviously occupied with other activities, which he did, but participants in these interviews were still noticeably reticent (although it is possible that these were just more reserved people). This was only the case for four participants, but I was acutely aware of the difference it made to the data I was generating and collecting. I was grateful to be given keys so that I could interview the participants one-to-one.

My hope had been to record the interviews on a voice recorder, but as both the ITT and ARO staff thought this was unlikely I did not apply very quickly for permission. My initial interviews were therefore conducted without a recording device. In keeping with the advice of Noaks and Wincup, I made *aide-memoir* notes on paper through the interview and wrote more extensively immediately afterwards.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 86.

Where quotes from these are used in this thesis, I am always sure they are verbatim; where there is doubt about the exact phrasing, I have either paraphrased or reported it in prose.⁶⁶ Fortunately, and somewhat surprisingly, I received permission to take in a recording device in time for my second series of interviews, which were the bulk of the interviews. There is some debate as to whether a recording device is off-putting in an interview or in fact allows for a more engaged conversation.⁶⁷ Perhaps it is a sign of the cultural shift in the last two decades, whereby people are now so much more used to both recording and being recorded in all situations in life, that most of my participants felt entirely unbothered by being recorded. One participant commented that it made it feel like a police interview, but this was said as a joke and made no perceptible difference to the interview. I put other items on the table as well as the voice recorder, in hopes that it could be forgotten about as general clutter. Interviews being recorded lasted anywhere between 20 minutes and over an hour. Data from unrecorded interviews has proved more useful than I anticipated it would, but I certainly felt that there were richer data from the interviews I was able to record.

Unfortunately, for my final set of interviews my permission to have a recorder was rescinded by senior management, and so I returned to note-taking. My main regret in this is that I was not bold enough to push for an answer as to why the deputy governor did not want me to carry a recorder; it is perhaps a telling sign of the power dynamics which come to the fore when in a manager's office rather than communicating in 'home territory' or over email. My argument was that as I already had been recording interviews it would be far more helpful if I could continue just for these final ones. This approach backfired: it transpired the deputy governor was not aware that I had been given permission. He told me I should not have been permitted to record anything and said he was 'very interested' to know who had given me permission. Fortunately, I could not remember the name of the person who had signed my initial form, so I could avoid 'grassing' without having to lie

⁶⁶ See Jewkes, *Captive Audience*, 78.

⁶⁷ See Crewe, *The Prisoner Society* 482-483; Jewkes, *Captive Audience*, 77-78. Liebling reports getting her pen taken away by an interviewee who wanted to talk more freely than the structured interview style and note-taking allowed (Liebling, 'Breaking the Silence', 149).

outright. It is common for researchers to at times feel caught in the middle between staff and prisoners,⁶⁸ but I am not aware of any researchers reporting being asked by senior staff for information on other senior staff.

Although the aim of my project was to get the unfiltered views of the participants (insofar as this is ever possible), I still thought it important to get the thoughts and opinions of prison and ITT staff. Accordingly, I interviewed four ARO staff who had overseen the MiP weeks in pairs, one recorded and one not. The main purpose of these discussions was to get the feelings of the place music had within the prison regime from an official point of view. Although the research is primarily focused on the experiences of prisoners, the ARO staff insights were helpful for understanding relationships between prisoners and staff, for getting a feel of the drugs world in prison, and for the interplay between the rhetoric and reality from a facilitator's point of view. I had many informal conversations with ITT musicians which proved hugely helpful in understanding the work of the ITT. I also interviewed project founder and director Sara Lee, one of the ITT musicians (Scott) in a formal context, and the musician in residence (Will) informally, which bolstered my understanding of the rest of the data, particularly as regards the impact of the effectiveness rhetoric on practitioners.

2.5.4 Ethics

Any empirical research has ethical implications – 'ethics are fundamental in maintaining the integrity and legitimacy of research in society and in protecting practitioners and participants'.⁶⁹ Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the project, ethical approval was sought from (and given by) the Universities of Leicester and Nottingham. There was also an ethics section of the NOMS application. I wrote simple explanations and consent forms for prisoners to read and sign, ensuring participants were able to give free and informed consent. Confidentiality was assured (within extreme security limits) and anonymity has been protected by the

⁶⁸ Crewe, for example, references the difficulties of 'maintaining neutrality in such a binary environment' (*The Prisoner Society*, 475.) See also, Alison Liebling, 'Whose Side are We on? Theory Practice and Allegiances in Prisons Research' *British Journal of Criminology* 41/3 (2001): 472-484.

⁶⁹ May, *Social Research*, 47.

use of pseudonyms and the omission of personal data. Field notes are kept in locked cabinets at the University of Nottingham, and computer documents (including interview transcriptions) are password protected and stored on the University of Nottingham server, in accordance with its data protection policy. However, 'attention to ethical issues is something that needs to be ongoing in the research process.'⁷⁰ Although every effort was made in the planning stage to anticipate and mitigate potential ethical issues, once in the field 'dilemmas have to be resolved situationally and spontaneously.'⁷¹

Informed consent was always sought – every interview was preceded by providing information of the study and asking for consent. However, it is possible that many participants will have assumed that being interviewed was a part of the music project. This was exacerbated by the interviews being organised by the ARO staff, the same people who facilitated the music projects. The one time I asked someone myself if they would be happy to be interviewed, I tried to reassure him that it was not compulsory but 'a favour' to me, which I quickly realised was a big mistake. 'Favour' is evidently a loaded term for prisoners – Crewe depicts 'favours' in prison as being part of reciprocal relationships between officers and prisoners, including behaviours such as informing (prisoners) and speeding administrative processes (officers), rather than altruistic.⁷² In this instance, the prisoner in question laughed, and someone else in the room shouted 'ooh, she's thrown down the favour card!' Fortunately, he did consent to be interviewed, but I was grateful that others had been organised by the ARO staff and I simply reiterated in the interview itself that they could leave any time and were not obliged to be there. I found that very few read the information sheet or wanted to hear it read, and though I tried to encourage the participants to take the consent form seriously, many of them signed without really engaging with its contents. In hindsight, and having now analysed the data, I wonder if I was inadvertently complicit in the sorts of bureaucratic 'tick-box' exercises that have come to characterise prison life.⁷³

⁷⁰ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 45.

⁷¹ Liebling, 'Whose Side are We on?', 481.

⁷² Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 241.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 432.

Although the content of conversation was predominantly limited to the music projects, I was at times privy to personal stories and distressing information. Prisoners' life narratives are sometimes harrowing, and despite my being a stranger, prisoners shared personal stories disconcertingly soon into our relationship.⁷⁴ Such openness is probably aided by my status as an outsider, and my genuine interest in them and their lives.⁷⁵ However, although it is normal for researchers to feel 'pressure to...move away from the role of researcher',⁷⁶ I am not a therapist and was not in a position to offer sustained support. In many ways this echoed the experience of the ITT facilitators who likewise were occasionally on the receiving end of emotionally-laden tirades without the means, beyond the musical activity, to bring closure. Noaks and Wincup suggest constructing interviews 'to allow space and time for emotional recovery [for the interviewee]',⁷⁷ but this was often not possible either in interviews or in music sessions, both of which set the scene for such emotional displays. Where necessary, I responded with sympathy and as much care as possible.

2.5.5 Situating the researcher in the research

In criminological research, and particularly prisons research, there is a school of thought emphasising the need for the researcher(s) to acknowledge and discuss their own emotional journeys through the fieldwork.⁷⁸ Applied ethnomusicology also encourages 'reflexive discussions of interpersonal relationships (whether beneficial or problematic)' and acknowledges vulnerability and uncertainty on the part of the researcher as an inherent part of the research process.⁷⁹ While researchers should avoid 'pointless emoting or [stepping] over that fine line that

⁷⁴ See Liebling, 'Breaking the Silence', 155.

⁷⁵ See Jewkes, *Captive Audience*, 80.

⁷⁶ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 51.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁷⁸ Yvonne Jewkes, 'Autoethnography and Emotion as Intellectual Resources: Doing Prison Research Differently' *Qualitative Inquiry* 18/1 (2012): 63-75; Liebling, 'Breaking the Silence'. For a response to Jewkes, see Ben Crewe, 'Not Looking Hard Enough: Masculinity, Emotion and Prison Research' *Qualitative Inquiry* 20/4 (2014): 392-403.

⁷⁹ Dan Bendrups, 'Transcending Researcher Vulnerability Through Applied Ethnomusicology' in Pettan and Titon eds. *Oxford Handbook of Applied Ethnomusicology* (2015), 71.

demarcates honest disclosure and showy exposure',⁸⁰ just as the presence of the researcher changes the 'research world',⁸¹ so the research world impacts the researcher. The nature of my impact on the research world and its impact on me, and the extent to which these affected the research process and findings, are discussed here.

Prisoners 'are all too aware that their relationships with outsiders are fundamentally structured by the essential difference between being captive and being free.'⁸² Thus, many researchers emphasise the immediately obvious elements of their biology or biography which mark them out as different from those they research. In a prison context, this often means gender, class, nationality or regional identity, and their familiarity with the prison environment. Understanding how these traits influence the research process is seen as necessary. Dorina Damsa and Thomas Ugelvik, however, argue that 'what actually impacts data collection in exactly what ways may be very difficult to tell.'⁸³ Damsa (a young Romanian woman new to prison research) and Ugelvik (a slightly older, Norwegian man experienced in prison research) conducted different but comparable projects at the same Norwegian prison housing only international prisoners. They ended up 'producing very similar substantial findings.'⁸⁴ Thus, they conclude that the differences of citizenship, age, gender and experience 'were not differences that really made a difference' to the research findings.⁸⁵

That is not to say that none of these factors made a difference to the research *process*. Being a female researcher in a male prison undoubtedly shaped the interactions with the research participants. Prisoners were occasionally flirtatious or treated the interview as something akin to a date, paying more attention to their manner and appearance. At other times I provided a rare opportunity for chivalry, similar to what Jewkes described as the 'old-fashioned "gentlemanly" courtesy not

⁸⁰ Yvonne Jewkes, 'An Introduction to "Doing Prison Research Differently"' *Qualitative Inquiry* 20/4 (2014): 387.

⁸¹ Liebling, 'Breaking the Silence', 156.

⁸² Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 479.

⁸³ Damsa and Ugelvik, 'A Difference That Makes a Difference?', 8.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

usually found in general life.’⁸⁶ However, I found as Damsa did that it was the intersection of my age and gender that played a larger role in shaping the relationships.⁸⁷ Aged 25 and 26 at the time of fieldwork I was younger than most of the prisoners at the institution (and looked younger still). Many of the prisoners therefore attributed me a younger sister, daughter or even granddaughter role, being someone they could protect and look out for. I shared with Damsa the frustrations of being perceived as young, innocent and inexperienced, and worked to establish my ‘musician’ and ‘researcher’ credentials.⁸⁸ Damsa and Ugelvik found that for each of them, certain attributes marked out difference, and other attributes ‘contributed to create common ground.’⁸⁹ Biological factors marked me out as different, but my position as a musician and music teacher within the (largely non-hierarchical) ITT projects enabled more common ground.

Reflecting on how my personal attributes, in this instance age and gender, impacted on the research is largely a speculative process. Therefore, a few fieldwork anecdotes may help to elucidate. I was once made uncomfortably aware of the ‘backstage discussions’⁹⁰ that must have been going on about me. Following the second MiP week, I went onto a unit to interview three prisoners, introduced myself to the wing officer who said, without looking up from his work, ‘oh *you’re* Sarah, yes, I know *all* about you.’ Though a largely innocuous comment, it revealed three things: firstly, I had made enough of an impression to be worthy of comment; secondly, these conversations were not limited to those who had been on the project or even to prisoners but were had in public with officers too; and thirdly, the use of the word *all* suggested that I had been the topic, rather than mentioned as part of a wider conversation about the project. The possibility that my gender was impacting the ITT projects themselves, rather than just the research, was suggested when, at the end of an MiR session, a prisoner came in and asked how he could get onto the project. After he left, Will (the musician in residence) asked if he

⁸⁶ Jewkes, *Captive Audience*, 77.

⁸⁷ Damsa and Ugelvik, ‘A Difference That Makes a Difference?’, 6.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 472.

could 'translate' the conversation: 'how can he get onto the project with the woman?'

It would be easy from these to infer that in prison my identity was reduced to my biological attributes, but one interaction with a participant stands out in particular to counter this. During an MiR session one prisoner, who had been attending for quite some time, was the only participant for a while, and he began sharing his life story. He reached a part which he clearly considered crude as it pertained to sexual behaviour – although in truth this was traumatic rather than crude – and paused, then said 'I don't mind sharing this in front of *this* woman' and continued. Evidently I had secured his trust, and the fact that this was also true of Will suggests that the role I played of tutor-observer was contributing to the trusting relationships being developed between myself and the research participants. His emphasis of 'this' also spoke volumes to me: my identity in his eyes, and, I hope, in the eyes of others, had gone beyond the immediately obvious 'young woman' and become more complete and personal, a reciprocation of the way in which I tried never to see them as merely 'prisoner' but as individuals with their own characters.

The process of research was no doubt impacted by all sorts of characteristics and actions on my part. Certainly operating as a musician and teacher contributed to building rapport. Seemingly more importantly than any personal feature or characteristic, rapport was built because I had a fairly agenda-free attitude towards my interactions with them. During the observation times, I was interested to get to know them, hear their stories and find out about their lives both before and in prison. Overall, the participants' openness and willingness to share is probably the result of my general demeanour and attitude towards them.

2.5.6 Leaving the field

On reflection, my fieldwork stage was fruitful and enjoyable. Others have noted being relieved when it came to an end, remarking on the emotional and at times

physical toll that fieldwork entailed.⁹¹ My own experience was not this. I thoroughly enjoyed being part of the music projects, and took very naturally to the researcher-musician position. Indeed, if there have been times during my doctoral studies when I felt like ‘a fish out of water’, these have always been in academic contexts.

In any research project, however, one must at some point leave the fieldwork stage behind and allow some critical distance from the research. As Noaks and Wincup reflect, ‘Leaving the field physically can be relatively easy but getting away emotionally can prove more challenging.’⁹² I was acutely aware at the time that I was emotionally invested in the lives of the prisoners and the musicians who ran the projects. Thinking critically and analytically about the subjects of one’s research requires a degree of separation from them, which time and distance was needed to provide.

2.6 Analysis and Write-up

Analysis was ongoing throughout the fieldwork process.⁹³ Using a grounded approach in keeping with the aim to understand the ways in which the prisoners valued the ITT projects,⁹⁴ the themes emerged as the data was analysed. These solidified as the research went on, such that by the last batch of interviews I was confident of the sorts of themes which might emerge, but there was still much to be done after the official end of fieldwork.

I transcribed the recorded interviews myself, an arduous but useful task which gave the ‘opportunity to enhance [my] familiarity with the piece and become steeped in the nuances of the interview.’⁹⁵ I have tended to keep most of the hesitation phrases (um, er and so on) and descriptive details of the interview because these are important communicative moments which convey meaning.⁹⁶ Where its

⁹¹ Ibid., 475.

⁹² Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 69.

⁹³ Ibid., 121.

⁹⁴ Similar to the approach taken by Shadd Maruna, *The Great Escape: Exploring the Rehabilitative Dynamics Involved in ‘Changing Tunes’* (2010).

⁹⁵ Noaks and Wincup, *Criminological Research*, 129.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 130.

inclusion becomes a hindrance to reading, however, some have been removed and replaced with a short line of dots (...), and where tangential phrases interrupt the main focus of the discussion, I have used dots within square brackets ([...]) for ease of reading, as when quoting literature. I used NVivo software to code the interview data, which helped to separate the themes into viable chapters, but writing each chapter began with re-reading all the interview transcriptions and field notes, to ensure that quotes were not taken out of context.

I write in the first person. This may be considered to 'infringe upon the separation of subject and researcher',⁹⁷ but it also serves as a reminder that even the research was conducted by a real person, and that same person is the one doing the writing. When quoting interviews, I refer to myself by my first name and use pseudonyms for all participants, including ARO staff and ITT musicians. The only exception to this is Sara Lee, whose position as director of the ITT mean her identity cannot be hidden.

The research has been conducted in one prison, following the lives of relatively few prisoners. It has also been exclusively an investigation into one particular music organisation, albeit seeing two different working styles. It is reasonable to ask how far these findings are transferable into other contexts, both within the prison system and for arts organisations more broadly. Of course, they are location and context specific, as is any research; standing on its own this should not be considered a comprehensive study of music projects in prison. But in being as detailed as possible about the style of project and the value attributed it by prisoners, these findings will make sense in other contexts. Similarly, a central theme of this thesis is that it is neither helpful nor correct to say that 'music does...' without reference to what music, engaged with in what way, where or with whom. One can only understand the value people place on musical activity by examining it *in situ*; thus the next chapter provides detailed analysis of the ITT project themselves.

⁹⁷ Jewkes, 'Autoethnography' 72; see also Caroline Ellis, *Re-Vision: Autoethnographic Reflections on Life and Work* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2009).

Chapter 3

Musicking in Prison

‘It wasn’t what I thought it would be.’ (Adrian)

In attempting to understand what mattered to participants, and from this how the music projects may have been helpful to them, it is important first to have an adequate understanding of what actually happened. The ‘consensus that arts organisations had still not managed to unpick what the arts does and how it does it in these contexts’¹ is in part explained by the lack of attention given to the artistic events themselves. As was shown in Chapter 1, there is currently little to distinguish between the different art forms when it comes to the benefits they have for prisoners.² Beyond this, there is even less distinction made between the different forms of music project taking place. Evaluative reports concerning the effects and outcomes of music in many social action or community development contexts frequently move very quickly from the brief description of the event to the so-called results, often neglecting to provide important details as to what kinds of music, created how, with whom, and so on. This oversight, although often stemming from space and time considerations, has the potential of leading to generalisations and misconceptions about what music can do. As has become obvious whilst conducting and writing this doctoral research, people’s perceptions of what ‘music in prisons’ means are both vivid and varied, and often assumptions about what it means to do music with prisoners are far removed from the reality of the ITT projects.

The central argument of this chapter is that understanding context is essential for understanding value. That is, the ways in which prisoners experience and value the ITT activities, which are the topics of Chapters 4 and 5, are bound up in what

¹ Angus McLewin Associates, *Arts Alliance Evidence Library* (Arts Alliance, 2011), 35.

² Amanda Gardner, Lori L. Hager and Grady Hillman, *The Prison Arts Resource Project: An Annotated Bibliography* (US National Endowment for the Arts, 2014).

actually happened. By context, I do not mean only the setting in which the musical events took place; I mean the musicological context as well. Any claims of how and why prisoners value their musical activities must be understood as coming from specific types of musical activities, taking place in a specific location, done in distinctive ways and with a particular group of individual people.

This chapter begins by providing a scholarly basis for the importance of both musicological and penal context. It then provides a detailed account of the ITT projects, suggesting that the significant elements of the ITT approach involve participatory musicking, group dynamics, professional facilitators, song-writing, and for the MiP weeks only, performance. The chapter then explains how the prison setting shaped the ITT sessions, in terms of the practicalities of prison life and the connection in this particular prison with addiction recovery services. Finally, it discusses the way in which the music projects operated within some of the power and compliance structures of the prison, suggesting that the ways in which prisoners experience and value the music projects are bound up in the way in which they experience prison itself, and the attitudes they have towards their sentence and towards prison provision.

3.1 The Importance of Context

The term ‘musicking’ was popularised by Christopher Small, who intended it to signify the *action* of music rather than the musical product or work.³ Small theorised that the meaning of a musical performance is found in the processes and human interactions involved (moving away from the dominant focus in musicology at the time, which was on the musical work), and that to understand a musical event meant understanding all aspects of it: the musical product (if there is one), the people involved, the social structures surrounding the event, and even the physical setting. In short, the meanings of musical events must be understood in the context in which they take place: ‘Like all human encounters, [musicking] takes

³ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performance and Listening* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

place in a physical and a social setting, and those, too, have to be taken into account when we ask what meanings are being generated by a performance.⁴

Thus, Small aims to uncover meaning in a symphonic concert by interrogating the event from various angles, asking '*What's really going on here?*'⁵

Small's ground-breaking work had echoes of the approach taken by Ruth Finnegan over a decade earlier. Finnegan's monograph *The Hidden Musicians* provided a lens into the wide range of amateur musical activities taking place in Milton Keynes, as a case study example of an English town.⁶ Like Small, Finnegan's focus was on musical practices – what people *do* as they attend their various musical events. Crucially, Finnegan's work includes a description of a broad spectrum of musical activities in the town *and* the structural and social contexts in which they happen: 'Music does not just happen 'naturally' in any society, but has to have its recognised time and place, its organisation or personnel, resources, and physical locations.'⁷ Finnegan argued that to understand the value of music requires an understanding of the musical processes, which in turn requires an understanding of the practicalities and structural elements involved. This is true whether the aim is to analyse the musical activities of a geographical location or to know the effects of music on a particular social issue; likewise, it is true whether the activity has been externally organised or organically developed.

However, the bodies of literature – that is, literature about musical experiences and literature about the effects or results of musical activity – remain largely separate. Stephanie Pitts found in her study of the way in which musical participation is valued that 'the research context is clear – a growing recognition of the value and impact of musical participation has yet to be systematically supported with accounts of the experiences of those involved.'⁸ More recent research has

⁴ Ibid., 10.

⁵ Ibid. The use of the word 'really' here is somewhat misleading. I do not intend to imply that my account of the ITT projects is the 'real' one, while others are missing the truth; this chapter should be taken to be complementary rather than contradictory.

⁶ Ruth Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-making in an English town* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁷ Ibid., 193.

⁸ Stephanie Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005), 3.

advocated a combined approach: Crossick and Kaszynska have argued that 'valuations of art and culture cannot detach themselves from the social context and relations in which they take place.'⁹ Cheliotis has similarly argued that 'no serious study can afford to assess the effectiveness of a given programme without paying sufficient attention to its implementation', and particularly the complex relationships between arts programmes and institutional structures and systems, which are rarely given the attention they warrant.¹⁰ Likewise, Mary Cohen highlights the need for 'greater insight' into music-in-prisons research (specifically, for her research, prison choirs), arguing that 'lacking an adequate understanding of the conditions under which prison choirs are formed, and of the ways in which they actually operate, arguably obfuscates any attempt at evaluating their effectiveness.'¹¹ Although this thesis problematises notions of effectiveness, and the aim of this thesis is to understand the ways in which prisoners *value* the ITT music projects, rather than the *effect* of the music projects, these points are still salient. In order to explain the value prisoners place on their musical activities, the starting point must be to provide a detailed and accurate account of the musical events in question.

3.2 Musicking with the Irene Taylor Trust

According to their website, the Irene Taylor Trust's Music in Prison project has 'sculpted an effective project formula' for their activities, which is employed alongside 'flexibility in [their] approach' which responds to the needs of the specific group in question.¹² Fieldwork enabled me to see how this balance of formula and flexibility occurs in practice. Each session is different, and the project team adapt to the needs of the participants. But there are key elements to the ITT's approach,

⁹ Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska, *Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project* (AHRC, 2016), 15.

¹⁰ Leonidas K. Cheliotis, 'The Arts of Imprisonment: An Introduction', in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 13.

¹¹ Mary L. Cohen, "'Safe Havens': The Formation and Practice of Prison Choirs in the US' in Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment*, 227-8.

¹² Irene Taylor Trust, 'Music in Prisons' website: <<https://irenetaylortrust.com/what-we-do/our-projects/music-in-prisons/>> [accessed 25.09.2018].

which are evident in both the intensive Music in Prisons (MiP) weeks and in the weekly Musician in Residence (MiR) sessions, with the exception of performance. This perhaps explains why prisoners often spoke in similar ways about each type of musical provision – the overlap in the approach taken by the ITT musicians leading the different types of session provided continuity across the two different projects, and indeed between different sessions within the same project. The following sections outline what I perceived to be key elements of the approach taken by the ITT: the projects are participatory, involve groups, facilitated by professional musicians, involve song-writing, and aim to involve a performance.

3.2.1 Participatory

The underlying aspect of the approach taken by the ITT is to be entirely participatory throughout the projects. For many people this is unexpected, perhaps because the two most famous examples from popular culture of music in prisons are different: Johnny Cash performing and recording his live album *At Folsom Prison* (1968), depicted in the 2005 biopic *Walk the Line*; and the scene from *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994) in which the main character plays a Mozart aria through the tannoy while the whole prison stops to listen.¹³ Pitts has argued that scholarly studies tend to focus on the role of musical listening in life, and ‘few researchers have investigated the experiences of active musical participation.’¹⁴ The idea underpinning all of the ITT’s work is that this is a project to get prisoners playing music, rather than listening to recordings or professionals performing to an incarcerated audience. Usually this involves a group of mixed ability levels (discussed below), meaning the challenge is to find ways of involving every participant in the musicking without hindering a more experienced player’s learning or, indeed, the musical output. The projects involve using live instruments which may or may not be familiar to the participants, and the aim is to get the participants playing the instruments straight away.

¹³ Interestingly, actor Tim Robbins who played protagonist Andy Dufresne now runs an acting in prison project in California: see <<http://theactorsgang.com/prison-project/>> [accessed 29.05.2018].

¹⁴ Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation*, 3. More recently, ‘community music’, which emphasises participation, has become more widely-recognised as a research field of its own, which has contributed to filling the gap identified by Pitts.

In the MiP weeks, the beginning process was largely the same each time. A description from field notes is helpful for getting a picture of how this participatory process worked in practice, written on my first fieldwork day:

Once everyone had been introduced and the week had been explained, we got started. The group were encouraged to go and try out instruments – start playing, work out how they work, what happens if I push this button, what happens if I pull this string etc. Several went immediately to the instruments they felt more comfortable with; some clearly weren't immediately comfortable with any so sat down wherever. There was chaos as everyone started playing, and the MiP team darted round talking to people, but within 15 minutes some chord progressions were coming out from the guitar/bass section. The team waved people to stop and listen for a second as the chords continued, then join in again.¹⁵

To an onlooker this probably appeared to be musical pandemonium, just noise. And yet from the midst of the chaos, as guitarists were taught basic chords, pianists found melodies and drummers discovered new beats, something emerged that was recognisably 'music', and could become the basis of a song. In my field notes I observed being 'astounded how quickly things went from chaos to harmony.'¹⁶ One prisoner¹⁷ used this process as the inspiration for a song entitled 'Music Never Dies' whose lyrics began:

Monday morning chaos
Gel together as a group

Prisoners found the process of going from complete beginners making unstructured sound to capable participants in a musical group remarkable. Many commented with hindsight that they were doubtful at the beginning that anything would come from the experience and were therefore amazed that so quickly they were able to make something that sounded good.

¹⁵ Field notes: MiP, 29th June 2015, morning.

¹⁶ Field notes: MiP, 29th June 2015, morning.

¹⁷ Although in general prisoners are referred to by their pseudonym, when quoting their lyrics I have generally removed any indication of name so as to preserve their anonymity. The ITT CDs use participants' real names, and identifying a prisoner by their lyrics would jeopardise their anonymity through the rest of the thesis. I have kept pseudonyms where lyrics were not recorded onto CD.

Will's approach in MiR sessions was largely the same, although sometimes more structured. With a group where people knew how to play instruments the prisoners tended to just arrive and start playing. With a group of beginners, Will's method was to focus on one instrument at a time, explaining how it worked and its usual role within a band. Depending on the size of the group, he would encourage each participant to try out each instrument. This was generally well-received, but often highlighted people's deep fear of musical performance. As is all-too-frequently the case with adults learning new skills, some participants would say 'I can't do it' before even trying, and give up very quickly.¹⁸ Prisoners who had not played since childhood were occasionally embarrassed about their own perceived lack of skill (arguably a false perception), and would not listen to the encouragements of others.

Occasionally, those who could not overcome this fear did not return the following weeks, but this was quite rare. For the most part, participants enjoyed being able to join in straight away, and were inspired by the knowledge that they were able to do something musical so quickly. Liam, for example, was impressed to learn that two chords could be used in a variety of ways to make music interesting and gratifying;¹⁹ and Ben was amazed to hear the recording from a previous week's MiR session and recognise his own input as sounding 'alright'.²⁰ Seemingly unfocused jamming times often provided the musical material from which songs were written (discussed below), such as the supporting chords for one prisoner's spoken word poem 'Time', or the gunshot-replicating rhythm for another's song 'Eden'. All other aspects of the ITT projects stemmed from the fact that the aim was to make music.

3.2.2 Group dynamics

As well as being participatory, the aim of the ITT is also to be collaborative. Each ITT project in prison is made available to a group of prisoners at the same time. There are organisations and musicians who provide one-to-one instrumental lessons or

¹⁸ The attitudes of adult learners are discussed in Jenny Rogers, *Adults Learning* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 2007).

¹⁹ See Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians*, 36, for a comparable report.

²⁰ 'Alright' was frequently used by prisoners, generally indicating high praise!

musical tuition in prisons,²¹ but for the ITT an important part of the process is that a group of prisoners work together to make music.²² MiR sessions aimed for four or five participants; MiP weeks aimed for 10, although during my fieldwork numbers ranged from six to nine. The collective nature of the projects is referred to frequently by the participants as well as by prison staff and the ITT – it is seen by all as a fundamental aspect of the music project (discussed further in Chapter 5). The only requirement for participating in an ITT project was doing or having done other addiction recovery programmes (discussed in more detail below). Beyond this, the projects were available to those of any ability level, including those with lots of experience and those with none. There were few prison-related limitations as well: they were open to those employed, enrolled on education courses or unemployed, and to those on any status within the Incentives and Earned Privileges scheme.²³ There were few limitations on who could participate, and thus the sessions often involved quite a varied group of people.

Socio-musicologists find that broadly there are two roads by which a musical group usually forms: friends forming an ensemble together, usually autonomously, or strangers brought together for the sole purpose of music-making, usually with some external organisational force.²⁴ The ITT groups fell somewhere in between, and yet simultaneously outside of, these different avenues. These groups were not formed out of friendships, but neither were the participants all strangers. Many ITT participants had attended other ARO courses together, and thus were at least on familiar terms. For any programme in prison, coming from a confined setting many of the participants know each other enough to give a polite nod of greeting as they pass each other in the corridors or at the gym, or have met in workshops²⁵ or on

²¹ Yorkshire Youth and Music, for example, have provided individual music lessons in youth justice settings.

²² In practice, this was not always possible – there were rare occasions where only one person turned up for an MiR session.

²³ The Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) scheme gives all prisoners a status based on their behaviour – Enhanced, Standard or Basic. Some activities in prison, such as time allowance at the gym and what is allowed in cells, is dependent on IEP status. There is more discussion of the IEP scheme below in this chapter.

²⁴ See for example Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians*; Lucy Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education* (London: Ashgate, 2002).

²⁵ The case study prison housed several workshops, in which prisoners could be employed in different ways. Usually these were industrial or commercial employment ventures: prisoners told

the wing, and this was no different in the ITT groups. But there were also (allegedly) members of rival social groups who would normally avoid each other or target each other for violent confrontations.²⁶ Some were friends or at least friendly, others shared an affinity by virtue of being from the same ethnic background despite never having met each other – at times, those from the same minority ethnic background gravitated towards one another in greeting when new ITT groups formed, and then gradually widened their interactions to include the rest of the group. There were already a range of relational expectations from the beginning of an ITT project, and these varied and sometimes volatile personal histories and relationships brought an added significance to the group efforts involved in an ITT project.

Statistically, there are likely to be many similarities in prisoners' backgrounds.²⁷ However, although to this extent the ITT group members had similar social histories, the ITT groups were not socially homogeneous. There were many different ethnicities and nationalities represented, giving a racial diversity that would be exemplary for state-funded music projects on the outside, and simultaneously reflects the disproportionately high number of those from ethnic minorities in prison.²⁸ Of course, taking place in an all-male prison meant that all participants were male (making female practitioners and myself as a female researcher stand out to an extent, as discussed in the methodology), and none were under the age of 21.²⁹ That being said, the age range of the participants was

me that they were involved in packaging breakfast for the prisoners, sorting clothing for charity shops, or tailoring and fixing clothes.

²⁶ These alleged rivalries were never evident to me, only spoken of in interview. For discussion of rivalries in prison, see Coretta Phillips, "It ain't nothing like America with the Boods and the Crips": Gang narratives inside two English prisons' *Punishment and Society* 14/1 (2012): 51-68.

²⁷ See, for example, Kim Williams, Vea Papadopoulou and Natalie Booth, *Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds: Results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) longitudinal cohort study of prisoners* (Ministry of Justice Analytical Services, March 2012), online: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278837/prisoners-childhood-family-backgrounds.pdf> [accessed 04.09.2018].

²⁸ Ministry of Justice, *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2016* (30 November 2017), online: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/669094/statistics_on_race_and_the_criminal_justice_system_2016_v2.pdf> [accessed 03.07.2018].

²⁹ 18- to 21-year-old offenders are housed in Young Offender Institutions rather than adult prisons.

large, far more varied than many musical groups in the community. The prison population is ageing,³⁰ so it is unsurprising that there is a greater number of older men in the music groups, who bring a different set of expectations and life experience to the project than the younger men.

In terms of musical experience and skill, the ITT ensembles were unusually eclectic groups. With accessibility being a key part of the ITT's approach, and therefore no prior experience or ability being necessary, in any MiP week or any given MiR session there could have been a complete beginner playing alongside someone who had been self-taught since coming to prison, both playing alongside a prisoner who used to drum in a semi-professional band. As is often the case with amateur adult music groups, there were many who played as children but had not touched an instrument since they stopped during their teenage years or early twenties.³¹ Some were fairly proficient on one instrument and wished to learn to play more instruments; others hoped to enhance their basic skills on one particular instrument. Occasionally, such as the MiP week in February and one or two MiR sessions, the group was made entirely of beginners. The norm, however, was for there to be a mix of abilities working together. Sessions were therefore adapted according to the skills of those present, and a variety of pedagogical tools were employed to ensure that all participants were able to progress (further discussed in Chapter 4). Comments from some of the more experienced players suggested that the lack of ability in others was rarely a frustration so long as they put in adequate effort; some even found it an inspiration to see beginners trying hard and learning quickly. On the other hand, less-experienced players were sometimes intimidated by the talent of more experienced players. Liam, for example, was deterred from

³⁰ The proportion of offenders aged over 50 has increased in both male and female populations in England and Wales: see Grahame Allen and Noel Dempsey *Prison Population Statistics* (4 July 2016) online:

<http://www.allweare.org.uk/uploads/2/0/0/8/20080425/prison_population_statistics_july_2016.pdf> [accessed 03.07.2018], 11-12. This trend is discussed in Natalie Mann, *Doing Harder Time? The Experiences of an Ageing Male Prison Population in England and Wales* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013) and in Various Authors, 'Part 3 – Coping Among Ageing Prisoners' in Liebling and Maruna eds. *The Effects of Imprisonment* (2005).

³¹ Stephanie Pitts, "'The Violin in the Attic' – Investigating the Long-Term Value of Lapsed Musical Participation' in Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 171-185.

learning the guitar during an MiP week when other members of the group started showing off by playing famous songs together; he had to be reminded that he was only two days into his guitar education where they had been learning for many years, and was eventually persuaded to continue. This kind of intimidation, even unintended, on the part of the more experienced players, was rare; more commonly, partnerships were formed as a result of the different abilities, with prisoners taking time to teach and encourage one another.

The ITT participants, then, would not always naturally fall into an easy group dynamic. Certainly some groups, particularly in MiR sessions, seemed like a random assortment of individuals who happened to be doing the same activity at the same time, but who were not operating as a unit. However, there were times when the group clearly gelled over time. MiP in particular provided opportunities for the group work to become more cohesive, where individuals brought together at the beginning of a week began to form into not just a generic team, but a musical ensemble, a 'band', as my field notes described:

Through the week they have increasingly referred to themselves as a 'band' – at the beginning of the week this word was hardly used at all, but by now that's how they describe themselves.³²

The MiP groups could be observed through the week developing in eye contact and non-verbal communication, encouraging one another and making group decisions. At the end of the week each group was asked to decide upon a band name and album title, a process which sealed the ensemble experience. In this way the ITT groups were operating like other bands around the country.

Nonetheless, there was the obvious difference with ITT groups that the end of the MiP week signalled the disbanding of the band. MiR courses likewise were time-limited – although participants sometimes remained in an MiR group for many months at a time, eventually their participation came to an end. Sometimes more organic partnerships emerged from within the externally-coordinated ITT groups, when participants proactively arranged to make music together. Ian, Dan, Paul and

³² Field notes: MiP1, day 5, morning.

Simon, for example, bonded during an MiP week and then rearranged their timetables so they could be in an MiR group together and continue to write songs. Isaac, Arthur and Ollie began jamming together on their landing or in one of their cells after taking part in MiR sessions and arrived each week with ideas from these times. Even where such developments did not occur, there were examples of people teaching each other in cells or writing songs together. The music projects sometimes brought participants into collaborative relationships that continued in some form or another after the end of the organised activities. In that way the MiR sessions, and occasionally MiP weeks, operated in part as a rehearsal time for bands which existed independently of the ITT.

3.2.3 ITT facilitators

The ITT musical groups in prison were not comprised only of the prisoner participants; ITT projects are led by a number of professional musicians, who play a greater or lesser role within the band formed. Each MiP week had three session leaders (three of Steph, Miles, Ross and Scott), and the MiR sessions were led by one musician (Will). The ITT musicians are all freelance musicians who work in a professional capacity in many musical contexts. Many are performing musicians in one form or another: soloists or in their own ensembles, musicians or backing vocalists for touring artists, session musicians for recording artists. Most also do other forms of community work – as well as other ITT projects they are involved in musical work with schools, disabled children and adults, and young offenders or youth at risk, amongst other groups. Their work in prison was neither their main musical job nor an ‘on the side’ job; rather, their various musical activities spilled into one another, enhancing their talents and creativity in all areas.³³ Their musical backgrounds are equally varied, from classical training at music colleges to self-taught within jazz or pop traditions. The group of MiP musicians got on very well socially as well as professionally and worked together well.

As has been found to be the case in other music projects in prison, the practitioners’ manner, expertise and dedication meant they were universally

³³ These were the views of several ITT musicians, as expressed during general conversation.

approved of by the prisoner participants.³⁴ The prisoners treated them with a great deal of respect and saw in them a source of inspiration for their musical aspirations (a point returned to in Chapter 4). The examples the ITT musicians shared of their experiences as teachers and touring or gigging musicians inspired awe and admiration in the prisoner participants. When Scott mentioned he had played bass with some of Pink Floyd, Ian breathed a silent ‘wow’, and several participants spoke to me about how amazed they were by the experiences of these musicians.

The role of the facilitators within the band was multifaceted. The ITT musicians were producers, musical directors, at times lead composers. In many ways the ITT musicians were a part of the band – particularly in the more cohesive groups. Simultaneously, they acted as teachers, passing on skills and knowledge to the group, although the methods were unlike what would be seen in a usual classroom (see Chapter 5). They facilitated the musical activity, contributed to it, made suggestions and often final calls when necessary. Their presence and manner shaped the experience of the projects for the participants, and an understanding of their musical status, role within the group and manner of leading is important.

The musicians were often perceived to be and spoken of as band members, equal parts of the musical ensemble. Community musicologist Lee Higgins, researching the relationships between project leaders and participants in community settings, found that ‘the notion of being equal is an important one for both community music facilitator and participants’, both of whom, in Higgins’ research, tended to characterise their relationship as a friendship.³⁵ While ‘friendship’ was rarely, if ever, mentioned during my study, there were several ITT groups who spoke about their band as including the facilitators as equal members, and this was an important part of the group dynamic. The ITT musicians encouraged this attitude in the way they spoke about the projects; during the MiP weeks in particular they tried to avoid giving the semblance of too much hierarchy. In the more cohesive MiR groups, Will was referred to as part of the band; one group gave themselves a band

³⁴ Jo Cursley and Shadd Maruna, *A Narrative-Based Evaluation of “Changing Tunes” Music-based Prisoner Reintegration Intervention: Full Report* (Changing Tunes, 2015).

³⁵ Lee Higgins, ‘One-to-One Encounters: Facilitators, Participants, and Friendship’ *Theory Into Practice* 51/3 (2012) p162.

name of 'Will presents: 2 rastas, a baller and a mic', referring to each person's role in the band.³⁶

Despite the fact that both participants and practitioners perceive and strive for equality, the relationships clearly were not on an even footing. As Higgins argues, 'The relationship between the facilitator and participant cannot be equal. It is the facilitator's responsibility to ensure some boundaries and, as such, they hold some power.'³⁷ There was plainly some hierarchy within the ITT groups, primarily because the facilitators were most evidently the ones in charge. The ITT sessions were not overseen by officers: MiP sessions were overseen by ARO staff at a distance but they never stepped in except to bring a session to an end, and MiR sessions were entirely unsupervised by prison staff. Although ultimately responsibility for keeping order lay with prison staff, the on-the-ground authority lay with the facilitators, and there were times when the facilitators had to step in and take some control over a situation.

Occasionally the slightly blurry authority of the facilitators was tested, as prisoners made the most of being outside of the gaze of the officers. During MiR sessions, where there were no prison staff supervising, participants at times used their freedom questionably:

Ben took several 'toilet trips' which were almost certainly not to use the loo – at one point I saw him smoking out of the window in the association room. Before the second one he started saying where he was really going and Will said, "best not to say, just tell me you're going to the loo!"³⁸

Ben presumably thought there was no issue in Will knowing he was abusing his freedom, but Will's response indicates that facilitators would rather be ignorant than have to exert any control, or summon officers to exert their control. There were times where the team had to step in and be slightly more authoritarian than they wanted to be, and could not turn a blind eye. It took some courage to take

³⁶ At times I was also included as one of the band; in this instance, when the prisoner announced his idea for a new name to the rest of the group he was then called a chauvinist for missing me out of the name.

³⁷ Higgins, 'One-to-One Encounters', 162.

³⁸ Field notes: MiR, 18th January 2016, afternoon.

control like this, as they do not want an overly-hierarchical group dynamic. Often instructions would be given as suggestions or requests in good humour, and in a way that returned people to the musical activity at hand, rather than towards punishment or embarrassment.

In this way, the ‘power’ held by the facilitators both was, and was perceived to be, very different to the power held by officers, and even ARO staff.³⁹ Prisoner participants were generally aware that some kind of leadership was necessary for the project to work, and dismissed the idea of having a group which ran without any external input: in Jake’s words, ‘it would be chaos.’ But two factors were key to the authority of the ITT facilitators. Firstly, they came in from outside, which was hugely valuable to the participants and took precedence over any issues there might have been by their use of authority. It was particularly important for some prisoners that the musicians were in no way connected with the establishment – as Paul put it, ‘they’re not the ones who are locking you behind a door.’ Secondly, the ITT’s use of their authority was minimal and gentle, and therefore garnered respect. Unlike with the officers, this came from a recognition that they *deserved* respect, rather than that there would be trouble if they did not receive it. Indeed, at times there were calls for the ITT musicians to take more responsibility, or else prisoners trying to assert their authority for them – during one MiP week, for example, Ollie stood and said to the rest of the group that ‘when this man [Scott] raises his hand, we need to be quiet.’⁴⁰ Generally the musicians’ expertise, experience and attitude drew the respect of the group, meaning that ‘control’ was rarely necessary.

The facilitators also operated with a degree of creative authority. Their job was difficult: to include all ability levels in the process, to ensure everyone was engaged, draw out people’s creativity and help to create a viable musical product in the form of finished songs and, in the case of MiP, usable recordings. Aiming for a democratic process whereby decisions are made as a group is noble, and beneficial

³⁹ Most participants acknowledged that the ARO staff were a different type of authority figure to the officers, because the primary role of ARO staff was to care and to help, not to keep order.

⁴⁰ Field notes: MiP3, day 2, morning.

in a prison context, but difficult to achieve. My field notes show some of the challenges involved, particularly for big groups:

There was a slight concern for me that it's overly led by the MiP team [...] The teamwork was very much facilitated by the MiP team: some decisions were group-made, such as the ending of the reggae track, but lots of them were made by the team moving around, chatting to individuals or small groups and then informing others of the decision made. Even with the group decisions, it was often more of a multiple-choice decision than an open-ended question.⁴¹

Though they tried where possible to encourage democratic decisions when the group could decide together, the combination of reticence and disagreement meant that at times the facilitators had to be the decision-makers.

During my observations, I wondered whether the team were taking their musical responsibilities too far. Although they never acted as the 'autocratic' tutors reported in some musical activities,⁴² it seemed likely to me that participants would feel that it was the facilitators who were really in control of the musical output. I therefore asked each interviewee to describe the role of the facilitators. All the participants felt that the team had been fantastic for encouraging their own creativity, for getting the best out of people. Ian, for example, felt they were able to 'tap into us, draw out ideas'. ARO staff noticed how much the team allowed the participants to have creative autonomy:

Sarah: Did it seem to you, how much were they steering the way that they would make music, and how much were they encouraging the guys in the room? Where was the balance between them as musicians doing their own music [interrupted]?

Gemma: Yeah, I think that's quite interesting, because I found that it would have been so easy for them to have taken over, and, you know, for the prisoners, the guys to just be a little bit in the background. But they didn't do that. You know, towards the end, to make it sound really good, they put their own little spin on it as we were getting towards the end, but all the way through the week it was just down to what the guys

⁴¹ Field notes: MiP1, day 2, morning and afternoon.

⁴² Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation*, 61.

were doing. And, you know, they're so talented they could have very easily, have, erm, yeah, overtaken that in, you know, in their own, cos they're so good at what they do.

Duncan: Yeah, I think they got the balance right.

There was a general feeling that the professionals allowed the participants to create the music but making sure bits were removed if they didn't sound good (indicating the importance of the musical product) and for making creative suggestions that they might not otherwise have thought of.

3.2.4 Song-writing

One of the most important aspects of the ITT's approach is that the projects always involve the participants in creating their own music rather than learning and rehearsing pre-written repertoires. Specifically, as a group they write their own songs, including writing lyrics and producing their own harmonic progressions, melody lines and beats, a standard process for amateur rock bands.⁴³ Song-writing is a common approach in prison music projects and has been used in prisons all over the world.⁴⁴ In the ITT projects, not all participants were lyricists; everyone was given the option of providing lyrics and singing but not every participant took up the opportunity. But the ITT projects always involved new songs being written as a group.

Although there is no formally stated reason given in ITT publicity, the reasons for using song-writing in their approach seem to be primarily twofold: expression and accessibility. Sara Lee believes that 'everyone has a song inside them, something to share with the world.'⁴⁵ Music is considered a vehicle for self-expression, and for

⁴³ Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians*, 167-173.

⁴⁴ For example: Changing Tunes (England and Wales) have a selection of songs written by participants on its website: <<https://www.changingtunes.org.uk/music/>> [accessed 04.07.2018]; Vox Liminis' *Distant Voices* (Scotland) is a collaborative project between prisoners and non-prisoners, <<https://www.voxliminis.co.uk/projects/distant-voices/>> [accessed 04.07.2018]; for an example from USA see Mary L. Cohen and Catherin M. Wilson 'Inside the fences: Pedagogical practices and purposes of songwriting in an adult male U.S. state prison' *International Journal of Music Education* 35/4 (2017) 541-553; from Australia, see Lucy O'Grady's research in Australia, Lucy O'Grady; 'The Therapeutic Potentials of Creating and Performing Music with Women in Prison: A Qualitative Case Study' *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy* Vol. 6 (2011).

⁴⁵ Quoted from 'Music for Young People in Youth Justice Settings' (University of Sheffield, 2016), a conference at which Sara Lee spoke. For a review, see

the ITT this is an essential part of their work. Music therapists are increasingly recognising the therapeutic value of song-writing (as opposed to primarily using improvisation techniques) in clinical practice, which includes emotional expression and finding an outlet for their personal stories and feelings.⁴⁶ The same has been found in non-clinical settings: for example, Riley's research into a song-writing course within the liberal arts degree programme for university undergraduates found that song-writing contributed to personal development by aiding emotional stability and providing a space for self-expression.⁴⁷ This is valued highly by the prisoner participants in ITT projects (discussed further in Chapter 5).

Creating new songs also contributes to the accessibility of the project. John Kratus has advocated using song-writing in music education in schools, arguing that song-writing 'immerses students in the creation and performance of music in a vernacular style they already know, using instruments with which they are already familiar, and in ways that are meaningful to their own lives.'⁴⁸ Song-writing allows the ITT participants to tap into their existing musical knowledge, incorporating a broad range of song styles and genres. Further, writing new songs rather than recreating existing songs avoids negative comparisons with professionals: if people are recreating a song they have heard on the radio but without the necessary production means to which professional artists have access (or, in all likelihood, the musical skill of a professional musician), the first reaction is likely to be why it doesn't sound like it 'should'. Creating new material is intended to allow the participants to feel pride in their own work and to express themselves without attempting to imitate anyone else.

<<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/music/newsevents/music-for-young-people-in-youth-justice-settings-2016-1.578149>> [accessed 04.07.2018].

⁴⁶ Felicity Baker et al., 'Therapeutic Songwriting in Music Therapy' *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy* 17/2 (2008): 105-123.

⁴⁷ Patricia E. Riley, 'Exploration of Student Development through Songwriting' *Visions of Research in Music Education* 22 (2012) online: <http://www-usr.rider.edu/~vrme/v22n1/visions/Riley_Student_Development_Through_Songwriting.pdf> [accessed 04.07.2018].

⁴⁸ John Kratus, 'Songwriting: A New Direction for Secondary Music Education' *Music Educators Journal* 102/3 (2016): 61.

The ITT sessions, however, did not operate as song-writing workshops;⁴⁹ from an observer's perspective they were more like band rehearsals during which original material was written. There was no fixed method for ensuring songs are written, and the process was largely dependent on the participants themselves. One way for a song to be written was for someone to bring some words that could form lyrics for a song; most frequently this would be done by those who write poetry in their cells.⁵⁰ More commonly, a participant might have an idea for a song, but the bulk of the writing was done during the session: Simon, for example, spent the first morning of his MiP week writing lyrics as the rest of the band were learning chords. During MiP weeks, one professional musician then worked with the lyricist to create a song whilst the other professionals would direct the music. The 'feel' of the song would often be decided by the lyricist, and the whole band could approve the use of particular chords, riffs, beats or melody lines. These might come out of the musical 'chaos' described above, or from the beginning someone might have one musical idea and then other elements would be built around that. Efforts were made to ensure that every participant was occupied during these processes, although at times instrumentalists were left with nothing to do if their part was decided and others were not yet done.

Occasionally the MiP groups wrote a song together, lyrics and music combined. During one MiP week, for example, the group decided they wanted to have sit down and have a group song-writing session, whereby they could all contribute to the lyrics. Different participants (and ARO staff and professional musicians) made suggestions which were written on a flip chart for all to see; most of the group chipped in with lines, topics, or words that might make a good rhyming pattern with lines already written. What emerged was 'The Journey', a song that reflected something of all of their journeys through life, including crime, drugs and alcohol, prison, getting clean, fears and hopes for release, and trying to stay crime-free. Ideas for musical style, chords and such were shared as the lyrics were written,

⁴⁹ See Cohen and Wilson, 'Inside the fences' for research into song-writing workshops with prisoners.

⁵⁰ For a discussion of poetry-writing in prison, see Robert Johnson, 'Art and Autonomy: Prison Writers under Siege' in Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment*, 167-188.

coming from the participants and the professionals. Once the lyrics and the shape of the song were decided and a singer had been chosen, the group returned to their instruments to work on their individual parts – much like a sectional rehearsal in an orchestra – and came up with their own specific contributions. The result was a sophisticated song to which everyone in the group had contributed, and over which every member could feel some sense of ownership.

In the MiR sessions, song-writing and composition was even less prescribed, partly because there was not a performance to work towards (a point discussed below). However, the sessions were still based around music written by the participants themselves. Sometimes lyrical content would come from conversation, and complaints in particular were used as song-writing material. More often, songs came out of what musicians call ‘jamming’ – improvising around chord progressions, with different players adding in their own musical material. At times these jamming sessions and random collections of lyrics were turned into what we might call a ‘real’ song, something complete. Evidently for the participants, having a sense of completion was important. During those times people who had identified themselves as lyricists either wrote lyrics down or simply made things up on the spot, encouraged by Will (ITT). These lyrics at times turned very quickly into cohesive songs. These often included lyrics written in previous weeks, which were combined with new materials, giving some sense of pathway and continuity to the MiR sessions.

The instruments used in ITT sessions fell broadly into pop and rock categories: acoustic and electric guitars, bass guitar, keyboard, drum-kit and hand percussion, and microphones for vocalists.⁵¹ Song genre was limited accordingly; but that was the only limitation on genre. The approach taken by the ITT is to tap into the participants’ existing musical knowledge, rather than introduce new and unfamiliar genres.⁵² The MiP weeks and first MiR session began with introductions, including

⁵¹ Some ITT projects elsewhere involve orchestral instruments, but that is dependent on there being people able and willing to play them and, more importantly, gaining security clearance for the instruments to be in prison. The projects during my fieldwork included no other instruments.

⁵² Unlike, for example, Good Vibrations who use Javanese gamelan, or Pimlico Opera who stage musicals and operas with prisoners.

finding out what music each participant enjoyed, listened to and was interested in. There was a wide range of musical taste, and because of the collaborative nature of the projects often the songs written would incorporate various preferences. As such, the songs that were written during the sessions did not always fit neatly into one category of music: a reggae song with a rap in the bridge; harsh lyrics set to ballad-style chords; a spoken word poem; a minor 12-bar blues, and so on. During one MiR session with a more experienced group improvising and jamming, Will commented, 'Very...well I don't know what genre that fits into but it's good!'⁵³ Suggestion of a specific genre was rarely made during the composition stage; if a different style was preferred usually the language would be more general – 'let's do something a bit more upbeat' or, 'can we get something a bit darker?' Whilst the facilitators tried to keep some sense of musical consistency, for example tempo or verse length within a song, if the lyricist or drummer could not (or would not) adhere then the song was altered accordingly. Sometimes the genre was much more 'usual' – the output included a drum & bass track, a classic rock song, and frequent use of the reggae beat (with the emphasis on the off-beat). It was interesting to note that despite the familiarity of reggae, and not just amongst the Afro-Caribbean population (although they were often the driving force behind those particular creations), the participants found the 'skank' rhythms⁵⁴ exceptionally difficult to pull off. Significantly, then, the use of familiar genres was not to make the projects *easier* but more accessible, to increase motivation and interest levels.

The song-writing aspect of the ITT projects was at times problematic. Collaboration was not always easy, particularly if instrumentalists had conflicting ideas about progressions or rhythms, or the lyricist wanted specific accompaniments which the instrumentalists could not or did not want to play. For example, Dan came to one MiR session with a chord progression he wanted to use, and Simon had some lyrics he wanted to fit to it. However, Dan's pattern had three rounds (that is, 12 bars for the verse and 12 for the chorus, where usually each would be 16) and Simon was

⁵³ Field notes: MiR, 23rd November 2015, morning.

⁵⁴ *Skank* = the off-beat, stabbing chords which characterise reggae music.

not keen to change his lyrics to match the bassline.⁵⁵ These kinds of conflict were always more awkward than they were heated, but often it was in these moments that the ITT team had to step in and direct the music more weightily than they usually would. At other points, the lyricist had very clear ideas about how the song should go, but was unable to communicate this with others. Ollie, for example, arrived for an MiP day with a song he had written that morning (apparently inspired by a dream) and sang the tune and a bass riff to the ITT team. Miles (ITT) tried to play the riff on the bass guitar, but the process of getting it from the ideas in Ollie's head into a song that was harmonically and rhythmically stable took a long time.

As well as the practical problems of collaborative composition, lyrical content was also at times a difficulty. The aim of the song-writing element is principally to encourage the participants to express themselves, but there were times when the familiar musical style being played led to lyrics which were more obviously designed to fit with the traditions of that musical world, rather than to be particularly expressive of a personal attitude or experience. One prisoner, for example, brought some lyrics for a rap in which the chorus was:

There ain't nothing like a bass line
There ain't nothing like the need to move your waistline
So just dance the night away, lose track of time

Whilst the ITT provides the opportunity for self-expression, some lyricists used it simply to write a song they liked and which fit with the musical style they favoured.

More problematically, the ITT projects also highlighted the delicate line between self-expression and censorship or self-censorship. Artwork by prisoners has been subject to censorship by virtue of its being created by convicted criminals, which does not rest easily with everyone in society.⁵⁶ But censorship in the music industry more generally is commonly debated, particularly for songs which include violent or misogynistic content or explicit lyrics: Steen Kaargaard Nielsen and Mads Krogh, for example, provide a history of corporate (self) censorship in America resulting from

⁵⁵ Field notes: MiR, 21st September 2015, morning.

⁵⁶ Rose Parkes and Charlotte Bilby, 'The Courage to Create: The Role of Artistic and Spiritual Activities in Prisons' *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 49/2 (2010): 98.

the Parental Advisory Label programme, arguing that this has ‘spilled over’ into global corporate music practices.⁵⁷ Alexander Carpenter argues that artists are often complicit in censorship after national tragedies or high profile acts of social violence, which limits open dialogue around the issues.⁵⁸ What both of these papers point to is the way in which content considered ‘inappropriate’ or ‘unsuitable’ is socially censored, even where there is no legal censorship. In a similar way, occasionally the ITT team had to work out how to encourage prisoners to write personal lyrics without actively encouraging expression of sentiments which are unpalatable, particularly to the public or to those who fund the activities. The ITT team tended to err on the side of tolerance, for both lyrics (i.e., swear words) and content (themes).

More prevalent in the ITT projects was actually self-censorship. The issue of swearing came up several times when participants would say they had removed swear words from their lyrics so they could be used. Alternatively, prisoners would self-censor to avoid potential trouble: for example, in the process of writing a rap for a commissioned song about Alcatraz prison, one prisoner asked if it was permissible to have a line about wanting to escape because he was worried that it would go on his file, even though it expressed something of himself that he wanted to share and fit within the genre he was writing. In the end he did include it (*‘I’d have tried to escape but done it properly’*) after being assured that this would not reflect badly on him. The ITT team tried to avoid directing the lyrics in any direction other than to help them make musical sense, but this was clearly a difficulty inherent in the song-writing aspect of the projects.

3.2.5 Performance

Thus far, this chapter has documented the attributes of ITT projects which are common to both MiP weeks and MiR sessions. The one significant difference between the two interventions is the role of performance in MiP weeks, which is

⁵⁷ Steen Kaargaard Neilsen and Mads Krogh, ‘Spillover Censorship: The Globalization of US Corporate Music Self-Censorship’ *Popular Music and Society* 40/3 (2017): 345-362.

⁵⁸ Alexander Carpenter, “‘Die Young’: On Pop Music, Social Violence, Self-Censorship, and Apology Rituals’ *Popular Music and Society* 40/3 (2017): 261-273.

missing from MiR sessions. While both have a clear musical product – a collection of original songs – having some kind of performative element is crucial for the MiP weeks, and something which many MiR-only participants felt was lacking from their experience.

In theory, every MiP week ends with a live performance of the songs that have been written during the week. Historically this has been a large affair, with participants allowed to invite family or friends from outside to be in the audience, as well as other prisoners and members of staff. Frequently senior members of the governing staff have attended, and awarded certificates to the participants. According to anecdotes from the ITT team, in numerous prisons the performance day involves moving from classrooms or small meeting rooms into the chaplaincy or the sports hall where there is space for an audience of as many as 200 people. Throughout my fieldwork, however, performances were prohibited in the case study prison. This decision had evidently come from the prison's governor. Field notes from my first day of observations read as follows:

[Outside the gate, waiting to be let in] Much of the conversation was about the restrictions from the governor on giving a performance on the final day, and banning the words 'concert', 'gig', 'performance' etc – some moaning, and suggestions of how we could get round it. It seems the ban has come directly from the governor, although most of the ground-level staff would see the importance of giving a concert to finish the week.⁵⁹

The reasons for this were never made completely clear, although it had much to do with the fear of (tabloid) media getting hold of a story in which prisoners are 'at a gig' or 'having fun'. Such restrictions have become the norm in prisons, according to the team. The change has been quick and widespread, as cuts to both budget and staff put increased pressure on security in prisons, and sensationalised stories put the reputations of prisons and their governors at risk.⁶⁰ The restrictions were

⁵⁹ Field notes: MiP1, day 1, morning.

⁶⁰ For example, David Barrett, 'Concerns over "holiday camp" jails' *The Telegraph* (11 Feb 2015), online: <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/11406172/Concerns-over-holiday-camp-jails.html>> [accessed 25.09.2018]; John Stevens, 'Coming live from prison. Who's missing me?' *Daily Mail Online* (14 August 2013), online: <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2393391/Thug-Sonny-Barker-posts-pictures-easy-prison-life-Facebook.html>> [accessed 25.09.2018].

frustrating for both the ITT team and ARO staff and, as I have argued elsewhere, hindered some of the rehabilitative aims of the project.⁶¹

Flexibility and adaptability are qualities that those who work in prisons quickly learn; and so, despite being disappointed, the MiP musicians altered their expectations and the project unfolded accordingly. Each week that I observed ended with an informal 'live run-through' of the tracks that the group had written, to an audience largely comprising the drug and alcohol counsellors and perhaps some chaplaincy or education staff who had could spare half an hour. An unofficial audience of prisoners would gather wherever the sound could travel, including by the door or open windows; indeed, the doors were at times opened deliberately to allow other inmates to watch and listen without actively inviting them to sit in the audience. The hope was that such actions trod the thin line between obeying the command to not have any performance and enabling the group to showcase their work.

The other adaptive strategy suggested at times by the ITT team was to make more of the recording day. The fourth day of every MiP week is dedicated to recording the songs the group have written; the tracks are later mixed by the team and put onto CDs. The recording contributes to the purposeful nature of the project, giving an end goal which is not only tangible but material: every participant is given three CDs with all the tracks on to keep or give to friends and family. The CD's cover is designed by a graphic artist, showing the band name and album title, and every participant's name and role is credited. Currently, with the emphasis still on a live concert before an audience, the recording day is more functional than performative. But in the projects I observed the recording day elicited excitement, nerves, anxieties, courage – all the emotions associated with performance. Turning the recording sessions into 'live recording days' was suggested as a way to counter-balance the restrictions on holding a performance.

⁶¹ Sarah Doxat-Pratt, 'Performance Matters: The Case for Including Performance in Prison Music Projects' *Prison Service Journal* 239 (2018): 27-32.

In contrast, the MiR sessions had no distinct performative element. Midway through my fieldwork the MiR sessions did start being recorded but not for producing CDs, only for playback. Occasionally ARO staff would arrive at the end of a session and listen for a while, or other prisoners would overhear from the association room to which the music room was connected; but these were more often off-putting than an exciting end to a process. Sometimes this could give the impression of a more aimless activity in MiR sessions than the MiP weeks. For MiP weeks, although performances had been restricted, the fact that they were self-contained and included formalised recording made it easier to see the direction of the project. Although MiR participants had musical goals in mind in terms of writing songs and learning new skills, many participants told me they wished there had been an opportunity to perform. One prisoner spent a year trying to organise a concert or event in which they could showcase their work as part of a charity fundraiser, but was unsuccessful. It was clear that those prisoners who were able to participate in an MiP week having done the MiR sessions already were gratified in being able to produce a 'finished version' of songs they had written, and perform these to even a small audience.

The emphasis on performance indicates that there is something significant about having a clear purpose to the musical activities. Participants clearly developed 'strategies for maintaining enjoyment and enthusiasm' despite not having a clear performance aim;⁶² and for many participants the opportunity to develop musical skills was itself purposeful. But within this there was clearly something which seemed important and necessary about having a tangible aim towards which the participants were working. The difficulty of holding a performance is also indicative of the way in which the ITT projects are subject to the workings of the prison in which they take place, to which this chapter now turns.

⁶² Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation*, 57.

3.3 The Prison Setting

This chapter has outlined the specific musical processes involved in an ITT music session at the fieldwork prison. The processes of musicking in prison, and particularly of providing externally-provided music projects, are inevitably affected by the realities of prison life as well as the methods employed by the ITT. As Cohen and Henley point out, many of the practices so vital to music-making in prison 'run contrary to the power structures and security rules within incarceration.'⁶³ Such practicalities are often ignored by research into prison programmes, as Diegard and Liebling have argued: 'studies tell us little about the context in which programmes are implemented or delivered, or in which prison life goes on.'⁶⁴ Although, as we will see in Chapter 5, prisoners perceived the music projects to be taking place somehow outside of the norms of prison life, still the realities of the prison setting played a constant role in the unfolding of an ITT session. Further, the relationships between the ITT and different aspects of the prison system were complex and impacted the way in which the prisoner participants valued their musical activities.

3.3.1 Prison practicalities

The methodology detailed some of the difficulties inherent in conducting research in a prison. Unsurprisingly, many of these obstructions are present in music projects too, inscribed as they are into the nature of a bureaucratic total institution. Practical difficulties are 'inevitable within the prison environment', and practitioners are used to working around them, but nevertheless the difficulties can be challenging.⁶⁵ Even the most basic requirements of the ITT music projects were subject to the prison rules and systems.

Like most musical endeavours, physical space and equipment is required to facilitate the ITT projects. While some prisons have designated music spaces, this was not the case in the fieldwork prison. MiR sessions took place in an otherwise-

⁶³ Mary L. Cohen and Jennie Henley, 'Music-Making Behind Bars: The Many Dimensions of Community Music in Prisons' in Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Lee Higgins eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Community Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 159.

⁶⁴ Léon Diegard and Alison Liebling, 'Harmony Behind Bars: Evaluating the Therapeutic Potential of a Prison-based Music Programme' in Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment*, 278.

⁶⁵ Kirstin Anderson et al., *Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team* (2011), 43.

unused office on one of the residential units; the MiP weeks took place in a classroom usually shared between education and the chaplaincy. Approval must be obtained in advance for taking equipment into prison, and then the equipment checked by security staff on its way in. Security issues are a constant concern in prison – King and McDermott suggest that ‘custody...can render almost anything liable to suspicion’, and as evidence narrate an experience in which a geranium pot plant given to a prisoner became a security issue.⁶⁶ In a similar vein, musical equipment was considered problematic. Hollow instruments such as acoustic guitars and drums have the potential to be contraband carriers, and leads and electronic items can be stolen by prisoners for illicit use, manipulation or trading. With this mind-set, it is understandable that there are restrictions on their entry into prisons. For the ITT, setting up (and indeed, setting down) could be a frustrating and lengthy process due to the large amount and specialist nature of the equipment.

While most amateur musical activities around the country take place in evenings or weekends, in prison there is not sufficient staffing during these hours to accommodate other activities, and therefore the ITT projects have to happen during the regular working week. Because of this, the process of getting the participants to the sessions was far more complicated than most music events in the outside community. In order to attend, prisoners usually had to be given permission to leave whatever their usual form of employment was (if any) and be transferred onto the music sessions for a week (MiP) or a course of Mondays (MiR). Sara Lee recognised the challenge this presented: ‘in order to get a group of men on a project, they have to be signed off their work, their jobs have to be held open, they sometimes have to lose their job in order to take this opportunity.’ Prisoners at this prison were allowed one morning or afternoon per week off their regular activity in order to do something else, but for MiP, and indeed for those already on the ‘added extra’ courses, prisoners had to decide whether the music projects were worth the risk of losing their regular employment.

⁶⁶ Roy D. King and Kathleen McDermott, “‘My Geranium is Subversive’: Some Notes on the Management of Trouble in Prisons’ *The British Journal of Sociology* 41/4 (1990): 446.

Beyond the bureaucratic challenges of getting participants to the sessions, there were also physical barriers: the prisoners were not able to get themselves around the prison whenever they wanted. Although the prisoners exercised their autonomy in signing up for the music courses, they were entirely reliant on the officers to unlock them in order to attend the music sessions.⁶⁷ Different units unlocking at different speeds in the morning or after lunch (and some being quite some distance away from the music room) delayed prisoners on a regular basis. Oversleeping or forgetfulness have more serious consequences in prison than for music participants on the outside – the routes around the prison are only open at certain points during the day, so if a prisoner takes too long to leave his cell and the routes are closed, he will be locked in his cell again. The only other option is to persuade an officer to escort them separately – an unlikely scenario.

Once prisoners had arrived at the session, difficulties still remained in keeping them there. In a usual band rehearsal, almost all non-musicking activities would happen during breaks in the rehearsal. In prison, however, the relative autonomy the participants had during music sessions was exploited somewhat and prisoners would come and go for any number of reasons, including toilet breaks, phone calls to family, or unexplained but seemingly urgent errands. As well as requiring participants to be signed off their usual activities the music sessions also had to compete with other requirements of the working week.⁶⁸ Healthcare appointments, legal visits and even haircuts could be scheduled at the same time as a music session, because like everything else, these usually can only happen during working hours rather than at evenings or weekends.

When it came to official appointments such as legal visits some prisoners, valuing the music projects more highly than their other engagements, would say with bravado that they would miss their appointments. Whilst this would undoubtedly make the musical progress smoother, the ITT musicians and staff of course encouraged the participants to take their commitments seriously. This advice was

⁶⁷ The deprivation of autonomy is considered one of the ongoing 'pains of imprisonment' – Gresham M. Sykes, *The Society of Captives, A Study of a Maximum Security Prison* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958).

⁶⁸ See Cohen and Henley, 'Music-Making Behind Bars', 160 for a similar account.

generally heeded by the participants, although sometimes begrudgingly. Ethan, for example had a parole board meeting scheduled midway through an MiP week; as he was aware that parole would not be granted he did not wish to attend, but knew that not attending would jeopardise his chances of parole in the future. We all encouraged him to go, which he did, but he did not keep it secret that he resented missing 'something useful' for a 'pointless meeting'.⁶⁹ Again, the issue of not being able to move themselves around freely makes a difference – a short appointment could mean someone missing an entire morning or afternoon of music.

The music sessions in prison were also more prone to disruption than usual musical activities. Any musical event may have unexpected interruptions, but these happened more frequently and with more regularity in prison. An MiP week was nearly cancelled because the power supply to the room wasn't working, revealing how the shortage of prison staff meant that there were seemingly few contingency plans for unexpected incidents other than those involving prisoner protests or violence.⁷⁰ An MiR session was delayed upon the discovery of broken glass on an amp, where someone had tried to smash the window (presumably to steal the equipment, or possibly as the result of a fight). More regularly, alarms would go off or officers would give a notice over the tannoy, unwelcome sounds in the midst of musicking which were distracting and left the group unable to hear any music being played. The comings and goings of participants caused inevitable disruptions to the session, disturbing the other participants as well.

The question for staff, musicians and the participants themselves is how they deal with the absences and disruptions. For MiP weeks, the effect of disturbances was probably more easily covered due to there being three musicians leading rather than just one, but still it impacted the song-writing and participatory nature of the project. Making sure that everyone with lyrics had an opportunity to put music to them and that every song got recorded took careful planning on the part of the MiP team. When lyricists, singers or soloists missed a session, especially without notice,

⁶⁹ Field notes: MiP3, day 3, morning.

⁷⁰ Staff shortages meant that basic 'security' issues were the priority, and organising events like MiP were lower priorities.

it caused problems such as songs not being finished, crucial parts missing from tracks, or the 'live run-through' being delayed. In these instances the musicians, characteristically flexible and adaptable, would simply find ways to solve the problem. Sometimes the musicians would step into the role that was missing, if that part was a minor one. If a lyricist was missing for some of a recording day the track would be recorded as an instrumental, the lyrics recorded separately (perhaps on the performance day) and overdubbed onto the instrumental backing track. Every effort is made to ensure that the musical activities are able to continue despite planned or unplanned absences.

This flexibility, however, reveals more complex issues under the surface. As we saw earlier in the chapter, a key part of the ITT's approach is to be collective, to work in a group. Both MiP and MiR work best when there is a regular group learning, composing and rehearsing together. Crucially, one reason for operating in this way is that every member feels that they are valued and have an essential role within the creative process, and that the rest of the group are reliant on their commitment and effort. In order for the important skills of commitment and perseverance to be developed it needs to matter if they miss a session; and yet simultaneously for the sake of everyone else there, the absences need to be covered over and the effects mitigated. As has been shown, the realities of prison life mean that disruptions are par for the course, far more than in the outside world where evenings and weekends are able to be filled. The fine line between adaptability to changing circumstances and simultaneously encouraging commitment is not an easy one to tread.

3.3.2 Addiction recovery

The practical issues described above are likely to occur in every prison. More specific to this one was the stated link between the music projects and addiction recovery services in the fieldwork prison, which is not always the case for ITT projects. As already mentioned, the ITT projects ran as part of the addiction recovery services: every music participant, at least on paper, is either currently taking another of their courses or has 'graduated' from one of their programmes.

While this limited the pool from which the participants were taken, the impact this connection made on the way the sessions ran was not immediately obvious. Indeed, perhaps it is slightly incongruous to speak of the way in which this relationship impacted what happened during an ITT project. After all, a key finding of this thesis was that the relationship with the Addiction Recovery Organisation (ARO) largely did not matter in terms of how the participants valued the ITT projects. However, the link with the ARO was organisationally significant – ARO staff decided who could participate and oversaw the ITT sessions, and almost entirely the one thing all participants had in common was suffering from some form of addiction. Some explanation of the way in which the ARO worked in the prison and how prisoners engaged with their work is therefore necessary.

Drugs are a huge problem across the prison estate.⁷¹ Particularly concerning currently is the availability of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), formerly ‘legal highs’ designed to mimic the effects of traditional drugs.⁷² For prisoners who are serious about trying to recover from their addictions, the prison environment is not the ‘holiday camp’ depicted by tabloid news or politicians. Indeed, in 2011 nearly 500 prisoners and former prisoners were awarded compensation from the government for inadequate addiction treatment whilst in prison.⁷³ Most prisons in England and Wales, however, have some measures in place for treating addiction, and there was an organisation based in the case study prison whose job was to help prisoners recover from addiction. It was the ARO that facilitated the music projects.⁷⁴

The ARO recognises that addiction recovery, like desistance from crime, is a journey, and therefore aims to provide support for prisoners’ social and emotional development as well as addiction-specific therapy and, where necessary, medical

⁷¹ The Centre for Social Justice, *Drugs in Prison* (London: Centre for Social Justice, 2015), online: <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CSJJ3090_Drugs_in_Prison.pdf> [accessed 04.07.2018].

⁷² Rob Ralphs et al, ‘Adding Spice to the Porridge: The development of a synthetic cannabinoid market in an English prison’ *International Journal of Drug Policy* 40 (2017): 57-69.

⁷³ Clare Dyer, ‘Poor treatment of drug addicts in prison costs UK more than £3.5m in compensation and fees’ *BMJ* (2011): 343.

⁷⁴ As mentioned in Chapter 2, the provider changed during the course of my fieldwork, but to protect anonymity the organisations are referred to together as the ARO.

treatment. According to ARO staff, the music projects were intended to contribute to these varied approaches and develop 'recovery capital' to assist the participants in their recovery journeys.⁷⁵ However, the reality was not so simple. It was never evident that the ARO link had made a difference to the approach of the ITT; indeed, some prisoners did not realise that the two were connected. Further, the attitudes of the participants towards the music programmes as part of addiction recovery were hugely varied, as indeed were their thoughts about addiction recovery itself.

A high proportion of prisoners have some kind of drug or alcohol addiction, and not all of these sign up for addiction recovery courses.⁷⁶ The music projects being available to anyone who is doing or has done an addiction recovery course is not synonymous with them being open to anyone with addiction problems; indeed, theoretically it may only be those who are already far along the road of recovery who can participate. Prison is full of drug and alcohol misuse, but for a variety of reasons many prisoners do not utilise the services available to help them with their recovery. The music projects were provided solely for those taking ARO courses, not any prisoners with addiction problems. Thus, the distinction of the ITT sessions being part of addiction recovery services is more bureaucratic than it is substantive: not that the ARO is essentially a bureaucratic operation, but from the perspective of the prisoners the relationship between the ARO and ITT was primarily structural.

This may seem like an obvious qualifier – certainly on a practical level there would be no way to limit the work of ITT to addicted prisoners without the input of the ARO. But it is complicated by the practicalities of actually enacting the limitations. It became evident in interviews that some participants signed up to ARO courses but either did not take their recovery seriously or did not entirely believe themselves to be addicted (whether rightly or wrongly I do not know). Josh, for example, claimed he had been signed up for ARO because he was drunk when he committed his crime, and therefore told that he had a problem with drink, a judgement he

⁷⁵ Luke (ARO), personal correspondence.

⁷⁶ The Centre for Social Justice, *Drugs in Prison*.

vehemently refuted. There was a sense that addiction recovery services were treated with the same 'tick-box' attitude as many other programmes in prison.⁷⁷

Other participants were fully on board with ARO programmes, but did not see music as contributing to that in any way. Some were even sceptical of the possibility:

Ollie: when we talk about music it's always sex, drugs, and rock and roll. How could you combine that together? There's always drugs behind music. [...] Me hitting the drums, they ain't gonna stop me from, you know, smoking the cannabis joint is it?

For many, music was a nice 'added extra' but was not really part of what the ARO did – as Christopher pointed out, 'it's a bonus, you know [but] it wouldn't stop people from using if that's what you're saying.'

Perhaps most significantly, some participants did not realise that they themselves were signed up to the ARO's programmes, let alone that the music was supposed to be part of that provision. Rather than the feigned compliance some prisoners display, these men seem to have been accidentally compliant.⁷⁸ Lee, for example, was ignorant of what he had signed up for:

Sarah: So obviously the music programme is part of what ARO do here, so dealing with recovery and addiction stuff. Do you think the music is a helpful part of that? Do you think it shouldn't be part of that?

Lee: Wait, is it addiction?

Sarah: So... [laughter]

Lee: I never heard...

Sarah: Have you done anything with ARO?

Lee: No. I didn't fit their profile because I just smoked weed.

Lee acknowledged that he saw an ARO support worker regularly, who he met with regularly and through whom he had heard about the ITT projects, but did not

⁷⁷ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 432.

⁷⁸ Ben Crewe, 'Power, Adaptation and Resistance in a Late-Modern Men's Prison' *The British Journal of Criminology* 47/2 (2007): 256-275.

realise that the reason he met with her was his supposed addiction problems.

Arthur, similarly, did not realise he was signed up to the ARO's programmes:

Sarah: Where do you think the music plays its part in the rest of what ARO do?

Arthur: Well I don't know what ARO do, right, but if it does anything like...

Sarah: [Interrupting] Sorry, have you done anything with ARO?

Arthur: No.

Arthur went on to describe the ways in which he thought the music projects might be helpful for addiction recovery; he was not fully able to articulate his thoughts but asserted that music was the 'ultimate tool' for helping people deal with their addiction problems. But the fact that both he and Lee had been attending ARO programmes without realising it is indicative of the way in which prisoners engage with their programmes in prison. Evidently, prisoners can 'go through the motions' of compliance without much awareness.

Further, in being limited to those on ARO programmes, the music projects were of course not open to everybody who might find them helpful. Prisoners asked me at times how to get on to the music course, and were vaguely upset when told they had to be on ARO courses to participate; vaguely, in that they generally seemed fairly resigned to this kind of distinction and were not particularly bitter. One prisoner jokingly said to me: 'yeah, I'd have liked to do it, but didn't think it was worth getting a drug habit while I'm in here.'⁷⁹ In practice, however, the music sessions were *not* always limited to those on ARO programmes. Nathan, for example, would regularly turn up halfway through an MiR session and join in; the ARO staff tended to 'turn a blind eye' in recognition that he was finding it helpful regardless of his status as a non-addict. There was an arbitrary nature to the 'blind eye' attitude though: when it transpired that Simon had done the MiP week and done several MiR sessions but his involvement with ARO had been at a different prison, he was taken off the list. Ironically, Simon had been one of the 'success stories' of the project – his MiR group had formed a cohesive band who wrote and

⁷⁹ Field notes: MiP1, day 1, afternoon.

rehearsed together in their spare time, and it was clear to him and to observers that he was finding the sessions valuable for managing his sentence and preparing him for the future. His being taken off the list had knock-on effects for the rest of the band (he was their principal lyricist), but more significantly points to the structural rather than rehabilitative link between the ITT and the ARO, and suggests that departmental managerial aims at times took precedence over general rehabilitative aims.⁸⁰

3.3.3 Structural matters

The problematic relationship between the ITT and the ARO exemplifies a broader issue, which is the way in which the music projects interact with the structures and power dynamics inherent in prison life. Interview data showed a variety of opinions about whether the music projects were ‘part of the system’ or outside of it, and correspondingly whether the facilitators were a part of the establishment or not. In light of this, it must be asked whether the music projects actually serve to reinforce the problematic and painful aspects of imprisonment, rather than mitigate them. Overall, this is an unlikely possibility given that the prisoners tended to prefer their time in the music projects to almost anything else in prison. Nevertheless, the various systems and structures underpinning the running of the prison inevitably seeped into the way the music projects were run, and thus how they were experienced and valued by the prisoner participants.

Cheliotis argues that ‘evaluation research on arts-in-prisons programmes has generally tended to either miss or undermine their systematic subjugation to purposes of “administrative convenience”.’⁸¹ His point relates to the notion of arts programmes incentivising compliant behaviour, which he argues is ‘inherently antagonistic to the avowed mentality of arts-in-prisons programmes.’⁸² Compliance in prison is encouraged through the Incentives and Earned Privileges (IEP) scheme, which is intended to reward prisoners for ‘good’ behaviour and punish ‘bad’ behaviour by the addition or removal of privileges. The IEP scheme has been widely

⁸⁰ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 226.

⁸¹ Cheliotis, ‘The Arts of Imprisonment: An Introduction’, 13.

⁸² Ibid.

criticised both for its efficacy and morality; Liebling, for example, shows that it raises 'questions of what constitutes "good behaviour" in prison, and what constitutes "a privilege" (rather than an entitlement), and of who should have the decision-making power'.⁸³ ARO staff were aware of the dangers and generally reluctant to use the music projects as a mechanism for compliance. Prisoners, however, often supported the idea of using the music as an incentive for compliant behaviour: many participants in interview suggested that one of the benefits of music for prison life was that prisoners would not want to lose their spot in the session, and therefore would behave. In so saying, the participants were often articulating how they thought the prison operated and why it benefited the prison to allow the music projects to happen, rather than how it benefited them personally. Even if they were aware of the coercive nature of the IEP scheme, they could see that the music project would be an effective mechanism for it. To this extent, the prison's power was working 'almost automatically, without the need for direct intervention on the part of the authorities.'⁸⁴

Prisoners were paid for attending the music projects at the same rate as they would be for their usual activities, essentially meaning money should not be factored into their decision-making, indicating the ARO's desire to avoid incentivising participation. Some ARO staff expressed their concerns about inadvertently using music as a bargaining tool for their own aims – they were worried that prisoners would sign up to ARO courses in order to get onto the music course, and therefore their therapy courses would be filled with people not taking their recovery seriously. There is also the possibility that the music projects would act in a more positive way by incentivising dealing with addiction problems, but this was seen as less likely.

The issue of incentivising musical participation leads to some important questions. Were the music projects part of the system which operated coercive power over its participants, or separate to the system and working against it? The perspectives

⁸³ Alison Liebling, 'Incentives and Earned Privileges Revisited: Fairness, Discretion and the Quality of Prison Life' *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention* 9/S1 (2008): 25.

⁸⁴ Ben Crewe, 'Depth, weight, tightness: Revisiting the pains of imprisonment', *Punishment & Society* 13/5 (2011): 524.

participants had on this were largely contingent on the extent to which they valued other provision in prison and their thoughts on the validity of their imprisonment. While it is important to note that none of the prisoners *liked* being in prison, several expressed views of prison as being just, useful, and the impetus for changing their lives. Others saw prison as an inevitability having been involved in the criminal justice system since youth (or simply having committed a crime); still others saw prison as an injustice, a corrupt system of control.⁸⁵ Therefore, although the music projects were seen almost unanimously by prisoners as valuable, this value was directed towards different places according to their attitudes towards prison.

Some participants experienced the music projects as one of the many good things the prison offered, or even the best – the music projects were enjoyable, useful, and worked in partnership with other programmes on offer. Others saw the music projects as the only good thing on offer in this particular prison: Tommy, for example, thought that the MiR session would be ‘shite like everything else here’, but just signed up on the advice of his case worker, and to his surprise, he found he enjoyed it enormously.⁸⁶ Pete, similarly, acknowledged that this was not the worst prison he had been in, but only because the music course was its saving grace.⁸⁷ Still other participants were negative about provision in general and saw the music as something entirely separate to prison. Prisoners commonly experienced the music projects as a safe space or sanctuary from normal prison life (discussed in Chapter 5), but for some prisoners the anti-establishment perception of the project translated to a feeling that attendance was somehow actively rebellious, that they were subverting the system by being there. As Maruna found with Changing Tunes participants, some prisoners experienced the ITT projects as being something that was exclusively for them, and not for or because of the prison.⁸⁸ Participants engaged with the music projects in ways that reflected and were shaped by their views of their imprisonment.

⁸⁵ See Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*.

⁸⁶ Field notes: MiR, 22nd February 2016, afternoon.

⁸⁷ Field notes: MiR, 22nd February 2016, afternoon.

⁸⁸ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 19.

3.4 What Happened: Just the Starting Point

This chapter has argued that understanding context is key to understanding value. Given so much of the way in which prisoners appreciated the ITT projects was connected with their incarceration, an accurate picture of *what happened*, in terms of musical processes and prison life, is essential. Therefore, the chapter has provided a detailed and accurate picture of the ITT projects that formed the basis of the fieldwork. Though the MiR sessions and MiP week are different, the approach of the ITT provides continuity across the different interventions. The chapter has shown that the prison setting impacts the ideal running of the ITT projects in numerous ways, and indicated some of the ways the ITT team attempt to mitigate these issues. It has outlined the structural relationship between the ITT and drug recovery services in the prison, which is a structural relationship that is far more problematic in practice. Finally, it has argued that the value prisoners place on the musical activities is bound up in their views on prison life and their assumptions about the ITT's place within prison provision.

The move towards a more complete understanding of the way in which the ITT projects work serves in part to avoid the trap of making unhelpful generalisations about musicking. Were the ITT projects conducted differently, it is likely that they would be valued accordingly. The performance issue stands as an example – the experience of the MiP week would have been quite different if the performance had been to hundreds of other prisoners in the sports centre, as has been the case on other ITT projects. Likewise, had the ITT sessions been overseen by officers rather than non-uniformed staff or only ITT musicians, the opportunities for self-expression and a feeling of being outside of the prison system may have been missing. More positively, such an arrangement might have the potential to develop trusting relationships between prisoners and officers. Understanding what happened is a necessary starting point for understanding the value of the projects.

Understanding what happened is, however, just the starting point. The following chapters address in detail the aspects of the ITT projects which *mattered* most to

prisoners: namely, the opportunity for music education, and the chance to be involved in something distinctly different to normal prison life. The specifics of the musical processes and the way in which the prison shaped the ITT sessions will continue to be referred to throughout the next chapters, as the thesis now turns to the narratives prisoner participants told of their experiences in the ITT music projects.

Chapter 4

Music in Prisons as an Educational Endeavour

‘For me, it was about *learning*.’ (Arthur)

There is a collective wisdom amongst practitioners and researchers which posits that a core benefit of the arts in prisons programmes is that they act as something of a catalyst, sparking further involvement in education. Illiteracy rates are high amongst prisoners: ‘57% of people entering prison were assessed as having adult literacy skills expected of an 11 year old – over three times higher than in the general adult population (15%).’¹ According to the Shannon Trust, an organisation set up to encourage literate prisoners to mentor and coach other prisoners in literacy skills, ‘on release non-readers are precluded from 90% of jobs, reducing their chances of successful rehabilitation.’² Providing prisoners with the basic educational skills necessary for adult life continues to be a priority within prison education, and there is a belief that the arts could play a big part in encouraging engagement. The Prison Reform Trust found in 2003 that ‘For prisoners who have rejected, or have been rejected by, formal education the arts can provide a route back into learning.’³ A recent review for the Ministry of Justice reported similar findings.⁴ As shown in Chapter 1, research into various music projects in prisons yielded similar results: Cox and Gelsthorpe’s evaluation into ITT in 2008 found some positive correlation between involvement in music and engagement in education,

¹ Prison Reform Trust, *Prison: the facts – Bromley Briefings Summer 2017* online: <<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/portals/0/documents/bromley%20briefings/summer%202017%20factfile.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018], 3.

² Shannon Trust; ‘The Challenge’ *Shannon Trust* website: <<http://www.shannontrust.org.uk/our-work/the-challenge/>> [accessed 24.10.2017].

³ Julia Braggins and Jenny Talbot, *Time to Learn: Prisoners’ Views on Prison Education* (Prison Reform Trust, 2003), 8.

⁴ Sally Coates, *Unlocking Potential: A review of education in prison* (Ministry of Justice, 2016), online: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524013/education-review-report.pdf> [accessed 21.09.2018].

particularly in terms of confidence to participate,⁵ and research into Good Vibrations asserts similarly that their positive impact includes encouraging ‘moves towards further learning, training and education’.⁶ There is enough evidence to suggest that it is at the very least *possible* for musical activities to encourage and increase prisoners’ engagement in other forms of education.

However, the participants in my study gave little indication that they were more likely to participate in other courses within the prison as a result of participating in the ITT projects. Rather, the participants valued the ITT projects first and foremost as educational opportunities in and of themselves. The ITT projects were not seen as stepping stones to other courses; rather, for many prisoner participants, the music education they received was the educational opportunity they had been waiting for. Despite the fact that the sessions were not posited as educational endeavours, still they were experienced as such by the participants, who referred to the facilitators as ‘teachers’, sessions ‘music classes’, and the space ‘the classroom’.⁷ Prisoners rarely spoke of ‘taking part’, nor of ‘joining in’ – they wanted to learn.

The central argument in this chapter is that what mattered most to prisoner participants was that the ITT projects offered them an opportunity to learn. The chapter begins by demonstrating that the opportunity for musical education was the primary factor in motivating prisoners to participate and the main attribute on which participants judged the sessions. It will then show that the ITT’s approach, defined in the previous chapter, was generally a successful way of providing musical education that fulfilled the hopes and expectations of most participants. The chapter will then turn to focus on the educational value of the ITT projects within the specific context of prison activity provision, comparing prisoners’ views of the music projects to their thoughts on other programmes. Finally, it will argue that in

⁵ Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars: Music in Prisons: an evaluation* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2008), 32.

⁶ David Wilson, Laura Caulfield and Susie Atherton, ‘Good Vibrations: The long-term impact of a prison-based music project’, *Prison Service Journal* 182 (2009): 31.

⁷ Indeed, after a while I began to adjust my language accordingly to address the fact that at times the participants did not know to what I was referring by ‘the office where the music sessions happen’ or similar.

being inherently valuable as educational opportunities, the ITT projects provided prisoners with new aspirations for their futures which now *included* musical activities, in terms of continued learning and the potential of teaching others.

4.1 Educational Motivations

The reason participants most frequently gave for signing up for one of the ITT courses was a desire to learn or improve musical skills. For some, learning an instrument had been an unfulfilled childhood dream; others had learnt as children but then given up, and now regretted that decision. Many expressed having 'always' wanted to do music, particularly to play an instrument, and saw the ITT projects as an opportunity to begin learning. Rob, for example, told me in interview that he signed up for the MiP week because he wanted to take up guitar and so he saw it as a 'good opportunity to start trying to learn how to play the guitar there'. Arthur's interest in music had been reignited by seeing Ollie playing guitar on the landing, and he signed up for the MiR sessions so that he could learn. Edward had had a broad musical life as a child but left this behind as an adult; he signed up for the music projects because of his love of music, saying in interview 'I wanted to learn some new things and see if I can get back into music.' Aaron had been hoping to learn guitar for his whole life: 'guitar has been a lifelong instrument, you know, you wonder about how it works'; he bought a guitar so he could teach himself and signed up for the MiP week in the hope of learning more quickly. Nick, like Aaron, had already been teaching himself the guitar; Nick signed up for the MiR sessions to get some 'extra experience' and increase his abilities. The instrumental selection available in ITT projects allowed participants to begin fulfilling lifelong dreams.

Some signed up for the music projects in order to extend the skills they already had into new musical areas. Dan, for example, had ordered an acoustic guitar whilst in prison so that he could rekindle a childhood hobby, but signed up for the MiR sessions so he could learn to play the bass guitar, which he had not done before and was not able to do in his cell. Carlos had been playing percussion in an ensemble before prison, and was using the MiR sessions to kick-start his guitar

abilities so he could be a more versatile band member upon release. Greg saw the MiP week as an opportunity to stretch his musical skills beyond DJing and musical production, which he did outside, and into live instruments, particularly the keyboard. Like others, he was glad of the chance to have a course, rather than relying on self-teaching – partly to have access to the instruments but mostly to help him start and continue, because in his words, ‘I give up really quick.’ For these participants, the musical learning they had already received led to further *musical* learning.

Many did not speak of their own motivation in such clear terms, but instead claimed the generally accepted motivation for everyone in the room was a desire to learn. When talking about the project and why it had worked well as a group, Adrian pointed out ‘we was all there to learn something.’ George made corresponding comments of MiR sessions: the fact that ‘everyone was there to learn’ was the motivating factor that enabled them all to work together.⁸ Arthur shared similar assumptions about the motivations for himself and the rest of his MiR group at various times during his interview:

Arthur: We want this, we can’t get enough of it. We want this three times a week if we can, because this, because we want to progress, we want to learn. So this will make us progress very quickly, and maybe in, you know, like six months’ time we’re doing some serious music [...] For me, it was about *learning* [emphasis in recording].

Their evident desire to learn was reflected in the attitude many participants had towards the project, and in particular their frequently-articulated desire for people to take things ‘seriously’. Seeing music as a ‘seriously committing’ activity,⁹ they expected others to give it the attention and dedication it warranted. Several participants felt that the reason the project went so well was because everyone treated it with due respect. They were concerned that others would come with a

⁸ See Chapter 6 for further discussion of the sociality of the music projects.

⁹ Michael Argyle, ‘Subjective well-being’ in A. Offer ed. *In Pursuit of the Quality of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 32, quoted in Stephanie Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005), 65.

more flippant approach, which would hinder their own learning. David was clear that his advice to others wanting to do the project was that ‘you have to take it, really and true, seriously, and stop messing about.’ Josh wanted others to take it seriously and not waste time – ‘if you’re going to sit around and piss arse about, what’s the point in being there?’ Both David and Josh’s frustrations were aimed at imagined slackers; in reality, everyone in their MiP group was extremely dedicated. Occasionally there were real disappointments: George, for example, though usually very happy with his MiR sessions, shared that the times he got frustrated with others was when they did not appear to be pulling their weight, such as having lyrics that they would not share with the group. I had noticed his exasperation myself during an MiR session in which one participant was being disruptive and not singing: ‘George at times took him in hand a bit, saying “Come on man, you’re just mucking around, sing what you’ve got”.’¹⁰ In interview George spoke about a similar occurrence in another session: ‘that’s what frustrated me sometimes, was, you know...he’s got lyrics but like, when I say, “oh yeah, take them out” and he’ll just sit there, I’m like, “come on man!”. [...] I’d like other singers and rappers to get involved, like, and create little fun things.’

Some participants took it upon themselves to prove that they were taking the music projects seriously and wanted to learn. Paul, as others, found it frustrating when people did not treat the music sessions with the seriousness he felt they deserved, so he swapped MiR groups in order to be with men he had met during his MiP week. He asserted that it was necessary to be with other good people who would take it seriously so that good music could be made and to ensure he got the best opportunity to improve his own abilities. Isaac’s dedication to the MiR sessions came out in his commitment to practise in his own time, buying his own guitar so he could keep improving. He wanted to come out of each session with a concrete new skill and therefore used his free time to prepare for the sessions, so that the session didn’t feel ‘wasted’. Several participants took books out of the prison library, demonstrating at least their intention to continue their learning.

¹⁰ Field notes: MiR 23rd November 2015, afternoon.

4.2 Dissatisfaction: Barriers to Learning

It is clear to see that most of the participants in the ITT projects were motivated by the desire to learn. They therefore judged the projects according to the level of progress made, and the strong desire to learn is particularly evident in the reactions of those for whom this desire was not fulfilled. Although it is always hoped that all participants value all sessions, the reality of music projects in any setting is that regularly some participants might be disappointed about one or other aspect. In my research, rare signs of disappointment tended to be apparent only when their high educational hopes were not met.

Tyler enjoyed his MiP week but said in interview, 'I'd have liked to do something a bit harder, up my knowledge.' He tried hard and learnt as much as he could, but evidently he did not feel he was being challenged through the week. Oscar was disappointed to find that the MiR times were not one-to-one lessons, and found the group sessions were not conducive to his desire to learn the guitar. Like Tyler, Oscar nevertheless enjoyed the sessions and made the best of them – he focused on piano, but particularly valued the times when Will would demonstrate each instrument in turn and allow them to try them all out. Edward had reacted similarly to finding there was not the opportunity to progress quickly on his desired instrument (keyboard) – he was disappointed but chose to focus instead on improving his drum skills. Liam developed very quickly through his MiP week, which he had joined because he wanted to learn guitar; he continued into MiR sessions hoping to improve, but found that he plateaued. At the time of interview, he was finding the MiR sessions slightly frustrating as he wasn't able to learn as quickly as he had hoped – everyone else in the group was also needing attention, and so he was still playing the same chords that he had learnt during the MiP week. He therefore started going 10 minutes early to every session to try to get some one-to-one time with Will before others arrive.

The participants mentioned above all found ways around their disappointment so that they could still get something of value out of the sessions. Others, however,

decided not to carry on because the projects were not fulfilling their hopes. At the extreme end of this was Mike, who had signed up for MiP because he wanted to learn to play *Titanic* on the piano, and left because he was not able to. This, of course, was well beyond the remit of the project – the ITT projects explicitly about writing new songs and working as a group, rather than individually learning pre-written material. But other participants also found that they did not get what they wanted out of it. Jake, for example, did the MiP week because he'd wanted to learn the piano and saw this as a good opportunity to begin; he then signed up for the MiR sessions in order to develop further. However, he found that he was not being given the opportunity to improve as much as he had hoped. Whereas Liam in this situation sought one-to-one time, Jake simply withdrew himself from the course.¹¹ Similarly, Tony had joined wanting to practise and develop his skills but found there were insufficient resources for him to practise properly – as a hand percussionist, there were not enough instruments for him. He ended up playing guitar during the MiR sessions, but became dissatisfied at the lack of progress he made there as well:

Tony: And when I start to play guitar here, he [Will] just, you see, you teach me three or four steps. And I never leave that, all we do the same, and I'm feeling bored because I want to learn.

Tony found the weeks I was there more productive because there were two teachers rather than one, giving him more opportunity for improvement. Ultimately though, for Tony as for others, the lack of equipment and teaching time proved an insurmountable hindrance to his learning, which was of paramount importance to him, and he therefore left the course.

At times, the strong desire to learn itself became something of a hindrance to participants' progress. As can be the case with learning new but familiar skills as an adult, when one is aware of the desired ability level it can be disheartening to find it takes time to reach it. This has been recognised as common in adult learners in all settings: 'Adults are unlikely to be satisfied with a time perspective that sees

¹¹ There must be many reasons why Jake quit, whereas Liam continued and tried to get one-to-one time; it was only once analysing after ending the fieldwork that I noticed the similarities between the experiences of these two young men so I was not able to investigate further.

learning as a lengthy process in which the attainment of a desired objective is in the distant future.¹² Rob, for example, told me during MiP sessions that he often found it frustrating not to be able to get the new skills as quickly as he liked and to still be struggling with chords during a session, despite the obvious argument that he was still a novice. Others wanted to be able to use techniques that were more advanced than their hands would allow them to use. For instance, I wrote about Arthur: 'he essentially doesn't have the skills to be able to play as well as he wants. He really wants to copy how Will plays, but can't.'¹³ Likewise, Isaac became exasperated at not being able to learn barre chords¹⁴ on the guitar, which would have enabled him to play the chords he heard in other songs. I wrote a similar note about Liam during MiP3: 'Liam wanted to learn the actual chords, so we had a go barring, but then I suggested doing just 2 notes at a time, moving up the frets, which worked better.'¹⁵ Where possible, then, the ITT facilitators (and myself, by extension) and participants worked to overcome the barriers to their progress, but this was not always possible.

Conversely, some thought their abilities were far worse than they really were, and so gave up for fear of looking incompetent or revealing 'concealed inadequacies'.¹⁶ Competency here seems to be linked with the sorts of masculine performances required in much of prison life.¹⁷ Evidently the desire to 'mask weakness [and] vulnerability' in order to 'masquerade as strong-willed, confident, and in control' extended even into the music classes.¹⁸ I noted after one MiR session: 'There's a real sense in the prisoners...that they expect to be good before they've even tried, and if they can't do it immediately then they've failed.'¹⁹ Christopher, for example,

¹² John Daines, Carolyn Daines and Brian Graham, *Adult Learning Adult Teaching* 4th edition (Wales: Welsh Academic Press, 2006), 11.

¹³ Field notes: MiR, 13th June 2016, morning.

¹⁴ *Barre chords*: a guitar technique whereby one finger holds all the strings down, and the other fingers make the chord shape – a more difficult technique than playing 'open' chords.

¹⁵ Field notes: MiP3, day 1, afternoon.

¹⁶ Phil Bayliss, 'Learning behind bars: time to liberate prison education' *Studies in the Education of Adults* 35/2 (2003): 162.

¹⁷ Nick de Viggiani, 'Trying to be Something You Are Not: Masculine Performances within a Prison Setting' *Men and Masculinities* 15/3 (2012): 271-291.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*: 284.

¹⁹ Field notes: MiR, 27th June 2016, morning.

signed up to the MiR sessions predominantly to learn the guitar, but found the setting made him feel too vulnerable to try:

Christopher: Because I can play [drums] a bit better, I felt shy to pick up the guitar to play. Cos obviously I felt like I'd be, erm, messing the tune up or anything, cos obviously I won't be able to play it at all well, and obviously it won't sound right when someone else is playing it really good, you know, so obviously I'd rather just try and do a beat I can do on the drums.

Christopher's fears of being embarrassed overcame his desire to learn guitar. Unlike others in a similar position, Christopher decided instead to focus on the drums, which he already knew how to play. Sean, on the other hand, was very embarrassed about his perceived lack of ability on the drums, even though in reality he was significantly better than the other participants (he had played as a child and retained some of the knowledge). His fear of looking foolish overcame his desire to play; he left and did not return. This came up again during an MiP week – 'Ethan wants to learn an instrument, according to Amy (ARO), but he thinks he's bad so gives up instantly.'²⁰ Ethan did at least stay in the group and wrote lyrics to sing instead of learning an instrument, showing again the resilience some prisoners had against the barriers to their participation or learning.

Some felt that the difficulties in continuity were a barrier to their development. Christopher, for example, acknowledged that having newcomers every week meant people got to try different instruments, but it also made it difficult to learn specific skills. Ollie felt that the infrequency of the sessions hindered his ability to progress:

Ollie: For me to really notice it, it has to be a daily, constant thing. Once a week you don't see the difference. [...] If it was, like, er, 6 weeks, every afternoon for 6 weeks, then there would be a vast progression. But once a week for 6 weeks, or whatever it is, there's no progression at all.

Sarah: Yeah, so you think that's not enough?

Ollie: It's not enough. It's not, you know. It's, cos, we can learn the basics but really and truly, you know, we want to go beyond the basics now.

²⁰ Field notes: MiP3, day 1, morning.

Tony agreed:

Tony: And the music is good, it's, is help us but as I tell you before, it's not the way, how to, to play music. Once a week, thirty minutes or forty minutes, it's not enough.²¹

Sarah: Not enough?

Tony: Erm, here there is no chance to, we cannot practise or do in our cells, because [of] the noise and complaints of the people.

Other participants were less bothered by the potential complaints from cell mates or neighbours, but did acknowledge that the temporary nature of both MiR and MiP was especially a hindrance to those without their own instruments. Aaron, for example, during his interview expressed his concern for Rob, who had progressed so much during their MiP week but did not have regular access to a guitar and therefore would not be able to continue his learning: 'it's a shame now, Rob's done all that hard work, he ain't got an instrument to pick up.'

Despite the fact that the ITT projects are not overtly intended to provide a musical education, it was a desire to learn and develop musical skills which motivated prisoners to participate. Moreover, the projects were judged according to how successfully they provided the educational opportunity hoped for. Although the examples of prisoners stopping because of their lack of progress is potentially disheartening, they make clear the strong desire to learn and improve that was evident in almost all participants.

4.3 Learning Outcomes

Although some participants were disappointed that they were not able to learn as much as they had hoped, still most participants found that the ITT projects provided an opportunity for music education that exceeded their hopes and expectations, and they valued the projects highly as a result. This finding was surprising given the projects were neither advertised nor structured as an educational opportunity. The

²¹ Tony's perception of the sessions being only 30 or 40 minutes was not quite accurate; in reality the MiR sessions were usually about 2 hours, but sometimes with limited musical activity during them, especially at the start of each session, which was what Tony found particularly frustrating.

ITT do not frame themselves as having a pedagogical approach, although Sara Lee recognises that ‘where they wanted to learn, we had something to offer’. Indeed, she finds that working with ‘enthusiastic amateurs’ and people who want to learn is one of the things she loves most about her job. The ITT are not overtly aiming to encourage long-term learning – in Scott’s words, ‘what we’re doing isn’t about...it’s not about making musicians.’ Yet their methods encouraged active and passionate learning in the participants, suggesting that their pedagogical techniques, whether intended as such or not, are highly successful.

The ITT’s approach is similar to approaches suggested by scholars and practitioners advocating untraditional pedagogies in classroom music education. Lucy Green has advocated using what she terms ‘popular music’ techniques in a classroom setting, arguing that ‘music education has had relatively little to do with the development of the majority of those musicians who have produced the vast proportion of the music which the global population listens to, dances to, identifies with and enjoys.’²² She therefore outlines the methods by which popular musicians learn their trades and suggests ways of using those in the classroom, such as by listening to and copying tracks of the learner’s own choice, or producing arrangements of pieces chosen by a group using whichever instruments they wished to use.²³ This, of course, is not directly the approach of the ITT, but there are similarities in methods nonetheless. Although ITT projects involve creating new songs rather than reproducing others’ work, the idea of learning by listening and experimenting is evident in the ITT’s approach. Green suggests that using pedagogical approaches which connect pupils’ music learning to musical activity which they find enjoyable and motivating would improve music education and lead to more long-term involvement in music – which is certainly the case for many ITT participants. In a similar vein, Ruth Wright has advocated a ‘holistic approach to music education’, whereby learning in the classroom is linked with the various extra-curricular

²² Lucy Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education* (London: Ashgate, 2002), 5.

²³ Ibid.

performance activities partaken by the pupils.²⁴ Such an approach would, according to Wright, lead to 'a steady and continuous development of musical skills, knowledge and understanding'.²⁵ The resonance of this with the ITT's approach is twofold: firstly, for MiP weeks, the immediacy of performance means that learning technique and developing understanding are practical rather than theoretical lessons. Secondly, although this could not be ensured by the ITT team, those who were able to connect their learning during ITT sessions to their wider musical activities often progressed the most.

The ITT projects were opportunities for prisoners to develop musically. I witnessed many participants make astounding musical developments and improve dramatically through the course of an MiP week or a series of MiR sessions, and these participants tended to recognise these improvements themselves. Participants spoke of their new or improved technical abilities, but also their deepened knowledge and understanding of musical processes and industries and their increased appreciation for music and musicians. These three areas of musical development are addressed here.

4.3.1 Technical abilities

Those who were motivated by their desire to learn musical skills were, of course, gratified when they actually learnt some. Many of the participants gained new technical skills or improved skills they already had during the projects, both MiR and MiP.

The MiP weeks were particularly effective for beginners seeking to make rapid progress on an instrument. ARO staff noticed the improvement made by beginners during MiP weeks, often amazed at the progress the participants made in such a short space of time. George and Liam were instrumental beginners: both used their MiP week as the impetus to start learning the guitar for the first time. Though both new to the guitar, they picked up the skills very quickly, and by the end of the first

²⁴ Ruth Wright, 'A Holistic Approach to Music Education' *British Journal of Music Education* 15/1 (1998): 71-81.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 81.

day were able to change chords, play basic melodies and do some simple strumming.

The second MiP week I observed comprised almost entirely beginners, and by the end of the week each member of the group had basic competency at one or sometimes two instruments. Adrian was especially grateful to the project leaders for allowing him to develop:

Adrian: When I first sat at the drums and I bashed them a little bit and then, then I couldn't do that, you know, and I went, 'I can't do this' and I went to put the drums down, the drum sticks I had. [...] Miles came up, he said, 'no, don't give up yet mate', he said, 'come on, you can do this', and that, so I picked it back up and then, we managed. [...] Obviously instead of just, like, when I was on the bass guitar, instead of just doing, you know, plucking one string, I think they could see that I could do 2 or 3 strings, and move on, you know?

Sarah: Yeah.

Adrian: And I put a slide in as well, you know.

Aaron was similarly highly impressed by the quality of the week and how much he was able to learn with ITT compared with other attempts he had made:

Aaron: It was great, it was great, seriously. You know, I couldn't swap a chord for the life, I mean, when I first started.

Sarah: Yeah?

Aaron: And now I'm actually delving deep and thingy, and making sense of flats and this and that. [...] I was swapping chords the first day [of MiP]. You know, even though the guy that trains me on the wing, the police guy, he's really good, I come back and he, he wants to speak to you guys and see what you guys do to me.

Sarah: Oh really?

Aaron: Yeah [laughs] cos he was trying to get me to switch them for ages, and I was just, all over the place.

Others, like Aaron, had found that their previous attempts at learning or even being taught by others had been unfruitful or slow. The ITT projects, however, had proved successful in ways that defied expectations.

Later in the interview, Aaron mentioned another sign of the improvement he had made during the course of the week:

Aaron: It came to the stage where by Friday, I could play almost and, and steal a little glimpse around the room. Before I couldn't put my head up, I had to really focus...and talk to myself in my head. But after a while I could look up and that.

This may seem like a small achievement, but anyone who has been in a youth orchestra or band will have memories of being told how important it is to look up from their instruments or scores and make eye contact with one another. This is necessary as a musical skill, and for developing as a coherent band and operating as a team: learning to look up and at other people can contribute to the group dynamic. Scott (ITT) spoke about his enjoyment in noticing participants gain the confidence to look up and around when I asked him what he looks for in a successful project: 'Just seeing people get more eye contact with people. [...] Cos I think so much of this is about togetherness and group work.'²⁶ This kind of ensemble skill requires both technical ability and confidence, which often takes time. It is a mark of the quality of the musical education he received that Aaron both saw the importance of looking up whilst playing, and found that he was able to do it occasionally after so short a time.

Progress for MiR participants tended to be more gradual. MiR sessions were particularly successful educationally when the group remained the same for several weeks in a row, because they could all progress together. The groups that were slightly more difficult to target were ones which changed week by week, or those with very varied ability levels. Nathan, for example, a talented drummer, most enjoyed the sessions where there were other capable and 'professional-like' players there with whom he was able to improvise; during sessions which included beginners he found he was not able to develop his own skills. But most participants valued the regular contact of MiR sessions and recognised the improvements they were making as a result. Whatever level they started at, they were able to move further. Nick was improving on his guitar and was confident that regardless of the

²⁶ See Chapter 6 for further discussion about the importance of 'togetherness'.

make-up of the group he would continue to improve because, 'it's all learning'. Although evidence suggests that not everyone had the opportunity to improve, Nick's claim that every experience he had in the MiR sessions was a learning one supports again the notion that the sessions were perceived as predominantly learning opportunities.

Participants spoke of their achievements in ways that indicated a deep sense of pride. Arthur spent a long time during the interview telling me about his musical development, the chords he had managed to get under his fingers and the techniques he had learnt through the MiR sessions. Isaac was trying to develop beyond his guitar skills into musical multi-tasking, learning to sing and play guitar at the same time. Ben found he was able to go beyond the basics he already knew and into new skills:

Ben: I just enjoyed learning to play the drums. I always knew the basics of just doing left, right, left, right...with my feet. I learnt that about twenty years ago, but obviously now you show me doing them other little things. Now I can make little beats up myself and that, yeah, I love it man.

For Ben, it was not just about learning to play the drums but being able to play well enough that he could compose, to create something himself which contributed to the musical output. In being participatory in a compositional way, the ITT allowed participants to develop their skills in composition. Many participants did not use that terminology, perhaps because it is a word more easily associated with classical music, but as part of the song-writing the ITT sessions allowed participants to learn how to make up a melodic or rhythmic line that would contribute to a track.

As well as the technical skills for playing instruments, there was also at times a focus on lyric-writing. This was less spoken about as something the participants wanted to improve on or learn to do – they wanted to do it, but did not often recognise it as a technical skill that would require honing. This suggests that for the participants the song-writing aspect of the project was the way in to learn about music, rather than the projects being ways to learn about song-writing specifically. There were occasions when the ITT team worked on things such as lyrical structure, thematic development, rhymes and cadence – all important parts of song lyrics –

with participants. At times during an MiP week a team member would work closely with the lyricist to get the verse-chorus structure, or work on rhymes.

Sessions allowing the group to ‘compose by committee’, where groups more formally wrote songs together, gave more of an opportunity to incorporate technical teaching into the process.²⁷ During one MiR session, I observed Will encouraging the participants to include more subtlety in their lyrics: when one participant suggested the line ‘never meant to pick up that knife’ to rhyme with ‘life’, Will encouraged him to use the word ‘knife’ in more metaphorical way, to include the sentiment but create a more poetic line. It was changed to ‘now the point’s sharp as a knife’.²⁸ Similar things were done with other ideas, such as ‘criminal records’ – to ‘change the record’ has a double meaning for the prisoners, who talked about being trapped in cycles of behaviour (like a metaphorical broken record) as well as having a literal criminal record. Because notions of quality in songs being heavily subjective, it can be difficult to see definite advancement with lyric-writing, but it is a skill to be developed as much as any other musical skill, and ITT gave some opportunity for this.

4.3.2 Knowledge and understanding

Part of learning technical skills involved developing an understanding of musical structures – that is, a theoretical knowledge of the building blocks of music, the musical elements that go into the different genres they referred to. Looking at incorporating theoretical teaching into popular pedagogies, Green found that when it was taught in the context of enjoyable and practical music learning, ‘even music theory was perceived in terms far removed from drudgery.’²⁹ In being participatory and performative right from the beginning, the ITT projects made theoretical and technical learning desirable and engaging.

²⁷ Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation*, 61.

²⁸ This also highlights the censorship issue touched upon in Chapter 4: here, although it was not intended maliciously, there was still an element of Will restricting personal expression in the interests of technical or musical output.

²⁹ Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn*, 106.

Learning of music theory happened organically as participants began to make connections between what different instruments were doing or communicate what they were doing. Aaron, for example, found himself understanding concepts of metre and rhythm through playing in different styles. He said in interview: 'Even that it's got four beats in it, I didn't really grasp it until Scott was breaking it down for me.' Ollie shared that he had enjoyed learning 'how to read scales and all that' from Will during MiR sessions. David was proud that he had learnt to put 'music signs' next to his lyrics, taught by Miles and Ross, so that he knew when to come in to sing his line.

At times theory was actively taught, spontaneously, as part of learning new chords or styles, corresponding with the idea that 'learning about theory tends to be led by excitement about the music.'³⁰ After one MiR session, for example, I wrote:

George's other song, still being finished, was much darker; the lyrics were about a battle between him and the devil – or the battle going on around him. Will told him about the 'devil's chord' (augmented fourth/tritone) and in the process explained a bit about major/minor chords. It was very simple music theory, but the guys all listened as Will played a C chord, then C minor, explained about intervals and how some sound happy, sad etc.³¹

There were similar instances during MiP weeks, either with the whole group or one instrumental section at a time. Scott spent about half an hour at the end of one MiP session explaining basic musical theory to the participants – he sat at a keyboard with a piece of paper and pen, drawing diagrams to explain scales, keys and harmonies. He touched on enharmonic equivalents,³² and showed how on some instruments the same note can be played in different ways. I noticed Adrian then applying this theory to the bass guitar, by changing frets and strings; this was a clear example of teaching theory in a way that makes it engaging and enables it to be immediately put into practice.

³⁰ Lucy Green, *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy*, (Abingdon: Ashgate, 2008), 8.

³¹ Field notes: MiR 18th January 2016, afternoon.

³² *Enharmonic equivalents*: the same note spelled differently, i.e. G#/Ab.

Prisoners often articulated this as wanting to learn ‘properly’: they wanted to learn the correct technique and theory, and to understand the mechanisms by which they could make the desired sound. Implicit in this is perhaps an assumption that learning by doing is less ‘authentic’ than learning by being formally taught, an assumption which has received criticism.³³ During one MiR session Will responded to being asked how to read music by suggesting the participant not bother. His point was not that the ability to read music is always useless, but perhaps more a recognition that ‘full participation was possible without learning this skill.’³⁴ To learn guitar, as the prisoner in question was attempting to do, it is possible that being able to read music from staves and staves will not be as beneficial as learning by ear or experimentation. But this participant, and others too, certainly had a sense that if there was a right way to learn, they wanted to learn that way.

Questions of what constitutes ‘proper’ teaching and learning correspond to the difficulties of identifying what level of musical involvement and skill is necessary in order to refer to oneself or others as a real musician.³⁵ Possibly a part of demonstrating their serious attitude towards their music education was their interest in going beyond simply being able to *play* their instruments, but to be authentic musical learners. Learning ‘properly’, even if their understanding of this was problematic, was seen as a precursor to learning well.

As their understanding of the elements of music increased, the participants valued being able to communicate these ideas with one another. Music may be considered a universal language which ‘provides a means by which people can share emotions, intentions and meanings even though their spoken languages may be mutually incomprehensible’,³⁶ but for the prisoner participants learning to use their spoken language in order to communicate ideas *about* music was equally, if not more,

³³ Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn*

³⁴ Ruth Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-making in an English town* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 139.

³⁵ Stephanie Pitts, ‘Becoming a Musician: Dilemmas and Definitions’ in Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (2005), 13-32.

³⁶ David J. Hargreaves, Dorothy Miell and Raymond A. R. Macdonald, ‘What are Musical Identities and Why are they Important?’ in Macdonald, Hargreaves and Miell eds. *Musical Identities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1.

significant. Participants, particularly during MiP weeks, were in awe of the way in which the facilitators communicated with one another. During an MiP session, I observed the following: 'Aaron said to Rob, "it's like another language, they just know what they're talking about".'³⁷ During interview, Aaron shared his delight at learning this, and being able to use musical jargon such as 'high action', 'capo' and 'head stock'. Participants found a point of pride in 'learning the musical language' (Greg). Musical jargon, then, was acting to an extent as a marker of belonging: those who could speak in the language of musicians were potentially more able to conceive of themselves as a 'musician', and to connect with others in the band as a group of musicians.

4.3.3 Increased musical appreciation

Beyond technical abilities and theoretical knowledge, participants also developed a newfound appreciation for music. This included listening habits, understanding of the music industry and heightened respect for musical processes and musicians themselves.

Several participants shared that their listening habits had changed, and they now spent time doing 'focused' listening to the radio or their CD collections, picking out different parts and using that to feed their interpretation of each song or piece as a whole. Rob, for example, told me in interview: 'I just like listening to the instruments, you know, like pick out an instrument and, like, concentrate on that.' Aaron described it in ways reminiscent of how English Literature school pupils and students describe their enjoyment of reading being spoiled by studying novels, except in this instance there was a sense of pride in the change:

Aaron: It's dangerous now, I listen to music and I [clicks], I hear beats. I feel the skank now, I listen to my Bob Marley CD and I hear it, and to do that in five days [...] I can't listen to music normally again [laughter], it's just, it's ruined me!

Isaac described in his interview how he listened more attentively now:

³⁷ Field notes: MiP2, day 2, afternoon.

Isaac: Last week, for some reason, what I did, I just listened to the music, like, other music, and I proper listened, and now I can hear things better. [...] I realised a lot of it is about how you strum [...] it doesn't matter if you're just using E and G for example, if you're strumming it right, you can just make it sound, like, sound totally different.

He had realised that music is not only about melody and chords; rhythm, style and timbre can make a piece interesting even where the other aspects are simple. Furthermore, Isaac had not just learnt to listen attentively but had also understood that what he had heard could be applied it to his playing so as to improve his own technical abilities. As their understanding and interest in music grew, participants seemed to be spending more of their spare time consciously listening to music. As they did so, they gradually understood how listening well could help them play better – and therefore listened even more.

As well as more focused and attentive listening, participants said they were listening to a broader range of music. This was at least in part due to the eclectic mix of styles which characterised the MiP and MiR sessions. Although there is space for participants to make use of their existing musical knowledge, many were also happy to try new genres during the sessions. I noticed during an MiP week:

I've also been really impressed with the variety of musical styles they've done, and the willingness to try things that usually wouldn't interest them. Paul, for example, is far more comfortable with laid back, ballad-style music, but worked hard in the faster tracks. Matthew and Samuel, on the other hand, were listening attentively in the slower tracks to think musically and sensitively about when to play and when not to. In just 4 days, they've covered: rock, reggae, ballad, drum & bass, and spoken word poetry. This has required real versatility and sensitivity. It's also involved careful listening and then discussion.³⁸

The range of styles in which they played clearly impacted their listening habits. Participants listened to more of the genres they were playing in the sessions and, having widened their listening beyond their usual tastes, began listening to unfamiliar genres. Rob, for example, told me in interview that he had 'even been

³⁸ Field notes, MiP1, day 4, afternoon

listening to some classical music'.³⁹ Malcolm felt that his 'musical ears' had been 'opened' as a result of the MiP week: the widening of taste and exposure had heightened his enjoyment of music, because he was learning to appreciate different styles and genres.

For some, the widening of their musical tastes and appreciation correlated with personal developments. Both Isaac and George started describing rap as a more juvenile genre during their interviews.⁴⁰ George had been rapping throughout his time in prison (over a decade) but had more recently turned to singing. He took this far more seriously than rapping, wanting to have lessons so that he could improve his range and accuracy. Isaac described himself as now being 'too old for rap', and found his musical tastes widening and, to use his sentiment, maturing:

Isaac: I was more, sort of, into rap and that before, when I was younger. [...] I've just started getting into...more live instruments, different type of music as well. Like Johnny Cash, and things like that, I weren't into before, now I, I really respect and understand what he's doing. But, doing that and then learning, learning how to try to play the guitar, I haven't learnt yet [laughter] I'm trying. [...] Like, er, I know you was in one of the sessions, more on the reggae, sort of, adult vibe, and I've never done that before, ever, so it showed me something new about myself as well.

In Isaac's case, his developing musical appreciation was having an impact on his self-perception, as he recognised his changing musical tastes and connected it with new aspects of himself. Evidently for Isaac, his musical preferences were connected with a lifestyle and a perception of maturity rather than being purely about taste, and thus as his musical horizons widened, so did his thoughts about himself.

The sense of learning new things about themselves corresponded with the development of appreciation of other musicians and their musical outputs. The projects provided a brief but comprehensive education in various aspects of the music industry, allowing participants to develop an appreciation for the full

³⁹ Despite the fact that there were many genres that were unfamiliar to individual participants, the word 'even' was generally only used for classical styles, suggesting a perceived 'otherness' about classical music.

⁴⁰ For a discussion on maturation and musical perceptions, see Douglas Iain Lonie, 'Musical Identities and Health over the Youth-Adult Transition' (Ph.D., University of Glasgow, 2009), online: <<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/1125/1/2009LoniePhD.pdf>> [accessed 22.09.2018].

production process. They had the opportunity to understand what is involved in turning some words into the completed songs they hear on the radio or see performed in concert. The participants were frequently interested in the technical side of working with live instruments, including the use of amps, speakers and cables, the mixing desk and the recording equipment. Particularly in MiP weeks, prisoners were able to see how recording worked and the many, often hidden, skills involved in creating and producing a song. Malcolm told me that appreciating 'what it takes to produce something like that' meant he had 'developed a respect for music and musicians' as a result of the MiP week. Greg, who had been a DJ outside prison, had learnt new production skills and said he now acknowledged the value of the 'imperfection' of live instruments in writing and performance – 'imperfection' both in the sense of things going wrong which brought an authenticity to the track, and in the sense of unexpectedly positive things happening as a result of mistakes.

The collaborative nature of the ITT projects was significant for participants' understanding of musical processes, and particularly how the different roles worked together. Dean was particularly struck when he noticed that how important the instrumentalists are in a band:

Dean: 'I think everything [inaudible] is very important. Because I didn't know this before, I didn't know you could be playing drums, you could be good at playing drums, and play the keyboard, or play the guitar, and sing, that you could do everything. That was the truth. But, because I learnt everything almost at the same time, then, I just thought, everything was as important as everything.

Sarah: Yeah, so everything's an equal part?

Dean: Everything, kind of, for me, is kind of an equal part...Singers get talked a lot about...a lot, you know, and people behind the scenes like drummers and people that play the keyboard, the guitar, you don't really hear about them as much as you hear about...the singers.

Sarah: Yeah.

Dean: But maybe naturally people think, you know, that, that [singing] should be more nerve-wracking, but even playing keyboard and not messing up the whole programme is, is enough, as well.

The realisation that other members of the band were of equal importance to the singer, and that it was noticeable if a 'behind the scenes' person made a mistake, made him see the necessity of each person taking responsibility for their part, and that if one person was not taking it seriously or trying their hardest, the whole group suffered.

For Aaron, this realisation that all parts of the band were equal was deeply impactful in a different way. He shared:

Aaron: I'm from a line of life where everyone wants to be the main singer, no one wants to be the back-up singer, but the back-up singer's just, he, he's just happy and content. [...] Because my distraction was, it's all or nothing where I'm from, you know what I mean? It's ... maybe I just need to go back to doing something that makes you happy and content.

He referred to his encounters with the ITT facilitators as 'humbling', and suggested that they inspired him to think of new possibilities in life. The ITT musicians represented a kind of musical professional largely unfamiliar to a lot of the participants: professional but not famous, with a variety of musical occupations and outputs. Their perceived attitude to life, as well as their musical skills, were the source of inspiration for participants.

The participants learnt much from the professional experiences of all the musicians. Scott (ITT) was especially adept at sharing stories from his gigging life, the good and the bad, the serious and the humorous. During one conversation he spoke about more modern techniques used in performing and recording such as *melodyne*, *autotune* and on-stage pitch correction. I noted that 'the [prisoners] were a bit disillusioned' at discovering the lack of talent in some professionals,⁴¹ but it did heighten their understanding of the music industry and deepen their respect for those musicians who were able to play or sing accurately on cue, including the ones leading the ITT sessions.

⁴¹ Field notes: MiP2, day 3, afternoon. (According to the ITT team, afternoon of day 3 is often where the participants are the most tired, and therefore where there can be more scope to have these discussions.)

The ITT projects, then, were opportunities for a varied musical education. They enabled the development of technical skills, knowledge and understanding, and inspired a newfound appreciation for music and musicians. Participants spoke of the ITT projects as a learning opportunity – and so they were, whether advertised as such or not. For some participants their educational experience had a profound effect on them, as they became aware of new skills and tastes which opened up new possibilities for their self-conception and futures.

4.4 Music in Prisons: Better Than All The Rest

Educational motivations and experiences do not necessarily preclude the ITT projects also being valued for encouraging engagement in other types of learning. However, the participants in this study showed signs that this was in fact untrue. I do not mean to imply that music projects never *could* encourage further learning. And indeed, it is possible that participants were encouraged to engage with further education but had not yet connected their musical experiences and other educational aspirations together. However, in terms of the way in which prisoners experienced and valued the music projects, it does not seem to have been the case that they were inspired to continue learning elsewhere in prison. There are several reasons for this, discussed here. Clearly the zeal with which participants spoken about the educational value of the projects must be understood at least in part as the result of comparison with other activities on offer in the prison. The ITT projects were commonly considered better than all other provision, and the reasons for this are worth exploring.

4.4.1 General problems with prison provision

The music programmes were considered by the participants to be the most enjoyable programme on offer in the prison: it was ‘probably the best out of all of them’ (Christopher); ‘the best time I’ve had in prison’ (Arthur); it ‘smashes all over’ other prison activities (Adrian); the MiR sessions were ‘10 times better’ than other things (Nathan), or even ‘a million times better’ (Isaac). The MiR sessions were

programmes that the prisoner participants looked forward to all week. According to Greg, 'no one had a bad word to say' about the MiR project, which is 'really rare' for a prison course. The projects clearly looked appealing to those who were not on the list at the time – several prisoners overheard MiR sessions and came in to ask how they could get on the list, and more than once I was stopped on my way around the prison by men wanting to know how they could get themselves onto the music course. Participants confirmed this: according to Ben, 'people are always wanting to get into the music class' and according to Isaac, word had 'definitely spread through the jail.' But the participants' comments about the project went far beyond them being more enjoyable than anything else in prison; they were considered to be more engaging, more challenging, and more stimulating than other things on offer.⁴²

The beginning of this chapter showed the lack of literacy skills amongst prisoners and the potential for the arts to encourage prisoners to engage further with learning, which is seen as a key part of rehabilitative work. Its importance is particularly because there is a general assumption that prisoners who have not responded well to education will either have no interest in learning, or be lacking in confidence that they *can* learn and will therefore be unlikely to try.⁴³ However, a longitudinal study for the Ministry of Justice has shown that many prisoners 'appear to be highly motivated to learn' and that 'attitudes which minimise the importance of education and training are not widespread through the prison population.'⁴⁴ Further, a 2014 report for the Prison Education Trust (PET) found that prisoners' reasons for not engaging with education are more commonly to do with 'a combination of barriers outside their control', such as courses being targeted at a

⁴² The claims in this section are not intended to denigrate the work of prison education staff, or those who provide training and skills. Like everyone else, these professionals are working in an extremely difficult culture and are beset by the challenges of managerialism and the need to meet targets (see, for example, Lynne Rogers et al., 'The aspirations and realities of prison education for under-25s in the London area' *London Review of Education* 12/2 (2014): 184-196). I intend only to reflect on what the participants in my study revealed; I rarely observed education or training courses, and so can provide no empirical reflection on the veracity of the claims made.

⁴³ Coates, *Unlocking Potential*.

⁴⁴ Kathryn Hopkins, *The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners* (Ministry of Justice Analytical Services, March 2012), online: <<https://www.lemosandcrane.co.uk/dev/resources/pre-custody-empl-training-edu-status-newly-sentenced-prisoners.pdf>> [accessed 26.09.2018], 16.

low level, being subjects of no interest to the prisoner or having long waiting lists, than they are to do with a lack of confidence or motivation to learn anything at all.⁴⁵ ITT participants occasionally mentioned the long waiting lists as an issue for them when they were unable to get on to desirable courses, but far more frequent and vehement were the complaints about the nature of the provision itself.

As discussed in Chapter 3, there was a range of opinions about the provision in prison generally and the validity of their sentences, but largely the content of their critique was similar even if the sentiment and manner of expression varied. The complaints about provision whilst in prison echo concerns raised by the HM Inspectorate of Prisons, whose 2016-17 annual report of the prison estate raised the concern that in 'delivering learning and skills and work', across the male estate 'around half of prisons were judged less than good in their overall effectiveness.'⁴⁶ That being said, as touched on in Chapter 2, the Inspectorate report of the case study institution found the provision for learning and skills and work activities to be of a good standard.⁴⁷ Officially, this prison was an adequate example of the type of provision expected of the prison estate. Yet prisoners in my study frequently complained about the provision they were getting. Paul referred to rehabilitation provision at the prison as 'a farce' and Isaac declared that 'out of a lot of prisons I've been to, this is one of the worst in the way it's run, the regime.' There was a clear gap between the official rhetoric and the lived experience of some of the prisoners participating in ITT projects. Education courses were often seen as simple or badly taught, and many employment opportunities in prison, such as cleaning or the workshops, were boring and perfunctory.

Although it is true that a large proportion of prisoners have few or no qualifications, the PET report found that 80% of respondents had an educational or professional

⁴⁵ Clare Taylor *Brain Cells – Listening to Prisoner Learners* Third Edition (Prisoners' Education Trust, 2014) online: <<https://fbclientprisoners.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Reports/PET%20Brain%20Cells%203%20Report%20LR.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018], 16.

⁴⁶ HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales *Annual Report 2016-17* (House of Commons, 18 July 2017) online: <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/07/HMIP-AR_2016-17_CONTENT_201017_WEB.pdf> [accessed 03.07.2018], 42.

⁴⁷ Reference removed to protect the anonymity of the institution.

qualification of some form before entering prison, including 45% with GCSEs, 20% 'A' levels and 11% a degree.⁴⁸ The author states clearly that this should not be taken as representative of the prison population as a whole because of the 'self-selecting nature' of the survey (it requires a certain level of literacy to complete it, for example) and the slight weighting towards older prisoners on longer sentences.⁴⁹ A similar type of self-selection seems to be present in the ITT music programmes: it is those already pre-disposed to engage with prison programmes more generally who sign up for the music projects. Many participants were already involved in various other courses and programmes, and there was evidence that some were seeking out any and all stimulating activity. David, for example, told me of the 32 certificates currently decorating his wall, all the result of programmes he had done in prison, and now felt at a loss because he had 'done everything already'. There are people in prison who *do* have high levels of motivation for learning and have already amassed qualifications either inside or outside of prison, and many of these clearly felt the levels of provision at the case study prison were inadequate. It would be interesting to see the results for further engagement if the selection process for music projects were targeted at disengaged and unmotivated individuals, but this was not the case for my research.

Further, it was rare that prisoners distinguished between the types of provision they were receiving. According to a 2003 study, most prisoners do not distinguish much between the different types of provision in prison.⁵⁰ The budgetary and regime distinctions between Offending Behaviour Programmes, counselling, drug and alcohol awareness, vocational training workshops and education 'sometimes appeared arbitrary' to the prisoners they spoke with – 'To the prisoners, there didn't seem much difference: they listed these as "courses" and so they were.'⁵¹ As such, it stands to reason that prisoners would not see a clear line of progression from one programme into another. Except for an upward progression of

⁴⁸ Taylor *Brain Cells*, 13. The author acknowledges that she does not know whether these qualifications came before their first sentence, or during a previous sentence.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵⁰ Braggins and Talbot *Time to Learn*, 23.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

qualification levels (Level 1 maths leading to Level 2 maths), prisoners are rarely inclined to make a connection of progressing sideways from one activity to another. Provision across the board at the case study prison, regardless of the 'department' activities were attached to, was not considered to be hugely stimulating by the prisoners, and the ITT music projects shone by comparison.

4.4.2 Motivations

Overall, as we have seen, a primary motivation for participating in the ITT projects was a desire to learn musical skills. In contrast, few other courses or jobs on offer in the prison were taken because the activity therein was considered valuable in itself. Managerialism and target culture has had a profound impact on prison life,⁵² and particularly on the ways in which prisoners engage with their activities. Alison Liebling found in her research, 'Life in prison was all about risk, filling in forms, applying for courses and getting the right assessment.'⁵³ Prisoners find it frustrating and often deeply painful that the system seems to be geared towards meeting targets rather than meeting needs.⁵⁴ Crewe, for example, refers to the 'fetishism of targets' evidenced by prisoners in his study being marked down as being 'engaged in constructive activity while playing cards in idle workshops'.⁵⁵ However, rather than simply disregarding the opportunities on offer in prison, as unengaging as they often were, most prisoners do still apply for jobs or sign up for courses. For the participants in my study, jobs or courses were rarely valued for the content of the activity, but for a variety of personal or procedural reasons.

For some their decisions were entirely based around the need for money, and prisoners would sign up for whichever job or programme would earn them the most. Although the hope was that this did not make a difference for participating in the ITT projects (see Chapter 3), money was certainly a factor in other decisions,

⁵² Ben Crewe, *The Prisoner Society: Power, Adaptation and Social Life in an English Prison* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Alison Liebling, *Prisons and their Moral Performance: A Study of Values, Quality and Prison Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁵³ Alison Liebling, 'Moral performance, inhuman and degrading treatment and prison pain' *Punishment & Society* 13/5 (2011): 537.

⁵⁴ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 225-227.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 226.

including taking menial jobs rather than educational programmes. An Inspectorate report in 2016 found:

...those taking part in education or an offending behaviour course can earn less than those in employment or carrying out manual work in a workshop. This can act as a disincentive for a prisoner to take part in education or an offending behaviour programme, even where these would better meet their needs.⁵⁶

Prisoners who had a separate means of income (by being sent money from people outside, or by engaging successfully in the prison economy) were freer to choose activities based on what interested them.

Some participants said they signed up for jobs because of the benefits employment gave them within the prison system, such as being on an enhanced regime or having full-time access to the gym:

Sarah: Do you also have a job here?

Isaac: Yeah, erm, I do, I work in the workshops.

Sarah: What happens in the workshops?

Isaac: Nothing! [laughter]

Sarah: Just machines?

Isaac: Nothing special, just bagging tea bags, like we make cereal packs for the other prisoners, so just put cereal, sugars and that in there.

Sarah: OK.

Isaac: It's just to, so I can get my full-time gym basically.

Such conversations regarding the workshops were frequent in the music sessions themselves. The tasks themselves held little reward, short of the benefits they had for the rest of prison life.

Likewise, prisoners talked of their activities in prison in a way that suggested they took up courses or jobs as a show of compliance (some more genuine than

⁵⁶ HM Inspectorate of Prisons *Life in prison: Earning and spending money* (January 2016) online: <<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/01/Earning-and-spending-money-findings-paper-final-draft.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018], 6.

others),⁵⁷ rather than because of the content of the work. Rob, for example, had taken a menial job because it 'looks good on my record'. David shared similarly:

Sarah: Do you have a job in here?

David: I used to, I'm not working at the moment. But my solicitor said yesterday, I must just put down for a cleaning job.

Sarah: OK

David: Even though I don't want to do it, just, just put it down.

Sarah: Just to have something to say that you've done it?

David: Yeah.

For these men, their rather reluctant shows of compliance were personally acceptable because they could see the way in which it would ultimately benefit them, even if the activity itself might not. Arthur's compliance was more fatalistic, and his statement suggests his feelings of powerlessness over his decisions: 'I done the courses that they asked me to do, I done them all [...] it wasn't things I wanted to do. It's things you lot [prison management] wanted to do, and I complied.' His frustration at having done things to satisfy the prison rather than himself was palpable, and all the more so when he pointed out that it did not seem to have actually contributed to his sentence progression anyway.

Occasionally, prisoners were put in a position where they had to choose between a job where the activity was intrinsically valuable, and one which would contribute to their sentence progression by showing they were moving 'upwards'. George spoke about this during a session:

He's thinking about taking another job, which would put him as an A* clearance prisoner; it was being some sort of orderly, which was a higher grade than his current job at the barbers. He enjoys barbering and he's teaching people how to cut hair, it's what he wants to do when he gets out, 'as well as music', but at the moment he's gone

⁵⁷ See Ben Crewe, 'Power, Adaptation and Resistance in a Late-Modern Men's Prison' *The British Journal of Criminology* 47/2 (2007): 256-275.

as far as he can go with barbering and it doesn't contribute to his sentence progression any more. So he thinks he's going to accept the higher grade job.⁵⁸

It is perhaps a sign of the triumph of managerialism that a prisoner who was focused on his future employability outside of prison, one key factor in desistance, actually adjusted his focus to his life inside in his desire to satisfy prison aims.⁵⁹

The utilitarian and managerial motivations for taking courses did not lead to engaged learning or participation for many prisoners. Arthur spoke about this at some length:

Arthur: You've got so much rooms of these guys telling them instructions and everything like that, that half of them are just dropping asleep, they don't, they've locked off in here [points to head]. They might show themselves involved [...] they might get them a little active and that, but, do you know what I mean, as soon as they leave that room they want to wipe it all out, they want to forget it, it's not something they want to remember. And so therefore, any chance, the first chance they get to forget those things they're going to forget it. Because it's been imposed on them.

His comments reflect what Ryan and Deci refer to as 'externally regulated' motivation – that is, being motivated by 'compliance, external rewards and punishment' – which results in people showing less interest and value and putting in less effort to the activity.⁶⁰ When participation is only a show of compliance, the activity will be less engaging, people will do less to improve it, and will naturally place little value on it.

In contrast, participation in the ITT projects was far more intrinsically or autonomously motivated.⁶¹ Ryan and Deci found the following when looking at forms of motivation:

Comparisons between people whose motivation is authentic (literally, self-authored or endorsed) and those who are merely externally controlled for an action typically reveal that the former, relative to the latter, have more interest, excitement, and confidence,

⁵⁸ Field notes: MiR, 27th June 2016, morning.

⁵⁹ See also Liebling, 'Moral performance, inhuman and degrading treatment and prison pain'.

⁶⁰ Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, 'Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being' *American Psychologist* 55/1 (2000): 72-3.

⁶¹ Ibid, 73.

which in turn is manifest both as enhanced performance, persistence, and creativity...and as heightened vitality, self-esteem and general well-being.⁶²

The intrinsic value that the ITT projects held for the participants, and particularly in comparison to much of the rest of prison life, had a cyclical effect: they signed up because the course had some kind of intrinsic reward, and this in itself made the activity more engaging, which added to the effort participants put in, which, in turn, added to the intrinsic rewards of the activity.

4.4.3 Engagement

Evidently, the educational provision in particular lacked the ‘novelty and challenge’ which defines intrinsic motivation.⁶³ A common criticism of anything deemed ‘education’ by the prisoners, including education courses and industry qualifications, was that they were ‘too basic’ (Jake),⁶⁴ and did not allow people to advance very far. This is backed by studies: the PET report found ‘some respondents were studying courses well below their level due to lack of options’,⁶⁵ and the national Inspectorate report found ‘prisoners frequently worked at levels below their capabilities and were not challenged enough to progress.’⁶⁶ This was clearly felt at the case study prison as well: Isaac said the educational courses did not go to a high enough level to maintain his interest; Simon declared that some of the guys were ‘bored’ in education. Music being a stimulating activity therefore made it a ‘no-brainer’ (Simon) to be involved in the ITT projects.

Participants referenced people’s commitment and punctuality as evidence of the value of the projects: Josh professed he would be ‘first in and last out’ if they were run regularly, and Simon declared that ‘all of us really want to be there Monday mornings, no one’s late.’ This dedication has been seen in other projects too – Maruna observed when investigating Changing Tunes: ‘CT participants’ clear commitment...translates into programme engagement and motivation that would

⁶² Ibid., 69.

⁶³ Ibid., 70.

⁶⁴ Field notes: MiP1, overview.

⁶⁵ Taylor *Brain Cells*, 2.

⁶⁶ HMIP *Annual Report 2016-17*, 44.

be the envy of other rehabilitative interventions.’⁶⁷ Of course, the fact the only real criticism participants had of the music projects was that they had not had the opportunity to learn suggests that when they are not providing the educational experience hoped for they may be contributing to troubling lack of engaging activity in prison.

But most participants evidently found in the music projects an opportunity to be challenged and mentally stimulated, which was not the case in many of their other activities. During one MiR session, for example, Jonny shouted over the music, ‘you’re really testing me to my limits today!’⁶⁸ Learning music provided mental stimulation which had a knock-on effect for their lives in prison. Josh, for example, said the following when reflecting on the merits of music in comparison to other provision:

Josh: To do something like [music], where I, I actually come back physically and mentally drained [laughs]. Physically and mentally drained, and people are like, ‘what, you ain’t, you’ve only been over there, like, doing’, like, no, you don’t understand mate, you don’t understand, you’re thinking, straight from the minute you get in there to the time you come out. And even before you go to sleep, you’re still thinking.

Others concurred with this assessment. Ian referred to the MiR sessions as ‘mentally stimulating’.⁶⁹ Jake said similarly that the MiP sessions were very stimulating, which was ‘something you don’t often get in prison.’⁷⁰

The music projects were even considered preferable to spending time in the gym because of the mental and physical challenge musical learning presented. While many prisoners spoke quite highly of the gym at the case study prison, and as we have seen many complied with the regime in order to expand their gym-time allowance, most acknowledged that this was not challenging or stimulating, but more of a pastime. Isaac spoke at some length about it:

⁶⁷ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 27.

⁶⁸ Field notes: MiR, 9th November 2015, afternoon.

⁶⁹ Field notes: MiR, 23rd November 2015, morning.

⁷⁰ Field notes: MiP1, day 4, morning.

Isaac: There's nothing in the prison for me that compares [to the music project]; gym's good, I like keeping fit and looking after myself, but, for me therapeutically music's the best. Especially because you're learning as well, at the same time, as well as enjoying the music and, it's challenging. [...] Like you said, after a while [gym] is just something you do, it's not really like, I don't come back thinking, 'yeah, I been to the gym', do you know what I mean? But with music...you've done something constructive today.

Clearly many of the prisoners with whom the ITT were working were those who had already harnessed what they could or wanted to from the prison's programmes, and it is unsurprising that so many of them felt unenthused by other provision in the prison. It is likely that many ITT participants would see it as a step backwards, rather than forwards, to go on to activities perceived as more basic. Ironically, the ITT are something of a victim of their own success: the ITT projects hold such educational value in themselves for the participants that the claim to increase participation in other educational areas is somewhat undermined.

4.4.4 Self-directed learning

Although it was clearly important that the music projects were learning opportunities, the participants simultaneously did not want them to feel like school. It is common in literature to hear complaints from prisoners about being treated like children: the 'intrinsically infantilising' nature of prison⁷¹ is felt keenly by many prisoners who take being put into the 'subject position of a child' as an attack on both their adult agency and, in male prisons, their masculinity.⁷² This was felt throughout prison life, and was certainly apparent in the prisoners' comments on education, where they struggled against the feeling of being back in school. In contrast, the non-hierarchical relationship between the facilitators and the participants (discussed in Chapter 3) enabled a learning style which motivated the participants because it included a recognition of their autonomy. Prisoners valued both the teaching style which enabled them to be in charge of their own learning,

⁷¹ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 429.

⁷² Thomas Ugelvik, *Power and Resistance in Prison: Doing Time, Doing Freedom* trans. Stephen G. Evans (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 72.

and their treatment at the hands of the ITT musicians who recognised them as adults.

Nick spoke about how much he liked Will's approach:

Sarah: What do you enjoy most about being in the sessions?

Nick: In the sessions? Er, just the freedom I feel ... cos I feel, like, I'm learning something, I'm having a laugh with someone, I'm not being judged or being told what to do. Well, I'm being told how to play, but that's not really a negative, do you know what I mean, it makes me feel good about myself.

Sarah: Cool. Is that rare in prison?

Nick: Yeah.

Being able to learn without fear of negative criticism or a dictatorial instructor was clearly special for Nick. He appreciated Will as a teacher, and felt that the reason people were engaged in the programmes was partly because of Will's manner and expertise: 'And he knows his stuff as well, so people listen to him and...they want to learn.' The combination of the desire to learn with the non-dictatorial approach increased the level of engagement. Arthur, too, enjoyed being away from the pressure of having 'a teacher over my head, with a whip, saying, do this thing here';⁷³ he spoke of Will in ways that contrasted with how he spoke about teachers in other subjects:

Arthur: Brilliant, brilliant, brilliant teacher

Sarah: Do you think he ever imposed his own way of doing things?

Arthur: No, he's got patience

Sarah: Yeah?

Arthur: He has patience, and he has that thing, he allows you to find your way. You know, he doesn't...impose his way. [...] He doesn't judge...he just lets you express yourself how you want it, he doesn't tell you, "look, you gotta play, er, classical or reggae or rock", or anything like that.

⁷³ NB: Arthur's reference to the teacher having a whip was clearly hyperbolic.

Being 'told how to play' whilst simultaneously being able to 'find your way' was evidently experienced as encouraging and empowering.

There was general consensus that the autonomy they felt in the sessions was ensured because they were run by professional musicians, without the oversight of uniformed staff. Some participants thought the sessions would work fine even if they were run by officers provided the officer could play instruments, but most agreed that the atmosphere of the sessions would change. This was perhaps due to the complicated and power-imbued relationship between staff and prisoners:

Liebling, Price and Shefer suggest that prison officers 'could represent the injustices of experienced authority' and could 'embody the prison (or at a wider level, the criminal justice system) every time they spoke to or approached a prisoner.'⁷⁴

Officers tend to represent the worst aspects of imprisonment for prisoners, while the music projects were space away from their confinement (see Chapter 6).

George suggested that if officers ran the session it would feel more like a school lesson. Lee said that the value of it being run by Will rather than an officer was that they could choose the style and largely direct the music, whereas 'The officers might be trying to teach us how to play, like, certain songs' (Lee). Liam said there would be 'too much of an iron fist' if it was overseen by officers. There was a feeling that the ITT musicians, being seen at least partially as on equal terms with the prisoners (see Chapter 3), enabled the participants to be in control of their own learning, whereas officers or programmes more 'in the system' tended to remove autonomy.

The ITT practitioners encouraged, sometimes simply by their lack of intervention, the participants to have creative autonomy.⁷⁵ ARO staff were impressed by the extent to which the participants had the freedom to choose the musical direction of the sessions:

Duncan: You know, there's, obviously they do have to lead it, but they've got to take everything else in. There was one point I was watching erm, Ross with David, and David was kind of messing around a bit, he had his keys that he had to do and he was messing

⁷⁴ Alison Liebling, David Price and Guy Shefer, *The Prison Officer* (Abingdon: Willan, 2011), 115.

⁷⁵ See Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn*, 204-5.

around a bit, and he's moving buttons to see what the different sounds were and everything, and Ross came over and, you know, was chatting to him, 'so which do you think is the best one' and that, you know. And, very much like that, they could very easily have said, 'well we'll go with this one then', you know, so that he feels he's got that input into it, you know, it's just tune and that.

Gemma: I think as well, I think that the guys are very used to being told, 'you can't do that.' Like, what are you doing, being, you know, they have to be challenged but there's a certain way, you know, at the end of the day, we're all human beings.

Duncan: Yeah

Gemma: And they, they deserve to be treated with respect, same as everybody else does. So the way that they did that as well, I thought was really, really good.

Inevitably, some groups allowed for more creative autonomy in the participants than others. Groups made up entirely of beginners required more direction than those where the whole group was already capable; and times where several participants were missing necessitated more decision-making from the team. As discussed in Chapter 3 and above, lyrical content had the potential to be an issue occasionally, and in this respect the MiR sessions were often easier to allow for creative autonomy because there was no permanent recording made from them. Generally in both MiP and MiR, though, the ITT team set up an environment in which the participants felt empowered rather than compelled to progress.

In summary, the ITT projects were quite a rarity for prison provision. More engaging, intrinsically valuable and run in a manner that allowed prisoners to be autonomous over their own learning, the music sessions stood apart from the rest of prison activity. There was an immediacy in the ways the prisoners spoke about the value of the music projects, both in terms of the excellent education they received and the comparison that provided with their other experiences. But that is not to say there was no long-term impact, as the next section goes on to discuss.

4.5 Lifelong Learning

The prisoner participants valued the projects in terms of their immediate impact, and many were hesitant to provide any speculation about how they might act differently as a result of the project, whether that was in prison or once released (discussed further in Chapter 6). Some were uncomfortable and at times derisive of the idea of hypothesising that their musical activities might directly lead them on to any other particular activity, especially seemingly unrelated ones. When talking about their futures, they were far more inclined to talk about their love of music itself, and their changed ambitions for the future which now *included* music in some form or another.

For many participants, the projects were seen as the start of or a milestone in a lifelong journey of musical education. Their passionate claims resemble Maruna's description of the way in which desisting ex-offenders 'said they had found some buried talent or personal trait, however mundane, that they could now exploit in their new lives.'⁷⁶ As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, many claimed they had 'always wanted' to do some kind of musical learning, and their being able to begin fulfilling this in prison was perhaps a way that they could 'redeem' or find purpose in their criminality and imprisonment.⁷⁷

Crucially, though, most saw this as the beginning of their dreams being fulfilled, and not the end point – their lifelong learning only began (or was re-started) during the ITT projects.⁷⁸ Those who were able continued their learning in their spare time – teaching one another on the landings, writing songs together, and practising alone. This was considered a serious pursuit: both Dean and Aaron spent time during their MiP week asking the professionals and me how we started out on our musical pursuits, keen to understand the different pathways people took with their musical education and what they could do to emulate us in their practise. Pete told me

⁷⁶ Shadd Maruna, *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives* (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 2001), 96.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 85-108.

⁷⁸ This suggests that the ITT projects were doing something that school music education often does not: see Stephanie Pitts, 'What is Music Education For? Understanding and Fostering Routes into Lifelong Musical Engagement' *Music Education Research* 19/2 (2017): 160-168.

during an MiR session that he was committed to continuing his development despite not having his own guitar:

Pete is on a landing with Arthur from the other group, and sometimes Arthur lends him his guitar and teaches him a few chords. He wants to get lessons from Ollie; he suggested doing some kind of deal where he buys him new strings in exchange for use of his guitar and some lessons.⁷⁹

These kinds of 'quid pro quo' trades were quite common. Nick shared similarly: 'I spoke to my other friend, and he's gonna show me a few things. Hour long lessons; give him my chicken or something.' Other participants spoke of offering to cook for their cell neighbours in exchange for lessons or the use of someone else's guitar.

Some participants were able to get access to their own guitar in order to continue practising.⁸⁰ Prisoners were able to make purchases from the Argos catalogue, and several bought a guitar starter pack from there.⁸¹ This was always more than a statement of intent – playing their new guitar became a regular part of their prison life. For example, Isaac had bought himself a guitar and said of it:

Isaac: I play it most nights, at least three, four times [...] I just end up looking at it, and, I get an idea in my head, I just start, just start playing, trying to make different sounds as well, cos you can end up, cos I only know the basic chords. [...] I'm trying to learn, I'm learning a scale at the moment, I can, I know the scale but to play it correctly and without pressing other notes...but I'm still learning, but, yeah I play it most of the time just to try to get myself better to improve.

Sarah: Yeah. Do you notice yourself improving?

Isaac: Yeah, I'm improving. Everyone saying I'm improving. [...] The lads have been saying that my level's gone up a little bit, so, hopefully it'll keep getting better.

⁷⁹ Field notes: MiR, 22nd Feb 2016, afternoon.

⁸⁰ Those whose preferred instrument was not guitar found it more difficult to continue learning whilst in prison, as few other instruments are so easily portable whilst causing minimal disturbance to others.

⁸¹ As is the case on the outside, having to purchase instruments has the potential to lead to a wealth disparity in musical opportunities. Indeed, one participant who did not have access to funds told me he had come by a guitar 'from dubious ways' rather than purchasing it. This brings up again questions of security, and also the extent to which ITT projects are inadvertently fuelling the contraband economy of prisons.

Aaron had also managed to get a guitar and spent the evenings of his MiP week practising in his cell. During his interview he told me that he was continuing to do so even after the project had finished. He was aware of the effect this might have on his cell-mate, but was determined:

Aaron: I would literally leave and I would go play, straight away. Straight away, straight away, at lunchtime I'd go play. And I mean, Hollyoaks was out of the question for him [laughter], I'd go play, you know. He's been through a lot, you know! And, erm, he'll be glad to know that I'm moving into a single cell.

He was very proud of his progress, and wanted to be able to tell the ITT musicians about it:

Aaron: And it's kinda, I was kind of gutted I can't like, you know what I mean, I ain't got access to Scott to say [laughing], 'look, look, look, I can do it now, I can do it now!' Cos I understand it now!

Sarah: Yeah [...] Next time I see him I'll tell him you can do it.

Aaron: Yeah, please tell him I can do it, I really can! A, D, and then down to the E, everything!

He now had the ambition to be proficient by the time he left prison: 'Two years left, I can actually be sure I can go home and play.' Their practise was more than a pastime in prison; they had long-term goals in mind for life upon release.

The intention to continue once released was a common trend in the data. For Arthur, the sessions had prompted a lifelong commitment by helping him gain skills much quicker than he would have been able to on his own. He shared how dedicated he was:

Arthur: I feel it's something that I can continue with my whole life, not something I'm looking forward to like maybe putting 15 years and retire. You know, when I come out, it's something that I've started and I intend to just do it for the rest of my life [...] I love my guitar so much. I love my guitar so much, I...could see me playing it regular outside. So, so I'm fully inspired, I fully got what I need to learn that guitar.

Rob likewise was keen to continue beyond the project and post-prison; he wanted to 'take it...as far as I could take it.' Josh wanted to learn the bass guitar; after

beginning to learn during his MiP week and taking to it very quickly he asserted that he was going to get one when he got out of prison. Simon (predominantly a lyricist and singer) had decided that he wanted to find a studio once he was released and record some of his songs properly.

Some participants' musical aspirations translated into a desire to work in the music industry, even wanting to rent studio space and record more. Ian likewise found his aspirations had changed as a result of being reminded of his musical skills – 'It's made me think maybe I should go back to doing music rather than working in computers.' Tony suggested that if people were able to learn properly whilst in prison, 'when they leave they have an opportunity for a job' in 'many different ways'. The well-rounded musical education they had received and the relationship with the ITT facilitators had showed participants a broader array of career possibilities in music than they had previously been aware of. Oscar could see the varied career possibilities in music:

Oscar: ...just give you a few more avenues, I guess. I mean, I would never have thought of it being something you could do for a career, like, get into music. And there are so many things available in music that you could get into, erm, I guess it's not something I would have thought of pursuing when I was younger.

These were not always individual goals. Partnerships emerged out of the ITT sessions, and Duncan (ARO) had noticed participants talking about it and encouraging each other to keep up their learning. Isaac, Arthur and Ollie, who would jam together in their spare time or even just sit and talk about music, were actually making plans to find a way to continue playing together once they had all been released.

Of course, their earnest aspirations are not evidence that they actually did continue learning beyond prison, or that they might be able to get a job in that industry. Although optimism and even 'illusions' as to what the future might hold are often evident in desisting ex-offenders,⁸² the reality is that commitment to musical learning is easier said than done. Particularly when there are financial and time

⁸² Maruna, *Making Good*, 88.

barriers to the activities, prisoners may end up being ‘denied access to the practical means of attaining the most desirable standards of artistic expression.’⁸³ The aim of the ITT projects is not overtly to provide musical education, and certainly they are not intended to set people up for lifelong careers in music – Scott (ITT) gave his perspective on this: ‘I’m not disappointed to come out of it and hear that none of them touched an instrument again.’ The intention and long-term ambition should be understood as more hopeful perspectives on what the future might be *able* to hold for the prisoners, rather than necessarily what it *will* hold.

4.6 Learners Becoming Teachers

Finally, some participants found their experience of the ITT projects had impacted them in such a way that they wanted to use their musical skills and knowledge to help and inspire others, particularly the next generation. This can be understood as what McNeill and Maruna refer to as ‘giving back’ or ‘generativity’ in desistance: “‘giving back’ to others plays a part in ‘giving up’ crime’.⁸⁴ Maruna, likewise, found that a common theme in the lives of desisting ex-offenders is the desire to ‘give something back to society’.⁸⁵ Though unable to articulate it clearly, participants had found that the value of the musical education they had received had had a profound effect, and they wanted to use music to help others.

Maintaining family relationships are important for prisoners, particularly for those who are fathers.⁸⁶ Participants wanted to pass on their musical skills to their children or other younger family members. Adrian told me, ‘I’m going to get my son playing, yeah’, and both Rob and Liam liked the suggestion that they play music with their children or teach them the guitar. Arthur spoke about wanting to use the musical abilities he had found to build on his relationships with his grandchildren;

⁸³ Leonidas K. Cheliotis, ‘The Arts of Imprisonment: An Introduction’ in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 10.

⁸⁴ Fergus McNeill and Shadd Maruna, ‘Giving Up and Giving Back: Desistance, Generativity and Social Work with Offenders’ in Gill McIvor and Peter Raynor eds. *Developments in Social Work with Offenders* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2007), 225.

⁸⁵ Maruna, *Making Good*, 88.

⁸⁶ Creasie Finney Hairston, ‘Fathers in Prison’ *Marriage & Family Review* 32/3-4 (2002): 111-135.

he has enjoyed doing sport with his children in the past, and now wants the opportunity to teach his grandchildren music, which he thought might be an even better way of connecting with them. Nick was considering using his musical skills to teach his nieces, as he does not have his own children, so that he could stay connected with his wider family. Aaron often spoke of his desire for his young daughter to learn – though he did not necessarily see himself teaching her, he wanted ‘to have some idea of what she’s doing and what the guy who’s teaching her is talking about’, so he can help and support her. Teaching music was partly a way of bonding with family members, but was also desirable because the men wanted their children to have the same positive experience they had had, and earlier in life.

Others wanted to use their musical skills to help young people in similar life situations to the ones they had grown up in.⁸⁷ Lee, for example, said: ‘maybe I will use it because I can try and help people as well, like, you know, people that’s like, that was in my position when I was there, you know. And then, like Will, just help them out.’ Arthur said:

Arthur: So I like music. So, erm, if I’m learning music in here, it would inspire me somehow. Because I mean, this, it’s inspired me, like potentially, I’ve looked and said, could I possibly be, can I possibly teach this? I’m not looking at it like, you know, oh, I wanna go out there and be, you know, the next whatever, whatever, whatever. Yeah? I’m looking at the next generation, I’m thinking about the generation to come. Can I have any effect and inspiration on them? You know, give them a guitar, show them how to play it?

Oscar wanted to be a drug and alcohol counsellor and saw music as ‘a good way of connecting to people’ as part of that. Music was generally seen as a way of helping those from similar backgrounds to themselves be encouraged down a different path in life, away from crime. Liam suggested that if he had been able to learn when he was younger, ‘I might have been pulled towards other things.’ George and Josh both spoke about wanting to work with youth at risk, using music as a way of connecting with them to help them turn their lives around. Isaac shared similar

⁸⁷ See particularly Maruna, ‘Work, Generativity, and Reform’ in Maruna *Making Good*, 117-130.

ideas – a contact had asked him to write an anti-gun crime song in the past, and he had performed it to teenagers. He was keen to continue, saying ‘if I could stop one person from living this life then, like, I’d be interested in doing that.’

These men did not know that the ITT already have a scheme that works with NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) teenagers, and were not generally talking about specific ideas. Many of them simply had a sense that their life paths had begun with choices they made as teenagers, and that if they had had this sort of input earlier, they may have ended up in a different situation. They wanted to ensure that others did not go the same route, and saw in music education a way to connect with people from similar backgrounds.

4.7 What Mattered: The Opportunity to Learn

This chapter has shown that from participants’ perspectives what mattered most in the ITT music projects was primarily the educational opportunity they provided. Prisoners were motivated to take part because of a deeply-held desire to learn and develop musical skills, and the ITT sessions were judged accordingly. While there were naturally some barriers to the sorts of progress some prisoners were hoping to make, for most participants the ITT projects were opportunities to learn technical skills, gain theoretical knowledge and understanding and increase musical appreciation. Closer inspection of this could contribute to efforts involved in expanding classroom pedagogies in music education, particularly examining further in the ways in which the projects allowed for self-directed learning even in an environment where autonomy is so frequently undermined.

The chapter went on to illustrate the ways in which the ITT projects compared to other types of provision in the prison. The educational value prisoners placed on the music projects must be understood within the context of prison provision, which was largely considered to be inadequate. The autonomous motivation and intrinsic rewards of the music projects contrasted with the shows of compliance and external motivations which characterised participation in other prison programmes.

The chapter ended by discussing the ways in which the musical learning participants received was connected in with longer-term ambitions. The ITT projects provided an opportunity to begin the fulfilment of self-professed lifelong desires, enabling life narratives to be re-framed around musical aspirations. The desire to use music generatively in the future was likewise a way of incorporating their musical experiences into their wider methods of preparing for a crime-free future. These were, of course, aspirational and there is no way of proving whether they came to be. But it was important to participants that the ITT projects afforded the possibility.

The desire to teach musical skills to the next generation in the hopes that it might change people's lives is testament to the fact that, even if the participants could not articulate it as clearly as they wanted to, the learning opportunity within ITT projects was found to have been deeply impactful. It was the content and the context together which was particularly important: in an environment where there were lots of educational options, the ITT perhaps would perhaps not have been valued so highly as an educational experience. A thread through this chapter has been that the value of having an opportunity to learn was so significant because of the comparison it provided with other provision. Correspondingly, the music projects contrasted with prison life in general, outside of the provision of activities, and it is to that idea that this thesis now turns.

Chapter 5

Relief and Repair: Music as a Sanctuary

‘For the times I was there, it wasn’t like I was in prison’ (Tyler)

The music projects, valued as they were by prisoners as an educational opportunity within prison, were also experienced as a time, space and activity that was separate to their normal prison lives. The ITT participants spoke of the music sessions in terms which highlighted this separation from the rest of prison life: Tyler suggested the sessions were like ‘play break’, Aaron compared the MiP week to a ‘holiday’, and prisoners frequently referred to the sessions as making them feel ‘free’. Such claims resonate with Shadd Maruna’s findings in his study of Changing Tunes (CT): ‘Participants routinely framed their time at CT as a [temporary] form of “escape” from the prison’.¹ This use of language is enlightening – as Maruna points out, ‘escape’ has many meanings and when speaking of it in a prison context usually all definitions are meant ‘except for the most literal’.² Likewise there is a notable juxtaposition of the use of the word ‘free’ and their patent lack of freedom: despite the absence of uniformed officers and other symbols of their incarceration, they were still not at liberty to come and go as they pleased, or even to be completely unrestricted musically. Still there was a sense of being ‘part of something separate from prison’ (as one member of ARO staff described it), which was important to the prisoner participants.

In this chapter I frame the idea of the music projects providing a separate space in terms of ‘sanctuary’: the music projects were a space and activity experienced by the prisoner participants as being different to and better than normal prison life, and which could, to an extent, make life better as well. However, a key theme in this chapter is that the kinds of ‘better’ prisoners are seeking is not necessarily the

¹ Shadd Maruna, *The Great Escape: Exploring the Rehabilitative Dynamics Involved in ‘Changing Tunes’* (2010) 18.

² Ibid, 4.

same as that of those seeking sanctuary in the outside world: when 'normality' is inverted, so too are some of the needs of a sanctuary space. The chapter argues that the musical sanctuary involved relief from the painful aspects of prison life, and to an extent provided an opportunity for participants to 'repair' themselves, to improve their lives and futures. The word (discussed more below) was put forward by Isaac, who used it to indicate notions of healing and transformation.

The chapter begins by reviewing some of the literature regarding the pains of imprisonment and the methods by which prisoners find ways to cope with or ameliorate these pains. It then defines the meaning of 'sanctuary' here, drawing on the relevant musicological and criminological literature, and particularly Tia DeNora's concept of 'music asylums'.³ The chapter then uses data from fieldwork to present the different ways in which the ITT projects afforded sanctuary: occupied time, positivity, emotional freedom, community and connection to the outside.

5.1 Establishing Sanctuary

A ubiquitous feature of prison literature is the notion of the 'pains of imprisonment'.⁴ The nature and direction of this pain is subtle and, today, largely not physical but psychological,⁵ constituting 'assaults on the self'.⁶ As Foucault puts it, imprisonment is punishment of the 'soul' rather than the body.⁷ He writes: 'The expiation that once rained down upon the body must be replaced by a punishment that acts in depth on the heart, the thoughts, the will, the inclinations.'⁸ For Sykes, the many pains of imprisonment are a series of deprivations – of liberty, goods and services, heterosexual relationships, autonomy, and security.⁹ Toch argues that the various

³ Tia DeNora, *Music Asylums: Wellbeing Through Music in Everyday Life* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016 (2013))

⁴ Gresham M. Sykes, *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958).

⁵ Ben Crewe, *The Prisoner Society: Power, Adaptation, and Social Life in an English Prison* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁶ John Irwin and Barbara Owen, 'Harm and the contemporary prison' in Alison Liebling and Shadd Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 2005), 94-117.

⁷ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1991(1975)).

⁸ Ibid., 16.

⁹ Sykes, *The Society of Captives*.

'stresses' of imprisonment, largely analogous to Sykes' 'pains', are compounded by the stress of having to be seen to cope with them, to manage the stressful experience.¹⁰ Crewe describes the mechanisms of power and control that operate in prisons, arguing that they are intangible yet inescapable and thus 'tighten' the psychological burden of imprisonment.¹¹ Liebling and Maruna similarly refer to the 'hidden, but everywhere apparent, features of prison life': 'Fear, anxiety, loneliness, trauma, depression, injustice, powerlessness, violence and uncertainty are all part of the experience of prison life.'¹² Whether intentional or not, and whether beneficial for society or not, a theme running through criminological literature is that the pain of incarceration does not end with the removal of liberty. Furthermore, these pains are not momentary; they have long-term consequences on the ability of the prisoner to live in the outside world.¹³ The pains of imprisonment are experienced to different degrees by all prisoners, and therefore finding ways of adapting to and coping with prison life is paramount.¹⁴

Part of surviving prison involves finding some way of 'escaping' the pains, meaning that prisons are not the relentlessly painful experience which is perhaps depicted above. Erving Goffman describes all 'total institutions', of which prisons is a type, as being like 'a kind of dead sea in which little islands of vivid, encapturing activity appear.'¹⁵ He argues that a characteristic of all total institutions is the presence of 'removal activities': 'voluntary unserious pursuits which are sufficiently engrossing and exciting to lift the participant out of himself, making him oblivious for the time being to his actual situation.'¹⁶ Robert Johnson, drawing on the work of Hans Toch, has argued that 'most male prisoners attempt to carve out a private prison world

¹⁰ Hans Toch 'Studying and Reducing Stress' in Robert Johnson and Hans Toch, eds., *The Pains of Imprisonment* (Waveland Press, 1982), 25-44; see also Hans Toch, *Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival* (New York: The Free Press, 1977).

¹¹ Ben Crewe, 'Depth, weight, tightness: Revisiting the pains of imprisonment' *Punishment & Society* 13/5 (2011): 509-529.

¹² Alison Liebling and Shadd Maruna, 'Introduction: the effects of imprisonment revisited' in Liebling and Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment*, 3.

¹³ Mike Maguire and Peter Raynor, 'Offender management in and after prison: The end of 'end to end'?' *Criminology and Criminal Justice* 17/2 (2017).

¹⁴ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*.

¹⁵ Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (St. Ives: Penguin, 1991 (1961)), 68.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 67.

composed of niches and sanctuaries, offering sheltered settings and benign activities that insulate them from mainline prison.¹⁷ For Toch, 'sanctuary' is about fleeing physical danger, where 'niches' are forms of psychological survival.¹⁸ According to Johnson, a niche enables some degree of autonomy ('a world he can adapt at least partly on his own terms') and provides a coping mechanism ('enhances his ability to negotiate the stresses of prison').¹⁹ Given prisoners fashion niches for themselves, what constitutes a niche rather than a punishment is specific to each prisoner. Indeed, O'Donnell has argued that even the element of the prison system considered the most tortuous – namely solitary confinement – can be experienced as a sanctuary, can be used as a survival strategy, by those prisoners who seek it out.²⁰

These findings all indicate the need for, and presence of, both physical spaces and activities that provide a way of ameliorating the pains of imprisonment. The music projects certainly operated as one of these activities. The idea of music being a form of removal is common outside of prison too: Stephanie Pitts has found that different groups of musicians and music-lovers talk about their musical activities as 'a break from everyday life' or an 'escape' from their daily routine.²¹ However, the idea of 'sanctuary' in this chapter goes beyond escapism or removal; it is more closely associated to Tia DeNora's notion of a musical 'asylum'.²²

Underlying DeNora's notion of 'asylum' is the idea of music activity being both an escape from and an *improvement to* an everyday lived reality. Using Goffman's work as a starting point, DeNora explores the idea of music, and specifically music therapy, being able to 'make things better'.²³ She aims to rethink or, in her words, to 'rehabilitate' the notion of asylum, taking it away from physical 'bricks and mortar' or 'clinical health practices or treatments' towards a more conceptual understanding of the word.²⁴ She frames asylum as both a 'removal' from harm or

¹⁷ Robert Johnson, *Hard Time: Understanding and Reforming the Prison* 3rd Edition (Canada: Wadsworth, 2002), 109.

¹⁸ Toch, *Living in Prison*.

¹⁹ Johnson, *Hard Time*, 172-173.

²⁰ Ian O'Donnell, *Prisoners, Solitude, and Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 68.

²¹ Stephanie Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005), 45.

²² DeNora, *Music Asylums*.

²³ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 136.

pain and a 'refurnishing' of environments to enable human flourishing. Asylum, for DeNora, is understood not as a place where one goes but an activity that shapes the space in which one is: 'an activity oriented to furnishing the social environment with things (symbolic and material) that are conducive to, or afford, wellness, and [...] a place that is removed from causes of distress that are otherwise present in the social environment.'²⁵ Music, in certain contexts, can be one of these activities; it is 'a medium for removal from and refurnishing of social environments so as to make existence habitable, hospitable, better.'²⁶

What is the difference between DeNora's 'asylum' and the notion of 'sanctuary' used here? Firstly, although as with DeNora's asylum the sanctuary was predominantly created by the musical activity rather than being particularly linked to a specific place, unlike DeNora's 'asylum' it is not the 'everyday life' of prison, but the one-off, special musical events (the ITT projects) that this chapter is concerned with.²⁷ The distinction is also partly linguistic: both words have a variety of meanings in the English language, but DeNora uses 'asylum' in a mental health and therapy context. 'Asylum' has links with psychiatric wards for the severely mentally unwell and secure hospitals for those whose mental illness led them to violent crime, which make it at best confusing but at worst an inappropriate word to use to describe prisoners' experiences of music projects. 'Sanctuary' has gentler connotations and the definitions more accurately reflect the views of prisoners. Historically the laws of sanctuary provided criminals with a refuge from capital or corporal punishment,²⁸ and in a comparable way the music projects in prison provided some degree of refuge from the emotional and psychological punishment inherent in the experience of imprisonment. 'Sanctuary' can be further defined as a place of safety for those fleeing violence and danger; in a nature context, 'sanctuary' is a protected space place for vulnerable species to thrive and prosper; it also has inescapable spiritual connotations, bringing up transcendent qualities of

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 138.

²⁷ See Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²⁸ For more full histories of the sanctuary laws in the UK, see George H. Westley, 'The Right of Sanctuary' *The Green Bag* 8/10 (1896) 422-426; Karl Shoemaker *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages, 400-1500* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011).

restoration and healing. Evidence of these aspects of sanctuary came through the data in this research, as the music projects were experiences as both separate and restorative. Relief and repair were made possible through various aspects of the musical sanctuary created, presented as: occupied time, positivity, emotional safety, community and connection to the outside world.

5.2 Occupied time

One of the biggest pains of modern imprisonment is the problem of time – filling time and marking its passing.²⁹ Researchers and prisoners alike characterise prison as boring and monotonous, a place where time seems to pass slowly and with few ways of quickening it. Yvonne Jewkes describes the experience of time as being ‘both quantitatively and qualitatively different inside prison’; that is, both how the length of time is perceived and how the passing of time is experienced is different when one is incarcerated.³⁰ While many in the free world would see unstructured time as ‘leisure time’, in the inverted normality of prison unstructured time is often experienced as painful rather than peaceful. According to Robert Johnson, ‘Prison time, more and more, has become a species of dead time spent in empty activities carried out in isolation from the larger world.’³¹

There were signs of this during my fieldwork. I noticed how infrequently prisoners knew the date, with many unable to recall the year, let alone the month or day. I rarely saw prisoners wearing watches, and some said they tried to avoid having timepieces around them. Lee, for example: ‘I try not to look at the date because it makes my time go slower ... the date and the time, I stay away from it.’ Ben found that time was going even slower as he approached release and was ‘thinking of selling off the clock, just so I’m not watching it’. Seemingly awareness of the time

²⁹ See Yvonne Jewkes, *Captive Audience: Media, Masculinity and Power in Prisons* (Cullompton: Willan, 2002), 10-14 for a useful summary.

³⁰ Ibid., 10.

³¹ Robert Johnson, ‘Brave new prisons: the growing isolation of modern penal institutions’ in Liebling and Maruna eds *The Effects of Imprisonment* (2005), 256.

meant a constant reminder of how *much* time was left in prison, rather than how little.

Prisoners spoke about their experiences of time in prison during interviews – Lee described prison as ‘wasted time’; Aaron referred to prisoners as being ‘frozen in time’; Simon said that prison was ‘just about killing time’. There is a slight paradox in the idea of both ‘killing time’ until release, but also being ‘frozen’ in time, unmoving. These sentiments are well-expressed in lyrics written by one participant, from a song which spoke of his experiences:

*I don't want what lies ahead
There's not much out there still turns this head
Cos the life I've lived, it's left me cold
And I don't wanna die, but I ain't gonna get old*

*Nothing changes
Same old places
Worn out faces*

The final three lines, knowingly or unknowingly a quote of Tears for Fears’ *Mad World* (although to a different tune), are repeated several times, slowly, at the end of the song – a musical demonstration of the tedium of imprisonment and the hopelessness it fosters.

Prisoners noted that there are very few activities which will mitigate this:

Ollie: There’s only so much TV you can watch, there’s only so much radio that you can listen to, there’s only so much books you can read.

Dan: [In prison] you’ve got a lot of time on your hands.

Aaron: I do the same thing every day.

Christopher: When you’re in your cell, behind the door, you’ve got nothing else to do, except for watch TV, write a letter, do push ups...

Josh: Last week [the week after an MiP week] was just slow, cos I’m on the wing doing nothing...drinking coffee till, like, there’s no coffee left and smoking burn until, like, me lungs are sore, and walking around just like [sighs] there’s nothing to do.

Nick: Say if I've been in a cell for six hours, all you're doing is watching telly, and it's, it's same thing on every day, it's repetitive.

For prisoners, then, time has been 'appropriated in the name of punishment'.³² The pressure of finding ways of marking time, filling time, killing time, without the patterns of time found in the outside world, make incarceration a psychologically painful experience.

Accordingly, the value of filled time was a constant theme in interviews. The music projects were 'something to do' (Malcolm); 'something different to do' (Jake); sessions 'broke the monotony' (Ian); the course meant 'you're not sitting about in your cell (Rob); it 'breaks up the time' (Oscar). The music projects gave them a chance to 'escape out of the daily routine – it's the same thing week in, week out and [music] breaks it up a bit' (Nick). Music being a pastime is a common claim, but it holds more weight for prisoners than it does for the majority of the free population. For prisoners, boredom is not felt as a temporary reality but a state of being. The claims above are not the words of someone simply awaiting the next activity or with a spare evening to enjoy some leisure activities – these are the words of men who feel themselves to be in a near-permanent state of lethargy. Many in the outside world would see a sanctuary as a space of seeming timelessness, where the hectic requirements of busy life are forgotten; for those whose everyday life is one in which they are oppressed by having nothing to do, it is occupied time which provides the sanctuary.³³

Another feature of this time-filling sanctuary was that time itself was experienced as going very quickly during the sessions. Josh, for example, said in response to the question whether music was a good time filler, 'Time filler?! Time, I don't even think there was any time, it just flew! ... That week went by so quick for me, it was unreal.' Ollie agreed that music was a good way of passing the time: 'it's extraordinary really ... you're creating something, you're making your own thing.

³² Diane Medlicott, 'Surviving in the Time Machine: Suicidal prisoners and the pains of prison time' *Time & Society* 8/2-3 (1999): 212.

³³ There is perhaps an interesting parallel here with views of weekends – free citizens look forward to the weekends for leisure time, but prisoners spoke of dreading them because there is even less to do at weekends than on weekdays.

And, you know what I mean, you don't notice the time pass but the time, it kills time like nothing.' Of course, in many ways time 'flying by' was experienced as regrettable – prisoners frequently lamented that the projects were not long enough, or that time went too quickly. Prisoners at times wished the projects had lasted longer or been more frequent, but valued them because time was experienced as passing quickly.

Why is it that musical activity is able to do this? Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has researched this common phenomenon of time seeming to pass quicker when one is engaged in some activities. The word he used to describe this experience is 'flow', which he defines as 'the holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement'.³⁴ This flow state is experienced as 'a unified flowing from one moment to the next...in which there is little distinction between self and environment, between stimulus and response, or between past, present, and future.'³⁵ There is minimal awareness of time passing because the mind is entirely focused on something else. One criterion Csikszentmihalyi identifies as being necessary to produce a flow state is that the activity must be to some degree autotelic – that is, of some intrinsic value. His research found that in people who had experienced flow, 'intrinsic rewards appeared to overshadow extrinsic ones as the main incentives for pursuing the activity.'³⁶ How important it is, then, that the prisoners valued the music primarily for the musical education they received. The activity had inherent value to them – they were eager to learn musical skills – which fuelled their concentration and created the environment in which 'flow' could occur.³⁷

'Flow' should not be confused with a trance-like state. As shown in Chapter 3, the ITT sessions in prison are prone to disruptions and disturbances. External noises or people coming in and out of the room did break the flow of the session, as

³⁴ Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety* (Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1975), 36.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 35.

³⁷ That is not to say that there can be no external rewards – flow is not necessarily hindered by the fact that, for example, a prisoner recognises he is doing something that might look good on his record. But there must be significant intrinsic reward to experience this flow state: the prisoner focuses on learning the chords because he enjoys playing them correctly.

participants forgot chords, made mistakes or simply stopped playing. But for the ITT participants it was the quality of the activity, rather than the lack of any other distractions, which created a sense of flow. Csikszentmihalyi found that the autotelic experience occurs when the activity adequately balances challenge and ease: it must be sufficiently difficult that it requires attention and effort, but not so far beyond the abilities of the individual that it induces anxiety. 'Poised between boredom and worry, the autotelic experience is one of complete involvement of the actor with his activity.'³⁸ The ITT methods – which, as we saw in Chapter 4, allow participants of differing abilities a chance to learn and improve – are fundamental for allowing this balance of effort and accessibility, which contributes to a feeling of flow. And it is this sense of flow which gives the impression of time passing quickly, providing a sanctuary from the 'dead time' of usual prison life.

As well as the time in the sessions, participants often found that the time in between sessions also went quickly. This was unsurprising for the MiP weeks where one would expect the week to be seen retrospectively as a whole (that is, even if an evening felt slow, the week as a whole spent doing music every day would have felt fast), but it was interesting that those doing the regular MiR sessions also found time passed quickly. Participants spoke about looking forward to Monday all week, and enjoyed having something else to focus on. This suggests that in providing stimulating activity, the music not only filled the time but also provided something to think about and talk about, rather than the pains of imprisonment being increased by the sufferer dwelling on them. The act of looking forward likewise seemed to speed up the time – Isaac, for example, said 'Music, I actually was looking forward to every Monday, the six weeks went so quick, felt like it was 2 weeks.' The MiR sessions seemed to act as a temporal anchor, giving a rhythm to the weeks with an enjoyable way of marking the time. It would be interesting to see if this remained the case if the music projects became a regular feature of prison life – would they continue to be experienced as distinct from the empty time and monotonous routine of prison life if they became part of the repetitive regime? What is clear, however, is that in the way the ITT projects were offered in this

³⁸ Csikszentmihalyi, *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety*, 35-36.

prison, the prisoners experienced them as a way of filling time, of passing time and of marking time which provided a distinction and relief from the pressures of normal prison life.

5.3 Positivity

Another way that the music projects provided some sanctuary to the participants was in the happy atmosphere created during the sessions. Of course, it is entirely to be expected that the musical activities were enjoyable: most musicking around the country is enjoyed by those who choose who take part. As we saw in the previous chapter, the enjoyment of the ITT projects stood out in stark contrast to other prison activities. The way prisoners spoke about this, however, went beyond being 'one bright point in an otherwise very difficult and punishing environment', as Maruna put it,³⁹ or mere removal activity. The music projects were a space and activity in which prisoners were able to release the negativity of imprisonment, create their own positive atmosphere, and in so doing they could 'imbibe' some of that positivity and take it with them into the rest of prison life.

Prisoners in my study tended to refer to their experiences in prison as a positive-negative dichotomy: prison life was normally 'negative', and the music projects were 'positive'. Greg, for example, found the music to be entirely positive, whereas 'everything's negative in prison, nothing's positive'. Greg's reference to *everything* in prison being negative suggests that Greg did not perceive the music projects as being truly *in prison*. Nick shared similarly: 'it's not negative or nothing, it ain't poison, so it's good.' Rob referred to the MiP week as having 'positive energy [...] it's positivity isn't it, that's what you need in prisons, you need positivity.' Dean said that his MiP week was 'a positive thing, there was no negative thing, everything that was said was positive, positive, positive.' The music projects were clearly happy times for the participants, and made all the more so by the contrast with regular prison life: my field notes are full of references to individual participants having a

³⁹ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 18.

good time, the buzz that came after a performance, and seeing people moving, dancing, smiling and laughing together.

The prisoner participants overall valued the stress-relieving nature of musical activity. Ethan shared why this was necessary for him: '[there's] lots going on in the mind, I feel like I'm about to explode', but music provided 'an emotional release, for anger, boredom, intolerance, apathy [...] with music, I'm venting what's inside me.' Adrian described the music sessions as 'something to clear your mind'; Nathan shared similarly that the MiR sessions were a good way to 'forget about things for a moment' and 'release all the stress'. Liam found the positivity of music stress-relieving: 'It's a release, music. It just makes you happy.' Oscar agreed: 'I know some people do use music to get their frustration out. [...] For me, it's a relaxing thing. It, it kind of releases a lot of tension because you're letting what's in your head come out.' Finn found music good because 'it helps keep your anger down'. In an environment where anger and frustration are often bottled up, having a way of releasing this was beneficial.⁴⁰

The possibility of releasing negative emotion and stress was often referred to as therapy – several mentioned thinking of the sessions as music therapy during their interviews, and many of the officers referred to the sessions as therapy. My field notes record participants speaking in those terms:

Lots of mentions of 'therapy' today – Ollie arrived and said he was ready for his Monday morning therapy session; the others said it a couple of times, and Nathan left at the end saying, 'thanks for the therapy'.⁴¹

Nathan described the music session as the best thing in the jail, the only good thing on offer. When Will asked him what he wanted to do he said he didn't mind, "it's all therapy".⁴²

⁴⁰ Ben Crewe et al. 'The emotional geography of prison life' *Theoretical Criminology* 18/1 (2014): 56-74.

⁴¹ Field notes: MiR 23rd May 2016, morning.

⁴² Field notes: MiR 13th June 2016, morning.

The courses were not music therapy – although the distinction between music therapy and other social musicking activities is often blurry at best.⁴³ Lucy O’Grady’s term ‘therapeutic potentials’ is helpful here: ‘the term encourages an exploration of how making music has the power to inspire change or transformation in a positive or healing way in certain contexts, while remaining true to the idea that music is not always therapeutic, and that the capacity for change is not always enacted.’⁴⁴ Regardless of what happened as a result, the sessions were broadly recognised as a chance to release tension and stress in a way that was experienced as being therapeutic, and had the potential to bring about a degree of healing.

‘Therapy’ often brings up images of relaxation, of someone lying peacefully on a couch and talking; ‘music therapy’ tends to be associated with calming music. This was not the case for the ITT projects. While there was certainly therapeutic value in being able to express themselves in their lyrics, a point which will be returned to below, it was often the times of chaos and cacophony that enabled the release of negativity. There was an opportunity to let loose on drums or guitar, to make noise and go wild within the confines of the safety of the music projects. This release was heightened by the physicality of music making. The idea of music being ‘moving’ is often understood as being an emotional description, but there is a physical reality to this as well. Listening to music induces physical movements, and making music requires physical movements.⁴⁵ I noticed frequently how the drums in particular – and occasionally hand percussion – were used simply to let off steam. But at times all the instruments were used to this effect by just going through the physical motions of playing them. This is one way in which the projects being participatory in nature, and using live instruments, is so important – there is a whole-body experience of musicking which provided a release for participants.

⁴³ Although true music therapy requires a qualified music therapist, trained in counselling as well as music, the distinctions between ‘community music’, ‘community music therapy’ and ‘music therapy’ are rarely, if ever, sharply defined – see Mercédès Pavlicevic and Gary Ansdell eds. *Community Music Therapy* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2004) for discussion on this.

⁴⁴ Lucy O’Grady; ‘The Therapeutic Potentials of Creating and Performing Music with Women in Prison: A Qualitative Case Study’ *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy* Vol. 6 (2011): 124.

⁴⁵ Marc Leman, Jeska Buhmann and Edith Van Dyck, ‘The empowering effects of being locked into the beat of the music’ in Clemens Wöllner ed. *Body, Sound and Space in Music and Beyond: Multimodal Explorations* (Taylor and Francis, 2017), 13-28.

Leman, Buhmann and van Dyck write that music encourages 'spontaneous' bodily responses, in the form of tapping the feet, walking in time or dancing – we 'synchronise' our bodies to the music as we hear it (whether primarily as players or as listeners) and can become 'locked into the beat'.⁴⁶ Simon Frith argues that dancing is 'not just a way of expressing music but...a way of listening to it'.⁴⁷ Music, in short, makes us move. This even allowed non-participants the opportunity to join in as well, as staff and prisoners who overheard the sessions began to dance along with the music from the corridors or adjoining rooms. Participants, too, would dance along to the music as they sang or sat at their instruments – something which was both indicative of and increased the positive atmosphere in the sessions.

It was particularly interesting to observe that the music courses were also a chance for prisoners to let their guards down and be silly and juvenile without fear of judgement, contrasting with the 'hypermasculinity' of many areas of prison life (discussed further below).⁴⁸ I noticed how microphones would often bring out the childish nature of some prisoners – they would make all sorts of noises into the microphones, including rap or scat noises and animal impressions. In a wider environment where one has to be on guard at all times, it was clearly a relief to be able to let go. My field notes record one MiR session where the release was particularly evident:

Jonny wrote some joke lyrics about items he'd stolen from the kitchen (a bottle of soy and a bag of baking powder, I'm going to make a stir fry). [...] So, for the last 10 minutes we sang 'the stir fry song'. Jonny kept on joking about his kitchen lyrics, so Will just ran with it. [...] Will took the energy level up loads, going a bit crazy which gave the other 3 permission to be silly with the lyrics [...] and opened up the session for people to let loose a bit.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Simon Frith, *Performing Rites: Evaluating Popular Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 142.

⁴⁸ Tony Evans and Patti Wallace, 'A Prison within a Prison? The Masculinity Narratives of Male Prisoners' *Men and Masculinities* 10/4 (2008): 484-507.

⁴⁹ Field notes: MiR, 23rd November 2015, afternoon.

This type of release is notable when one takes into consideration the childlike nature of some protests in prison – grown men using excrement to rebel,⁵⁰ or holding themselves on the roof to make seemingly trivial demands.⁵¹ Prison is an infantilising environment, so it is perhaps important to question whether this release is evidence of music's beneficial power, or in fact evidence of the way in which prison reduces adult instincts to childlike tendencies; but clearly at times the music sessions invited a carefree abandon which the participants enjoyed.

The release of stress and negativity was certainly valuable, and no doubt prison staff would be grateful for the more constructive forms of release which took place if that avoided trouble on the landings. Beyond release, the participants were able to in some way 'imbibe' some of the positivity they experienced, and take it away with them into the rest of prison life. It was clear that the music projects were lifting participants' moods for beyond the length of the project. ARO staff noticed that the participants, particularly MiP participants, were still beaming weeks after the project, which was clearly an unusual thing. Participants frequently told me in interview that they would leave a music session on a 'high',⁵² and it would improve their mood and outlook. Christopher, for example, said: 'it lifts my mood as well. You know, erm, just, as I said it relaxes me at the same time and it lifts my mood, makes me more happier for, like, the rest of the day.' Oscar agreed: 'it can affect you emotionally as well, it can brighten up any boring day, or any, anything that you're going through it just helps you put it aside, you can just have fun. So...emotionally I think it's a, it's a good booster.' Ben said, 'Oh yeah definitely, it relaxes people, you know, puts them in a better frame of mind.' Evidently attitudes and outlooks improved as a result of taking part in the ITT sessions.

This positivity at times went beyond their happiness during the music sessions and began to be reflected in their feelings about themselves and their futures. DeNora

⁵⁰ 'Dirty protests' became notorious after IRA and INLA prisoners used such tactics in the 1970s. Today, however, such moves are 'more often acts of despair than concerted strategic decisions' (Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 236).

⁵¹ One of the music participants was, as I was told, transferred to another prison after an 'incident at height'.

⁵² This was generally referring to an emotional high rather than intentionally making a comparison with drugs.

might refer to this as part of the 'refurnishing' that goes on in musical activity; Isaac talked about the need to 'repair' themselves:

Isaac: I think [the music project] has a very important place, because, I think, I don't want to say damaged, but a lot of people in prison are trying to repair themselves, and if you've done quite a bit of time, you know, you can get lost in the system, and down, and a bit depressed or feel oppressed or whatever. [...] They're looking for something to lift them up, so it definitely helps.

Isaac's impression was that those who are looking for something to 'lift them up' were able to find it in the music sessions. Other participants shared similar sentiments, recognising the potential of the projects not just to make them feel happy with their immediate situation during the session, but to improve their outlook on life and feelings about themselves as well. Ben struggled to put his feelings into words, but tried to explain when I asked him how he felt when he left the sessions:

Ben: I used to come out of there every Monday feeling...it's hard to describe...just generally happy, just happier, just felt good in yourself, you know what I mean? [Later in interview] Just helps keep people in a good, er, frame of mind, keep people positive, you know what I mean, about their sentence, you know, about things they need to do.

It is likely that other participants had similar experiences. Duncan and Gemma (ARO) observed that in having achieved something tangible in the music project, the participants were given hope that they could achieve more in life than they thought they could.⁵³

Participants articulated similar thoughts: the music sessions were good for 'cementing hope' (Ethan), and for building 'that thing like belief, hope, all those kinds of things' (Aaron). Nick was more specific about where this hope was directed: he shared with me how much he lacked confidence and was fearful of returning to drugs and crime on release. The fact that the projects 'made me feel good about myself' gave him courage to believe he could continue on the

⁵³ Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars: Music in Prisons: an evaluation* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2008), 21-22.

desistance journey. These sentiments came out in one participant's song lyrics, which were set to a reggae beat:

*Need to think of the future (think of the future
Need to get myself stronger (get myself stronger)
I wanna be brighter (wanna be brighter)
Gotta keep myself together (keep myself together)
Cos where I am, right now, is not where I wanna be (wanna be)
As I look out, I think to myself what I can achieve (can achieve)
I gotta feeling, a strong, strong feeling
I'm gonna be alright (be alright)
I'm gonna dance all night (dance all night)*

Of course, hope for the future may not translate onto actual improved outcomes once participants are released. But aspirations are often the precursor to successful desistance.⁵⁴ Further, it clearly mattered to the participants that the ITT projects gave them a reason to feel good about themselves and their futures.

The music projects can be a form of healing for prisoners. Key to this, though, is that the 'positivity' of the projects was created by the participants themselves. Isaac talked about prisoners needing to 'repair themselves', rather than being repaired by others; the participatory and social nature of the projects was essential for this. Neither the ITT musicians nor the 'music itself' were themselves the 'repairer'; rather, the music projects provided the space and the activity within which the prisoners themselves created the positive experience. Participants could release their negativity and imbibe positivity, which contributed to an ongoing sense of hope that translated into their feelings about themselves and their futures.

5.4 Emotional Safety

Although the participants would talk about the projects as entirely positive experiences, this is not quite the whole story. In reflecting on the projects and describing them as entirely positive experiences, they were in part enacting what

⁵⁴ Shadd Maruna, *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives* (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 2001).

psychologists call the ‘peak-end rule’ – our memories of events, particularly short-term ones, are largely determined by the highest-intensity emotions (‘peak’) and by how we feel at the end.⁵⁵ It is this which enables us to look retrospectively at an event and say honestly ‘I loved every minute’, when that was almost never the reality. The music projects *were* positive, but they also involved more complex emotional exploration, and brought up feelings of pain, loss, thoughtfulness, nostalgia, hope, lack of hope and regret. Prisoners recognised that the emotional range expressed within the music project was unusual for prison life. The participants benefitted from being able to explore and express their thoughts and feelings in a safe space.

It is widely accepted that in male prisons, prisoners generally feel the need to be highly guarded and adopt a tough persona, a macho front that is performed to other prisoners.⁵⁶ Many of the public spaces of prison life – and indeed, for prisoners the idea of ‘private’ space is nuanced, as many share cells – require certain kinds of emotional behaviour. This is a common theme in literature, which Jewkes acknowledges: ‘all researchers will be familiar with the sentiment that inmates feel it necessary to adopt a façade while inside.’⁵⁷ George explained, ‘there’s quite a façade in prison, where you keep your emotions close to you, you know...if you show too much emotion, like, you’re weak, you know.’ Nick talked about the pressure to appear strong and unaffected by life’s issues, even to the point of not wanting to admit they had a drug problem in case it was perceived as weakness, which often stopped people asking for help. Some prisoners will naturally find this easier than others, either because toughness comes more naturally to them or because they are better actors, but either way this can be

⁵⁵ See B. L. Fredrickson & D. Kahneman, ‘Duration neglect in retrospective evaluation of affective episodes’ *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Vol 65 (1993): 45-55; and Quanquan Zheng et al. ‘Hedonic Evaluation over Short and Long Retention Intervals: The Mechanism of the Peak-End Rule’ *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making* 26/3 (July 2013): 225-236.

⁵⁶ See Nick de Viggiani, ‘Trying to be Something You Are Not: Masculine Performances within a Prison Setting’ *Men and Masculinities* 15/3 (2012): 271-291.

⁵⁷ Yvonne Jewkes, ‘Men Behind Bars: “Doing” Masculinity as an Adaptation to Imprisonment’ *Men and Masculinities* 8/1 (2005): 53.

exhausting – as Jewkes points out, ‘even after a tough façade has been established, it has to be maintained, and this in itself can be a great source of pressure.’⁵⁸

More recently, however, Crewe et al., drawing on the ideas of removal activities, niches and sanctuaries outlined above, have attempted to move beyond the idea of prisons being unwaveringly emotionally suppressive.⁵⁹ The authors argue that (male) prisons ‘have a distinct kind of emotional geography, with zones in which certain kinds of feelings and emotional displays are more or less possible to experience and exhibit.’⁶⁰ The music projects undoubtedly provided one of these zones in that they allowed for a certain degree of emotional expression, but, as we shall see, something more distinctive about the music projects was that they *required* a degree of emotional openness.

Music is generally considered to be an emotionally expressive medium. John Sloboda has asserted that ‘the capacity of music to heighten emotional life’ is the ‘transcultural’ meaning of music, the value placed upon music that transcends cultural boundaries.⁶¹ That is not to say that all cultures hear the same emotions in music, but that it is the emotional content of music that means music has ‘penetrated to the core of so many different cultures.’⁶² Patrick Juslin distinguishes between ‘perception’ and ‘induction’, that is, perceiving emotion in music and actually feeling an emotion in response to music, but asserts that ‘music is intentionally used by listeners to regulate their moods and emotions’.⁶³ DeNora asserts that ‘Music may be understood as providing a container for feeling [...] Music is a material that actors use to elaborate, to fill out and fill in...subjective stances and identities.’⁶⁴ And, as was discussed in Chapter 4, song-writing in particular is seen as a vehicle for emotional and self-expression.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Crewe et al. ‘The emotional geography of prison life’.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 56.

⁶¹ John A. Sloboda, *The Musical Mind: The cognitive psychology of music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 1.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Patrick N. Juslin ‘Emotional responses to music’ in Susan Hallam, Ian Cross and Michael Thaut eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 139.

⁶⁴ Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 74.

As we saw above, music was being used as a release, which provided a different opportunity to the usual tendency of bottling up emotion. It was evident, though, that music was valued as more than an outlet or stress reliever. Release implies a letting go of pent up emotion or turmoil; expression suggests thinking through these feelings and articulating them. Gemma (ARO) had a particular perspective on why this was important for prisoners:

Gemma: I think your emotions, and the way that you express your feelings, how that comes out within the writing [...] And sometimes I think with substance misuse, you need to, erm, when you come into prison and you stop taking all those substances, in actual fact what happens is you get all your emotions back. So I think being able to deal with them in a, in a music setting like that, erm, it's, it's really good how that, how that can come out. And I think you could spend weeks on a course and you will not get the same outcome. Of people's emotions. All emotions.⁶⁵

Where drugs had been used to *suppress* emotions, music here was used to *express* emotions. Suppression of emotion is often seen as essential in the public spaces of prison, where there are people ready to exploit the slightest sign of weakness.⁶⁶ But in musical activity, prisoners found an outlet that allowed them to explore and express their emotions safely, rather than simply bottling them up and pretending they were not there.

It was clear that an opportunity for emotional outlet and expression was sought within prison, and music fulfilled that desire. The songs written by the prisoners were frequently based on personal stories. Themes of alcoholism, family and children, crimes and regret, hopelessness and grief often formed the content of songs; music encouraged expression of those aspects of life they might find difficult to talk about in normal conversation. The nature of this emotional journey should be interrogated: there are dangers in bringing up past trauma without the expertise or stability of a professional counsellor around to deal with the aftermath. In the context of this research, however, the ARO staff were there to provide ongoing

⁶⁵ Gemma's comments come from her focus on the ARO's work, addiction recovery. Her thoughts help to explain why perhaps the expression was so valuable to this particular group of prisoners. However, participants did on occasion show up to music session clearly intoxicated.

⁶⁶ Crewe et al. 'The emotional geography of prison life'.

support to the prisoners where needed, and clearly the participants experienced the emotional outlet as beneficial.

Part of the reason the music projects were particularly good for allowing emotional expression was because music holds cultural capital. In short, there was social kudos that came from being able to write a song that over-rode the need to front. In that way, music became a potential alternative way of performing their masculinity – rather than being stoic and macho, they could be competent and talented. Ian Levy and Brian Keum have argued that this is particularly the case with hip-hop: ‘given that Hip-hop is a socially and culturally acceptable art form, it is far less likely that using Hip-hop to explore and/or disclose emotions would lead to feelings of vulnerability or weakness.’⁶⁷ Perhaps it was this which enabled one prisoner to share his childhood experiences of abuse and neglect as a rap:

*Too many people judge a book by its cover
And not knowing the pain of having no one to love ya
So what’s your mental illness?
Growing your mother beaten every day, by my side, go take cover
Had a life full of stress and a life full of drama
Dragged up in care and I wasn’t looked after*

These are the home truths which, in conversation, would usually come out within only the most trusting of relationships, but with a microphone and backing beat this prisoner felt free to share far more explicitly.

Despite Levy and Keum’s claim, though, this vulnerability was clearly a possibility in other genres as well; people’s personal histories and feelings went into all sorts of tunes. Isaac wrote a song during an MiR session about missing his home, which he titled ‘Come Close To Me’, and shared during the session why he thought it was helpful: ‘He said that even the toughest guy here, or the guy who thinks he’s the toughest, will have moments where they feel lonely and depressed. The song is about being in your cell and wanting home to come close.’⁶⁸ This was recorded in

⁶⁷ Ian Levy and Brian TaeHyuk Keum, ‘Hip-hop emotional exploration in men’ *Journal of Poetry Therapy* 27/4 (2014): 220 [Hip-hop capitalised in original].

⁶⁸ Field notes: MiR 23rd May 2016, morning. Paradoxically, by others’ and even to an extent his own account, Isaac was one of the prisoners who was perceived to be and thought of himself as ‘tough’.

my field notes – I was able to hear because Isaac spoke about it openly. And this was part of the emotional fabric of the sessions: not only would prisoners write lyrics which were emotion-laden, but often they would then talk within the group about the inspiration for the lyrics. Once the emotions had been let out the dangers of talking about them within that same emotional space were minimised.

It was generally acknowledged that good song-writing *required* emotional expression. To write a good song meant to open up some truth about yourself and your feelings. Referring specifically to hip-hop, Levy and Keum assert: ‘the more vividly we are able to speak to our emotional experiences, the better Hip-hop we are able to create.’⁶⁹ Isaac recognised that ‘the best way I can sing is from emotion, or perform is from emotion.’ The facilitators encouraged participants to write something personal to them if they were struggling for lyrics; this was not considered the only way of writing songs, but it was an easy fall-back if lyricists were not particularly forthcoming.⁷⁰

Music, and specifically song-writing, provided an ideal opportunity for emotional expression. For some participants, a particular value of music was that it provided a way of actually exploring or working through their emotions, rather than just releasing them.⁷¹ This, again, was seen as something music offered which many other outlets did not. George found that music allowed for the full spectrum of emotions, which provided the distinction between the music projects and the gym as emotional opportunities:

Sarah: Is that quite a rare thing in prison? Do you feel there’s many opportunities to kind of, let your emotions out?

George: Nah not really. Gym, you get. But it’s not the same. In the gym you kinda just let out your testosterone, like if you’ve got any built-up aggression, you let the aggression out. But, with music, I find it can be an emotional rollercoaster...cos you can

⁶⁹ Levy and Keum, ‘Hip-hop emotional exploration in men’, 220.

⁷⁰ Of course, the desire to write a good song also led to participants imagining emotional journeys, making up narratives, or using stock phrases that worked in the genre they chose.

⁷¹ Felicity Baker et al., ‘Therapeutic Songwriting in Music Therapy’ *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy* 17/2 (2008): 105-123.

be happy one minute, sad one minute. [...] So, I think, like, for me music is the best outlet, the best.

For George, it was the range of emotional possibility which marked music out as 'the best' way to work through his emotions. Ethan said similarly, 'something like music, that's real expression. It's tangible, you can see people grow.' Ethan had recognised the personal change, or 'repair' work, that can occur as a result of musical expression. Prisoners used song-writing as a way of reaching new emotional territory – either by going emotionally deeper as they connected with their own and others' stories, or by being able to move on from it.

The clearest examples of this kind of repair work came when they used the music sessions as opportunities to express their immediate feelings about the prison system or what they perceived to be mistreatment by the officers. I noted after one MiR session:

Not clear exactly what happened but [Ethan] was annoyed about it. He said that there was no way of saying the things you want to say to them, that there are all these courses about learning to express yourself and stuff, but you never know how they're going to react if you use it on them. George was saying that that was why music was so good, it was a way to release things. He was encouraging Ethan to put himself into his lyrics, talk about prison and life – 'it doesn't all need to be good, prison is where you're at right now'.⁷²

The group then used improvised rap to express their vexation. As they did so, their outlooks changed and their frustrations moved on to humour. During other sessions I noticed that what started as anger became diffused as they sang or rapped and played instruments: topics progressed to other sources of annoyance, but simultaneously became a joke rather than an angry outpouring. They began laughing, as did others who heard. The music projects provided a sanctuary in which emotion was released and expressed in such a way that, having had the opportunity to express their frustrations, they were able to let go of them and move on.

⁷² Field notes: MiR 27th June 2016, morning.

The music sessions evidently provided an opportunity for varied emotional expression which was lacking in much of prison life. But an important feature of music is that it is a medium that is *heard*. Poetry-writing in cells seems to be a common pastime, and there were certainly some prisoners who wrote songs whilst alone in their cells. But being in an ITT session was a chance to communicate emotions and experiences with a group who were prepared to hear. In a world where individuality and agency are diminished, and where often the only emotional displays which garner attention are protests, it was restorative to be able to communicate hurts, happiness, pain and frustration, personal stories, and for that to be heard and commented on by others.⁷³ Because of the way in which music encourages emotional expression, music was, according to Oscar, ‘a much easier way to communicate [...] a good way of connecting to people.’ Liam said he appreciated ‘being listened to’ during the music sessions. For some it was undoubtedly a nerve-wracking experience to reveal their innermost emotions before a group of other prisoners, but they did it nonetheless, and found that they were admired rather than judged. Some relished being heard by others, and felt a relief in being open before other prisoners. The suggestions of writing group songs, and the responses to that afterwards, indicated the need for others to hear of their experiences and, crucially, to share in them – to reveal that they, too, had the same problems or feelings. The emotional expression afforded by the ITT sessions did not involve simply expressing in an abstract sense, putting feelings into a vacuum away from the self; it involved expressing things which would be listened to and shared by other people.

5.5 Community

The fact that the music sessions afforded such possibilities indicates that the social environment was very different to that which usually characterises prison. It was clear from participants’ comments that the social environment was something very

⁷³ The focus here has been on emotional content of lyrics, but the music elements were also communicative in this way too: using drum-beats to signify a clock ticking, or fast repeating chords to resemble the sound of gunshots.

special for them; indeed, frequently prisoners cited the 'social side' as one of their favourite things about the music projects. The music in prisons literature talks frequently of social skills and support as important benefits of musical participation in prison (see Chapter 1). For the ITT participants in this study the most important aspect of this was that the music projects created a distinct community that was separate from normal prison relationships, but could inform the way in which they related with others.

Accounts of prison life tend to focus on the pains and deprivations, including feelings of isolation and loneliness. Some researchers, however, have attempted to document more thoroughly the social world of prisons, and particularly the nature of friendship in prison. Timbre Wulf-Ludden, looking at American prison systems, argued that research has placed too much emphasis on the negative and violent social interactions in prison, overlooking the many prosocial relationships which can develop.⁷⁴ She suggests three main areas in which prison friendships are beneficial for prisoners: advice or companionship, avoiding trouble (by helping one another 'stay on track'), and self-improvement, particularly in the area of addiction recovery.⁷⁵ Crewe, though, has argued that the general lack of trust in prison, stemming in part from the fact that 'prisoners are acutely aware that their peers have committed some form of social transgression', makes close relationships in prison unlikely.⁷⁶ He differentiates between three types of social relationships in prison: 'proper friends' or 'real mates', 'prison friendships', and 'associates'.⁷⁷ Close, or 'proper' friendships tended to exist only between those who knew each other outside prison; 'establishing these proper friendships from scratch was impossible or imprudent'.⁷⁸ The general mindset towards relationships in prison as being 'prudent individualism'.⁷⁹ As such, prisoners tended to have only a few of these close relationships, and those friendships which did develop from scratch in

⁷⁴ Timbre Wulf-Ludden, 'Interpersonal relationships among inmates and prison violence' *Journal of Crime and Justice* 36/1 (2013): 116-136.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 301.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 305-6.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 305.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 229.

prison were more limited both in depth and longevity. Social groupings are common in prison, though, usually formed around 'fervent and deeply held' regional or cultural and religious identities.⁸⁰

Prisoners distinguished between the social groups and relationships within the music group and those which characterised the rest of prison life. Within the sessions, there was a sense of unity and community that was rarely seen in prison. Liam said that the environment was '100 times different [...] there was a lot of encouragement – in here, you don't hear that very much.' Aaron described the social side as 'camaraderie', and particularly noticed how respectful everyone was to each other. Simon agreed: 'everyone listened...we had a common ground...Everyone had the utmost respect for one another.' Ollie was impressed by the way people interacted, saying: 'And the praising as well, you know, we're all praising each other, it, it does help build, build up a good morale.' I frequently noticed how encouraging people were of one another, applauding, high-fiving or fist-bumping good solos, expressing their admiration of another's work or abilities and encouraging each other to try new things. This is an example of the 'togetherness' Scott (ITT) referred to, which is an important part of the ITT's work. There was a clear sense in the ITT sessions that prisoners felt they were part of something distinct, a member of a community which, though temporary, was better than the norm.

Indeed, for some this group was not a temporary thing: there were several accounts of ongoing relationships between participants after the MiP weeks ended or people left an MiR course. Two 'bands' were formed as a result of the ITT sessions, and these groups continued to write and rehearse together (one or more members having managed to get themselves a guitar) on the landings even when their sessions came to an end. In these instances, the music projects went beyond being spaces removed from the normal social interactions of prison which enabled

⁸⁰ Coretta Phillips, "'It ain't nothing like America with the Bloods and the Crips': Gang narratives inside two English prisons' *Punishment & Society* 14/1 (2012): 51-68.

more positive relationships. They were actually shaping (or, 'refurnishing', to use DeNora's term) the social world of the prison itself.

Many prisoners also found the community of the music projects special because the usual social divisions of prison were not so evident. The music projects were a place where prisoners found commonality and affinity with others who would usually be in different or even rival groups. David said he liked the fact that 'there was no conflict against one another', indicating his expectations of other prison relationships. George referred to the way the ITT projects challenged the social groupings of prison:

George: ...it brings people together, builds bridges, builds social, erm, I don't know how you would say it, see like, different socio groups is it? ... Cos in prison you've always got, erm, different crowds. [...] So it brings different, erm, groups together, and allows them to work with each other and understand each others' cultures and just, behaviours, how they are, personalities.

Edward said similar things: 'it was good to see people of all kinds of culture, race ... For me the most important thing was to see the unity. There we all was like family, that was what I loved most.'

The social environment of the music projects had the potential to be not just different but also 'helpful', as Oscar described it. When I asked him to explain what he meant, he elaborated: 'seeing people in a different light, I guess.' The music projects had helped him to realise the things he had in common with other people, and enabled him to 'normalise' talking to people he would usually avoid. Ian shared the same idea: 'I found connections with people I never thought I would.' For Ian, who thought the social groups were particularly defined in prison, this was particularly significant:

Ian: ...seeing people work together of different race, religion, colour ... barriers were down. [...] I was surprised, more than surprised, shocked even. [...] Music cuts through, cuts through the divisions of race, religion, what not. [...] Different groups laughing – laughing, wow!

For these participants, the social environment of the music projects was extraordinary not just because it was so much better than most of prison life, but

because they had experienced its potential to overcome social divisions. Malcolm pointed out that this was a permanent mentality shift, that it would have a 'ripple effect' on his relationships with others outside. In this way, the transformational aspect of the musical sanctuary has the potential not only to change the social world inside prison but to foster internal change in the participants which shapes their futures.

What is it about music that fostered this community? The sociability of musicking is a topic that has been addressed by musicological and sociological researchers, who frequently state different forms of the argument that musical structures stand as metaphors for 'ideal' human interactions.⁸¹ Cynthia Cohen has suggested that 'Music is perhaps the art form where the qualities of harmony, balance, and rhythm can be most readily apprehended. When elements appear in harmonic relationship to each other, we perceive unity in diversity.'⁸² This certainly has some weight in a prison context – as shown in Chapter 4, participants had a newfound understanding and respect for the different roles within a band and how each person contributes to the finished product. A danger of Cohen's claim, though, as well as being far too genre-dependent for the breadth of application it receives, is that it tends to turn the 'music itself' into the agent, and musicians into the recipients of music's relationship-building powers. Although occasionally prisoners did perceive the similarities between their personal relationships and those between the different instruments in the band, their understanding of the way in which the social environment was created tended to me more to do with the requirements of the music projects and the likely characteristics of the other participants.

The amazement that some prisoners expressed at the diverse relationships formed during the music projects was offset by others who saw an element of self-selection in the process. Some participants maintained that those who would sign up for a music course are likely to be predisposed to be the 'right' sort of person; as Nathan

⁸¹ Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 13.

⁸² Cynthia Cohen, 'Engaging with the Arts to Promote Coexistence' in Antonia Chayes and Martha L. Minow eds. *Imagine Coexistence: Restoring Humanity After Violent Ethnic Conflict* (San Francisco: 2003), 273.

said, 'everyone in there is likeable'. From seeing Nathan's interactions with his groups this is perhaps an overstatement – there was not always active affability, and with the more quiet or withdrawn participants relationships were perhaps more characterised by neutrality than likeability. Certainly it was rare for there to be someone in the music sessions who was especially disliked or out to cause trouble, but what was more important was the shared purpose of the sessions. The distinct community was formed from the purposeful nature of the music course: the shared desire for a viable musical product or tangible musical outcome and the dedication that this cultivated in the participants.

Chapter 5 showed that one of the concerns or frustrations for group members was others not taking it seriously. Correspondingly, the fact that participants generally *were* taking it seriously meant they got on well together. Dean, for example, felt that 'everyone...was trying their best', and trying 'to not mess it up for every other person.' He thought that the responsibility towards one another took the relationships to another level and made people 'more considerate'. Liam thought that 'music brings everyone together' because 'everyone was there to learn, [so] egos dropped.' Tyler was impressed that there was 'no tension, everyone was trying to help everyone', and Simon liked the fact that 'everyone had a part to play'. Cox and Gelsthorpe found in their research into ITT projects that 'the process of building a song took precedence over cultural differences',⁸³ and the situation was no different in these ITT projects. There was a shared purpose that both necessitated and fostered a good group dynamic, even between those of different and rival social groups.

Furthermore, the emotional honesty encouraged by the music projects contributed to commonality and trust between participants. As participants sang their own lyrics, those listening valued finding 'common ground' (as Ethan put it) with others in the group. Aaron spoke about hearing Dean's lyrics:

Aaron: There was a couple of things that he said in his lyrics that...I kind of, like, related.
[...] It's cool, it's nice to know, not nice to know, [laughs] not in that sense, but to just

⁸³ Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters: Whatever Happened to the Arts in Prisons?' in Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment* (2012), 266.

know, like, you're not alone. And it kind of like, it kind of helped the bond, to kind of say, 'oh right we're kind of identical in, in, in our journeys'.

People sharing their own stories in lyrics contributed to the community that was built during the projects. The reception these emotional displays received – of respect and appreciation – undoubtedly led to others being emboldened to share their own stories in lyric form. According to the ITT musicians there is a knock-on effect of one participant being vulnerable: Scott shared several times that in his experience as soon as one participant expressed an interest in writing a song about his mother, others would ask to do likewise.⁸⁴

Within the safety of the music projects, trust and openness began to form as participants revealed more of themselves than they usually would. In prison life, the need to 'front', to present themselves in certain ways, means prison is 'considered [by prisoners] a highly partial and inauthentic social setting.'⁸⁵ It is assumed that everyone in prison has adopted 'strategies, performances and social masks', and therefore judging true character is near impossible.⁸⁶ The emotional expression fostered by the musical activity enabled the participants to see different aspects of people's lives and stories – aspects usually kept hidden to all but a very few people, if any. It is perhaps this that led people to deeper relationships within the music projects more quickly than in other areas of prison life – it was easier to come to conclusions about someone's character and intentions. Crucially, the shared experience and dedication to the course led to the general assumption that the participant's 'true character' as seen here was worthy of respect and affection. Thus when one participant left the room in tears because of the lyrics he had written and the traumatic events they reminded him of, his apologies at the end of the week for 'blubbing like a baby' (his words) were shouted down by assertions that 'there's no shame in crying mate' and 'I cry every time I speak to my kids.'⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Mothers are perhaps a 'safer' choice of personal topic, as they are generally 'venerated' by prisoners and shown 'unadulterated love', unlike other female figures – see Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 426.

⁸⁵ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 307.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 308.

⁸⁷ Field notes: MiP2, day 5, morning.

Such honest exclamations are not unheard of in prison, but are rare; the disclosures speak to the levels of trust the men had in each other.⁸⁸

The music projects, then, had a distinct social feel, characterised by encouragement, safety to interact with those of other social groups, and heightened levels of trust. And, of course, having participated in such a project meant that the participants all had this as a shared experience, something upon which to build some form of ongoing relationship. The music projects provided a sanctuary space in which the participants could form a distinct community which, though temporary, was considered better than their regular social interactions and made their ongoing social interactions better too.

5.6 Connection to the outside

Finally, the music projects provided a way in which prisoners could connect with the outside world, reducing the totalising effect of the institution.⁸⁹ Certainly, the music projects enabled a separate space, a ‘removal’ from the norms of prison life; but at the heart of the rationale for imprisonment itself is the notion that some offenders must be *removed* from society at large. Part of the sanctuary that music projects provided in being separated from normal prison life, then, might be better characterised as a *return* to freedom. Not that they were in a space that exactly recreated or even represented their norms on the outside – indeed, for many of them life on the outside is also full of hardship which they did not wish to return to – but there was a sense in which the music projects could remind the participants of the wider world and assist them in their attempts to participate in it. Where for many people a sanctuary involves being ‘cut off from the world’, in a prison this notion of sanctuary is inverted, such that being cut off from their current situation can mean re-establishing a connection to the outside world.

Lucy O’Grady, researching creative music projects in a maximum security women’s prison, described musical activities as ‘a type of bridge from the inside to the

⁸⁸ Crewe et al., ‘The emotional geography of prison life’.

⁸⁹ Goffman, *Asylums*.

outside.’⁹⁰ O’Grady’s research, based on a similar style of music project to the ITT, showed that ‘music in this case enabled the women to momentarily escape their most immediate realities within prison while at the same time strengthening ties with some of the realities of the outside world.’⁹¹ Such claims emphasise a binary, inside-outside divide between prison and the free world which is not entirely accurate. Jennifer Turner problematises ‘the notion of the prison as a discrete, self-contained entity, opposed to outside society’; and argues that there are actions and mechanisms which ‘cut across, undermine and even transform the boundary between the prison and everything non-prison or “outside”’.⁹² The prison boundary is a ‘fluid border’, one which enables flows in and out, both physically and metaphorically. In the music projects, this fluidity is seen in obvious ways in the fact that the practitioners come in from outside; more subtly, we might point to the fact that participants’ previous music experiences filtered into the ITT sessions, while the sessions shaped participants’ musical activities and preferences in a way that they claimed would continue once released outside the wall.

That being said, for the prisoners themselves the physical nature of the high walls and barbed wire surrounding them was perceived as a more definite separation, even if they knew it was only temporary.⁹³ The physical separation from family, friends and the outside world in general is experienced as deeply harmful, and ‘the importance for prisoners of “keeping in touch”, both literally and metaphorically, with family and friends is paramount.’⁹⁴ The music projects operated not so much as a bridge between two entirely separate worlds, but more as providing a much-valued meeting place of the two.

In many ways the connection to the outside tied in with the idea of metaphorically leaving or ‘escaping’ prison, to return to a word used earlier. There was certainly a sense of being able to forget where they were: Tyler, for example, said doing a music project ‘takes your head out of here for a while’, and Josh said similarly, ‘it

⁹⁰ O’Grady; ‘The Therapeutic Potentials of Creating and Performing Music with Women in Prison’.

⁹¹ Ibid, 142.

⁹² Jennifer Turner, *The Prison Boundary: Between Society and Carceral Space* (Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2016), 14.

⁹³ The vast majority of prisoners, including those on life sentences, do at some point get released.

⁹⁴ Turner, *The Prison Boundary*, 13.

took my mind out of being in here.’ Ethan said the music sessions meant he could ‘transcend the reality of what was going on – my mind slips into what it can be.’

Isaac spoke in similar ways, and tried to explain his thoughts:

Isaac: While you’re playing, you’re just not in the jail at that time. You’re, music sort of transcends, just, the boundaries, innit, so it’s like, while we was in there we didn’t feel like that room was prison. Felt like we was just free for that moment, cos you’re expressing yourself, so, you know, using your imagination.

Ethan and Isaac articulated what many found difficult to speak of but had certainly experienced: the music projects provided a sanctuary space in which they could both forget their immediate environment and also imagine themselves to be elsewhere.

The music projects provided more tangible ways of those inside reaching loved ones outside. The musical experiences gave the participants things to talk about with their loved ones or write in letters. Gemma (ARO) referred to this as the ‘ripple effect’ on prisoner’s families, the impact which should not be neglected.⁹⁵ When life is very repetitive, conversations with family members often become routine, and it makes a big difference to have something new to say. Prisoners frequently gave me excited and detailed accounts of the conversations they had had with people outside, particularly children, about what they were learning during the music project. It likewise, presumably, enabled families on the outside to think with pride of their partners, sons, brothers and fathers on the inside – certainly this was the assumption of the prisoner participants.

Being able to send out the CDs from MiP weeks was also a means of connecting: according to George it ‘keeps your family tight’.⁹⁶ As well as being a physical means of transcending the border, even if material rather than personal, having CDs sent to family members gave the participants a chance to tell loved ones things that they

⁹⁵ Much of the literature into the effects of imprisonment focuses on prisoners’ experiences of incarceration; it must not be forgotten, though, that imprisonment can have a deeply harmful on those who are not incarcerated, including prisoners’ families: see Joseph Murray, ‘The effects of imprisonment on families and children of prisoners’ in Liebling and Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (2005), 442-462.

⁹⁶ Having a recording element is therefore something to consider for the MiR courses as well as the MiP weeks.

perhaps would not be able to articulate in normal conversation, or indeed that their confinement does not give them the chance to say. Participants shared their excitement with me about who was going to hear their CD, and what they might think of them as a result. For some, this was about having something that family could be proud of, but for others there were messages shared that were directly targeted at the future listener. The communicative element of music, particularly through song-writing, was also a way that prisoners could feel they had a way of connecting to the outside, to 'figuratively touch the world outside of prison.'⁹⁷

Indeed, even if the target audience were not going to actually hear the song, there was often an imagined conversation taking place through the music. When prisoners sang out their hurt at their ex-partners, or anger at the system, there was a desire to imagine being heard and responded to even when they knew it would not be heard by the desired recipient. One prisoner, for example, responded to some bad news regarding his sentence with very few words, and instead went straight to the microphone and sang:

*Lonely, lonely
I'm dreaming of the nights you used to
Hold me, hold me
Now I'm praying for the day when they will
Parole me, parole me,
Till I'm in your arms again I'm,
Lonely, lonely*

Not only was the imagined hearer clearly not in the room, but I ascertained from informal conversations with this prisoner that he was not planning on sending a CD to the woman to whom it referred.⁹⁸ But there was a clear desire to sing out loud, despite his nerves; to sing to his former partner and feel that he had told her how he felt, even if the only actual listeners were the others in the room with him.

⁹⁷ Turner, *The Prison Boundary*, 185.

⁹⁸ He did not tell me who it was about; his relationship with the mother of his son was by his own account not a good one, but perhaps his lyrics refer to her in an idealised remembrance of a better time.

In a similar way, those using music and lyrics to communicate their frustrations with the system were doing so in the knowledge that it was unlikely to actually be heard by those to whom it was directed, but nevertheless wanted to use the communicative nature of song to imagine being heard. One prisoner had a message to those in power – his song *Eden* spoke of gang culture and the government's continued inability to do anything about it:

*While we're killing one another, government are just watching
Secret society, them and their clapping
They not care about the ghetto youth dropping
No sir, never stop champagne popping.*⁹⁹

The chorus referred to 'gunfire rain' and used the drumbeat to mimic the sound of gunshots. There are echoes here of the idea of 'generativity' which often forms part of a desistance journey.¹⁰⁰ In Chapter 4 I pointed out that many of the participants wanted to use music to connect with youth from similar backgrounds to themselves, and help them stay away from things which might lead them into prison. For this prisoner, part of 'giving back' and contributing to the welfare of the next generation was perhaps in changing culture, and he therefore directed his lyrics at those who he felt should be doing more to help society as a whole.

These are all ways in which the music projects enabled those inside to metaphorically leave the prison and 'return' to the outside world. There were also ways in which the outside was coming in. Most obviously the professional musicians running the project provided a meeting point inside the prison of prisoners and non-prisoners. Of course, everywhere in prison there is evidence of the outside world as staff and visitors come and go. But for the prisoners, officers in particular were still a part of the 'inside' world, whereas the facilitators were largely considered outside of the system. The facilitators as individuals were highly valued – participants thoroughly enjoyed getting to know them and being able to hear

⁹⁹ The lyrics may be slightly wrong, as the lyrics are transcribed from the recording, but the gist is certainly correct.

¹⁰⁰ Fergus McNeill and Shadd Maruna, 'Giving Up and Giving Back: Desistance, Generativity and Social Work with Offenders' in Gill McIvor and Peter Raynor eds. *Developments in Social Work with Offenders* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2007), 224-239.

their stories. As we see in the previous chapter, the participants were inspired by their professional pursuits and their musical skill, and as they got to know them found that their future aspirations were changing.

The facilitators were also symbolic of a wider world from which prisoners were usually cut off. As musicians coming in from outside, they became positive representatives of the society to which the participants would one day return. Finn, for example, said he liked 'getting to interact with society' during the MiP weeks. Aaron said several times during interview that it 'makes you know that there's another world out there' and he appreciated having 'that communication with the outside world.' It was interesting to note the excess of gratitude prisoners displayed towards the ITT team, seeing their involvement as an unwarranted altruistic gesture from benevolent individuals, rather than people doing their job. Indeed, even ARO staff at times spoke in these terms – Duncan for instance, said, 'that makes a huge difference, that it's actually people *taking their time to come from outside*... It's like, wow' (my emphasis). Unlike other 'outsiders' whose jobs obviously involved them coming in to the prison, the ITT team were seen as members of the non-prison community choosing to enter prison and make connections with the prisoners.

The music projects, then, were spaces that were open to the outside world, spaces in which inside and outside could connect. This connection was important for some of the 'repairing' that went on in the musical sanctuary. There was an extent to which prisoners found that their self-conception was changed as they interacted with the facilitators and connected with the outside world. Aaron said that working with the facilitators made him 'see that people still give a damn.' His words imply that in general he feels forgotten about or uncared for in prison – in Aaron's case not from his immediate family, with some of whom he still had a good relationship, but from wider society.

Liam similarly said he appreciated how the ITT team treated them, 'especially given we're prisoners'; he appreciated being able to converse with people from outside without feeling judged, finding that there was 'no stigma – they see you as normal people'. His words indicate that whilst in prison the treatment he received from others who were technically 'outsiders' reinforced his criminal identity, and that his

imprisonment was a stigmatising experience which marked him out from 'normal' society.¹⁰¹ Jake used similar language to describe his experience: 'you lot, you're not criminals! I've found it's not boring to do that, to do normal things with normal people.'¹⁰² Both Liam and Jake's use of the word 'normal' is not just implying that prisoners are somehow 'abnormal', although the stigma attached to that identity may be felt in that way; it is referring to an identity which is not defined by criminality or the justice system, whichever side of that system a person might be on. The music projects provided a space in which prisoners could connect with a non-criminal identity, both in terms of other people unconnected with prison and their own conception as people able to live non-criminal lives.

5.7 What Mattered: Relief and Repair

This chapter has argued that the ITT music projects create a sanctuary space which is experienced as different from and better than regular prison life. The space, the people and the activity together provided several ways in which relief and repair work were possible. In providing a way for prisoners to fill, pass and mark time, the ITT projects provided relief from the immense burden of 'dead' time and monotony. The projects provided an opportunity for relief from the negativity of prison life, and for some repair work to be done in the form of participants 'imbibing' the positivity and taking it with them into the rest of prison life. The emotional expression afforded by the music projects provided relief from the repressive and suppressive prison environment, and also provided the opportunity for working through emotions, particularly but not exclusively through the medium of rap. The projects provided an opportunity to be heard, and to be part of a community which felt distinct from the norm and far more encouraging than the usual relationships which characterise prison life. Further, possibilities of repair came through participants adapting their perceptions of other people as they

¹⁰¹ Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963).

¹⁰² While I do not hold to Liam or Jake's distinction of outsiders as 'normal', and presumably themselves by extension as 'abnormal', it is telling that this language was used so freely.

engaged in musical activity together. Finally, in providing an opportunity to connect with the outside world, the ITT projects provided temporary relief from the totalising nature of imprisonment. The relationships with facilitators in particular provided a vision for what future relationships with others in society might look like.

There are several themes which are important to recognise. Firstly, the idea of the music projects being a 'sanctuary' in this way is specific to the prison context: in an environment where normality is inverted (as in prison), sanctuary too must be inverted. Many in the outside may well find versions of 'escapism' or 'freedom' in their musical activities, but its form in prison must be understood in relation to the musical approaches of the ITT – instrument learning, song-writing and group work – and the specific pains and deprivations inherent in the experience of imprisonment. Secondly, music was seen as a medium for many of these sanctuary aspects because it simultaneously provided the opportunity and required the response. The music projects did not force participants to express their emotion or to encourage one another, but the desire to produce good musical results combined with the setting to enable such actions.

Thirdly, therefore, the transformative elements of this sanctuary were largely created by the participants themselves. Participants' agency is key in this, as Chapter 1 discussed. Although the ITT team's role in facilitating should not be understated, if the participants were not willing to actively participate, make themselves vulnerable, encourage one another and allow their opinions to be changed, the 'repair' elements of the sanctuary would not have been there.

Chapter 6

Effectiveness and Value: Measuring a Successful Project

‘I will no longer commit crime as a result of taking this.’ (Paul)

This thesis has been framed around problematising notions of effectiveness in the current discourse. Music projects in prison have been found to be beneficial for prisoners in many ways, as discussed in Chapter 1, but the way in which these benefits are articulated does not closely correlate with how prisoners themselves talk about what they valued in the music projects. I have not sought to refute the claims of the current literature here, but it is evident that they do not tell the whole story. This thesis, therefore, has provided a thorough understanding of *what happened* in the ITT projects (Chapter 3) and then has argued that *what mattered* to prisoners in their musical activities came through the musical education they received (Chapter 4) and the contrast the ITT projects provided to normal prison life (Chapter 5).

This chapter draws together the core ideas of this thesis. It begins by developing the ideas put forward in Chapter 1 regarding the rhetoric of effectiveness, suggesting some of the ways in which the pressure to prove results is understood and responded to by the ITT and by the prisoner participants. The chapter then argues that the key issue with the dominant narrative of effectiveness is that participants’ voices are often overlooked or ignored. It presents the case for moving beyond an intrinsic-instrumental dichotomy, in order to interrogate more deliberately the question of ‘whose effectiveness’: according to whose values is a project considered to have instrumental value? It then suggests some reasons why valuing what prisoners say about their activities is important. The final section of the chapter brings out some of the connections and themes running through the data about what prisoners valued in their musical activities, in line with Stephanie

Pitts' approach to theorising the value of musical participation more broadly.¹ In an attempt to balance the discourse surrounding the value of prison music projects, I suggest and reflect on a list of criteria which might be used as indicators of success if the prisoner participants were in charge of evaluation.

6.1 The Rhetoric and the Reality for the ITT

A key idea underpinning this thesis has been that the dominant discourse of effectiveness is insufficient as a means of understanding the work of the ITT, and, indeed, of all arts-based prison projects. As we have seen, the theoretical, methodological and ethical challenges to an effectiveness rhetoric leave much still to be answered. What became clear from the data, however, is that this is not just a theoretical problem; the rhetoric of effectiveness which dominates discourse has practical implications for the ITT. This has been recognised by other researchers. Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, who conducted an evaluation of the ITT's Music in Prisons work in 2008,² have since written a reflective account of their research process for the evaluation.³ As well as reflecting on the methodological challenges of producing viable research with meaningful conclusions in a 'growing culture of managerialism in the prison service', their research also 'revealed significant challenges in establishing and funding creative programmes in an increasingly outcomes-based prison culture.'⁴ To paraphrase, the issues with the effectiveness rhetoric are not simply methodological problems for researchers or administrators to overcome; they have an impact in practice. This section discusses these issues in the following three areas: firstly, the burdensome nature of the pressure to measure success; secondly, the institutional impediments and structural barriers which undermine many of the effects the music projects could have; and thirdly, the way in which the funding and evaluation process becomes for

¹ Stephanie Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005).

² Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars: Music in Prisons: an evaluation* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2008).

³ Alexandra Cox and Loraine Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters: Whatever Happened to the Arts in Prisons?' in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment* (2012), 257-276.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 257.

practitioners and participants a game-like process of ticking boxes and finding the right buzzwords.

6.1.1 The burdens of measurement

The extension of PbR brings up important questions about who was and is responsible for what outcome. This has practical implications in terms of attributing credit, but also brings up the question of who is taking responsibility in advance. Cox and Gelsthorpe refer to a 'responsibilisation strategy': the 'shifting burden of responsibility for crime prevention and crime control from the government to the individual and the community'.⁵ This, they argue, has severe implications for arts programmes, which 'may in fact be increasingly called upon to address some of the core functions of the state.'⁶ ITT project founder Sara Lee acknowledged that at times it feels like the government are 'just passing the buck to us', relieving themselves of the responsibility for reducing reoffending rates and putting the burden on organisations. And a burden it is, both in terms of actually doing the work, and in finding ways to provide satisfactory evidence. Furthermore, the effectiveness rhetoric is not just about 'credit where credit's due' – its flip side raises questions of what constitutes failure, and who is to blame for it? If an intervention participant does reoffend, who is it that has failed?

Many of the measurement issues refer to the attribution of responsibility – that is, how to ensure the right organisation is credited for success.⁷ For the ITT in the case study prison, this is particularly difficult to determine: their work is part of the ARO's provision, and so determining what the music projects have achieved and what other of the ARO's interventions are to be credited with is an impossible task. But it is also undesirable, as it removes the sense of holistic care that is so important for addiction recovery, and indeed for all aspects of offender rehabilitation. Sara Lee pointed out, 'we're a very small charity, we're part of a very, very big picture.' ARO staff likewise said the music projects were 'a great

⁵ Ibid., 262.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ministry of Justice, *Transforming Rehabilitation: Summary of Responses* (May 2013); Carol Hedderman, 'Payment by Results: Hopes, Fears and Evidence' *British Journal of Community Justice* 11/2-3 (2013)

enhancement, I think, to what we do' (Duncan), and for the prisoners the music projects were a 'part of their journey' (Gemma). Nick, a prisoner participant, described the music projects as 'a valuable pawn', a hugely appreciated but single part of the work the ARO do with the prisoners, and indeed of his journey towards recovery and desistance. The implication of the effectiveness rhetoric is that organisations must work out their own contribution to results, but in many cases this is neither practicable nor desirable.

These issues are at times acknowledged by the ITT staff. Sara Lee spoke at length in interview about the way in which they are required to provide evidence of satisfactory results in order to gain funding or access, and especially the lack of clarity over how they were expected to do this. She expressed particular exasperation at the idea of funders and legislators requesting longitudinal studies demonstrating long-term impact, pointing out that given probation officers struggle to keep track of the ex-prisoners they are supposed to be monitoring it is even more unlikely that the ITT would be able to achieve this.⁸ The frustration, though, does not seem to be solely about the requirements put on them by funders; discussions with the ITT team indicated they had a desire to know more fully the impact their work has, but lacked the means of fulfilling it.

As required, the ITT staff do conduct some research to measure the impact of their work. Aside from the various researchers who have conducted research for the ITT, the organisation also collects its own evidence for its records and for prisons and funders. All ITT participants are asked by the practitioners to provide feedback on their experiences. The MiP weeks involve a 'before' and 'after' questionnaire in which prisoner participants are asked to rate various personal traits (such as confidence and hope for the future) and their thoughts about the week; these are done at the start and end of the week, with the practitioners present. Will asked MiR participants for 'quotes' at the end of some sessions which were then used on his reports to the ITT as evidence of impact. Self-reporting inevitably relies on prisoners being reflective and honest enough to report accurately, but is also a

⁸ I am not sure whether Sara's comments were based on official statements, anecdotal evidence or news reports.

time-friendly (that is, quick) way of gaining quantitative or reportable data from the prisoners themselves.⁹ However, there are issues with procuring quantitative data in this way: Diegard and Liebling, researching *Good Vibrations*, discuss their methodological challenges, including the fact that ‘the qualitative or participant observation study contradicted the eagerly anticipated (by the sponsors) quantitative before-after study.’¹⁰

Such discrepancies were evident in my fieldwork as well: for example, when filling in his pre-project form, Matthew declared out loud that he rated his confidence as 10 out of 10 (despite the scale only going to six), but when it came to performing in public it was clear to everyone that he was exceedingly nervous. The discrepancy between his self-reporting and his actions is indicative of an issue with evaluative research, and indicates the need for ‘results’ to be interrogated more firmly than the effectiveness rhetoric tends to require.

Further, issues with self-reporting are evident even in more qualitative research. Whether from qualitative questions on surveys (‘what did you like most about the project?’) or from interview and observation data, claims are made about the role of music in people’s lives which will always be difficult to draw firm conclusions from. The deeply-felt assertions that music projects could ‘change their lives forever’ (Christopher) or had helped them ‘to be a better me’ (Nick) end up being something of a dilemma for researchers and practitioners. As I have argued elsewhere, ‘These claims are easy enough for researchers to either state without critique in an effort to justify musical activity or ignore completely in an attempt to only make assertions that are empirically provable’.¹¹ Claims of transformation are unprovable not in the sense that they are necessarily contradicted by evidence, although undoubtedly sometimes they are, but because they are impossible to confirm. Cursley and Maruna discuss this:

⁹ See Arthur A. Stone et al. eds., *The Science of Self-report: Implications for Research and Practice* (Psychology Press, 1999) for a discussion of the benefits and weaknesses of self-reporting as a research method.

¹⁰ Léon Diegard and Alison Liebling, ‘Harmony Behind Bars: Evaluating the Therapeutic Potential of a Prison-based Music Programme’ in Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment* (2012), 295-6.

¹¹ Sarah Doxat-Pratt, ‘Performance Matters: The Case for Including Performance in Prison Music Projects’ *Prison Service Journal* 239 (2018): 30.

Participants we spoke to insisted that their participation in Changing Tunes had a transformational impact on their lives. The nature of this research design does not allow us to interrogate the veracity of such claims (we lack a “before” and “after,” let alone a control group to test the hypothesis of cause and effect).¹²

Methodologically, Cursley and Maruna’s response was to try to understand what prisoners meant by their claims of personal transformation. The risk of this is that these bold claims of how music was actually experienced by the participants are reduced to demonstrable outcomes such as ‘empowerment, self-initiative and personal challenge’.¹³ Without diminishing the significance of Cursley and Maruna’s findings, I suggest these words speak to the dilemma involved in translating an experience that is indescribably valuable into communicable and believable outcomes.

6.1.2 Institutional impediments and structural barriers

Chapter 3 showed that the contextual realities of running a music programme in prison are often overlooked by researchers. The chapter addressed this gap by providing a detailed account of the way in which prison life and structures affected the ITT projects. When it comes to measuring effectiveness, the expected results likewise tend to be disconnected from the institutional realities in which the activity takes place. As has been shown throughout this thesis, the prison context shaped the process of ITT projects and impacted the way in which the projects were valued by the participants. The structural realities inherent in prison life also necessarily have an impact on the potential for the ITT to have the kinds of effect hoped for by those who look to prove results.

The managerialist culture prevalent in the criminal justice system means that an individual prison does not have a clear and unified goal towards which it works. There are ‘competing budgetary priorities and contradictory objectives’ between different departments and different levels of management.¹⁴ At times, the various

¹² ¹² Jo Cursley and Shadd Maruna, *A Narrative-Based Evaluation of “Changing Tunes” Music-based Prisoner Reintegration Intervention: Full Report* (Changing Tunes, 2015), 16.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁴ Pat Carlen, ‘Imprisonment and the penal body: the cancer of disciplinary governance’ in Alison Lieblich and Shadd Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005), 432.

goals of different departments or personnel seemed to be conflicting or in competition with each other, to the point that they obstructed meaningful progress on the part of prisoners. For example, an issue emerged during my fieldwork when it became apparent that although most employers within prison were happy to allow prisoners time off to do one-off projects such as the MiP week, some were not. ARO took this to be the employer prioritising his or her own targets or funding requirements over the good of the prisoner in question. Of course, it may well be that the 'good' of the prisoner in question would be to continue the employment, and the ARO were sympathetic to the targets of the employer. This sort of conflict reflects the struggle between departments, even when all involved are seeking the good of the prisoner. More specifically for the music projects, the governor's refusal to allow a performance at the end of the MiP weeks was understood from ARO and ITT staff to mean he was prioritising public perception over the rehabilitative function of the project. As another example, in stopping Simon from continuing to participate in MiR sessions once it became apparent he had not taken any ARO courses in this prison (see Chapter 3), his personal progress and desires were superseded, albeit somewhat reluctantly, by the ARO's institutional concerns about fairness and meeting their own targets.

Scott (ITT) spoke of times at other institutions during his long tenure with the ITT when prison staff at all levels had been 'actively trying to jeopardise what we're doing.' Similarly, Cox and Gelsthorpe report that they 'observed several acts of resistance' from prison staff towards the ITT programmes during their research, including 'the refusal of officers to help transport inmates, the reluctance of administrators to organise space and time for the project, and often a great sense of ambivalence about having the project operate inside the prison walls.'¹⁵ Although I noticed shades of this kind of behaviour during my research it was almost always due to lack of time and personnel (with the exception of the performance restriction) and not in any way intentional or malicious. Staff shortages in the prison throughout the fieldwork caused issues for the ITT occasionally with it being difficult to unlock prisoners on time or escort prisoners

¹⁵ Cox and Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters', 263.

outside of regular times. On one occasion, the officers refused to unlock the prisoners because they were understaffed and feared for their safety.¹⁶ As well as being infuriating for the prisoners who missed their session, this left the ARO staff, and to an extent Will, in an awkward position whereby they understood the plight of the officers but were also frustrated because the staff protest kept prisoners locked in their cells. From Will and the ARO staff themselves this frustration was no doubt because men were kept away from useful programmes. It is possible, though, that the implications low attendance would have for their management reports compounded the issue.¹⁷

The ITT programmes take place within a context that actively undermines many of the ‘effects’ they seek to have. Ethan pointed out that it is ‘not possible to be a well-rounded person in prison.’ The realities of life for prisoners, both in prison and once they are released, often counteract many of the desistance factors towards which the ITT could contribute, and by which their success is supposedly measured. As Diegard and Liebling found in their study of Good Vibrations, regardless of the group and individual benefits of the course, all the participants are ‘still in prison, and struggling to varying degrees with this environment, at the end.’¹⁸ Maguire and Raynor write, ‘prisons are not benign institutions. Inmates are there against their will, cut off from normal life, and housed with large numbers of other offenders – all of which are significant obstacles to rehabilitation.’¹⁹ Although prisons are supposed to rehabilitate prisoners, the idea of a ‘rehabilitative prison’ is somewhat oxymoronic.²⁰ Prisoners told me they found playing the guitar in their cell useful for managing cravings or avoiding trouble on the landings, but for security reasons were unable to purchase new strings when one broke. They reported feeling more peaceful and happy as a result of music sessions, but were still the victims of bullying and violence outside of the sessions. The participants found the emotional

¹⁶ In reality, it was more of a statement of discontent rather than one day of understaffing being more dangerous than any of the preceding ones; there was a feeling that if they continued to make it work with too few staff then there would be no impetus on the managing staff to change things.

¹⁷ Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 58.

¹⁸ Diegard and Liebling, ‘Harmony Behind Bars’, 298.

¹⁹ Mike Maguire and Peter Raynor, ‘Offender management in and after prison: The end of “end to end”?’ *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 17/2 (2017): 153.

²⁰ Ibid.

release of the sessions valuable, but were still living in a socially demanding and emotionally repressive environment which did not allow for ongoing release. The prisoners valued ITT projects, but the personal benefits were held in tension by the fact that their immediate future meant ongoing life in prison, with all its associated ills.

The idea of long-term effectiveness upon release is also problematic. Sara said that showing contribution to employment potential was a common requirement for success, and was derisive of the probability that their work was going to clearly and directly enable an ex-prisoner to get a job. Some ITT participants (and ITT staff) felt keenly that the ITT projects would prove to be useful for getting a job on release, by encouraging them to have confidence and ambition for example, but still knew that their status as ex-prisoner would be a significant barrier to their eventual employment.²¹ Arthur, for example, declared that he had become ‘disheartened with the system’ as he increasingly realised that his age, race and criminal history would all work against him. His fears are not unfounded – criminal justice charity Unlock report that ‘People with convictions are the least likely “disadvantaged group” to be employed’, largely because of the attitude of employers towards hiring such people.²² Their survey found that of the 61% of respondents who had taken an education or work programme whilst in prison, only 12% had found work.²³ Josh’s claim that ‘them courses, they [prison staff] reckon that are recognised, outside aren’t even going to be worth the paper or card they’re written on’ might be overly blunt but there is some truth in the idea that ‘the support that people might receive in prison...can only help them so much.’²⁴ If courses providing training and qualifications for specific jobs do not necessarily secure employment, then the ITT’s contribution towards employability skills such as perseverance, cooperation and confidence may not make a huge long-term difference in the

²¹ See Unlock, *Support for ex-offenders inquiry: Written response to the Work and Pensions Committee Inquiry* (April 2016), online: <<http://www.unlock.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Unlock-written-response-to-Work-and-Pensions-Committee-Inquiry.pdf>> [accessed 12.09.2018].

²² Ibid., 5-6.

²³ Unlock, *Support for ex-offenders inquiry – Results and analysis of our survey* (September 2016), online: <<http://www.unlock.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Support-for-ex-offenders-inquiry-%E2%80%93-Results-and-analysis-of-our-survey.pdf>> [accessed 12.09.2018], 3.

²⁴ Unlock, *Support for ex-offenders inquiry – Written response*, 5-6.

current climate. There are structural barriers to prisoners' futures which work against the contribution of the ITT.

6.1.3 'Playing the game'

Despite the issues, the ITT as most organisations provides evidence of its impact. However, there was a clear disconnect between the rhetoric and the reality of the ITT programmes. By this, I do not mean that they were not effective in any way, but that the ways in which practitioners, participants and ARO staff fulfilled the requirements of the effectiveness rhetoric did not have much bearing on the musical activities. The pre- and post-week surveys filled in by MiP participants seemed to be solely an administrative task; the facilitators did not seem to use them to tailor the week to the specific requirements of that group. Undoubtedly the ITT administrative staff pay attention to the trends and can shape things accordingly, but in immediate terms the measurement activities and the musical activities were largely separate. I talked to Will about this, during an unattended MiR session, and recorded the following in my field notes:

[Will] said that for him it was really about the music, rather than about rehabilitation. He knows music 'works', knows that stuff can change when people get in a room together but you can't always prove it. He knows it's true, and isn't really bothered whether we can prove it or not. The language around rehabilitation is really just about 'playing the game' for him.²⁵

The game-like nature of the proving effectiveness was evident in what I saw of the ITT's operations. As stated, in order to receive funding and gain access to the prison, the ITT must show the ways in which they contribute to rehabilitative aims. For the case study prison, this included explaining the ways in which their work could contribute to addiction recovery as well. Clearly they were able to do this to a satisfactory degree, else they would not have been able to run the projects, but the link seemed to be more of a pragmatic way of gaining access than one which had operational impact. That is, there was no clear indication that the approach of the ITT was altered in order to satisfy the ARO requirements or to tailor their approach

²⁵ Field notes: MiR, 13th June, afternoon.

towards addiction recovery; their methods seemed to match the formula used in other prisons where the musical activities might be part of education, offending behaviour courses or any other part of prison life. I discussed this with Sara Lee:

Sara Lee:²⁶ Financially, you know, things are also difficult, because they [the government] absolutely slaughtered budgets. Erm, so...as a charity that asks for a contribution from the prison, they'll [the prison] always do it, they always have done it in the past, but it seems much more difficult now to find it, or it comes from stranger places.

Sarah: Does that then make it difficult, because if your budget is coming from the education department, does that then mean you have to have some kind of way of showing its value in education? Or does it not really work like that?

Sara Lee: Not necessarily, no. [...] They might be able to get a, you know, a couple of hundred from this budget, few hundred from that budget, six hundred from that budget, and just build things, build it all together. And you invoice at the end and you just get a number. [...] Sometimes we're asked for, you know, ok, in order to get this amount of money, we need, erm, an outline of what you're going to be doing and what our money is going to pay for.

Sarah: Yeah.

Sara Lee: So, you do that. You just do that. If you, that's kind of just what you have to do. [...] So you kind of grit your teeth and just go, right, ok, let's do it.

For any project, then, the budget could come from many and various sources, and the department within the prison which ultimately signed off on the ITT project could mean little more than an entry point. The sense of this being a game to play is palpable. Sara referred to 'the obsession with having to tick a box about something', and the need to provide 'the buzzwords' to the government. There is an evident frustration in spending time on something seen as an exercise in ticking the right box and using the right buzzword rather than a particularly meaningful exchange.

Significantly, Sara indicated that both sides are aware that they are players in this game – the institution 'just want us to do a music project that men or women are

²⁶ Surname included to avoid confusion between Sara and Sarah.

going to benefit from', and for the ITT, 'the most important thing is that we get in and do the work with the people that need it most.' Scholars have suggested that the unending pressure to prove results can result in 'mission drift',²⁷ whereby organisations end up 'moving away from their stated mission in order to receive funding.'²⁸ In contrast, it seemed the ITT were able to see dangers of focusing too much on proving results. They were engaging as minimally as possible in the effectiveness game, and were doing everything they could pragmatically to ensure they could keep focused on their primary goal, on making sure they could 'do the work'.

Like the ITT, for prisoners themselves the ARO link was largely seen as the means of access and had little to no impact on how they valued the projects. As described in Chapter 3, there were several prisoners who were unaware that the music projects ran as part of addiction recovery services; some were even unaware that they themselves were signed up to ARO courses. Clearly at some point or another prisoners had signed up for these courses, using the necessary language or ticking the right box at the right time, but without actually understanding or engaging with the process at all. For those prisoners that did know the music projects were linked to ITT, only a few acknowledged that it was beneficial for their personal recovery. Most participants saw the main advantage of the link with the ARO as being that it limited the pool from which participants were taken, thereby increasing the likelihood that they would be able to do the course.

Prisoners recognised the game-like nature of the need to provide evidence of outcomes. For example, I wrote the following interaction with Paul in my field notes after one MiR session:

At the end, Will asked them for feedback from the session, wanting quotes for his report. [...] Paul said sarcastically to me 'I will no longer commit crime as a result of

²⁷ Emily Barman, 'What is the Bottom Line for Nonprofit Organizations? A History of Measurement in the British Voluntary Sector' *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 18/2 (2007): 103.

²⁸ Grace Wyld and James Noble, *Beyond Bars: Maximising the Voluntary Sector's Contribution in Criminal Justice* (New Philanthropy Capital, 2017), 29.

taking this.' He in particular is very aware of what people want to hear and cynical of the system and rhetoric.²⁹

Paul did not intend to be taken seriously; his tone indicated a weariness with the question itself. Indeed, though the prisoners are able to 'play', for them the constant evaluation adds to the experience of prison being psychologically painful, or 'tight'.³⁰ Prisoners are frequently asked to provide this kind of information, leading them to feel that prison courses are really intended for show. In Ethan's words, 'I think the rehabilitation model at present is about the government and probation protecting themselves.' Maruna's evaluation of Changing Tunes revealed that prisoners' perceptions of many courses were that they are more for the prison than for the prisoners.³¹ Crewe found similarly that many prisoners 'dismissed [courses] as hollow interventions introduced only "for government statistics" or to "tick boxes", to provide an appearance of treatment.'³² It would be wrong to categorise prisoners' views as entirely uniform on this score; some participants in this study were hugely grateful for the opportunities they had had in prison and were confident in the prison's aims to provide meaningful rehabilitative programmes. Nevertheless, there was a clear sense that prisoners as well as practitioners and prison staff are all simultaneously tired of and complicit in the effectiveness rhetoric. They are able to 'play the game', say the right thing at the right time, and provide the feedback they think others want to hear.

It might well be asked why prisoners go along with the rhetoric. As we saw in Chapter 4, prisoners sign up for courses for a variety of reasons but often because they believe a particular course will speed up their sentence progression, or simply will get them out of their cells, rather than because they believe it will truly help them personally. When it came to the music projects, though, participants were

²⁹ Field notes: MiR, 23rd November 2015, morning.

³⁰ Ben Crewe, 'Depth, weight, tightness: Revisiting the pains of imprisonment', *Punishment & Society* 13/5 (2011).

³¹ Shadd Maruna, *The Great Escape: Exploring the Rehabilitative Dynamics Involved in 'Changing Tunes'* (2010), 19.

³² Crewe, *The Prisoner Society*, 432.

confident that they had been helpful. The issue was not that the projects were ineffective, but that effectiveness was being sought in the wrong places.

6.2 Effectiveness: Who Decides?

This chapter has focused almost entirely on the negative aspects of the effectiveness rhetoric, but it must be said that there is merit in trying to understand how and why music, the arts generally and rehabilitation programmes overall, can contribute to reducing crime. Both for ensuring good use of public funds and for helping more people avoid the detriment of imprisonment, not to mention reducing the number of victims of crime and severity of harm, there is likely to be great benefit in furthering our understanding of how and why musical activity impacts people in certain ways. My argument here is not that musical activity is ineffective for any of these things; my argument is that in using solely a rhetoric of effectiveness to define the value of musical activity, we are greatly limiting our understanding. Perhaps one of the greatest ironies of the rhetoric of effectiveness is that those right at the heart of the ITT projects – the participants and the practitioners – are entirely convinced that music has a positive effect on themselves or other people but simultaneously sceptical or derisive of the expectations from others of what those effects will be or how they might be proved.

As discussed in Chapter 1, discourse about the value of the arts tends to be polarised; notions of intrinsic and instrumental value have been understood as dichotomous. Crossick and Kaszynska, therefore, aimed to ‘break down the divide between the intrinsic and the instrumental camps, to transcend the debate about things to be valued “for their own sake” or else only understood in terms of the narrow economic or other material benefits they provide.’³³ Their way of ‘transcending’ the debate was to put the ‘experience of individuals’ back into the equation before understanding the benefits they bring for others.³⁴ In many ways this thesis has had analogous aims. But my research has also shown that

³³ Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska, *Understanding the value of arts & culture. The AHRC Cultural Value Project* (Swindon: Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2016), 5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

dichotomising the debate is itself unhelpful – it is not just a question of whether the value of an activity is intrinsic or instrumental, or even the ways in which the one feeds into the other. Assuming that there is some instrumental value in musical activity, the question remains: according to whose terms are we defining that instrumental value? Or, to put it another way, who gets to decide what constitutes a ‘good’ effect?

The disconnect between the rhetoric and the reality of the ITT programmes suggests a broader trend in which the ways participants value musical activities – and, although not so much the focus of this thesis, the ways practitioners view their work – have largely been ignored from the discourse. This is generally true across the board with music or arts interventions in the community. Tony Brown et al. provide a report on an AHRC research network whose aim was ‘to improve understanding of the historic, current, and potential roles that community music...can play in promoting community engagement.’³⁵ ‘Community music’ in the report is intentionally defined only vaguely, but is considered to be inclusive of and not limited to all interventions between music practitioner(s) and participant(s).³⁶ The network’s meetings involved stakeholders ‘comprising academics, researchers, funders and commissioners, practitioners and managers’,³⁷ but no mention is made of any input from participants in the activities.

The field of community music, which would include all projects intended for some kind of social good, has reportedly been resilient to shifting policy concerns and has shown an ‘ability to responsively position itself in relation to “what needs to be done” from a policy perspective’.³⁸ However, as Brown *et al.* point out, ‘the matter of which or whose “values” it embraces in order to endure...emerges as a vexed one.’³⁹ Lonie argues that when it comes to understanding the value of musical

³⁵ Tony Brown, Ben Higham and Mark Rimmer, *Whatever Happened to Community Music: AHRC Research Network Report* (AHRC: 2014) online: <https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/47880/1/Whatever_Happened_to_Community_Music_AHRC_CM_Research_Network_Report_final_.pdf> [accessed 02.07.2018], 1.

³⁶ See Lee Higgins, *Community Music in Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

³⁷ Brown et al. *Whatever Happened to Community Music*, 1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

activities, the focus has increasingly turned to 'the measurement and valuation of inputs, outputs and outcomes.'⁴⁰ As we have seen, overwhelmingly it is the values of governments and funders that have prevailed. Any significant exploration of what outcomes are sought or valued by the participants themselves has been absent.

Prisoners provide perhaps the most salient example of participants' values being overlooked in favour of governmental or funder priorities. The vast majority of prisoners are incarcerated because they have committed actions undesirable to the state. Therefore, in many ways the hope of rehabilitative efforts is to transform attitudes and behaviours of individuals into ones in keeping with state values.⁴¹ Prisoners, even those who want to 'go straight', do not have the right to decide and articulate what is best for them; they 'have proved themselves to be untrustworthy by virtue of their past actions'.⁴² In keeping with this, then, prisoners' motivations for and experiences of participating in any activity are seemingly considered irrelevant in how those activities are evaluated.

Hedderman, Gunby and Shelton have argued that this is a trend for female ex-offender projects in particular.⁴³ Investigating the Together Women project working with female offenders, they found that alongside all the methodological issues, 'there is a more important difficulty to be addressed in assessing the impact...and that is the question of who it is for and what it is designed to achieve.'⁴⁴ I would argue that this question is not limited to women's projects; the question cuts to the heart of the purpose of community arts projects and offender rehabilitation. Ward and Maruna argue of counselling and therapy for prisoners, 'offender rehabilitation may be one of the only forms of treatment in existence that is explicitly intended

⁴⁰ Lonie, 'Measuring Outcomes and Demonstrating Impact', 282.

⁴¹ Christopher Uggen, Jeff Manza and Melissa Thompson, 'Citizenship, Democracy and the Civic Reintegration of Criminal Offenders' *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 605/1 (2006): 281-310.

⁴² Tony Ward and Shadd Maruna *Rehabilitation: Beyond the Risk Paradigm* (London: Routledge, 2007), 17.

⁴³ Carol Hedderman, Clare Gunby and Nicola Shelton, 'What women want: The importance of qualitative approaches in evaluating work with women offenders' *Criminology and Criminal Justice* 11/1 (2011): 3-19.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

for the benefit of others (the “community”) rather than for the person undergoing the counselling itself.’⁴⁵ If a project is intended for the benefit of the participants, it is seemingly obvious that at some point the participants should be asked what they are hoping for from it, and whether they are receiving it. Yet, evidently, this has no place in public discourse. When it comes to prisoners and rehabilitation, an ‘effective’ project is determined according to others’ values.

6.3 Valuing What Prisoners Value

Given their assumed ‘proven untrustworthiness’, why should we pay heed to what prisoners value? The question is important both in terms of public perception and for theorising an approach to evaluation that does prioritise their values. There is, of course, a human argument to be made – prisoners are human beings (as many participants in my study were at pains to stress) and warrant the dignity of being treated accordingly. As such, their opinions, hopes and expectations are worthy of consideration just as others’ are. Sidonie Smith and Kay Schaffer argue that the freedom to tell one’s own story is connected with the advancement of human rights,⁴⁶ and suggest that the communication of personal narratives across all kinds of cultural boundaries is a ‘call for the recognition of difference and responsibility for the human dignity of others.’⁴⁷ There is a moral issue with ignoring the voices of a group of people, particularly when the discussion is around activities in which they are the most intimately involved.

However, and as Smith and Schaffer explain, the extent to which people’s narratives spur public responses ‘depends upon the witness’s identity as innocent victim. [...] In the case of inmates, however, the affective appeal of promoting empathy, critical awareness, identification or activism is difficult to make successfully.’⁴⁸ Cheliotis, similarly, argues that ‘The idea of “rehabilitating” offenders has greater political value than treating them as equals and granting

⁴⁵ Ward and Maruna, *Rehabilitation*, 17.

⁴⁶ Sidonie Smith and Kay Schaffer, “‘Land of the free’? Circulating human rights and narrated lives in the United States’ *Comparative American Studies An International Journal* 1/3 (2003): 263-284.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 279.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 276.

them full rights.⁴⁹ While the human argument alone may be morally sufficient, there is a practical reality which is that the arguments most likely to induce sympathy and change are those which connect to wider penal aims.⁵⁰

There is an argument to be made that listening to prisoners' views is in itself supportive of the desistance process. As was shown in Chapter 1, 'fostering agency' must be an aim of rehabilitative interventions.⁵¹ Recognising and supporting someone's agency over their own life must surely include a degree of interest in their hopes, expectations and experiences. This is, to an extent, about allowing citizenship. As Uggen, Manza and Thompson have argued, denying someone the rights of citizenship 'makes performing the *duties* of citizenship difficult.'⁵² Although rehabilitation 'raises profound political questions about the nature of (good) citizenship',⁵³ the concept of desistance incorporates being reintegrated into civic society and 'participating as full members of their communities.'⁵⁴ The ability to express one's views and be heard is not the defining feature of citizenship but it is certainly part of it.

This is an extension of the idea that an offender cannot simply desist in the abstract, but must desist *into* something else.⁵⁵ If desistance involves reintegration into a community, that naturally involves finding ways of behaving which conform to, or at least do not alienate one from, the requirements of that community. But simultaneously, it requires to an extent knowing what might help ex-offenders lead

⁴⁹ Leonidas K. Cheliotis, 'The Arts of Imprisonment: An Introduction' in Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment* (2012), 8.

⁵⁰ There are parallels here with the intrinsic-instrumental dichotomy in the arts, although without the 'victim' and 'perpetrator' labels. For many researchers and practitioners, their personal motivation is a belief that music is an inherent good or even an inherent right, but they are pragmatically aware that extended funding will only come if there can be seen to be public good, rather than purely individual good, as a result.

⁵¹ Fergus McNeill, 'A desistance paradigm for offender management' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 6/1 (2006): 55.

⁵² Uggen, Manza and Thompson, 'Citizenship, Democracy and the Civic Reintegration of Criminal Offenders': 283.

⁵³ Fergus McNeill 'Four forms of "offender" rehabilitation: Towards an interdisciplinary perspective' *Legal and Criminological Psychology* 17/1 (2012): 31. See also, Cormac Behan and Ian O'Donnell, 'Prisoners, Politics and the Polls: Enfranchisement and the Burden of Responsibility' *The British Journal of Criminology* 48/3 (2008): 319-336.

⁵⁴ Uggen, Manza and Thompson, 'Citizenship, Democracy and the Civic Reintegration of Criminal Offenders': 299.

⁵⁵ McNeill, 'Four forms of offender rehabilitation', 30.

fulfilling lives, not just crime-free lives, in their communities.⁵⁶ That is not to say we should be entirely uncritical of their views, given that criminal activity can and does bring about some fulfilment.⁵⁷ However, understanding what prisoners want out of life and the factors that might motivate their change is a step in the direction of helping them to do so.⁵⁸ Supporting desistance, whether as professionals or as community, requires 'understanding the quality of the actual experiences, processes and pathways that desisting persons experience'.⁵⁹

The inherent contributions listening to prisoners might make to desistance are reasons to take account of the views of prisoners generally. There are also arguments in favour of taking in their accounts of the specific activities in which they take part. Hedderman, Gunby and Shelton argue that 'an up-to-date and detailed appreciation of service users' perspectives is essential' for understanding what interventions might do. In a similar vein to the idea that knowing what happened is a necessary precursor to truly understanding the impact of a project, likewise we cannot hope to fully know what came of an intervention without actually asking those involved and giving some credence to their answers.

This is arguably an obvious point, except that, as shown above, it is so often not the case that it needs to be stated more bluntly. David Brown has argued, 'It is important to listen to prisoner accounts of their experiences for the reason that as all accounts are in various ways *partial*, both in the sense of incomplete and of expressing a preference for a particular position, efforts to achieve a fuller understanding of a phenomenon such as the prison experience will be enhanced.'⁶⁰ Brown is referring to the prisoner experience as a whole, but his point is easily

⁵⁶ Tony Ward and Clare-Ann Fortune, 'The Good Lives Model: Aligning Risk Reduction with Promoting Offenders' Personal Goals' *European Journal of Probation* 5/2 (2013): 29-46.

⁵⁷ Donald. A. Andrews, James Bonta and J. Stephen Wormith, 'The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model: Does Adding the Good Lives Model Contribute to Effective Crime Prevention?' *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 38/7 (2011): 740.

⁵⁸ See Mike Maguire and Peter Raynor, 'How the resettlement of prisoners promotes desistance from crime: *Or does it?*' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 6/1 (2006): 19-38; John H. Laub and Robert J. Sampson, 'Understanding Desistance from Crime' *Crime and Justice* Vol 28 (2001): 48-49

⁵⁹ Shadd Maruna, Russ Immarigeon and Thomas P. LeBel, 'Ex-offender reintegration: theory and practice' in Shadd Maruna and Russ Immarigeon eds. *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 15.

⁶⁰ David Brown, 'Giving Voice: The Prisoner and Discursive Citizenship' in Thalia Anthony and Chris Cunneen eds. *The Critical Criminology Companion* (Sydney: Hawkins Press, 2008), 229.

applicable to any intervention within prison – given that, as we have seen, notions of value in prison music projects have been so tied up with governmental priorities, providing an alternative account creates balance. Listening to and communicating prisoners’ views may provide ‘a valuable antidote to...official discourse.’⁶¹ An important caveat should be made here though: as Brown points out, the idea of communicating prisoners’ views ‘is not...to assert that prisoners’ accounts have some privileged authenticity or veracity which allows them to trump accounts of those whose knowledge is obtained from [other] sources’.⁶² Although there is an argument for removing the overly-romanticised claims of the ‘power of music’ from discourse, the aim here is inclusion rather than replacement.

Understanding what prisoners value and why in their activities is also an important component in knowing which activities to extend or replicate, and when to do so. As Ward and Maruna argued, asking ex-offenders what helped them ‘go straight’ would be a valuable way of knowing what might help others.⁶³ Hedderman, Gunby and Shelton suggest there are two potential futures from ignoring participant perspectives in favour of ‘simplistic’ assessment measures which ‘miss out key elements in the process’.⁶⁴ In the first instance, the intervention may be ‘judged to be a failure’.⁶⁵ Thus, there is a possibility that funding is cut to services which *are* helpful to service users and beneficial society, but only in immeasurable ways. Alternatively, they suggest a project may be ‘judged to be a success, but without clearly understanding what the essential elements are.’⁶⁶ This, they argue, would lead to ‘pale imitations’ being widely set up, which will not necessarily include the ‘vital ingredients’ that would ensure success.⁶⁷ As suggested in Chapter 3, had the ITT projects been carried out differently, the value prisoners placed on them would have changed accordingly. Understanding which elements are important to

⁶¹ Ibid., 231.

⁶² Ibid., 228.

⁶³ Ward and Maruna, *Rehabilitation*, 13.

⁶⁴ Hedderman et al., ‘What women want’: 17.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

participants and why helps to shape and improve projects, and to know how best to replicate them.

6.4 Participants' Perspectives

This chapter has shown that the current methods of evaluation are problematic and frustrating in practice for the ITT musicians and often for the prisoners themselves. It has argued that a significant flaw in current notions of effectiveness is the fact that there is little attention paid to the viewpoints of the participants, outside of those views which support the aims of facilitators, funders or legislators. It has further shown that there are both moral and practical reasons for bringing prisoners' viewpoints into the discourse about rehabilitative interventions in general, and prison music projects in particular. To end this chapter, I suggest several criteria that might be put forward if it was the prisoner participants themselves, and only the prisoner participants, who were in charge of evaluating the projects.

Such an exercise is not intended to privilege prisoners' perspectives over and above any others; it aims to add in the voices that have been missing from the discourse.⁶⁸ Where conventional discourse has 'given pride of place to benefits that were thought to resonate with governments',⁶⁹ I aim to give 'pride of place' instead to what participants valued most. This thesis has argued that what mattered most to prisoner participants was the educational opportunity afforded by the ITT projects, and the sanctuary space they provided away from prison life. But, in line with Stephanie Pitts' approach to articulating the value of musical participation more generally,⁷⁰ there are trends and connections running through these chapters which warrant further reflection. These are, of course, specific to the ITT's work in one prison. Further, they pull together the thoughts and articulations of over 30 individual people, and it should be recognised that even in this brief list not all of

⁶⁸ Currently, their voices are of course being mediated through my own, but I hope this can be a step in the right direction.

⁶⁹ Crossick and Kaszynska, *Understanding the value of arts & culture*, 153.

⁷⁰ Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation*, 141-144.

them would apply to all participants. They are by nature speculative, and particularly the latter two which relate to long-term value. But the list that follows may have merit for other music-based programmes in prison as well. I begin by asserting the general success of the ITT projects in the eyes of the participants, and then suggest the following criteria: provision of immediate relief, maintaining interest, the opportunity to learn, musical outcomes, the opportunity for personal improvement, and evidence that change is possible.

6.4.1 A successful project

As something of a preface, the first thing we might point out is that from the perspective of the prisoner participants, overall the ITT projects have indeed been successful. There was overwhelmingly positive feedback from those who completed MiP weeks or a series of MiR sessions. Occasionally, participants made suggestions for improvement such as more regular sessions, using more technology, including a performance or having the courses accredited – but these are mostly things beyond the ITT's control. As discussed (see Chapter 4), some did not finish the ITT projects they started. But by methodological necessity, most of the participants in this study had either completed an MiP week or spent significant time attending MiR sessions. From these participants, suggestions for improvement were rare. Many would agree with Arthur's assessment that 'If you're looking for negative you're gonna have to find someone else [laughs] cos I've got nothing negative to say!'

This, of course, does not tell us anything about why or how the projects were valued. Indeed, perhaps where participants are willing to provide such feedback, paying more attention to what participants criticise in their activities would be a valuable resource for understanding their hopes and experiences, and improving services to prisoners.⁷¹ But it is important to recognise the obvious from the outset: whatever the reasons, prisoners considered the ITT projects to be among the best they had participated in. This was all the more poignant for MiP weeks in that this

⁷¹ For a comparable claim in music education, see Stephanie Pitts, 'The Violin in the Attic: Investigating the Long-Term Value of Lapsed Musical Participation' in Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 171-185.

was still the case some time after the end of the project. Scott (ITT) pointed out that 'I would expect them to say that the moment they finish...because it's very exciting to perform, to record, all this stuff. I've often been intrigued what happens [after] a week, two weeks, a month.' For prisoners to continue giving such praise after the initial euphoria has worn off is indicative that within these prisoners' value systems, the ITT is providing an excellent project.

6.4.2 Provision of immediate relief

Common to all participants was a sense of immediacy in their valuing of the ITT projects. A successful project tended to be one which provided some immediate relief from their current circumstances. Although many participants had more medium- and long-term ambitions from the ITT projects, most were also seeking some form of instant gratification in the form of the abatement or amelioration of some of the painful aspects of imprisonment. This included relief from the mental lethargy of prison in the form of music education, and from the boredom, negativity, repression and loneliness of prison as described in Chapter 5.

In many ways, this relief was predominantly about having fun. The idea of prisoners enjoying themselves is naturally unpalatable to some in the outside world because it seems contrary to the idea that prison should be punishing.⁷² Indeed, prisoners themselves recognised that others may not like the idea of them having fun. Some expressed their thoughts of the music projects feeling 'not like prison' with some guilt, arguing vehemently that if we (the ITT team, myself included) had been the victim we would not like to think of them doing a music course in prison.⁷³

Concurrently, though, prisoners acknowledged the basic humanity involved in being creative and enjoying themselves, and suggested rather pleadingly that this be considered a good thing. Their pleading is significant – there was a sense that they were not asking for much, just a bit of enjoyment to improve their current lives.

⁷² Although public notions of punishment have nuance – see Anna King, 'Keeping a Safe Distance: Individualism and the Less Punitive Public' *The British Journal of Criminology* 48/2 (2008): 190-208.

⁷³ This is not an accurate representation of the ITT team members' feelings, but indicates the views of the prisoner himself.

Why, then, is 'having fun' not the first criterion here? As Pitts has pointed out, music is 'an activity entered into for largely straightforward reasons', which largely constitute enjoyment.⁷⁴ But, as we have seen, the value of music projects *in prison* is bound up in the context. Prisoners are acutely aware of their context and the expectations that attend it, including that they are somehow changing. Researchers have found that many benefits of music 'will be realized only if the experience is positive.'⁷⁵ Likewise, for prisoners, the fun was only the starting point. Certainly, the projects stood out as being far more enjoyable than other options in prison, but prisoners were anxious to point out that the projects were not 'just' fun. The ITT projects were mentally stimulating, a chance to do 'enjoyable hard work' (Isaac), creatively engaging and socially rewarding. In all of these instances, it was the relief they provided from prison normality which contributed to their importance.

This raises some questions about the extent to which the value of prison music projects is contingent on the pains of imprisonment. If reforms made imprisonment a less harmful experience, potentially the music projects would be deemed less valuable. Such issues are certainly worthy of consideration. Alternatively, and more in keeping with prisoners' views, music has the potential to be a tool for prison reform. The way in which music provided immediate relief served as evidence that the prison could be 'a more peaceful place' (Arthur) and more conducive to long-term prospects if more prisoners had more frequent access to musical activities. While immediate relief is not the only way in which music projects were valued by prisoners, the totalising effects of prison meant that a large portion of value was given to the way in which the music projects contrasted with and improved life in prison.

6.4.3 Maintaining interest

This thesis has shown throughout that prisoners sign up for courses in prison for varied, and often quite utilitarian, reasons. Their motivations for *completing* a

⁷⁴ Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation*, 141.

⁷⁵ Susan Hallam, Andrea Creech, and Maria Varvarigou, 'Well-Being and Music Leisure Activities Through the Lifespan: A Psychological Perspective', in Mantie and Smith eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure* (2017), 50.

course are similarly varied. Though prisoners seemed to have low expectations of courses, they were naturally disappointed by programmes which appeared to be interesting and helpful but turned out to be boring and seemingly useless. Mundane courses often seemed to elicit more frustration than having no courses at all. For prisoners, then, an important consideration in the success of the music projects was the extent to which the activities *continued* to be engaging.

Completion rates were not in themselves considered a good marker of success. For prisoners, punctuality, reluctance to leave and their continuing to talk about their music activities outside of the organised ITT times provided far more concrete proof of a successful project. Being ‘tested’, ‘challenged’, and ‘mentally stimulated’ on a weekly (MiR) or daily (MiP) basis was a marker of the ongoing value of the ITT projects. It should be noted, though, that these are still relatively short-term markers of success. Participants’ continued interest through the duration of the ITT projects will not necessarily translate into lifelong involvement (even if the aspirations are there), but are hugely significant within the prison context.

Ongoing engagement may be one of the many areas where prisoner values and practitioner aims coincide. When asked at a conference what measures they would use to define success, a panel of practitioners unanimously agreed that people engaging was one of them.⁷⁶ These practitioners acknowledged, as did the ITT team during my fieldwork, that prisoner participants do not always engage well, and part of their job as practitioners is to find ways of encouraging engagement. In the case of the ITT during this research, they seem to have been remarkably successful at doing this. Indeed perhaps such a criterion should be used as a marker of success beyond the prison context. Levels of engagement in prison music programmes may be the ‘envy’ of other rehabilitation interventions,⁷⁷ but it is possible that this would also be the case for many classroom music educators or music practitioners in other contexts.

⁷⁶ ‘Music for Young People in Youth Justice Settings’ conference (University of Sheffield, 2016).

⁷⁷ Maruna, *The Great Escape*, 27.

6.4.4 Opportunity to learn

As this thesis has made clear, overwhelmingly the prisoner participants tended to gauge the success or otherwise of the ITT projects according to their musical desires and experiences. As was shown in Chapter 4, the extent to which the ITT projects were deemed valuable was primarily contingent on the educational opportunities they afforded. As this topic has been dealt with in detail I will not simply rehearse the point, but given its significance to participants, some reflections should be made.

There were differences in terms of where participants' educational desires were directed. For some, these desires were specifically musical. Perhaps partly to hold the cultural capital that came from being able to play an instrument, sing or rap, or make up their own beats, the prisoners wanted to learn musical skills. They wanted to 'take it seriously', learn 'properly', and develop their skills as much as they could. Participants connected their musical experiences with their whole-life narrative – they had 'always wanted' to develop musical skills, that desire was now being fulfilled, and these skills could be taken with them into the future as part of a fulfilled life.⁷⁸

For others, however, the significance was in simply learning *something* – undoubtedly it would not have mattered much if the project on offer were almost any activity besides music, as long as the opportunity to learn was provided. This was to an extent linked to immediate concerns; their desire was to use their brains and be mentally, physically, or intellectually challenged. The ITT projects provided some of each. But the desire to learn something was also future-orientated. There was a sense for some of developing a portfolio of skills, so to speak. They wanted to 'use time well' whilst in prison, which meant learning as many new skills as possible. It was thought this would improve their time in prison, expand their chances of living crime-free upon release, and also add to the lessons they could pass on to the next generation.

⁷⁸ See Maruna, *Making Good*, 85-108.

Regardless of whether the educational hopes were specifically musical or whether music was simply the educational possibility presented by the ITT, the importance of musical learning was evident. This was where the problem generally lay for those who did not continue with the ITT projects: they stopped either because there was not the opportunity to learn precisely what they wanted, or because there were not sufficient resources to live up to their expectations. Overall, it is not much of an oversimplification to say that in the eyes of the prisoners a successful project was one in which they developed musical skills, an unsuccessful project was one in which they did not.

6.4.5 Musical outcomes

An important aspect of the value of the music projects was the extent to which there was a musical outcome. This was partially about the intrinsically rewarding nature of musical activity and the desire to make music for pure delight. However, the significance of musical outcomes for prisoners seemed to be more about the music projects doing what they said they would do. There was something valuable for prisoners about being in a project where there is no ulterior motive of satisfying prison or rehabilitative requirements, but where the stated aim is the real one. Given the participants tended to have musical goals in mind, there was an obvious satisfaction in these being fulfilled. Where conventional discourse prioritises extra-musical benefits and outcomes in prisoners' behaviour, capacities and character, for prisoner participants the most important outcomes were tangible musical ones.

In the MiP weeks, this generally meant songs written, recorded and performed. MiP participants expressed amazement at the number of songs they had been able to write as a group, and what they had managed to get done. Simon pointed out with pride, 'We started with nothing, and ended up with something.' The importance of performance in MiP was being able to demonstrate to others how much had been achieved musically. I interviewed participants before they received their CDs (the process took well over a month); all were excited to receive them and listen back to their work, but I have no way of knowing if it did live up to expectations. Indeed, the one prisoner I interviewed who had taken an ITT project many years previously

said he had been so embarrassed listening to the CD that he had thrown it in the bin immediately. Evidently his memory of rehearsing and performing were not matched by the reality of hearing his own voice. His experience does not necessarily resemble that of others, but it points to the importance of not just any musical product but a quality musical product.

The desire for musical outcomes did not necessarily mean a musical product though. What was considered important was having something concrete to show for the time spent. This was perhaps particularly significant for MiR participants who had no specific musical product to work towards. Here, there was often significance in having turned collections of lyrics or improvised lines into ‘real’ songs. Indeed, when I asked Isaac if he would have preferred there to be a more tangible goal from the MiR sessions, he responded adamantly, ‘there was a goal, the goal was to see if we could make a piece of music in that hour and a half.’

For all ITT participants, the musical outcomes were also often framed as specific skills learnt – new techniques on the guitar, chords learnt, or numbers of different instruments played. These were important as tangible musical outcomes which could be pointed to as evidence of success, and also as the skills which could be used generatively to ‘give back’ to society. Personal capacities such as confidence or teamwork were occasionally mentioned, but almost always in the context of their musical application – the confidence to play in front of others, the ability to play with other people instead of just alone, the realisation that they had the ability to write a song. Musical achievements were paramount for the participants.

6.4.6 Opportunity for personal improvement

Although the success criteria suggested so far have been to do with participants’ lives in prison or the rewards of musical activity itself, there is still evidence to suggest that prisoners wanted to acknowledge some kind of extra-musical and longer-term impact of the projects. The importance of this should not be overstated – particularly when long-term change was assumed to be solely to do with recidivism or addiction recovery, several prisoners in this study were highly sceptical and stated absolutely that music would not stop people reoffending, nor

would it stop people taking drugs. Anderson *et al.* report similar ‘realism’ in participants’ views.⁷⁹ What seemed to be important to the prisoner participants was not any one particular change determined by those outside the activity, but having the opportunity to move forward in areas of life they themselves saw as important.

There is clearly some overlap here with the ‘unprovable claims’ mentioned above, of prisoners asserting that their lives had been changed or that they had been turned into a better person. Even less sweeping statements like it had ‘done them good’ were at times made without much elaboration. I am not suggesting that we begin to treat these uncritically. But despite the methodological issues these claims raise, such feelings of transformation were clearly significant to some prisoners’ experiences.

I would argue, therefore, that in attempting to assess the success of a project, a more accurate approach from prisoners’ perspectives is to look at opportunities arisen, rather than change induced. If we accept that prisoners are in charge of their own change – or, to use Isaac’s words, that they ‘repair themselves’ – and that interventions may help, then for prisoners what was important was that they were given chances to improve personally. There are no trends in the data as to what kinds of self-improvement were occurring, or what kinds of ‘repair’ work were being done, only that the possibility was important. For some, their musical learning was their self-improvement – the music project had not made them better as people, it had simply made them better at music. Others did mention all kinds of extra-musical benefits, but these were individualised. Where participants were able to communicate clearly what improvements they felt they had made, they generally focused on one or two specific issues in their lives. Examples included: feelings of peace or happiness, less anger, confidence, managing cravings, using their time well, relationships with family, fatherhood abilities, potential job prospects, having something to offer others and so on.

⁷⁹ Kirstin Anderson et al., *Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team* (2011), 55.

None of these on its own could be considered important to the whole cohort of participants; some participants would say that any number of these were areas in which they already excelled, or where music projects could have no impact. The significance of the music projects for prisoners was in providing the opportunity for self-improvement, without specifying where this should be directed.

Correspondingly, it is very possible that those who felt they had not had the opportunities for self-improvement that they hoped for were disappointed in their experiences, or certainly valued them less highly than others did.

6.4.7 Evidence that change is possible

Beyond the individualised types of self-improvement provided by the ITT projects, the way in which prisoners connected their experiences in the music projects to their long-term prospects might be described best as the projects providing evidence that change was possible. I do not intend to imply that this is the language prisoners used, but the statement may summarise their attitudes and comments to this effect. Claims about what they had got out of the music projects were often framed as ‘it made me realise...’, ‘it has shown me...’, ‘it reminded me that...’ and so on. The ends of these sentences could be internally-focused – the music projects showed them who they could be or perhaps even reminded them who they already are.⁸⁰ Alternatively, they could be more externally-focused – the music projects helped them realise what they were capable of or what the future could hold. These were imaginative and aspirational, but still based in some reality of the projects.

As we have seen in Chapter 4, people connected their extended musical knowledge and appreciation with their lives as well. This was described by one participant as being ‘[opened] up to a new walk of life’. For some, their changing musical tastes and skills were evidence that they did not have to continue with how they had always been, a new life was possible. The ITT team were particularly inspirational for participants. In wanting to use music generatively, many participants said they wanted to do so ‘like Will, just help [people] out’ (Lee), or to use music in a similar

⁸⁰ Maruna, *Making Good*, 88.

manner to the MiP team. The facilitators represented a different kind of musical professional, one that was seen as both desirable and, crucially, attainable for the prisoner participants. Further, the relationships in the group, with the ITT team and with other participants, were evidence to participants that they did indeed have the capacity for 'normal' interactions with others in society, even those with whom they would not usually associate.

Prisoners' views are perhaps summed up by Ian's assertion that 'if we can do it in here, we can do it out there.' Again, what 'it' means was personal to each participant, but for many the realities of what they could do and how they could be during the ITT projects, individually and as a group, was evidence enough that such things would be possible once released. Of course, unfortunately this is not always true. As has been shown, there are many barriers to desistance from crime and reintegration into the community, not to mention the difficulties of continuing with musical activities or succeeding as professional musicians in any capacity. Indeed, given the high expectations some participants had of the results of their musical activities, perhaps we have an ethical responsibility to either lower their expectations or do more to ensure their hopes are met. But practitioners and participants alike can perhaps take encouragement from the notion that 'idealistic passion, overconfidence, and even a touch of self-righteousness may be traits [of] successful ex-offenders [seeking] to make a place for themselves in the world of conventional adults.'⁸¹ Sometimes the aspiration to succeed, combined with some evidence that this is a possibility, really can make it more likely.

6.5 Changing the Record

This chapter has discussed the ways in which the dominant discourse of effectiveness has an impact in practice on the work of the ITT. It has argued that the pressure to measure results is often experienced as a burden to the organisation, and that the expectations of what those results might be are undermined by the realities of prison life. There is therefore a game-like way in which the organisation,

⁸¹ Maruna, *Making Good*, 108.

the practitioners and even the participants respond to evaluative demands. The chapter has further argued that one of the fundamental flaws in the way the effectiveness rhetoric is outworked is that it inadvertently denies a voice to the participants themselves, and fails to take account of their hopes, expectations, experiences and values. The chapter made the case for valuing what prisoners value, arguing that there are both ethical and pragmatic arguments to be made for doing so. The chapter ended by reflecting on themes running through this thesis, providing a suggested list of criteria which might be used if prisoners themselves were to evaluate the projects. It was hypothesised that for prisoners, evaluation criteria might be: the provision of immediate relief, the extent to which the projects maintained their interest throughout, the opportunity to learn, musical outcomes, the opportunity for personal improvement, and evidence that change is possible.

The suggested list, though speculative, is not entirely contrary to other notions of effectiveness. Particularly amongst practitioners and researchers who themselves are trying to steer away from narrow conceptions of results, there are ways in which these sets of suggested outcomes are complementary. I would suggest three key areas in which the above list stands out against other, more common, suggestions of outcomes. Firstly, short-term benefits are prioritised over long-term ones. Although both are clearly important, the nature of imprisonment meant the immediate environment was a priority. Secondly, the priorities of the prisoner participants tend to be the musical rather than the extra-musical outcomes. It was the learning and creating that were particularly significant for the prisoners. Thirdly, where there were extra-musical outcomes, these were always framed as being fostered by the participants themselves and, sometimes, helped by the intervention. Without actively stating their avoidance of a top-down approach to their change, prisoners still talked about their experiences in ways that reflected their agency.

More recognition needs to be made of participants' views in music and arts projects in general, and particularly in prison music projects. 'Changing the record' of the common rhetoric necessitates articulating more clearly what prisoners value in their activities. Doing so would contribute to a more balanced discourse, help us

understand how and why music might be contributing to desistance efforts, and also suggest ways in which those providing music projects might be able to help more. I do not suggest that the way forward is to replace one list of criteria with another, creating a 'tick-box' exercise with which projects could measure success. Rather, perhaps this research and these criteria might be used to inform expectations of prison music projects, and to shape the desired outcomes in a way that satisfies funders *and* reflects the values of participants themselves.

Conclusion

Changing the Record

This thesis has advocated a new approach for understanding and articulating the value of prison music projects. It has argued that current notions of effectiveness are inadequate for capturing what prisoners value in their experiences, and are therefore insufficient as a means of understanding what music projects really do in prisons and for prisoners. In so doing, it has made an original contribution to the field by prioritising the experiences and values of the prison participants of Irene Taylor Trust music projects in one prison. It has extended current literature by emphasising the musical processes and the prison context – showing *what happened*. Further, it has sought to express *what mattered* to prisoner participants in their musical experiences. Finally, it has challenged the dominant discourse of effectiveness by theorising ways in which the participants' priorities could be translated into an alternative set of evaluative criteria, which could be used in conjunction with existing measures in order to balance the discourse.

Chapter 1, 'Effects and Effectiveness', provided a review of the key literature in the field. The many benefits of music projects in prison were outlined, along with some limitations of the music in prisons literature. The chapter then established the historical and cultural backdrop for research by documenting the instrumentalisation of the arts, the metrification of the charity sector, and the 'what works' movement in the criminal justice sector. I argue that these developments have led to an 'effectiveness rhetoric' which is used to articulate the value of prison music projects (and many other projects), which, as the chapter described, is problematic both in theory and in practice. The chapter ended by presenting recent findings about the process of desistance from crime, emphasising the need to recognise individuals' narratives and agency in the desistance process. Just as rehabilitation cannot be *done to* an offender but rather desistance is *done by* an individual, so music is not a tool used to bring about desirable effects, but an activity *done by* participants.

Chapter 2, 'Methodology and Research Reflections' provided an account of and reflections on the research process. Some of the key aspects of the approach taken for this thesis are its interdisciplinarity, enabled by inter-institutional supervision arrangements and inter-departmental membership; my background as a musician and musicologist rather than criminologist, which enabled a deeper understanding of the musical processes involved; and my position as a tutor-researcher during the observations, whereby I operated as a member of the ITT team and had valuable skills to offer the participants. This in particular enabled rapport to be built and trust to be developed between myself and the research participants, which contributed to the disclosures they made about their lives and experiences.

Chapter 3, 'Musicking in Prison', was in part a response to a gap acknowledged by the Arts Alliance in 2011: 'arts organisations had still not managed to unpick what the arts does and how it does it in these contexts.'¹ Arguing that a reason for this lack is that too often research moves directly to 'results', and that context is essential for understanding value, the chapter focused on 'what happened' in an ITT music session. I provided a thorough account of the musical processes involved in the ITT projects in prison and the way in which the prison setting shaped the experience for the participants. These findings are a necessary precursor to understanding what mattered to participants, the subjects of Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 4, 'Music as an Educational Endeavour', argued that the ITT projects were valued primarily as educational opportunities. This chapter provides the most obvious contrast to the literature – where the common understanding is that the arts and music can be beneficial for encouraging further engagement in educational programmes, this research found that prisoners showed no signs of this, but instead valued the ITT projects as educational opportunities in and of themselves. Prisoners were motivated to sign up because they wanted to learn musical skills, and the projects were judged accordingly. Overall, but with some exceptions, the approach of the ITT was successful in providing the skills participants' hoped for. However, the significance of the educational experience must be understood within

¹ Angus McLewin Associates, *Arts Alliance Evidence Library* (Arts Alliance, 2011), 35.

the context of prison provision, which was largely considered to be inadequate. Prisoners' experiences often translated into lifelong musical aspirations, and the intention to use music to 'give back' to the community, particularly the next generation.

Chapter 5 argued that prisoners also valued the ITT projects as a time and activity that felt outside of prison life. The chapter framed these ideas in terms of 'sanctuary', suggesting that the music projects provided an opportunity for immediate relief from prison life, and, to an extent, for prisoners to 'repair' themselves. This 'repair' had consequences for their lives in prison, but has the potential to change their futures as well.

Chapter 6 drew together some of the core themes of the thesis. It discussed the ways in which the rhetoric of effectiveness impacted the workings of the ITT, suggesting that ultimately the need to prove results is treated in a game-like way by all involved, although no one enjoys being a player. As such, the ideas in this thesis are not a criticism of the efforts made to prove effectiveness by any researcher or organisation per se, so much as a sympathetic critique of a system of measurement with which many are dissatisfied. Current notions of effectiveness are particularly flawed because they ignore the values of the participants themselves. It was argued that this was the case for community arts organisations generally, but particularly for prison projects. The chapter made an ethical and practical argument for valuing what prisoners value in their experiences. The chapter ended by suggesting and reflecting on how success might be understood if prisoners' views were the deciding voice in the discussion of value, hypothesising the following: the provision of immediate relief, the extent to which the projects maintained their interest throughout, the opportunity to learn, musical outcomes, the opportunity for personal improvement, and evidence that change is possible. These should not be taken as a new list of criteria to be used as an evaluative measure over and above other means, but should be used in conjunction with other metrics of success.

What Comes Next

To end, I want to draw out some ideas which have emerged through this research which warrant further research. As a starting point, I suggest that more research of a similar nature be conducted into music projects in prisons (as well as in the community). There are several reasons for this. The first is simple: there is a general lack of repeat studies in the area of prison music projects, and more needs to be done to verify previous findings. The second is that recognising imbalance in a discourse is only the first step; a balanced discourse requires that further attention be paid to the experiences of participants in their activities, rather than the results. The third relates to a potential limitation of this research. A concern in the data being generated was that it was overwhelmingly positive, as other researchers have found.² Criticism was rare, and actual displeasure in feedback was virtually non-existent. I have argued that this praise needs to be understood at least in part as resulting from the comparison with prison life, a context in which the data certainly make sense. But there may be other underlying issues. Consider the following assertion from Leonidas Cheliotis:

‘It is ironic that efforts have been made to promote drama therapy in prisons by reference to the supposed “affinity that criminals have for the dramatic” in that they “often speak about the masks they wear and the roles they play in order to fit into the criminal world”...without recognising the possible dramatic element in how prisoners express themselves about prison arts programming or indeed, their experiences of the “criminal world”.’³

To use a similar irony from this research project, given the extent to which prisoners are able to ‘play the game’ of effectiveness, the possibility that they were continuing to ‘play’ in my study but under different rules cannot be disregarded. This emphasises the significance of my having the observation data to support and inform the interview data, and my perception is that in interview most were

² Kirstin Anderson et al., *Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team* (Glasgow: Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research, 2011)43.

³ Leonidas K. Cheliotis, ‘The Arts of Imprisonment: An Introduction’ in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 10. See also K. B. Cogan and B. L. Paulson, ‘Picking up the Pieces, Brief Report on Inmates’ Experiences of a Family Violence Drama Project’, *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 25/1 (1998): 37-43.

remarkably candid. Nonetheless it is important that more studies attempt to understand the experiences of participants themselves. Creating a research culture where the primary aim is not to prove effects but to understand experience may, paradoxically, actually help us better understand the effects funders and legislators hope for.

There is also room for extending the research into the way in which prison structures and the prison context shape the experience of music projects. This research was based in a medium-security adult male prison, which came with its own structural challenges and social world. Using a similar idea in prisons of different security grades, or in women's prisons or Young Offending Institutions, would illuminate the way in which different prison structures and social worlds affect the musical processes, and therefore the way in which participants experience them. Similarly, the particular discrepancies in terms of engagement in further learning should be looked into further. Chapter 5 showed that many participants in this study were prisoners who were already highly motivated to participate in prison provision, including education. Research could be done to ascertain whether the nature of prison means that arts programmes are indeed tending to work with those already pre-disposed to engage with provision, and what the repercussions of this are. Additionally, practitioners and researchers could consider focusing musical and research attention on those who are unmotivated to participate in education, if such a thing were possible.

What emerged through the research very clearly was that the comparison with prison life was a constant factor in the way in which the ITT programmes were valued. If prison is a 'total' institution,⁴ prison music projects by nature become a part of that environment. This warrants more attention, as do the potential harms of prison music programmes. While the arts may play a part in prison reform, they may also be stopping prison reform taking place by ameliorating some of the pains of prison but without addressing the more serious issues of imprisonment. The fact that many of the benefits run contrary to prison life highlights many of the

⁴ Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (St. Ives: Penguin, 1991 (1961)).

successes of the project. Concurrently, however, it suggests a confused approach to penal policy whereby identity is degraded by prison, but attempts are made to rebuild it by the programmes within; emotional stability is threatened in prison but returned by interventions within. Responses to these ambiguities are worth theorising.

Throughout this thesis it has been evident that some of the participants had access to instruments outside of the music projects and were making music in their own time. This points to an area of musicking largely neglected by current research – the rich world of ground-level, organic musicking taking place in all prisons around the country. Even where there are no organised projects, music is being made and heard. A new realm of research would be to conduct an ethnographic study of musical life in prison outside of interventions. Such a study would move understandings of musical participation away from projects, and would contribute to broadening the value of musical activity beyond ‘effectiveness’. Looking at how and why prisoners engage with music, what musics they engage with and with whom, when there is no one there to organise it for them, would tell us much about music, prison, and the intersection between the two.

I have been primarily concerned here with the views of prisoners who take part in the projects. The practitioners who run these projects are an untapped resource, given their wealth of knowledge; understanding their motivations and assumptions about what they do would be an interesting line of inquiry. Such research is starting to emerge, but this would be a rich area for further exploration.⁵ Beyond their motivations and experiences, their role in these projects is also worth theorising further. It is perhaps significant that no changes in personal capacities or self-conception are expected of music practitioners, despite the fact that they are part of the musical activity and contributing to the musical process. Examining the differences in values between the practitioners and participants would greatly extend our understanding of prison music projects.

⁵ Kirstin Anderson, ‘Documenting Arts Practitioners’ Practice in Prisons: “What Do You Do in There?”’ *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 54/3 (2015): 371-383.

The inconsistency in how different people are expected to engage with music is perhaps the most telling sign that the rhetoric of effectiveness does not fully explain musical activity. Practitioners, joining in with the music activity, are not expected to have changed in the same ways that participants are. Likewise, many who are musically trained, myself included, will have been involved in musical activities throughout their lives without ever being asked to evaluate the experience for the effects it has had on their personality or behaviour. Where social good is not the aim, evidence of a successful musical activity is fairly simple: whether the participants come back for more. If that were how prison music projects were measured for success, no further research would be necessary. In 2005, Stephanie Pitts argued that 'Musical participation deserves to be more widely recognised and understood by researchers, policy-makers and funding bodies: in short, to be valued as highly as it is by the case participants and many others like them.'⁶ Over a decade later, it is evident that researchers at least have accepted and responded to this challenge. The next step is to find ways of understanding and articulating this value that align more closely with the ways done so by the participants themselves.

⁶ Stephanie Pitts, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005): 144.

Bibliography

Aitken, Jonathan, and John Samuels QC, *What happened to the Rehabilitation Revolution?* (London: The Centre for Social Justice, 2017).

Allen, Grahame, and Noel Dempsey, *Prison Population Statistics* (4 July 2016) online: <http://www.allweare.org.uk/uploads/2/0/0/8/20080425/prison_population_statistics_july_2016.pdf> [accessed 03.07.2018].

Anderson, Kirstin, 'Documenting Arts Practitioners' Practice in Prisons: "What Do You Do in There?"' *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 54/3 (2015): 371-383.

Anderson, Kirstin, Sarah Colvin, Fergus McNeill, Mike Nellis, Katie Overy, Richard Sparks and Lyn Tett, *Inspiring Change: Final Project Report of the Evaluation Team*, (Glasgow: Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research, 2011).

Andrews, Donald A., James Bonta and J. Stephen Wormith, 'The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) Model: Does Adding the Good Lives Model Contribute to Effective Crime Prevention?' *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 38/7 (2011): 735-755.

Angus McLewin Associates, *Arts Alliance Evidence Library* (Arts Alliance, 2011): online: <<http://artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/evaluation-downloads/arts-alliance-evidence-library-2011.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018].

Angus McLewin Associates, *Time Well Spent: Lessons Learned from The Irene Taylor Trust Music in Prisons' Evaluations of Music Programmes in Prisons* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2005).

Artists in Mind, <<http://www.artists-in-mind.org.uk/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

Ascenso, Sara, *The Lullaby Project: Areas of Change and Mechanisms of Impact* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2017).

Baker, Felicity, Tony Wigram, David Stott, and Katrina McFerran, 'Therapeutic Songwriting in Music Therapy: Part 1: Who Are the Therapists, Who Are the Clients, and Why is Songwriting Used?' *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy* 17/2 (2008): 105-123.

Baker, Geoff, *El Sistema: Orchestrating Venezuela's Youth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Barman, Emily, 'What is the Bottom Line for Nonprofit Organizations? A History of Measurement in the British Voluntary Sector' *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 18/2 (2007): 101-115.

Barrett, David, 'Concerns over "holiday camp" jails' *The Telegraph* (11 Feb 2015), online: <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/11406172/Concerns-over-holiday-camp-jails.html>> [accessed 25.09.2018].

Barz, Gregory F., and Timothy J. Cooley eds., *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives in Ethnomusicology* 2nd Edition (USA: Oxford University Press, 2008), online:

<<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nottingham/reader.action?docID=415761&query=>
> [accessed 04.07.2018].

Battye, Fraser, 'Payment by Results in the UK: Progress to date and future directions for evaluation' *Evaluation* 21/2 (2015): 189-203.

Bayliss, Phil, 'Learning behind bars: time to liberate prison education' *Studies in the Education of Adults* 35/2 (2003): 1657-172.

Beckles Willson, Rachel, 'The Parallax Worlds of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra' *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 134/2 (2009): 319-347.

Begun, Audrey L., Lisa K. Berger, Laura L. Otto-Salaj, Susan J. Rose, 'Developing Effective Social Work University-Community Research Collaborations' *Social Work* 55/1 (2010): 54-62.

Behan, Cormac, and Ian O'Donnell, 'Prisoners, Politics and the Polls: Enfranchisement and the Burden of Responsibility' *The British Journal of Criminology* 48/3 (2008): 319-336.

Belfiore, Eleonora, 'Impact', 'value' and 'bad economics': Making sense of the problem of value in the arts and humanities' *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education* 14/1 (2015): 95-110.

Belfiore, Eleonora, 'Auditing culture: The subsidised cultural sector in the New Public Management' *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 10/2 (2004): 183-202.

Belfiore, Eleonora, 'Art as a means of alleviating social exclusion: Does it really work? A critique of cultural policies and social impact studies in the UK' *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 8/1 (2002): 91-106.

Belfiore, Eleonora, and Oliver Bennett, 'Beyond the "Toolkit Approach": Arts Impact Evaluation Research and the Realities of Cultural Policy-Making' *Journal for Cultural Research* 14/2 (2010): 121-142.

Belfiore, Eleonora, and Oliver Bennett, *The Social Impact of the Arts: An Intellectual History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan Ltd, 2008).

Bilby, Charlotte, Laura Caulfield, and Louise Ridley, *Re-imagining Futures: Exploring arts interventions and the process of desistance* (Arts Alliance, 2013).

Bottoms, A.E., and William McWilliams, 'A Non-Treatment Paradigm for Probation Practice' *The British Journal of Social Work* 9/2 (1979): 159-202.

Bottoms, Anthony, Joanna Shapland, Andrew Costello, Deborah Holmes, and Grant Muir, 'Towards Desistance: Theoretical Underpinnings for an Empirical Study' *The Howard Journal* 43/4 (2004): 368-389.

Boyle, David, 'Target culture: back from the dead' *The Guardian* (8 Oct 2010) online: <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/oct/08/coalition-target-culture-payment-by-results>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

Braggins, Julia, and Jenny Talbot, *Time to Learn: Prisoners' Views on Prison Education* (Prison Reform Trust, 2003).

Brown, David, 'Giving Voice: The Prisoner and Discursive Citizenship' in Thalia Anthony and Chris Cunneen eds. *The Critical Criminology Companion* (Sydney: Hawkins Press, 2008), 228-239.

Brown, Toby, Ben Higham and Mark Rimmer, *Whatever Happened to Community Music: AHRC Research Network Report* (AHRC: 2014) online: <https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/47880/1/Whatever_Happened_to_Community_Music_AHRC_CM_Research_Network_Report_final_.pdf> [accessed 02.07.2018].

Cameron, David, 'Prison reform: Prime Minister's Speech' (Policy Exchange, 8 February 2016) full text online: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prison-reform-prime-ministers-speech>> [accessed 16.06.2018].

Carlen, Pat, 'Imprisonment and the penal body: the cancer of disciplinary governance' in Alison Liebling and Shadd Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005), 421-441.

Carpenter, Alexander, "'Die Young": On Pop Music, Social Violence, Self-Censorship, and Apology Rituals' *Popular Music and Society* 40/3 (2017): 261-273.

Cartwright, Jim, *An Evaluation of the Irene Taylor Trust's Sounding Out Programme* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2013).

Cartwright, Nancy, and Jeremy Hardie, *Evidence-Based Policy: A Practical Guide to Doing It Better* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

Caulfield, Laura, *Exploring Good Vibrations projects with vulnerable and challenging women in prison* (Bath: School of Society, Enterprise and Environment, 2015), online: <<http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/goodvibrationsprojectswithvulnerableandchallengingwomenfinal.pdf>> [accessed 02.07.2018].

Caulfield, Laura S., Dean John Wilkinson, and David Wilson 'Exploring alternative terrain in the rehabilitation and treatment of offenders: Findings from a prison-based music project' *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation* 55/6 (2016): 396-418.

Caulfield, Laura, David Wilson, and Dean Wilkinson, *Continuing Positive Change in Prison and the Community* (Birmingham: Centre for Applied Criminology, 2010).

Cavadino, Michael, James Dignan, and George Mair, *The Penal System – An Introduction* 5th edition (SAGE, 2013).

Changing Tunes, <<http://www.changingtunes.org.uk/>> [accessed 24.09.2018].

Cheliotis, Leonidas K. ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012).

Cheliotis, Leonidas K., 'The Arts of Imprisonment: An Introduction' in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 1-26.

Cheliotis, Leonidas K., and Aleksandra Jordanoska, 'The arts of desistance: assessing the role of arts-based programmes in reducing reoffending' *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice* 55/1-2 (2016): 25-41.

Cherbo, Joni Maya, Harold L. Vogel and Margaret Jane Wyszomirski eds. *Understanding the Arts and Creative Sector in the United States* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2008).

Clinks, 'Handmade Alliance', <<https://www.clinks.org/partnership-finder/45021>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

Coates, Sally, *Unlocking Potential: A review of education in prison* (Ministry of Justice, 2016), online:
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524013/education-review-report.pdf> [accessed 21.09.2018].

Cohen, Cynthia, 'Engaging with the Arts to Promote Coexistence' in Antonia Chayes and Marthe L. Minow eds. *Imagine Coexistence: Restoring Humanity After Violent Ethnic Conflict* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 267-293.

Cohen, Mary L., "'Safe Havens": The Formation and Practice of Prison Choirs in the US' in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 227-233.

Cohen, Mary L., and Jennie Henley, 'Music-Making Behind Bars: The Many Dimensions of Community Music in Prisons' in Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Lee Higgins eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Community Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 153-176.

Cohen, Mary L., and Catherin M. Wilson 'Inside the fences: Pedagogical practices and purposes of songwriting in an adult male U.S. state prison' *International Journal of Music Education* 35/4 (2017) 541-553.

Cooley, Timothy J., and Gregory Barz, 'Casting Shadows: Fieldwork is Dead! Long Live Fieldwork! Introduction' in Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley eds., *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives in Ethnomusicology* 2nd Edition (USA: Oxford University Press, 2008), online:
<<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nottingham/reader.action?docID=415761&query=>> [accessed 04.07.2018] (no pagination).

Cox, Alexandra, and Loraine Gelsthorpe, 'Creative Encounters: Whatever Happened to the Arts in Prisons?' in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 255-274.

Cox, Alexandra, and Loraine Gelsthorpe, *Beats & Bars: Music in Prisons: an evaluation* (London: Irene Taylor Trust, 2008).

Create, 'Inside Stories', <<https://createarts.org.uk/tag/inside-stories/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

Crewe, Ben, 'Inside the Belly of the Penal Beast: Understanding the Experience of Imprisonment' *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 4/1 (2015): 50-65.

Crewe, Ben, 'Not Looking Hard Enough: Masculinity, Emotion and Prison Research' *Qualitative Inquiry* 20/4 (2014): 392-403.

Crewe, Ben, 'Depth, weight, tightness: Revisiting the pains of imprisonment', *Punishment & Society* 13/5 (2011): 509-529.

- Crewe, Ben, *The Prisoner Society: Power Adaptation, and Social Life in an English Prison* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- Crewe, 'Power, Adaptation and Resistance in a Late-Modern Men's Prison' *The British Journal of Criminology* 47/2 (2007): 256-275.
- Crewe, Ben, 'Prisoner Society in the era of hard drugs' *Punishment and Society* 7/4 (2005): 457-481.
- Crewe, Ben, Jason Warr, Peter Bennett, and Alan Smith, 'The emotional geography of prison life' *Theoretical Criminology* 18/1 (2014): 56-74.
- Crossick, Geoffrey, and Patrycja Kaszynska, *Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project* (AHRC, 2016) online: <https://ahrc.ukri.org/documents/publications/cultural-value-project-final-report/> [accessed 04.07.2018].
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety* (Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1975).
- Cullen, Francis T., and Paul Gendreau, 'From Nothing Works to What Works: Changing Professional Ideology in the 21st Century' *The Prison Journal* 81/3 (2001): 313-338.
- Cursley, Jo, and Shadd Maruna, *A Narrative-Based Evaluation of "Changing Tunes" Music-based Prisoner Reintegration Intervention: Full Report* (Changing Tunes, 2015), online: <http://www.artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/final-report-cursley-and-maruna-changing-tunes.pdf> [accessed 02.07.2018].
- Daines, John, Carolyn Daines, and Brian Graham, *Adult Learning Adult Teaching* 4th edition (Wales: Welsh Academic Press, 2006).
- Damsa, Dorina, and Thomas Ugelvik, 'A Difference That Makes a Difference? Reflexivity and Researcher Effects in an All-Foreign Prison' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16/1 (2017): 1-10.
- Davis, Celeste, Stephen J. Bahr, and Carol Ward, 'The process of offender reintegration: Perceptions of what helps prisoners reenter society' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 13/4 (2012): 446-469.
- De Viggiani, Nick, 'Trying to be Something You Are Not: Masculine Performances within a Prison Setting' *Men and Masculinities* 15/3 (2012): 271-291.
- DeNora, Tia, *Music Asylums: Wellbeing Through Music in Everyday Life* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016 (2013)).
- DeNora, Tia, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Digard, Leon, Anna Graf von Sponeck, and Alison Liebling, 'All Together Now: the therapeutic potential of a prison-based music programme' *Prison Service Journal* 170 (2007): 3-14.
- Diegard, Léon, and Alison Liebling, 'Harmony Behind Bars: Evaluating the Therapeutic Potential of a Prison-based Music Programme' in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed. *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 277-302.

Dodge, Rachel, Anette P. Daly, Jan Huyton and Lalage D. Sanders, 'The challenge of defining wellbeing' *International Journal of Wellbeing* 2/3 (2012): 222-235.

Doxat-Pratt, Sarah, 'Performance Matters: The Case for Including Performance in Prison Music Projects' *Prison Service Journal* 239 (2018): 27-32.

Dyer, Clare, 'Poor treatment of drug addicts in prison costs UK more than £3.5m in compensation and fees' *BMJ: British Medical Journal (Online)* (2011): 343.

Ellis, Caroline, *Re-Vision: Autoethnographic Reflections on Life and Work* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2009).

Evans, Tony, and Patti Wallace, 'A Prison within a Prison? The Masculinity Narratives of Male Prisoners' *Men and Masculinities* 10/4 (2008): 484-507.

Ezell, Michael E., and Lawrence E. Cohen, *Desisting from Crime: Continuity and Change in Long-Term Crime Patterns of Serious Chronic Offenders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Finnegan, Ruth, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-making in an English town* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1991(1975)).

Fredrickson, Barbara L., and Daniel Kahneman, 'Duration neglect in retrospective evaluation of affective episodes' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 65/1 (1993): 45-55.

Frith, Simon, *Performing Rites: Evaluating Popular Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Gardner, Amanda, Lori L. Hager, and Grady Hillman, *The Prison Arts Resource Project: An Annotated Bibliography* (US National Endowment for the Arts, 2014).

Garside, Richard, 'Current criminal justice policy and the legacy of coalition' (University of Kent lecture, 2015) full text online:

<<https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/resources/current-criminal-justice-policy-and-legacy-coalition>> [accessed 15.06.2018].

Gauke, David, 'Prisons reform speech' (Royal Society of Arts in London, 6 March 2018) full text online: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prisons-reform-speech>>

[accessed 16.06.2018].

Geese Theatre Company, <<http://www.geese.co.uk/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

Geng, Xiawei, Ziguang Chen, Wing Lam, and Quanquan Zheng, 'Hedonic Evaluation over Short and Long Retention Intervals: The Mechanism of the Peak-End Rule' *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making* 26/3 (July 2013): 225-236.

Fine Cell Work, <<https://finecellwork.co.uk/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].

Goffman, Erving, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963).

Goffman, Erving, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (St. Ives: Penguin, 1991 (1961)).

Good Vibrations, <<http://www.good-vibrations.org.uk/>> [accessed 24.09.2018].

Gray, Clive, 'Local government and the arts revisited' *Local Government Studies* 43/3 (2017): 315-322.

Gray, Clive, 'Local Government and the Arts' *Local Government Studies* 28/1 (2002): 77-90.

Green, Lucy, *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy*, (Abingdon: Ashgate, 2008).

Green, Lucy, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education* (London: Ashgate, 2002).

Hairston, Creasie Finney, 'Fathers in Prison' *Marriage & Family Review* 32/3-4 (2002): 111-135

Hallam, Susan, 'The power of music: Its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people' *International Journal of Music Education* 28/3 (2010): 269-289.

Hallam, Susan, Andrea Creech, and Maria Varvarigou, 'Well-Being and Music Leisure Activities Through the Lifespan: A Psychological Perspective', in Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 31-60.

Hallam, Susan, and Raymond MacDonald, 'Introduction: Perspectives on the power of music' *Research Studies in Music Education* 35/1 (2013): 83-86.

Hanvey, Chris, and Terry Philpot, 'Introduction' in Chris Hanvey and Terry Philpot eds., *Sweet Charity: The role and workings of voluntary organisations* (London: Routledge, 1996), 1-6.

Hara, Mariko, 'Music in Dementia Care: Increased Understanding Through Mixed Research Methods' *Music and Arts in Action* 3/2 (2011): 34-58.

Hargreaves, David J., Dorothy Miell and Raymond A. R. Macdonald, 'What are Musical Identities and Why are they Important?' in Macdonald, Hargreaves and Miell eds. *Musical Identities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1-20.

Harris, M. Kay, 'In search of common ground: The importance of theoretical orientations in criminology and criminal justice' *Criminology and Public Policy* 4/2 (2005): 311-328.

Head, Emma, 'The ethics and implications of paying participants in qualitative research' *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 12/4 (2009): 335-344.

Hedderman, Carol, 'Payment by Results: Hopes, Fears and Evidence' *British Journal of Community Justice* 11/2-3 (2013): 43-58.

Hedderman, Carol, Clare Gunby, and Nicola Shelton, 'What women want: The importance of qualitative approaches in evaluating work with women offenders' *Criminology and Criminal Justice* 11/1 (2011): 3-19.

Henley, Jennie, 'Musical learning and desistance from crime: the case of a 'Good Vibrations' Javanese gamelan project with young offenders' *Music Education Research* 17/1 (2015): 103-120.

Henley, Jennie, *Good Vibrations: Music and social education for young offenders* (London: Institute of Education, 2012).

Higgins, Lee, 'One-to-One Encounters: Facilitators, Participants, and Friendship' *Theory Into Practice* 51/3 (2012): 159-166.

Higgins, Lee, *Community Music in Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales *Annual Report 2016-17* (House of Commons, 18 July 2017) online: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/07/HMIP-AR_2016-17_CONTENT_201017_WEB.pdf> [accessed 03.07.2018].

HM Inspectorate of Prisons *Life in prison: Earning and spending money* (January 2016) online: <<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisoners/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/01/Earning-and-spending-money-findings-paper-final-draft.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018].

Hope, Tim, 'Pretend it works: Evidence and governance in the evaluation of the Reducing Burglary Initiative' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 4/3 (2004): 287-308.

Hopkins, Kathryn, *The pre-custody employment, training and education status of newly sentenced prisoners* (Ministry of Justice Analytical Services, March 2012), online: <<https://www.lemosandcrane.co.uk/dev/resources/pre-custody-empl-training-edu-status-newly-sentenced-prisoners.pdf>> [accessed 26.09.2018].

Howard League for Penal Reform, *Prison Watch* <<https://howardleague.org/prisons-information/prison-watch/>> [accessed 04.07.2018].

Hwang, Hoky, and Walter W. Powell, 'The Rationalization of Charity: The Influences of Professionalism in the Nonprofit Sector' *Administrative Science Quarterly* 54/2 (2009): 268-298.

Hyndman, Noel, and Danielle McMahon, 'The hand of government in shaping accounting and reporting in the UK charity sector' *Public Money and Management* 31/1 (2011): 167-174.

Institute for Government, 'Prisons' *Performance Tracker Autumn 2017* online: <<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publication/performance-tracker-autumn-2017/law-and-order/prisons>> [accessed 04.07.2018].

Irene Taylor Trust: <<https://irenetaylortrust.com/>> [accessed 26.09.2018].

Irwin, John, and Barbara Owen, 'Harm and the contemporary prison' in Alison Liebling and Shadd Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005), 94-117.

Jewkes, Yvonne, 'An Introduction to "Doing Prison Research Differently"' *Qualitative Inquiry* 20/4 (2014): 387-391.

- Jewkes, Yvonne, 'Autoethnography and Emotion as Intellectual Resources: Doing Prison Research Differently' *Qualitative Inquiry* 18/1 (2012): 63-75.
- Jewkes, Yvonne, 'Men Behind Bars: "Doing" Masculinity as an Adaptation to Imprisonment' *Men and Masculinities* 8/1 (2005): 44-63.
- Jewkes, Yvonne, *Captive Audience: Media, masculinity and power in prisons* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2002).
- Johnson, Robert, 'Art and Autonomy: Prison Writers under Siege' in Leonidas K. Cheliotis ed., *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 167-188.
- Johnson, Robert, 'Brave new prisons: the growing isolation of modern penal institutions' in Alison Lieblich and Shadd Maruna eds *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005), 255-284.
- Johnson, Robert, *Hard Time: Understanding and Reforming the Prison* 3rd Edition (Canada: Wadsworth, 2002).
- Johnson, Robert, and Hans Toch, eds., *The Pains of Imprisonment* (Waveland Press, 1982).
- Juslin, Patrick N., 'Emotional responses to music' in Susan Hallam, Ian Cross and Michael Thaut eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 131-140.
- King, Roy D., and Kathleen McDermott, "'My Geranium is Subversive": Some Notes on the Management of Trouble in Prisons' *The British Journal of Sociology* 41/4 (1990): 44-71.
- Knight, Victoria, *Remote Control: Television in Prison* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016)
- Kratus, John, 'Songwriting: A New Direction for Secondary Music Education' *Music Educators Journal* 102/3 (2016): 60-65.
- Laub, John H., and Robert J. Sampson, *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives: Delinquent Boys to Age 70* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).
- Laub, John H., and Robert J. Sampson, 'Understanding Desistance from Crime' *Crime and Justice* 28 (2001): 1-69.
- Lees, Loretta, and Clare Melhuish, 'Arts-led regeneration in the UK: The rhetoric and the evidence on urban social inclusion' *European Urban and Regional Studies* 22/3 (2015): 242-260.
- Leman, Marc, Jeska Buhmann, and Edith Van Dyck, 'The empowering effects of being locked into the beat of the music' in Clemens Wöllner ed. *Body, Sound and Space in Music and Beyond: Multimodal Explorations* (Taylor and Francis, 2017), 13-28.
- Levy, Ian, and Brian TaeHyuk Keum, 'Hip-hop emotional exploration in men' *Journal of Poetry Therapy* 27/4 (2014): 217-223.
- Lidington, David, 'Delivering safer and more secure prisons: the roots to rehabilitation' (Reform, 18 December 2017) full text online:

<<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/delivering-safer-and-more-secure-prisons-the-roots-to-rehabilitation>> [accessed 16.06.2018].

Liebling, Alison, 'Moral performance, inhuman and degrading treatment and prison pain' *Punishment & Society* 13/5 (2011): 530-550.

Liebling, Alison, 'Incentives and Earned Privileges Revisited: Fairness, Discretion and the Quality of Prison Life' *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention* 9/S1 (2008): 25-41.

Liebling, Alison, *Prisons and their Moral Performance: A Study of Values, Quality and Prison Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Liebling, Alison, 'Whose Side are We on? Theory Practice and Allegiances in Prisons Research' *British Journal of Criminology* 41/3 (2001): 472-484.

Liebling, Alison, 'Doing research in prison: Breaking the silence?' *Theoretical Criminology* 3/2 (1999): 147-173.

Liebling, Alison, and Shadd Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005).

Liebling, Alison, and Shadd Maruna, 'Introduction: the effects of imprisonment revisited' in Alison Liebling and Shadd Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005), 1-29.

Liebling, Alison, David Price, and Guy Shefer, *The Prison Officer* (Abingdon: Willan, 2011).

Little, Amanda, 'Crossing the Great Divide: Dilemmas of U.K. Voluntary-Sector Leaders Who Move into Government' *Public Administration Review* 64/5 (2004): 618-624.

Lonie, Douglas, 'Measuring Outcomes and Demonstrating Impact: Rhetoric and Reality in Evaluating Participatory Music Interventions' in Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Lee Higgins eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Community Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 281-298.

Lonie, Douglas Iain, 'Musical Identities and Health over the Youth-Adult Transition' (Ph.D., University of Glasgow, 2009), online: <<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/1125/1/2009LoniePhD.pdf>> [accessed 22.09.2018].

Lowe, Toby, 'Payment by results – a “dangerous idiocy” that makes staff tell lies' *The Guardian* (1 Feb 2013) online: <<https://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/feb/01/payment-results-staff-fictions>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

Macdonald, Raymond, Gunter Kreutz, and Laura Mitchell eds. *Music, Health and Wellbeing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Maguire, Mike, and Peter Raynor, 'Offender management in and after prison: The end of 'end to end'?' *Criminology and Criminal Justice* 17/2 (2017): 138-157.

Maguire, Mike, and Peter Raynor, 'How the resettlement of prisoners promotes desistance from crime: Or does it?' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 6/1 (2006): 19-38.

Mangaoang, Áine, 'Dancing to Distraction: Mediating “Docile Bodies” in “Philippines Thriller Video”' *Torture* 23/2 (2013): 44-54.

Mann, Natalie, *Doing Harder Time? The Experiences of an Ageing Male Prison Population in England and Wales* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013).

Marples, Rebecca, 'Transforming Rehabilitation – The Risks for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector in Engaging in Commercial Contracts with Tier 1 Providers' *British Journal of Community Justice* 11/2-3 (2013): 21-32.

Martin, Carol, 'Doing research in a prison setting' in Victor Jupp, Pamela Davies and Peter Francis eds. *Doing Criminological Research* (2000), 215-233.

Martinson, Robert, 'What works? – questions and answers about prison reform' *The Public Interest* vol 35 (1974): 22-54.

Maruna, Shadd, *The Great Escape: Exploring the Rehabilitative Dynamics Involved in 'Changing Tunes'* (2010), online:
<<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57d94a1d5016e175c356668f/t/595b731617bffc06e04da9a0/1499165469859/The+Great+Escape+Prof+Shadd+Maruna+2010.pdf>> [accessed 02.07.2018].

Maruna, Shadd, *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives* (Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2001).

Maruna, Shadd, and Stephen Farrall, 'Desistance from crime: A theoretical reformulation' *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 43 (2004): 171-194.

Maruna, Shadd, Russ Immarigeon and Thomas P. LeBel, 'Ex-Offender reintegration: theory and practice' in Shadd Maruna and Russ Immarigeon eds., *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 3-26.

Mason, Jennifer, 'Qualitative Interviewing: Asking, Listening and Interpreting' in Tim May *Qualitative Research in Action*, (SAGE, 2002), ProQuest Ebook Central,
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nottingham/detail.action?docID=254691>.> [accessed 04.07.2018] (no pagination).

Matarasso, François, *The Human Factor: Experiences of Arts Evaluation* (Creative Commons, 2009) online: <<http://www.artshealthresources.org.uk/docs/the-human-factor-experiences-of-arts-evaluation/>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

Matarosso, François, *Use or Ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts* (Comedia, 1997) online: <http://www.artshealthresources.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/1997-Matarasso-Use-or-Ornament-The-Social-Impact-of-Participation-in-the-Arts-1.pdf>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

May, Tim, *Social Research: Issues, methods and process* 3rd Edition (Open University Press, 2001).

McNeill, Fergus, 'Four forms of "offender" rehabilitation: Towards an interdisciplinary perspective' *Legal and Criminological Psychology* 17/1 (2012): 18-36.

McNeill, Fergus, 'A desistance paradigm for offender management' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 6/1 (2006): 39-62.

McNeill, Fergus, and Shadd Maruna, 'Giving Up and Giving Back: Desistance, Generativity and Social Work with Offenders' in Gill McIvor and Peter Raynor eds. *Developments in Social Work with Offenders* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2007), 224-339.

Medlicott, Diane, 'Surviving in the Time Machine: Suicidal prisoners and the pains of prison time' *Time & Society* 8/2-3 (1999): 211-230.

Michaels, F. S. *Monoculture: How One Story is Changing Everything* (Canada: Red Clover Publishing, 2011).

Ministry of Justice, *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2016* (30 November 2017), online:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/669094/statistics_on_race_and_the_criminal_justice_system_2016_v2.pdf> [accessed 03.07.2018].

Ministry of Justice, *Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform* (May 2013).

Ministry of Justice, *Transforming Rehabilitation: Summary of Responses* (May 2013).

Ministry of Justice, *Breaking the Cycle: Government Response* (June 2011).

Ministry of Justice, *Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders* (December 2010).

Murray, Joseph, 'The effects of imprisonment on families and children of prisoners' in Alison Liebling and Shadd Maruna eds., *The Effects of Imprisonment* (Devon: Willan Publishing, 2005), 442-462.

National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance <<https://www.artsincriminaljustice.org.uk/>> [accessed 05.07.2018].

Neilsen, Steen Kaargaard, and Mads Krogh, 'Spillover Censorship: The Globalization of US Corporate Music Self-Censorship' *Popular Music and Society* 40/3 (2017): 345-362.

Noaks, Lesley, and Emma Wincup, *Criminological Research: Understanding Qualitative Methods* (London: Sage 2004).

O'Donnell, Ian, *Prisoners, Solitude, and Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

O'Grady, Lucy, 'The Therapeutic Potentials of Creating and Performing Music with Women in Prison: A Qualitative Case Study' *Qualitative Inquiries in Music Therapy* Vol. 6 (2011).

Parkes, Rose, and Charlotte Bilby, 'The Courage to Create: The Role of Artistic and Spiritual Activities in Prisons' *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice* 49/2 (2010): 91-110.

Patenaude, Al, 'No Promises, But I'm Willing to Listen and Tell What I Hear: Conducting Qualitative Research among Prison Inmates and Staff' *Prison Journal* 84/4 (2004): 695-915.

Pavlicevic, Mercedes, and Gary Ansdell eds., *Community Music Therapy* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2004).

Phillips, Coretta, "'It ain't nothing like America with the Bloods and the Crips": Gang narratives inside two English prisons' *Punishment and Society* 14/1 (2012): 51-68.

Pimlico Opera, <<http://www.pimlicoopera.co.uk/>> [accessed 24.09.2018].

- Pitts, Stephanie, “‘The Violin in the Attic’ – Investigating the Long-Term Value of Lapsed Musical Participation’ in Roger Mantie and Gareth Dylan Smith eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Music Making and Leisure* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 171-185.
- Pitts, Stephanie, ‘What is Music Education For? Understanding and Fostering Routes into Lifelong Musical Engagement’ *Music Education Research* 19/2 (2017): 160-168.
- Pitts, Stephanie, ‘Discovering and Affirming Musical Identity through Extracurricular Music-Making in English Secondary Schools’ in Lucy Green ed., *Learning, Teaching, and Musical Identity: Voices across Cultures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 227-238.
- Pitts, Stephanie, *Valuing Musical Participation* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2005).
- Pitts, Stephanie, ‘What do Students Learn when we Teach Music? An investigation of the “hidden” curriculum in a university music department’ *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education* 2/3 (2003): 281-292
- Playing For Time Theatre Company, <<http://www.playingfortime.org.uk/>> [accessed 27.09.2018].
- Prison Reform Trust, *Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile Autumn 2017* online: <<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Autumn%202017%20factfile.pdf>> [accessed 04.07.2018].
- Prison Reform Trust, *Prison: the facts – Bromley Briefings Summer 2017* online: <<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/portals/0/documents/bromley%20briefings/summer%202017%20factfile.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018].
- Ralphs, Rob, Lisa Williams, Rebecca Askew, and Anna Norton, ‘Adding Spice to the Porridge: The development of a synthetic cannabinoid market in an English prison’ *International Journal of Drug Policy* 40 (2017): 57-69.
- Riiser, Solveig, ‘National Identity and the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra’ *Music and Arts in Action* 2/2 (2010): 19-37.
- Riley, Patricia E., ‘Exploration of Student Development through Songwriting’ *Visions of Research in Music Education* 22 (2012) online: <http://www-usr.rider.edu/~vrme/v22n1/visions/Riley_Student_Development_Through_Songwriting.pdf> [accessed 04.07.2018].
- Rogers, Jenny, *Adults Learning* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 2007).
- Rogers, Lynne, Jane Hurry, Margaret Simonot, and Anita Wilson, ‘The aspirations and realities of prison education for under-25s in the London area’ *London Review of Education* 12/2 (2014): 184-196.
- Ryan, Richard M. and Edward L. Deci, ‘Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-being’ *American Psychologist* 55/1 (2000): 68-78.
- Sarre, Rick, ‘Beyond “What Works?” – A 25-year Jubilee Retrospective of Robert Martinson’s Famous Article’ *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 34/1 (2001): 38-46.

Savage, Michael, and Mark Townsend, 'Exclusive: shock figures reveal crisis state of prisons in England and Wales' *The Guardian* (17 February 2018) online: <<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/feb/17/uk-brutal-prisons-failing-violence-drugs-gangs>> [accessed 15.05.2018].

Saidel, Judith R., 'Dimensions of Interdependence: The State and Voluntary-Sector Relationship' *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 18/4 (1989): 335-347.

Schickler, Pam, 'Achieving health or achieving wellbeing' *Learning in Health and Social Care* 4/4 (2005): 217-227.

Shannon Trust; 'The Challenge' *Shannon Trust* website: <<http://www.shannontrust.org.uk/our-work/the-challenge/>> [accessed 24.10.2017].

Shaw, Ian, and Neil Lunt, 'Forms of Practitioner Research' *British Journal of Social Work* 48/1 (2018): 141-157.

Shelemay, Kay Kaufman, 'Musical Communities: Rethinking the Collective in Music' *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64/2 (2011): 349-390.

Shoemaker, Karl, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages, 400-1500* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011).

Sloboda, John A., *The Musical Mind: The cognitive psychology of music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

Smith, Sidonie, and Kay Schaffer, "'Land of the free"? Circulating human rights and narrated lives in the United States' *Comparative American Studies An International Journal* 1/3 (2003): 263-284.

Small, Christopher, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performance and Listening* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

Sparks, Richard, and Kirstin Anderson, 'Inspiring Change: Evaluating Arts and Justice Initiatives' *Scottish Justice Matters* 2/1 (2014): 5-7.

Starbuck, Elizabeth, 'Optimizing University Research Collaborations' *Research-Technology Management* 44/1 (2001): 40-44.

Staricoff, Roasia Lelchuk, 'Arts in health: the value of evaluation' *Perspectives in Public Health* 126/3 (2007): 116-120.

Stevens, John, 'Coming live from prison. Who's missing me?' *Daily Mail Online* (14 August 2013), online: <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2393391/Thug-Sonny-Barker-posts-pictures-easy-prison-life-Facebook.html>> [accessed 25.09.2018]

Strathern, Marilyn, "'Improving ratings": audit in the British University system' *European Review* 5/3 (1997): 305-321.

Stone, Arthur A., Christine A. Bachrach, Jared B. Jobe, Howard S. Kurtzman, and Virginia S. Cain, eds., *The Science of Self-report: Implications for Research and Practice* (Psychology Press, 1999).

Sykes, Gresham M., *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958).

Taylor, Clare *Brain Cells – Listening to Prisoner Learners* Third Edition (Prisoners' Education Trust, 2014) online:

<<https://fbclientprisoners.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Reports/PET%20Brain%20Cells%203%20Report%20LR.pdf>> [accessed 03.07.2018].

The Centre for Social Justice, *Drugs in Prison* (London: Centre for Social Justice, 2015)

online: <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/core/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CSJJ3090_Drugs_in_Prison.pdf> [accessed 04.07.2018].

Titon, Jeff Todd, 'Applied Ethnomusicology: A Descriptive and Historical Account' in Svanibor Pettan and Jeff Todd Titon eds. *Oxford Handbook of Applied Ethnomusicology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 4-28.

Toch, Hans, 'Studying and Reducing Stress' in Robert Johnson and Hans Toch, eds., *The Pains of Imprisonment* (Waveland Press, 1982), 25-44.

Toch, Hans, *Living in Prison: The Ecology of Survival* (New York: The Free Press, 1977).

Truss, Liz, 'A speech on criminal justice reform by the Secretary of State for Justice' (The Centre for Social Justice, 13 February 2017) full text online:

<<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/a-speech-on-criminal-justice-reform-by-the-secretary-of-state-for-justice>> [accessed 16.06.2018].

Turner, Jennifer, *The Prison Boundary: Between Society and Carceral Space* (Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2016).

Ugelvik, Thomas, *Power and Resistance in Prison: Doing Time, Doing Freedom* trans. Stephen G. Evans (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Uggen, Christopher, 'Work as a turning point in the life course of criminals: A duration model of age, employment and recidivism' *American Sociological Review* 65/4 (2000): 529-546.

Uggen, Christopher, Jeff Manza and Melissa Thompson, 'Citizenship, Democracy and the Civic Reintegration of Criminal Offenders' *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 605/1 (2006): 281-310.

Unlock, *Support for ex-offenders inquiry – Results and analysis of our survey* (September 2016), online: <<http://www.unlock.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Support-for-ex-offenders-inquiry-%E2%80%93-Results-and-analysis-of-our-survey.pdf>> [accessed 12.09.2018].

Unlock, *Support for ex-offenders inquiry: Written response to the Work and Pensions Committee Inquiry* (April 2016), online: <<http://www.unlock.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Unlock-written-response-to-Work-and-Pensions-Committee-Inquiry.pdf>> [accessed 12.09.2018].

Urbain, Olivier ed., *Music and Conflict Transformation: Harmonies and Dissonances in Geopolitics* (I.B Tauris & Company Ltd, 2007).

Vaughan, Barry, 'The Internal Narrative of Desistance' *The British Journal of Criminology* 47/3 (2007): 390-404.

Ward, Tony, and Clare-Ann Fortune, 'The Good Lives Model: Aligning Risk Reduction with Promoting Offenders' Personal Goals' *European Journal of Probation* 5/2 (2013): 29-46.

- Ward, Tony, and Shadd Maruna *Rehabilitation: Beyond the Risk Paradigm* (London: Routledge, 2007).
- Weaver, Beth, and Fergus McNeill, 'Lifelines: Desistance, Social Relations, and Reciprocity' *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 42/1 (2015): 95-107.
- Westley, George H., 'The Right of Sanctuary' *The Green Bag* 8/10 (1896) 422-426.
- Whitehead, Philip, 'Payment by results: the materialist reconstruction of criminal justice' *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 35/5-6 (2015): 290-305.
- Williams, Kim, Vea Papadopoulou and Natalie Booth, *Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds: Results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) longitudinal cohort study of prisoners* (Ministry of Justice Analytical Services, March 2012), online: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278837/prisoners-childhood-family-backgrounds.pdf> [accessed 04.09.2018].
- Wilkinson, Dean J., and Laura S. Caulfield, 'The Perceived Benefits of an Arts Project for Health and Wellbeing of Older Offenders' *Europe's Journal of Psychology* 13/1 (2017): 16-27.
- Wilson, Catherine Marie, 'If you listen, I'll tell you how I feel: incarcerated men expressing emotion through songwriting' (Ph.D., University of Iowa, 2013), online: <<https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/4978/>> [accessed 02.07.2018].
- Wilson, David, Laura Caulfield, and, Susie Atherton 'Good Vibrations: The long-term impact of a prison-based music project' *Prison Service Journal* 182 (2009): 27-32.
- Wilson, David, Laura Caulfield, and Susie Atherton, *Promoting Positive Change: Assessing the Long-Term Psychological, Emotional and Behavioural Effects of the Good Vibrations Gamelan in Prisons Project* (Birmingham: Centre for Criminal Justice Policy and Research, 2008).
- Winder, Belinda, Verena Sperling, Helen Elliott, Rebecca Lievesley, Jessica Faulkner, and Nicholas Blagden, *Evaluation of the use of 'Good Vibrations' percussion courses to improve motivation to change and treatment readiness with convicted sexual offenders embarking on treatment programmes* (Nottingham: Sexual Offences, Crime and Misconduct Research Unit, 2015), online: <<http://artsevidence.org.uk/media/uploads/goodvibrations-nottinghamtrentuniversity.pdf>> [accessed 02.07.2018].
- Wright, Ruth, 'A Holistic Approach to Music Education' *British Journal of Music Education* 15/1 (1998): 71-81.
- Wulf-Ludden, Timbre, 'Interpersonal relationships among inmates and prison violence' *Journal of Crime and Justice* 36/1 (2013): 116-136.
- Wyld, Grace, and James Noble, *Beyond Bars: Maximising the Voluntary Sector's Contribution in Criminal Justice* (New Philanthropy Capital, 2017) online: <https://www.thinknpc.org/beyond-bars-executive-summary_npc/> [accessed 29.06.2018].

Appendix One: Interview Starter Questions

A list of the broad starter questions used to spark discussion in the interviews, with examples of potential follow-up questions, discussion points or themes to look out for.

1. Why did you decide to sign up for the music project?

- What is life like in prison?
- What other rehabilitation programmes are there / have you done? Why? What did you think?
- What is work / education like? How difficult is it to give up other activities for music?

2. What did you think of the project?

- What did you enjoy most? Why?
- What did you find the most challenging? How did you deal with challenge?
- Was there anything that didn't you like?
- What would you do differently?
- MiP – go through day by day, ask about song-writing, instruments, recording, performing.

3. What did you think of how the course was run?

- Discuss the professional musicians
- Difference between MiP and MiR
- Anything you would like to see done differently?

4. How has the project affected your life in prison?

- What is life like for you in prison?
- Social world / relationships
- How does it contribute to addiction recovery?
- How long do the feelings last for after the end of a session?
- How does it compare to other things on offer in prison?

5. (If appropriate) If you had to convince the governor to continue the project, and/or, if you were trying to persuade someone else to sign up, what would you say?

- Differences in ways of explaining the project to different audiences.